

**TELLING STORIES AS A WAY OF BEING:  
HOW STORIES SHAPE A HAWAIIAN CULTURE-BASED SCHOOL'S IDENTITY**

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE DIVISION OF THE  
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT MĀNOA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE  
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

IN

EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

December 2018

By

Kelsey S. Matsu

Dissertation Committee:

Lois A. Yamauchi, Chairperson  
Noelani Goodyear-Ka'ōpua  
Julie Kaomea  
Nicole Lewis  
Katherine T. Ratliffe

## Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge the many people who have supported me and who have been an integral part of my dissertation journey. I am deeply grateful to the staff and students of Kanu o ka ‘Āina Public Charter School for sharing their time with me and trusting me with their stories. I felt incredibly welcomed on their campus and could truly see the passion and love with which they embraced the beauty and depth of their culture. I would like to especially thank Allyson Tamura for responding to my initial inquiry and opening up the way for me to learn from the KANU ‘ohana.

I would also like to thank my committee members: Lois Yamauchi, Noelani Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua, Julie Kaomea, Nicole Lewis, and Katherine Ratliffe. Each member provided invaluable feedback that broadened my thinking and strengthened my study. In particular, I would like to thank Lois Yamauchi, my chair and advisor, for her continuous support, guidance and mentorship. She has helped me grow as a researcher and has shown me by example what it means to care for community and to advocate for equity in education.

Lastly, I would like to thank my parents. I am grateful to my mom for instilling within me a deep appreciation for reading and a love for learning, and for teaching me the importance of having a strong mind, strong body, and kind heart. From my dad, I’ve learned what it means to persevere in vision and excellence, to work hard in everything, no matter how big or small.

*I am filled with gratitude to all of you. May the stories we share continually enrich our lives.*

## Abstract

The introduction of foreign influence into the Hawaiian Kingdom in the late 1700s dramatically changed this once isolated indigenous nation. Education, in particular, was increasingly institutionalized to conform with Western values, nearly obliterating the language and culture of the Islands. However, in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, a Hawaiian nationalist movement emerged, closely followed by the U.S. charter school movement, resulting in a flourishing of Hawaiian immersion and Hawaiian culture-based charter schools. This study explored Kanu o ka ‘Āina, a Hawaiian culture-based charter school, investigating the stories being told and retold by members of the school, the ways in which these stories established a core school narrative, and the ways members of the school identified with this narrative. Data included observations as well as interviews with seven adults and four students. Adult participants included a mix of administrators and teachers from elementary through high school. Student participants included juniors and seniors who had been at the school for more than five years. Results indicated a particularly strong core school narrative that arose from the founding story, suggesting that Hawaiian-based education was central to providing a learning environment in which Hawaiian children thrived. This Hawaiian-based education reflected a strong respect for time, respect for place, and respect for land and community. In addition, the study revealed that the strength and broad espousal of this core narrative among staff and students was due in large part to occasions for remembering, which significantly provided opportunities for particular stories to be told and retold through individual and collective practices, resulting in individuals embracing a strong sense of belonging to their school.

## Table of Contents

Acknowledgements.....	ii
Abstract.....	iii
Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
Purpose of the Study.....	5
Theoretical Framework.....	6
Chapter 2: Literature Review.....	8
Pre-Contact Education in Hawai‘i.....	9
Effects of Western Colonialism on Hawaiian Education.....	11
The Introduction of Hawaiian Language- and Culture-Based Schools.....	15
Hawaiian-Based Schools.....	17
The strengthening of cultural knowledge and cultural identity.....	18
A strengths-based approach to education.....	20
The centrality of Hawaiian epistemology.....	23
A means toward sovereignty and self-determination.....	24
A continuous political struggle.....	26
Contextualizing Hawaiian-based education within the contemporary academic discourse.....	28
The value of stories in establishing a culture-based educational framework.....	30
Organizational Remembering Model.....	32
Core stock of stories.....	34

Occasions for remembering.....	34
Member narratives.....	35
Kanu o ka ‘Āina New Century Public Charter School .....	35
History of Kanu o ka ‘Āina.....	36
Description of Kanu o ka ‘Āina.....	36
Chapter 3: Methods.....	40
Participants .....	40
Recruitment.....	40
Adult participants.....	41
Student participants.....	44
Data Sources .....	46
Observations.....	46
Adult interviews.....	47
Student interviews.....	48
Narrative inquiry.....	48
Video-recording.....	48
Data Analysis.....	49
Coding.....	50
Video and visual mapping.....	51
Role of the Researcher .....	52

Chapter 4: Results.....	53
Observations .....	53
Adult Interviews .....	55
The founding story.....	55
Respect for time.....	57
Respect for people.....	59
Respect for land and the community.....	62
A counter-story.....	65
Adult Second Interviews .....	67
Student Interviews .....	72
Hawaiian culture and identity.....	72
Give help. Receive help.....	74
KANU is family.....	76
Voice and leadership.....	79
Student Second Interviews .....	82
Comparing the School Narrative and Student Stories .....	84
Chapter 5: Discussion .....	89
Contributions to Practice.....	89
Occasions for remembering.....	89
Remembering as a practice of doing.....	89

Remembering as a collective practice.....	90
Remembering as a reflection of cultural values.....	91
Theoretical and Practical Implications.....	93
Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research.....	97
References.....	99
Appendix A.....	111
Appendix B.....	112

## Chapter 1: Introduction

For more than a thousand years, the Hawaiians flourished as a self-sustaining community, inhabiting a chain of islands in the middle of the Pacific Ocean about 2,000 miles from the continental United States. Isolated from foreign influence, they developed a rich culture and economy based on a deep relationship with the land and the sea (Dotts & Sikkema, 1994; Trask, 1999). An intricate system of land-use rights and responsibilities created an interdependent economic and political system that was mutually beneficial to all, from those living near the sea to those living inland, from the highest ranking ali'i (chiefs)<sup>1</sup> to the maka'āinana (commoners) (Trask, 1999). The Hawaiian people also had a rich cultural life that included voyaging, dance, chants and ceremonies, spiritual practices, martial arts, and the honoring of specific places and ancestral figures (Goodyear-Ka'ōpua, 2013).

Isolation from outside influence ended in the late 1700s with the arrival of Captain James Cook who came across the islands in 1778 (Trask, 1999). His arrival marked the beginning of increasing Western contact from British explorers to Calvinist missionaries. These explorers and missionaries brought with them a new set of values that included ideologies of “capitalism, Western political ideas (such as predatory individualism), and Christianity” (Trask, 1999, p. 5), all of which contrasted with the existing Hawaiian way of life. Over time there was increasing pressure and resolve from Westerners to inculcate their values and worldview upon the social, economic, and political spheres of Hawaiian life. To a great extent, this pressure began first with the institutionalization of education. “Schooling was an institution that could be used to rapidly indoctrinate and hence, assimilate those who were different into a common set of Euro-American

---

<sup>1</sup> English translations of Hawaiian words are noted in parentheses and cited from Pukui and Elbert's (1986) *Hawaiian Dictionary*.



beliefs, goals, and behaviors” (Benham & Heck, 1998, p. 11). Children were removed from the land, their arts, their language and their families and placed in classrooms of reading and writing (Benham & Heck, 1998; Dotts & Sikkema, 1994). Over the years, the Hawaiian people continued to suffer loss of their way of life to Western ideologies. In 1848, the Great Land Māhele (division) replaced communal land tenure with private property ownership, a concept completely foreign to a people who saw land as a responsibility to care for and not something to be owned. The Māhele resulted in the transfer of land ownership to foreigners who subsequently gained economic and political control of the islands. Not only did this loss of land change the economic and political structure of Hawai‘i, it more importantly took away a critical cultural component of Hawaiian identity, as land to the Hawaiian people was seen as a source of life, knowledge, and inspiration (Kana‘iaupuni & Malone, 2006; Meyer, 2001). According to Kikiloi (2010), the ‘āina (land) sustains our identity, continuity, and well-being as a people. It embodies the tangible and intangible values of our culture that have developed and evolved over generations of experiences of our ancestors” (p. 75). Further loss incurred to the Hawaiian people occurred in 1893 with the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy, leading the way for annexation of Hawai‘i as a territory of the United States in 1898.

The educational, economic, and political systems in Hawai‘i continued to erode and disenfranchise Hawaiian culture and values until the late twentieth and early twenty-first century, when a Hawaiian nationalist movement emerged, closely followed by the U.S. charter school movement (Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua, 2013). For many of the same reasons missionaries first targeted schooling as a means to inculcate a new system of values, schooling was significant to revitalizing language and cultural identity for the Hawaiian people. Beginning in 1984, there was a flourishing of Hawaiian immersion programs, followed by an emergence of Hawaiian culture-

based charter schools. According to Kana'iaupuni and Kawai'ae'a (2008), culture-based education embraces teaching skills and knowledge through a cultural worldview that is grounded in cultural values. The learning itself is largely shaped around

the notion of kuleana, which is oriented toward relational obligations as shaped by genealogy and land. . . . Often translated by combining the definitions of *rights*, *responsibilities*, and *authority* in English, the 'Ōiwi (Native) concept of kuleana also fundamentally implies genealogy and place. (Goodyear-Ka'ōpua, 2013, p. 64)

There is a deep connection between culture and learning. It is culture that shapes the ways in which we see and experience the world (Meyer, 1998). Culture, for the Hawaiian people, is rooted in history, genealogy, and place. In Hawaiian culture-based schools, history, genealogy, and place are often brought forward into the present as the cornerstone of teaching and learning (Goodyear-Ka'ōpua, Kauai, Maioho, & Winchester, 2008; ho'omanawanui, 2008). Not only does this act of bringing the past into the present ground schooling in indigenous knowledge and practices, but it also brings forth past stories and narratives that solidifies a culture-based educational identity. According to Linde (2009),

Narration is one very important way that institutions construct their presentations of who they are and what they have done in the past, and they use these pasts in the present as an attempt to shape their future. Narrative works to establish identity, that is, to answer the question, "Who are We?" Narrative is also the link between the way an institution represents its past, and the ways its members use, alter, or contest that past, in order to understand the institution as a whole as well as their own place within or apart from that institution. (p. 4)

This construct that narratives are core to forming institutional identity suggests that all schools in some way project an identity through the narratives they tell. Hawaiian culture-based charter schools have a rich cultural history from which to draw upon for such narratives. However, one challenge Hawaiian culture-based charter schools may face in maintaining a strong core narrative is that some might say that a culture-based educational narrative runs counter to the dominant narrative of Western education (Goodyear-Ka'ōpua, 2013). Rather than follow established schooling practices based on a Western model of education, Hawaiian culture-based charter schools have contested that model by building upon their own indigenous values, history, and place-based stories. These narratives seem to be particularly important to their initial founding and establishment. However, these schools were founded fairly recently, within the last 40 years. How then, do these educational institutions use their past to create an alternative educational narrative? This is a particularly salient question as one could argue that American education has struggled with effectively re-forming its educational system through such federal initiatives as No Child Left Behind and Race to the Top. Could Hawaiian culture-based charter schools provide insight into how educational institutions can harness the past to construct an identity in the present that propels them into the future?

Hawaiian culture-based charter schools were chosen specifically because of the abundance of narratives that are associated with these schools. These schools often look to indigenous practices and structures, oral history and chants as foundational to literacy and learning. They do not seek to recreate an existing educational entity aligned with dominant Western practices; rather, they look to their heritage, culture, and history to rearticulate schooling according to their collective purposes (Goodyear-Ka'ōpua, 2013). According to Goodyear-Ka'ōpua (2013), one of the founders of Hālau Kū Māna Public Charter School,

It is not enough to exist as a charter school and to simply maintain an institutional presence in which Hawaiian culture can be taught, recognized, and sanctioned by the settler state. Rather, the larger goal and purpose is to create and maintain opportunities for community members to constantly renew personal and collective obligations to the land and to each other. It is the process of recognizing our own power to control the educational futures of our peoples that is transformative” (p. 29).

Kū Kahakalau, founder and former director of Kanu o ka ‘Āina New Century Public Charter School stated, “In the face of nearly insurmountable external challenges, we have created a successful values-based model of education that is at once ancient and modern and validates our capacity to design and control our own process of education” (“Kanu,” 2009). As such, Hālau Kū Māna, Kanu o ka ‘Āina, and other Hawaiian culture-based charter schools have sought to redefine education by using their own stories and narratives to make “Hawaiian cultural knowledge and practices—such as navigation, sailing, fishpond restoration, and taro cultivation—centerpieces for cultural revival, community building, and academic excellence” (Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua, 2013, p. xv).

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to explore how past stories of an institution can create a narrative that forms the foundation of the institution’s identity. The first essential research question was: How do stories told within and about an institution, by members of the institution, help to construct a Hawaiian culture-based charter school’s collective identity? The three subquestions were as follows: (a) What are the repeated stories that form the core narrative of the institution? (b) What occasions for remembering exist to retell these stories? (c) In what ways do

narratives of students attending this charter school reflect those of the larger institutional narrative?

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study was grounded in an understanding of sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978). Sociocultural theory extends beyond the individual as the locus of knowledge; rather “learning and understanding are regarded as inherently social; and cultural activities and tools (ranging from symbol systems to artifacts to language) are regarded as integral to conceptual development” (Palinscar, 1998, p. 348). There is thus an interweaving of social and individual processes coming together in the co-construction of knowledge. A sociocultural approach to learning assumes that action is mediated and that it occurs within a particular cultural, historical, or institutional situatedness (John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996; Wertsch, 1991). In addition, learning is contextual and not universal. Thus, each student’s experience of learning within a particular situatedness will be unique to that individual.

Vygotsky argues that because the historical conditions which determine to a large extent the opportunities for human experience are constantly changing, there can be no universal schema that adequately represents the dynamic relation between internal and external aspects of development. (John-Steiner & Souberman, 1978, p. 125)

Hawaiian culture-based teaching and learning are reflective of this sociocultural perspective. Not only is learning grounded in hands-on, place-based activities, but it is also a collective activity rather than an individual endeavor (Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua, 2013; ho‘omanawanui, 2008; Meyer, 2001).

Education has played a significant role in the transference of social and cultural knowledge, and with it a values system that undergrids ways of knowing and seeing. The history

of education in Hawai'i has shifted over time in various ways from the participatory transference of traditional indigenous practices to the introduction of Western influenced schooling in the English language, and finally to the re-introduction of Hawaiian language and culture into an educational curriculum (Dotts & Sikkema, 1994; Goodyear-Ka'ōpua, 2013). Hawaiian culture-based charter schools have embraced the latter, bringing their history and culture into the present within the school setting. These schools provide a rich contextual environment and through the case study of one such school, I explored how this school used stories of history, genealogy, and place to harness a core narrative identity.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

Understanding the resurgence of Hawaiian-based schooling begins first with understanding the history of education in Hawai‘i and the ways in which Western schooling structures supplanted a Hawaiian system of sharing cultural practices, knowledge and expertise that persisted in Hawai‘i for more than a thousand years (Dotts & Sikkema, 1994). This background informs the importance of the emergence of Hawaiian language- and culture-based schools as a means to revitalize and re-introduce the Hawaiian language, history, and culture into students’ schooling experiences. I will review here literature on the history of Hawaiian education, the effects of Western schooling structures on Hawaiian education, and prominent aspects of Hawaiian-based programs and schools that have been established in the last approximately 30 years. I will also contextualize Hawaiian-based education within contemporary academic discourse and address the value of stories in establishing a culture-based educational framework.

The history of education in Hawai‘i reveals cultural differences in values that often influenced schooling structures and practices. For example, in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Western values influenced schools to focus on American citizenship and academic preparation for college (Dotts & Sikkema, 1994); whereas, more recently in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, we have seen Hawaiian values ground charter schools in learning around place, culture, genealogy, and traditional Hawaiian practices (Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua, 2013). Regardless of the values that influence schooling practices, all public schools receiving federal funding must still abide by nationally governed standards. How then do Hawaiian-based schools maintain their cultural identity while still operating within a nationally governed Western framework? One way organizations have sought to build their collective identity is through the active remembering of

past stories (Linde, 2009). It is this telling and re-telling of past stories that shape and build an organization's unique identity. Thus, I will also explore the value of stories in culture-based education, specifically those of Indigenous cultures, as well as review literature on how organizations use the remembering of past events or stories to help build an identity unique to their organization. Lastly, I will describe the founding history of the charter school I have chosen as my case study.

### **Pre-Contact Education in Hawai'i**

According to Meyer (1998), Hawaiian education prior to colonization could be described as (a) social-related, such that instructions were passed down from parents to children or grandparents to grandchildren; (b) gender-related, such that education prepared men and women for different economic activities within their community; (c) class-related, such that chiefs received education as administrators and warriors and other classes were prepared for different skills; and (d) vocation-related, such that skilled artisans passed down their knowledge of specialized trades to younger pupils. Thus, while there may not have existed schools as in the Western sense of the word, there nevertheless existed a highly structured system for knowledge processing integrated into the very seams of society. Learning was a cultural practice, an ongoing process in everything said or done.

*Maka'ala* (to be ready) was the learning process used in everything we (Hawaiians) did.

We had to "*nānā ka maka*" (watch with the eyes) and repeat exactly what our elders did.

There was no talking. By watching something, it becomes a part of your life. (Ulu

Kanaka'ole Garmon, HLC, as cited in Meyer, 1998)

This Hawaiian way of learning was also grounded in the natural environment and in one's ancestral lineage (Meyer, 2001). According to Dotts and Sikkema (1994),



The Hawaiians had a rich and extensive system of both formal and informal education in both the sciences and the arts. They regarded education, in general, as a natural process. They had an intimate, discriminating knowledge of nature, including names, characteristics, and habits of plants. They had developed an art of healing with vegetables and herbs. They had a rudimentary knowledge of geology (rocks and their formation and origin). They understood the ocean—its movements and how to use it for practical purposes, including fishing and voyaging. They knew the birds—mountain, sea, land, and migratory. They built round thatched houses. They had developed a working knowledge of astronomy—planets, constellations, how to determine latitude for purposes of navigation. They had preserved a large body of oral literature—legends, creation myths, heroic deeds of their ancestors, religion, and chants (some of which are now published); and they had an extensive unwritten language. Courses of formal instruction had been developed in which young people spent fifteen to twenty years in training under an expert to become canoe builders, *kahunas*, (priests), or dancers of the hula. A value system dominated the *kapu* system, inculcated in the young through participation in the life activities of the family and community, guided their behavior. (p. 14)

Much of knowledge was passed down through observing and doing, but knowledge was also passed down through oral chants and stories, through dance and names of places and family genealogies (Dotts & Sikkema, 1994). Learning in ancient Hawaiian education was not a separate component of Hawaiian society; it was embedded within all cultural and community practices.

## Effects of Western Colonialism on Hawaiian Education

The formal structure and system of Western schooling was introduced and established in Hawai‘i in the 1820s with the arrival of American missionaries to the islands. Upon their arrival, the missionaries sought first to create a written language for the Hawaiian oral language, which they presumed would more quickly mediate the teaching and learning of Christian doctrine (Benham & Heck, 1998). The first convert to Christianity was Ka‘ahumanu, the wife of King Kamehameha I (Kamakau, 1992). Ka‘ahumanu was appointed regent by Kamehameha I before his death, and after the passing of Kamehameha II, she held much political influence over the islands, particularly as the next King, Kamehameha III (Kauikeaouli), was only 11 years old (Benham & Heck, 1998). Ka‘ahumanu’s new faith influenced Kauikeaouli as shown in excerpts from the following speech by the young ruler:

Chiefs and people, give ear to my remarks. My kingdom shall be a kingdom of learning. . . It is a right that we strive hard to learn letters and to understand His words, that we may know the nature of His message. Let us be diligent, men, children, women; let us be strong. Those of you who are teachers, be faithful in teaching your pupils. It is my great desire that the poor, the rich, the chiefs, the men, the commoners, and all the children of our nation acquire knowledge and know how to read the Word of God. . . . (Kamakau, 1992, p. 319, reprinted from *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa*, Oct. 3, 1868)

As a result of this desire to see all people learn the Hawaiian written language, schools were established on a large scale to educate Hawaiian students (Wist, 1940). At the time, students were primarily adults. By 1832, nearly all Hawaiian adults attended one of 900 schools, and by 1853, nearly three fourths of Native Hawaiian adults over the age of 16 could read the Hawaiian language (Benham & Heck, 1998). During this time, demand for printed material exploded and

printed Hawaiian material amounted to over 3 million pages (Wist, 1940). In particular, newspapers written by Native Hawaiians multiplied. These newspapers communicated the voices of the Hawaiian people, sharing concerns regarding increasing foreign influence and addressing controversial topics (Benham & Heck, 1998).

While early schooling in Hawai‘i was established by missionaries with the intent of teaching Christian doctrine, the control of schools eventually shifted and became centralized under a Western-influenced government through the first school laws of 1840. These laws made school compulsory for all children between the ages of 4 and 14. They also disregarded Hawaiian cultural values and practices and enforced behaviors and attitudes that aligned with Western values (Benham & Heck, 1998). This instituted schooling as a means of acculturating Hawaiian children into a dominant U.S culture. The success of the colonization of education extended even to the young children of Hawaii’s ali‘i or royal chiefs. These young heirs to the throne were placed in a residential missionary school that ultimately “stripped the ali‘i children of their cultural identities and traditions” (Kaomea, 2014, p. 129). Continued political control of the educational system along with the overthrow of the monarchy in 1893 led to the passing of Act 57 in 1896, which “legitimized centralized control of all educational activity, prevented culturally sensitive activities, restricted involvement of the public in the schools, and drove the curriculum toward teaching students how to think and behave in appropriate, Western ways” (Benham & Heck, 1998, p. 111). In addition, the English language became the only recognized medium and basis for school instruction (Benham & Heck, 1998).

The goal of schooling was the assimilation of the Hawaiian people into a highly stratified society where English replaced Hawaiian as the language of business and government, disempowering the Hawaiian people (Benham & Heck, 1998; Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua et al., 2008).

By 1900, Western domination, not only in education but also in political, economic, and social spheres, was evident. Western-introduced diseases ravaged the Hawaiian people, reducing the population from 300,000 in 1778, the year Captain Cook first arrived to the islands to 57,985 in 1878 (Schmitt, 1968). With the arrival of large numbers of plantation laborers from Asia, the Hawaiian people went from comprising 81.9% of the total population in 1878 to only 24.4% in 1900 (Schmitt, 1968). Private property ownership, a concept foreign to the Hawaiian people, replaced the communal land tenure system and effectively transferred land ownership to Western hands (Benham & Heck, 1998; Dotts & Sikkema, 1994; Kame‘eleihiwa, 1992b). An oligarchy of five heavily interlocked agricultural conglomerates controlled the economy and government and had considerable influence in the education sector as well; and finally, Western domination culminated with the overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom in 1893 (Benham & Heck, 1998; Dotts & Sikkema, 1994).

The extent of Western influence on schooling practices can be seen upon close examination of the first school built specifically for children of Hawaiian ancestry. In 1887, Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop established Kamehameha Secondary and Elementary Schools in Honolulu. The establishment of Kamehameha Schools was important in educating Hawaiian children in a society where schools served the advancement of Western ideology while diminishing the power of Hawaiian culture, political influence and land tenure (Benham & Heck, 1998). Unfortunately, while Kamehameha Schools existed specifically for the advancement of Hawaiian students, the structure within which the school operated continued to promote Western values and definitions of success (Eyre, 2004). This new school encouraged the disciplining of students in preparation for future careers and advancement within an Americanized society (Kent, 1976). In effect, schooling continued to exist as a means to assimilate Hawaiian students

to American character and ideals. This further accentuated the devaluation of Hawaiian language and culture. In fact, William Oleson, the first president at Kamehameha Schools banned the Hawaiian language both in and outside the classroom and championed the use of English by offering countless incentives (Eyre, 2004). According to Eyre (2004),

every incentive was offered. . . slogans, ‘Better English Weeks,’ encouragement to sit in the library and read books, praise and prizes for pronunciation, speech contests, oratory at assemblies, discussion groups, debating societies, drama clubs, off-campus passes, free periods, an ‘English holiday’ for anyone not caught talking ‘native’ for a month. (p. 2)

The suppression of Hawaiian was so complete that students could sing Hawaiian songs beautifully but have little or no understanding of their meaning (Eyre, 2004). During 1924-1925, the Hawaiian language was reintroduced to the school; however, by this time, Hawaiian was relegated to a language of study. Unfortunately, it was the parents themselves who protested the teaching of Hawaiian, believing that it was only English that would serve their children well. Years later in 1961, then president Harold Kent described Kamehameha School’s educational philosophy as follows: “Training in personal and citizenship attitudes develops the student as a strong individual. . . it supports the important elements that make up the American character and way of life, and achieves this with intelligence and understanding” (Kent, 1976, p. 16). This school for Hawaiians was purposed for and structured within a Western framework. Throughout the first century of Kamehameha Schools, this would be evident in that there was constant conflict between Hawaiian culture and school curriculum (Eyre, 2004). Hawaiian culture was considered in many ways extraneous to learning and existed in clubs outside the classroom. It was English and Western values and ideology that formed the foundation of the school curriculum and goals.

This example of Hawaiian schooling existing as education for Hawaiians in a Western framework is important to begin with because it presents the landscape upon which Hawaiian language- and culture-based education was eventually introduced. The root of Hawaiian-based programs and schools can be traced back to an attempt to reverse the detrimental effects Western and English-only schooling has had on Hawaiian students (Goodyear-Ka'ōpua et al., 2008; Kana'iaupuni, 2005).

### **The Introduction of Hawaiian Language- and Culture-Based Schools**

Not only was the Hawaiian language banned at Kamehameha Schools, it was also banned in all public schools from 1896 until 1978, when it was reinstated as an official language alongside English (Benham & Heck, 1998). The domination of English in education effectively decreased the number of Native speakers, and the status and power once associated with Hawaiian was lost and replaced with a sense of shame (Yamauchi & Wilhelm, 2001). By the time of the Hawaiian renaissance in the 1970s, which marked a period of renewed pride in Hawaiian language and culture, an entire generation of people had grown up with significantly limited exposure to the language. It was estimated that in the early 1980s, there were only about 1,500 Native speakers and among them, only 30 children under the age of 18 could speak Hawaiian (Dunford, 1991; Kame'eleihiwa, 1992a). This was alarming to the survival of the language as the health of a language is often gauged by the number of its young speakers (Wilson & Kamanā, 2009). As a result, there was a push to establish Pūnana Leo Preschools which were Hawaiian immersion preschools, followed by the Ka Papahana Kaiapuni K-12 Hawaiian immersion program; both have been referred to as “language survival” programs (Hinton, 2011).

In 1984, as a result of concerted efforts by University of Hawai‘i educators and students, Pūnana Leo Preschools opened. These preschools provided children with an immersive Hawaiian experience while also requiring considerable participation from parents, including having parents also study the Hawaiian language, which was meant to encourage the speaking of Hawaiian outside of school (Yamauchi & Ceppi, 1998). As the first group of Pūnana Leo children neared graduation, their parents began lobbying the Hawai‘i State Board of Education to provide Hawaiian immersion classes in public elementary schools so their children could continue their total immersion education (Kame‘eleihiwa, 1992a; Yamauchi, Ceppi, & Lau-Smith, 1999). As a result, Ka Papahana Kaiapuni was established in 1987, eventually serving not just elementary school students, but becoming a Hawaiian language immersion program for students kindergarten through Grade 12 within the State of Hawai‘i Department of Education. In this program, Hawaiian is the language of instruction from Grades K-4, with one hour of English instruction each day in Grades 5-12 (Yamauchi et al., 1999). By 1996, the program grew to 13 sites, serving approximately 1200 students (Slaughter, 1997a). In 2016, there were 21 sites, instructing 2,600 students. (Hawai‘i State Department of Education, 2016).

The importance of preserving and revitalizing the Hawaiian language is captured by Kealohamakua Wengler, whose four children attended a Hawaiian immersion school. She asserted that, “the life of the people is within the language. When the language dies, so do the people, because along with it go all our stories and history” (Eichstaedt, 2006, p. 31). This idea that a Hawaiian immersion program was the necessary avenue to revitalize and preserve the Hawaiian language was significantly different from earlier perspectives of schooling. No longer was English championed as the language of schools and knowledge and advancement. Hawaiian language was emerging as a source of pride once again, and students, families, and communities

began to reconnect with their language, strengthening this movement toward language immersion schools.

In 1999, the Hawai‘i State Legislature passed a bill that allowed for the creation of community-controlled New Century Schools, expanding the scope of charter schools which, until then, had been limited to existing schools or “conversion schools” (Fukumoto, 2002). Prior to the passing of this bill, educators administered many of the Hawaiian immersion programs as a school-within-a-school, meaning Hawaiian immersion programs operated within existing public schools. The New Century Public Charter School bill opened the way for immersion charter schools to be opened as their own entity (Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua, 2013). A few Hawaiian immersion programs successfully applied for charters and opened schools on their own campuses. The bill also opened the way for an influx of Hawaiian culture-based charter schools, schools that were grounded in Hawaiian culture and history and values but that were not taught exclusively in Hawaiian as they were in immersion programs. For purposes of this paper, I will use the term Hawaiian-based schools when I am referring to both Hawaiian immersion and Hawaiian culture-based schools.

### **Hawaiian-Based Schools**

Since the first Hawaiian immersion preschools were established in 1984, the number of Hawaiian language immersion programs and Hawaiian culture-based schools has steadily increased. In order to better understand this Hawaiian approach to teaching and learning, I will cover five prominent points of Hawaiian-based schools. These five points include the following: (a) Hawaiian-based schools strengthen cultural knowledge and subsequently develop and strengthen students’ and their families’ cultural identities; (b) Hawaiian-based schools take a strengths-based perspective, engaging students in Hawaiian cultural practices and values, and



this approach increases student achievement; (c) Hawaiian-based schools are grounded in an Hawaiian epistemology that is unique to the Hawaiian people and distinct from a Western educational mindset; (d) Hawaiian-based schools reclaim education as an act of self-determination; and (e) Hawaiian-based schools continue to face political struggles.

**The strengthening of cultural knowledge and cultural identity.** One important aspect of Hawaiian-based education stems from the idea that learning is grounded in place, and culture is the cornerstone of schooling and of students' identity development as Hawaiians (Tibbetts, Faircloth, & Ah Nee-Benham, 2008). This is an important aspect of Hawaiian schooling as it directly counters the effects of the colonization of education in Hawai'i. According to Cummins (2000), personal and cultural identities are socially constructed by students in accordance to power dynamics evident in their environment. Thus, when the native language of students was banned and their culture and practices devalued, Hawaiian students over time re-negotiated their identities based upon the values and assimilationist ideologies of the dominant culture (Snyder-Frey, 2013; Davis, 1999). Luning (2007) stated,

Students in colonized societies commonly exhibit a pattern of insecurity and ambivalence about their cultural identity as a result of their interactions with the dominant group. Over time, these students tend to devalue their cultural heritage and accept the dominant culture as superior. (p. 4)

By grounding school curricula in students' cultural history and heritage, students can reclaim and reconstruct their Hawaiian cultural identity. Thus, the introduction of Hawaiian immersion schools, not only re-connected students to their language, but also may have strengthened their cultural identity. Founding educators articulated the goal of Hawaiian immersion schools to be language revitalization and preservation; however, the language was often taught by elders who

instructed through cultural place and practices, and oral chants and dances. As a result, students and parents found that through language learning, students' cultural knowledge grew, and with it, their cultural identity (Wilson & Kamanā, 2011).

In a review of indigenous language immersion programs, Yamauchi and Ceppi (1998) stated:

One Hawaiian language educator and activist mentioned that when he was first involved in the movement to establish Hawaiian medium schools, he was focused on saving the Hawaiian language. Ten years later, however, he realizes that it is the Hawaiian people—who they are and what they believe in—that is most important. The language is a marker of these things. (p. 17)

This aspect of Hawaiian-based schooling then is not separate from that of language revitalization but can be seen as its complement. Hawaiian-based schools became a place not only to preserve the Hawaiian language but to strengthen cultural identity by also preserving cultural practices and knowledge. Luning (2010) who studied the perspectives of students and families involved in a Hawaiian immersion program found that families “felt that the program created positive images of being Hawaiian and could affect the community in positive ways” (p. 53). One parent interviewed by Luning expressed a strong connection between language and identity:

I truly believe it's a lost identity that we've been able to re-grasp and make a part of our family life . . . I've not had the privilege of learning [the Hawaiian language] through my parents, so I want to give my children that . . . opportunity, so they can identify [with] who they are, where they come from, their cultural values” (Luning, 2010, p. 55).

According to Oliveira (2014), “the identities of Indigenous peoples are inextricably linked to our languages. Embedded in our native languages are our worldviews and cultures” (p. 78). Thus,

through language revitalization came cultural revitalization and a strengthening of cultural identity.

Other evidence for the influence of Hawaiian-based schools on student cultural knowledge and identity came from a 1999 study that compared students of Native Hawaiian ancestry who attended Hilo High School and those who enrolled in Ke Kula ‘O Nāwahīokalani‘ōpu‘u (Nāwahī), a Hawaiian immersion school in Hilo (Wilson and Kamanā, 2011). Wilson and Kamanā (2011) found that only about half of the Native Hawaiian students at Hilo High School chose Native Hawaiian as their ancestry or primary ethnic identity while students at Nāwahī overwhelmingly chose Native Hawaiian as their ethnicity. According to Snyder-Frey (2013), “learning Hawaiian is understood and valued by students as a means to reaffirm their identity and reconnect to the past, to their families, ancestors, and culture, and maintain a sense of continuity” (p. 238).

**A strengths-based approach to education.** A second aspect of Hawaiian-based schooling is that Hawaiian-based schools use a strengths-based approach to teaching and learning that in turn increases academic achievement amongst Hawaiian students. Similar to the position that Hawaiian-based schooling is a means of preserving and restoring language, cultural knowledge, and cultural identity, this aspect of Hawaiian-based schooling also accentuates the empowering of Hawaiian students, contrary to English-medium schooling which in many ways disenfranchised them.

In the year prior to the introduction of Pūnana Leo Preschools, the Native Hawaiian Educational Assessment Project determined that Hawaiian students had clearly identifiable educational needs as compared to non-Hawaiian students (Office of Education & The Kamehameha Schools/Bernice Pauahi Bishop Estate, 1983). The assessment indicated that

Hawaiian students scored below the national average of standardized achievement tests. Hawaiian students, in fact, scored the lowest of the four major ethnic groups represented in Hawai'i's schools. In addition, Hawaiian students were found to be disproportionately represented in special education and disproportionately absent from school. The report also noted that many of these concerns were rooted in historical events and that these "events which led inexorably toward the suppression of Hawaiian values, lifestyles, language, and beliefs have left as their legacy a variety of stresses on the present population" (Office of Education & The Kamehameha Schools/Bernice Pauahi Bishop Estate, 1983, p. viii). There are many studies which have documented the disparities in achievement between indigenous students and non-indigenous students, as well as their correlating low socio-economic status and underrepresentation in higher education (Yamauchi et al., 1999; Kana'iaupuni, 2008). Yet, it is not that Hawaiian students are unable to achieve. In 1896, the year that Hawaiian was banned, over 90% of Hawaiians older than age five were literate in Hawaiian and over 70% were also literate in English. (Wilson & Kamanā, 2006). These numbers point to the misalignment of teaching Native peoples through a non-Native language in a system that is disconnected with Native cultural knowledge and values.

The strengths-based approach to Hawaiian education suggests that teaching to the strengths of Hawaiian values and culture, including their language, increases student engagement and academic achievement. For example, Kana'iaupuni (2005) emphasized the importance of family and community relationships as sources of resilience, strength, and compassion for Hawaiian people. These values run counter to Western values of individual achievement and advancement, which are often the basis upon which students in non-indigenous schools are judged. By taking the strengths of the Hawaiian people and using these as cornerstones within

educational programs, students learn according to their natural cultural strengths. Another example is the use of place-based, cultural-based teaching and learning. By using cultural forms of learning such as wetland agricultural methods or knowledge of celestial navigation, Hawaiian-based schooling places Hawaiian students in a strengths-based position, at the center of their own educations, recognizing and celebrating the rich and abundant learning opportunities found in place, culture, history, and language of the Hawaiian people (Kawai‘ae‘a, 2008; Kana‘iaupuni, 2005).

An evaluation of the ninth year of the Hawaiian language immersion program found that students held positive attitudes toward literacy in both Hawaiian and English, and that achievement scores of students in these programs were comparable to that of mainstream students (Slaughter, 1997a). About a decade later, Kana‘iaupuni (2008) found that students in the immersion programs actually outperformed mainstream students in both reading and mathematics based on results from the Hawai‘i State Assessment and the SAT tests completed in 2004. Other studies of individual immersion schools also point to increased academic engagement and achievement among students attending Hawaiian-based schools. Results at Ke Kula Kaiapuni ‘O Ānuenuē, a Hawaiian immersion school in Honolulu, found that students not only maintained fluency in both English and Hawaiian, but that they also exceeded both state and national academic standards (Eichstaedt, 2006). Nāwahī has also been the test site for a state Hawaiian language college (Wilson & Kamanā, 2011). While Nāwahī immerses students in Hawaiian language and culture, it also requires all students to adhere to a college preparatory curriculum, and results have shown that student test scores at Nāwahī were comparable with those of their mainstream peers in public schools. In addition, amongst its first ten graduating

classes, Nāwahī has had a 100% high-school graduation rate and an 80% college attendance rate (Wilson & Kamanā, 2006; Wilson & Kamanā, 2011).

**The centrality of Hawaiian epistemology.** The next two aspects of Hawaiian-based schooling position Hawaiian education as its own entity, built upon its own epistemology, and therefore, separate from the dominant Western framework. The first of these aspects views Hawaiian education as grounded upon an epistemology specific to the Hawaiian culture and thereby distinct from any Western ideology. Hawaiian-based schools no longer operate within a Western mindset but must be wholly separate. According to Meyer (2001),

If we wish to understand what is unique and special about who we are as cultural people, we will see that our building blocks of understanding, our epistemology, and thus our empirical relationship to experience is fundamentally different. We simply see, hear, feel, taste, and smell the world differently. (p. 125)

Thus, the way to share cultural knowledge, understand cultural identity, and approach Hawaiian-based schooling, is through the lens, experience, and breath of Hawaiian epistemology.

According to Meyer (2001), this epistemology includes the following:

- Spirituality and Knowing—the cultural contexts of knowledge
- That Which Feeds—physical place and knowing
- The Cultural Nature of the Senses—expanding the idea of empiricism
- Relationship and Knowledge—self through other
- Utility and Knowledge—ideas of wealth and usefulness
- Words and Knowledge—causality in language and thought
- The Body-Mind Question—illusions of separation (p. 126)

These seven ways of knowing stem from epistemological themes that Meyer identified from conversations with 20 Hawaiian educational leaders. These leaders spoke of the spiritual forces embedded in the forming and shaping of knowledge; they spoke of their place of birth as the foundation of their worldview; and they spoke of the heart and spirit of the Hawaiian found in practicing, experiencing, and living the culture. They shared how the world is experienced through our senses and how Hawaiians had an awareness of their senses that was deeply formed from their language, history and culture; they shared how education was interwoven in relationships, reciprocity, and caring for the land and each other and the importance of tying function to knowledge gained. They also emphasized the importance of words and the weight of knowledge behind those words, knowing when to share knowledge and knowing who to share that knowledge with, and lastly, they shared how the mind and the body could not be separated from each other, how intelligence itself was found in the core of one's physical being (Meyer, 2001). The very foundation of what schooling is, how it's conducted, and why it exists is grounded in Hawaiian ways of knowing, separate and distinct from a Western understanding of school structure and systems. Smith (2005) contended that "indigenous frameworks for thinking about schooling present new and different ways to think through the purpose, practices, and outcomes of schooling systems" (p. 94). Hawaiian-based schooling then is not just an alternative method of education within a larger educational system; but rather, it is its own entity, its own system, based upon a full and rich epistemology rooted in generations of cultural practice and knowledge transmission.

**A means toward sovereignty and self-determination.** This aspect of Hawaiian-based schooling presents the establishment of Hawaiian language- and culture-based schools as an act of Hawaiian self-determination, meaning that the Hawaiian people through these schools have

the authority to determine what knowledge is of importance and what knowledge is to be shared and learned. According to Goodyear-Ka'ōpua (2013), this decision-making authority in the realm of school governance is “a fundamental aspect of peoplehood, freedom, collective well-being, and autonomy” (p. 6). Thus, Hawaiian-based schooling is not about providing an alternative education nor is it about reforming education, here Hawaiian-based schooling is about restoring “the holistic health of Hawaiian communities and nationhood” (Goodyear-Ka'ōpua, 2013, p. 5). It is an active political resistance to end colonial control of power and knowledge, beginning with, but not limited to the educational realm.

According to Goodyear-Ka'ōpua (2013), the Hawai'i public education system is a settler-colonial structure. As such, public education exists to replace Native peoples and land with a permanent settler society by “reproducing the settler society and its political economic order” and “by suppressing Native histories and contemporary realities, by discounting Indigenous epistemologies and knowledge bases, and by individualizing and disciplining Native bodies” (p. 25). The public school system is thus tied to maintaining a political and economic order that gives control of land and resources to colonial powers, undermining and suppressing Native knowledge and practices. Ultimately, what this maintains is that public education in Hawai'i has sought to control and denigrate the cognitive and social-emotional health of Hawaiians, and that Hawaiian-based schools thus seek to establish an educational structure based on Hawaiian epistemology with the intent of forming sustainable self-determining practices and whole communities, separate and apart from Western capitalism and governance (Goodyear-Ka'ōpua et al., 2008).

This emphasis of sustainable self-determination suggests that schooling alone does not address the continual onslaught of colonial oppression upon the Hawaiian people. While



Hawaiian language immersion programs have been critical in preserving and revitalizing the Hawaiian language as well as Hawaiian culture and cultural identity, the expanse of colonial influence infiltrates the state's political and economic systems and structures in ways that run counter to values of Hawaiian epistemology. For example, in Western society, the use of land and natural resources is often dictated by political power according to its monetary value. This contradicts Hawaiian epistemology where land is seen as a source of sustenance and cultural knowledge, and where land is central to one's identity and spiritual worldview (Kana'iaupuni & Malone, 2006; Meyer, 2001; Trinidad 2014). Land is meant to be cared for and not bought and sold for monetary gain or political power. Thus, "in order for indigenous self-determination to be meaningful, it should be economically, environmentally, and culturally viable and inextricably linked to indigenous relationships to the natural world" (Corntassel, 2008, p. 108). Coulthard (2014) asserted that "without such a massive transformation in the political economy of contemporary settler-colonialism, any efforts to rebuild our nations will remain parasitic on capitalism, and thus on the perpetual exploitation of our lands and labor" (p. 171).

**A continuous political struggle.** The final aspect of Hawaiian-based schooling addresses the power education, and in particular, language continues to have as a political entity. Just as the elevation of the English language in the 1800s was a means for one group of people to dominate and disempower another group, the Hawaiian language itself is becoming the grounds upon which marginalization of the Hawaiian people continues to occur by dominant groups.

According to Warner (1999),

some non-Hawaiian language educators and academics in the revitalization movement have and are actively engaged in promoting ideologies through political rhetoric and

discourse that serve to legitimize, justify, and empower their own voices not only to speak and decide for Hawaiians but also to silence those less empowered voices. (p. 68).

Warner argued that the revitalization of the Hawaiian language and culture through schools, the very means of ending the struggle of colonization, has in itself become another source of colonization as

some non-Hawaiians have used the criterion of language (i.e., the ability to speak Hawaiian) as the primary means not only for their inclusion in the Hawaiian group but also to exclude native Hawaiians and to deny them the authority to make decisions for themselves on native issues such as language and education. (Warner, 1999, p. 83)

One challenge of preserving the Hawaiian language has been in the struggle of determining what is authentic Hawaiian and what is not. For example, with dwindling numbers of native speakers, second-language speakers whose worldview persists through an English-language lens conduct much of the language teaching at the university level and this perspective affects their own analyses of the language (Wong, 1999). As a result, Hawaiian speakers differentiate between what has been termed “University Hawaiian” versus the language of the kūpuna (elders) or “real” Hawaiian. There is the additional challenge of determining who has the authority to introduce new words in Hawaiian to represent English words that currently do not have a Hawaiian counterpart. Warner (1999) and Goodyear- Ka‘ōpua (2013) argued that the kuleana (rights, responsibility, and authority) to make decisions regarding the Hawaiian language belongs to the Hawaiian people themselves and that appropriating this kuleana to any non-Hawaiian person or group is an act of colonization, repeating again the struggle Hawaiians have endured over the colonization of their land and sovereignty. Warner (1999) contended,

the Hawaiian language and culture are part and parcel of the Hawaiian people. . . the Hawaiian people should be made whole again, [and] be empowered to be themselves Hawaiian, to know themselves as Hawaiian through the knowledge and practice of their language, their culture, and their history, and to feel pride in themselves, their kūpuna (“ancestors and elders”), and their children and grandchildren in their own cultural context, their own land. Thus, it is imperative for Hawaiians as a native people forcibly separated from their language to learn their language, culture, history, and all the ways of their people. Further, it is critical to understand that in a context of colonization, native peoples who have been forcibly separated from their language should have the kuleana to determine their own language policy as well as to make other decisions that affect the members of the group. Nonindigenous people, whether they have learned to speak the language or not, should not assume decision-making roles in these contexts. (p. 88)

### **Contextualizing Hawaiian-based education within the contemporary academic discourse**

The dominant contemporary educational discourse is based on policy that embraces monolingual and monocultural values and norms, as seen in federally mandated, standardized tests such as those introduced by No Child Left Behind legislation. These have perpetuated educational content, contexts, and assessments that disregard Hawaiian and other Indigenous worldviews on the purpose, value, and structure of education (May & Aikman, 2003; McCarty & Lee, 2014). When Hawaiian-based schools became community-based charter schools, the schools gained more flexibility in their management and operations, including their choice and implementation of curricular instruction (Finn, Manno, & Vanourek, 2000). Not only could these schools engage students through Hawaiian language and culture, but they could also determine their own educational goals, distinct from established norms dictated from a Western academic

mindset, a mindset that disregarded Native cultural values of community, particularly, the place and people of that community from generations past into the present (Hanohano, 1999).

Hawaiian and other Indigenous epistemologies differ significantly from Western worldviews.

Wilkinson (1980) described one such difference in worldviews from a Native Indian perspective:

The goal of Indian people is perhaps somewhat different from the goals of a lot of other people. Their goals are not simply to survive, but to survive as a community; not just to survive as an individual, but to survive as a group. Similarly, the notion of progress in the Indian community is also different. The concept of progress is really not that appealing to Indian people because the purpose of the Indian community is not to progress. The purpose of the Indian community is simply to be, and the people find that being, along with those relationships between people and clans and certain ceremonial kinds of things, is a very satisfying existence. This may be difficult to understand for outsiders (p. 453-454).

Through the establishment of Hawaiian-based charter schools, educators challenge the historically dominant and powerful contemporary discourse that there is only one way to educate students. They are attempting to “situate Western academic discourse, and its conventions, as only one of a number of epistemological traditions” (May & Aikman, 2003, p. 139). According to May and Aikman (2003),

Indigenous language education proponents argue that the long historical dominance of European norms and values in schooling has nothing to do with their greater intrinsic value or use, but rather with the exercise and legitimation of unequal power relations which privilege such languages and cultural practices over all others, indigenous ones in particular. (p. 142)

By providing an education that champions Hawaiian language, culture, and values as cornerstones of learning and identity, Hawaiian educators are challenging contemporary educational discourse and reclaiming schooling based on an epistemology of what it means to be Hawaiian (Kahakalau, 2003; Meyers, 2001).

### **The value of stories in establishing a culture-based educational framework**

A significant way cultural values and ways of knowing become cornerstones in Hawaiian and other Indigenous-based education is through the continued remembering of past stories of cultural significance. According to Linde (2009), individuals and groups within institutions, choose to tell and retell particular stories of the past in order to construct a narrative identity in the present. These stories, then have specific purposes; they can be used

to establish legitimacy of authority, to claim ownership, to claim political or intellectual priority, to establish stability, to indicate the working out of divine purpose in history, to compare the past with the present to show that things are getting either better or worse.

(Linde, 2009, p. 3)

Indeed, culture-based schools, particularly those of indigenous cultures, place significant value in stories that are passed down from generation to generation (Hanohano, 1999). According to McKeough et al. (2008),

Historically and today, First Nations people share important knowledge, culture and traditional lessons through the telling of stories. It is through the telling of stories and legends that First Nations people preserve what is most important to them— language, traditions, culture, and identity. Stories are used to provide a sociocultural and historical account of the community knowledge from elders to youth, ensuring its survival with new generations” (p. 150).

McCarty and Lee (2014) explored what culturally revitalizing pedagogies looked like in the context of Native American schooling. They described culture being integrated in students' experiences through "external wall murals [depicting] the Navajo girls' puberty ceremony (*Kinaaldá*) and the red-rock canyon lands of *Diné Bikeyah* (Navajo Country)" (p. 114). They also described songs that were integrated in social studies and language arts lessons. For example, the song, *Shi Naashá*, was "a constant reminder and a commemoration of the Navajo people's survival and return to Diné Bikeyah from a federal concentration camp where thousands were incarcerated and perished between 1863 and 1868" (McCarty & Lee, 2014, p. 114-115). The wall murals and songs were reminders of important stories in the Navajo culture.

From a Hawaiian perspective, Ho'omanawanui (2004) shared that, "before Western contact in 1778, our mo'olelo (succession of talk or written literature) were passed down orally from *ha'i mo'olelo* (storyteller) to *ha'i mo'olelo*, from *kumu hula* (dance master) to *kumu hula*, from *kanaka* (person) to *kanaka*" (p. 87-88). Hula was one form of storytelling that connected Hawaiian people to their ancestors and traditions.

Together with the chanting of *oli* (chant) and the singing of *mele* (songs), the practice of hula is empowering for many Kanaka Maoli today in a myriad of ways—first and foremost because it continues to link us to our ancestors, particularly through the use of *'ōlelo Hawai'i* (Hawaiian language) texts both old and new. By practicing our *'ōlelo makuahine* (our Indigenous language base), we continue to value the *mana'o* (thoughts, expressions) of our ancestors through our common language, allowing us a glimpse of their worldview, which often contradicts or refutes the colonial perspectives taught in schools that ignores,

demeans, and/or suppresses our *pilina* (connections) and *kuleana* (responsibilities) to the *‘āina* (land) and each other (Ho‘omanawanui, 2004, p. 88).

Embracing the telling of stories orally or through dance or song were a way for Indigenous cultural values and traditions to thrive within an educational setting.

### **Organizational Remembering Model**

This next section describes the model by which I explored how institutions use past stories to construct their presentation of who they are in purposeful ways. According to Albert and Whetten (1985), “organizational identity is a concept that organizations use to characterize aspects of themselves” (p. 264). It addresses identity questions, such as “Who are we as an organization?” “Who do we want to be?” However, as an organizational entity, who answers these questions? How is ownership of this organizational identity expressed by individual members of that organization? In this study, I focused on organizational identity as expressed through active, collective remembering by group members, in particular, how stories of the past were used as a foundation of an organization’s identity in the present. According to Zundel, Holt, and Popp (2016) “history is used to create inward commitment, providing inspiration to employees about what the organization can be” (p. 212) and in doing so, history then affects individual action, further solidifying the collective identity of the organization (Feldman & Feldman, 2006; Linde, 2009; Zundel et al., 2016). In studying collective identity resurrection, Howard-Grenville, Metzger, and Meyer (2013) concluded the following:

Our analysis suggests that although identity certainly is claimed and understood, it is also lived and felt. Experience and emotional involvement bring a past identity into the present by activating narratives or symbols, infusing them with meaning for newly

recruited members. Experiences and emotions “reload” the symbolic memory bank by adding fresh accounts and new memories that become future identity referents (p. 114).

Linde (2009) explored the ways institutions use narratives to bring the past into the present, and in so doing, construct a representation of themselves that persists through time. Feldman and Feldman (2006) described such narratives as organizational remembering, “remembering” that constitutes a practice of action rather than a static memory that can be known but never evoked. Institutional remembering is thus both historical and social. It is historical in that each present act of remembering is connected to past acts of remembering. It is also social, a “collective, historically and culturally situated practice, enacted by socially constituted persons in order to establish meaning” (Feldman & Feldman, 2006, p. 880). The institutional narrative is not a static story but involves an active remembering that allows for re-experiencing; thus, merging individual and collective memory. It is a re-experiencing that Wertsch (2002) defines as a practice in which “the individual or group merges with, or is a part of the past event” (p. 46). This practice of organizational remembering of particular narratives informs an institutional collective identity, a socially constructed reality of the organization (Humphreys & Brown, 2002; Brown, 2006). The collective identity is a “discursive construct and ‘resides’ in the collective identity stories that, for example, people tell to each other in their conversations, write into corporate histories, and encode on websites” (Brown, 2006, p. 734).

Linde (2009) outlined three aspects of institutional narratives, which she considered important: (a) how every institution has a story stock that forms core institutional narratives; (b) how occasions for institutional remembering gives life to narratives within institutions; and (c) how members of an institution share narratives of themselves within the institution that



reveals the ways in which they have taken on the stories and values of the institution as their own.

**Core stock of stories.** According to Linde (2009), the core stock of stories are those stories that are told and retold over a long period of time. These stories “form an important part of the way that institutions remember their past and use that remembering to create current identities for both the institution and its members” (p. 73). There are certain stories that form core stories of many institutions, such as the founding narrative or narratives about turning points, including past disasters and triumphs. These stories can be in the first-person such that the speaker shares events that have been learned through the narration of others; they can be in the second-person such that the protagonist is “you,” the addressee; or they can be in the third-person such that the story being told is about another person or persons. The abundant retelling of these stories by various members of an organization signifies the appropriation of the story; the story is alive, carrying with it, the identity of the organization.

**Occasions for remembering.** Linde (2009) saw occasions for remembering as particularly important as they provide opportunities to bring representations of the past into the present, allowing for the “telling and retelling of the stock of stories which have a life within the institution and which constitute its acts of remembering. That is, when are these stories told, and why” (p. 44). It is the telling and retelling of core stories that gives an organization and its members a particular identity. Thus, if there is no event or place or practice that allows for the telling of a story, that story has little chance of becoming a core story that is known and shared by members of the institution. In essence, the occasion for remembering allows the story to take root and live amongst the members of an organization.

**Member narratives.** The stories which Linde (2009) identified as the most influential in the construction of an institution's narrative identity were those which have an extended life. Not only were these stories retold by single speakers over a long period of time, they were also retold by others who were not participants or witnesses of the original events, but who heard the stories from someone else and became tellers of those same stories. According to Linde, when the latter occurred and stories had moved to a new teller or new generation of tellers, the stories had been appropriated. Appropriation continued the life of the stories into the future, sustaining the same presentation of an institution's identity. It was particularly poignant when the narrator of the story dropped "the markers of nonparticipation, telling the story with no marking of how he came to know it. . . that indicated he had come to appropriate the story as part of his own past" (Linde, 2009, p. 79).

According to Linde (2009), members show their connection to a particular organization or community by becoming tellers of those stories of importance to that community. In addition, members show their induction into an organization by taking on the beliefs and values of that organization as well as positioning their own story within the narrative of the organization. For example, members may directly cite stories of the organization as part of their own history or they may use stories of the organization to explain their own evaluation of the way the world is or their own values systems. Using Linde's framework for understanding an institution's narrative identity, I explored a Hawaiian culture-based charter school located in Waimea on Hawai'i island in the State of Hawai'i.

### **Kanu o ka 'Āina New Century Public Charter School**

An understanding of Hawaiian epistemology reveals a cultural lens very different from that of Western ways of knowing. As such, it lays its own cultural foundation for education.

Meyers (2001) asserted “Hawaiian education is not something in relation to a Western norm, but something we must define in relation to our own understanding of ourselves, our past, and our potential” (p. 146). The question then is: to what extent have Hawaiian culture-based charter schools built their schools based on this Hawaiian epistemology that in so many ways is unique and separate from Western ways of teaching and learning? The purpose of this study was to explore how past stories create a narrative that forms the foundational identity of one particular Hawaiian culture-based charter school. The school chosen for this study was Kanu o ka ‘Āina New Century Public Charter School or KANU, its shortened abbreviation to which it is often referred.

**History of Kanu o ka ‘Āina.** The seed for Kanu o ka ‘Āina was first planted through the vision of its founder, Kū Kahakalau. As a Hawaiian language teacher, Kū saw all too often that her students would excel in her class, but would struggle in other classes, often failing and dropping out of school altogether (Hansen, 2011). Desiring to create a learning experience that included not just Hawaiian language, but Hawaiian traditional and cultural practices as well, she and her husband Nālei opened KANU as a Hawaiian-focused school-within-a-school at Honoka‘a High School on the island of Hawai‘i in 1997. Over the next three years, Kū gathered a group of Hawaiian educators, parents and community supporters who also felt the present educational system was failing their children. Together, they lobbied the legislature to allow for start-up charters, and in August 2000, KANU opened as the first K-12 Hawaiian focused start-up charter school, with 127 students (“Kanu,” 2009).

**Description of Kanu o ka ‘Āina.** I reviewed KANU accreditation reports from 2009 and 2016 to gain a better understanding of KANU as a school. Kanu o ka ‘Āina’s name comes from the Hawaiian proverb, “kalo kanu o ka ‘Āina,” which in its literal translation means, “taro

planted on the land,” but figuratively can be translated as, “natives of the land from generations back” (“Kanu,” 2009, p. 12). This choice of name reflected the cultural understanding that Native Hawaiians were intricately connected and a part of the land they came from (“Kanu,” 2009). “Our cosmogonic genealogies directly link us to the land. We come from the land; it is part of our ‘ohana (family). Like Hawai‘i’s natural environment, our Hawaiian learning ‘ohana is made up of diverse, yet like-minded individuals with a wide range of skills and strengths” (“Kanu,” 2009, p. 12).

KANU’s mission statement is, Kūlia i ka nu‘u- strive to reach the highest. In addition, the school was founded upon four core values:

Aloha kekahi i kekahi:	Love one another
Mahalo i ka mea loa‘a	Be thankful for what you have
Kōkua aku, kōkua mai:	Give and receive help
Mālama i kou kuleana:	Take care of your responsibilities

The KANU Accreditation Self-Study 2016 stated, “All members of the learning ‘ohana (family) are expected to embrace and live by these values which are clearly and consistently stated and prominently displayed throughout the school” (“Kanu,” 2016, p. 113).

Everything from the school name to the school motto to the curriculum was grounded in Hawaiian tradition and ways of knowing that can be traced to generations past (Kahakalau, 2003, p. 5). The belief of educators was that,

as an Indigenous peoples, Hawaiians have not only a right, but a responsibility to challenge the ongoing colonial paradigms perpetuated by Hawai‘i’s singular public school system, which has left native Hawaiians at the bottom of the educational ladder in

our homeland, scoring the lowest of all major ethnic groups on all educational performance (“Kanu,” 2009, p. 14).

It was only in controlling their own education and aligning that education to Hawaiian history, culture, and values, that “Hawai‘i’s Native people [could] achieve *pono*, or balance, righteousness, integrity, perfection, success” (Kahakalau, 2003, p. 6). In her own words, Kū asserted, “it is my sincere hope that the model of education that has emerged as a result of my research becomes a pedagogy of Hawaiian liberation and that it contributes directly to current efforts by Hawai‘i’s Indigenous peoples to gain control over our own educational process” (Kahakalau, 2003, p. 1). The goal was to create a place-based, project-based educational experience grounded in Hawaiian cultural values and traditional knowledge, that at the same time taught 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, preparing students to successfully function in a modern global society (“Kanu,” 2009). At the time of this study, KANU was in its eighteenth year of operation.

For its first eleven years, KANU operated out of tents, community centers, temporary make-shift facilities, and off-campus, outdoor, learning labs (Hansen, 2011). In 2012, the school moved to its present facility in the Hawaiian Homes community of Pu‘ukapu in Waimea on the island of Hawai‘i. In 2016, the total school enrollment was 334 students, with 76% being native Hawaiian and 52% being economically disadvantaged. Forty-four percent of students were female. (“Kanu,” 2016)

In this chapter, I described the historical context within which Hawaiian language programs and culture-based charter schools were established. In summary, these schools were formed following a struggle for the survival of Hawaiian culture and identity amidst colonization of Hawaiian land and political disempowerment of its people (Meyer, 2001; Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua et al., 2008; Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua, 2013). With the silencing of their voices, in many cases literally

with the ban of the Hawaiian language, the need for cultural revival and desire for self-determination culminated in the establishment of Hawaiian language- and culture-based schools. These schools, however, existed within a Western-based society and receipt of federal funding dictated their compliance to nationally regulated standards. As such, the inquiry for my study focused on how one Hawaiian culture-based school constructed an identity that ran counter to the dominant Western educational framework. As a precursor for this exploration, I introduced the ways in which organizations have used past stories to build a narrative identity for themselves.

The purpose of this study was to explore how one particular Hawaiian culture-based charter school used past stories to create a narrative that formed the foundation of its institutional identity. I have outlined the school I have chosen, including the history of its founding. In the next chapter, I will outline the method by which I addressed the following research question: How do stories told within and about an institution, by members of the institution, help to construct a Hawaiian culture-based school's collective identity? I will specifically address the following: (a) What are the repeated stories that form the core narrative of the institution? (b) What occasions for remembering exist to retell these stories? and (c) In what ways do students attending this charter school share their own narrative using stories reflective of those found within the larger institutional narrative?

### Chapter 3: Methods

This qualitative case study focused on a particular Hawaiian culture-based charter school. I was interested in examining the school in order to explore how a Hawaiian culture-based charter school used stories of the past to sustain a culture-based identity in the present, particularly one that ran counter to the more dominant Western education framework. Following Merriam's (1988) approach to a qualitative, naturalistic study, I observed, analyzed, and tried to make sense of what was happening in a natural setting. I was interested in the process of how certain things happen within the natural course of events as well as in the meaning behind people's experiences – how do they make sense of their lived experiences and how do they construct the social world in which they live?

#### Participants

**Recruitment.** I initiated email correspondence with Allyson Tamura, the Elementary Head of School. Allyson had been one of the original teachers at KANU's first school-within-a-school at Honoka'a High School. After moving briefly to another part of the island, Allyson returned to KANU and at the time of the interview, had been with KANU for 12 years. Having been at KANU for many years as a teacher and then as an administrator, Allyson was able to provide a brief background on all the teachers at the school. This allowed me to recruit a range of teachers who taught elementary, middle, and high school, and also those who taught a range of years at KANU. I wanted to recruit teachers who were both from Hawai'i island as well as those who were from the U.S. Continent. Allyson gave me a list of 39 staff members working at KANU. After emailing 12 persons, I received consent to interview and record seven adults.

In addition to these seven adults, I also sought to interview students. I asked Allyson for the names of students who were juniors or seniors and had been at KANU for at least five years.

I assumed that five years would have allowed students to be exposed to the school culture, signifying membership to the organization. In addition, I requested students who were highly involved in school activities which further indicated their membership in the organization. The names numbered less than 10. These students and their parents were contacted and four of them consented to be a part of this study. Students were interviewed and videotaped.

*Adult participants.* Adult participants included seven teachers and staff members who worked at KANU 2-17 years. See Table 1 for their roles at the school and other demographic information. Two of the participants came from the U.S. Continent and five were born in Hawai‘i. Three participants worked with elementary students, two worked with middle students, and two worked with high school students.

Table 1

*Adult Participants*

Name	Gender	Age	Ethnicity	Position	Years at KANU
Allyson	F	45	Part-Hawaiian	Elementary head of school	12
Allyssa	F	30	Caucasian	Middle school English teacher	2
Keōmailani	F	37	Native Hawaiian	Fifth grade teacher	13
KiTeya	M	40	Mixed	High school math/science teacher Project teacher	8
Maya	F	26	Part-Hawaiian	Kindergarten teacher	4
Nālei	M	58	Part-Hawaiian	Founder	17
Scot	M	54	Part-Hawaiian	High school social studies teacher Academy planning coordinator Sixth and seventh grade social studies teacher	11

*Note.* All participants consented to the use of their names for this study.



The first person I interviewed was Allyson. Allyson began work at KANU as a resource teacher and subsequently became the reading coordinator, then the testing coordinator, followed by the elementary academic coach, the lead teacher, the Vice Principal, and then into her current position as elementary Head of School. Allyson was part-Hawaiian and grew up on Hawaiian homelands in Hilo, Hawai'i. Growing up, her family struggled and she said that she had a rough childhood. But she remembered having many caring teachers who encouraged her to see her potential, and that influenced her decision to want to become a teacher.

From when I was grade four, I knew I wanted to be a teacher. I had a lot of caring and inspiring teachers. . . that took me under their wing, knew that my family was having a rough time, just encouraged me a lot to see my potential. . . And I always knew I wanted to be a teacher because of that. And I wanted to be able to help people in that way too, and help kids see the potential that they, they had within themselves, especially those who just had a rough time growing up and maybe you know, didn't have parents or families that encouraged them in that way.

Allyssa was a Caucasian, middle school English language teacher. She moved to Hawai'i from the mainland, and described her time at KANU as being very different than her prior experiences.

It's been good. It's been a good experience. It's been different, very different from working in big cities. I started my teaching career in Baltimore city and then from there moved to Philadelphia city. So, in that respect, it's very different. The cultural piece is really different. I had come from a charter network that was solely focused on academics. . . . Our teachers were really invested in some really intense [professional development],

so it was a very different environment from here where it's much more laid back, much more family friendly, a lot more easygoing. It just took a little bit to get used to.

She expressed that she loved the inquisitiveness and passion of her students and that they were the reason for her continuing with the school. She also enjoyed the familial connection where students called her, "aunty" and in return, she saw them like her extended family.

Keōmailani was a 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher in her 13<sup>th</sup> year of teaching at KANU. She was native Hawaiian and graduated from Kanu o ka 'Āina when it was a Hawaiian academy and still a school-within-a-school. Prior to attending the Hawaiian academy, she had been failing in the regular Department of Education system. However, upon entering the academy, she found success, found her identity, and made sure she graduated to become a contributing citizen. She "made sure that [she] came back and served [her] community the way they helped [her]."

KiTeya was in his eighth year of teaching high school students at KANU. He was a project teacher and had taught many subjects from geometry and algebra to biology and environmental science. He was part Native-American and part-African American and moved to Hawai'i from the Continental U.S.. Prior to his working at KANU, he taught environmental education in Ohio. He expressed a deep connection to and appreciation of nature and indigenous ways of knowing.

Maya was the kindergarten teacher. Her family was a ranching family of Waimea, and she grew up in the area. However, she did not grow up speaking Hawaiian or practicing ceremonial Hawaiian culture. She explained,

You know, there's things culturally growing up in Waimea, yes, I believe I know the culture and the traditions here, but at the same time, I didn't know all these oli (Hawaiian chants); I didn't know all these hula (Hawaiian dance); I didn't know what certain

cultural protocols were. . . But always feeling that culture was a huge thing for me and I wanted to live it and I wanted to know it.

She graduated from a private school in Waimea and went to college in the Continental U.S. before receiving a call about the opportunity to teach at KANU.

I also interviewed Nālei, one of the founders of the school. Seventeen years ago, Nālei alongside his wife, Kū Kahakalau, founded a Hawaiian academy, a school-within-a-school, which eventually transitioned into the charter school, Kanu o ka 'Āina. In our interview, Nālei who was part-Hawaiian described himself as a “hard-core practitioner of Hawaiian culture.” His grandparents on his mother’s side were full-Hawaiian, native speakers, and practitioners of culture. Through them and other elders, Nālei learned and practiced Hawaiian language, ceremonies, and culture over the past 40 years. He and his wife began the Hawaiian academy as a means to provide their own children with a more rigorous education than they felt was being offered through the mainstream public school system. They also saw a need for a cultural, hands-on approach to education that was more relevant for Hawaiian children. Nālei taught high school social studies.

Scot who was the high school’s academy planning coordinator as well as the sixth and seventh grade social studies teacher. Prior to working at KANU, Scot lived on the island of O‘ahu with his family and worked in sales. However, he had always wanted to be an educator and felt fortunate to have been asked to join KANU.

***Student participants.*** Participants also included four students who attended KANU between six and nine years. The students included two females. At the time of the interviews,

two were in their junior year of high school and two were in their senior year of high school. All four were part-Hawaiian.

Kaleo was a senior and had attended KANU from the fourth grade. He was involved in various school activities and had talked particularly about his passion for ceremonies and wanting to continue practicing Hawaiian ceremonies beyond graduation. He explained, “I’m always going to come back [to KANU] ‘cause that’s like my passion right there... I love doing ceremonies and practicing my culture and coming back and giving back to my community.” Kaleo expressed that in the next ten years he saw himself playing football and getting his education in mechanics and auto body.

Malie was also a senior and had attended KANU from sixth grade. She said it was her parents’ choice to send her to KANU. She had grown up on Maui, but her parents felt she wasn’t being exposed enough to Hawaiian culture and upon hearing about KANU, they applied for Malie to attend, and she was accepted. Over her six years at KANU, Malie had been involved with various school activities, including a student-run conference for charter school students. Malie was passionate about education.

Noah was a junior in high school and had been at KANU for eight years. He had actually attended KANU in first and second grade before leaving to attend a private school in Waimea because his parents felt he wasn’t reaching his full potential academically. However, he returned to KANU in the sixth grade because being at KANU made him feel like he was a part of a family. He also expressed that he returned to KANU because he wanted to know more of his Hawaiian roots. Noah shared several Hawaiian values the school taught him which he would like to continue to live and embrace beyond high school, in particular “kulia i ka nu‘u” (strive for

your highest) and “aloha kekahi i kekahi” (love one another). He also shared he would like to attend college and become an athletic trainer.

Pua was also a junior in high school and had been at KANU since kindergarten. However, her family moved to the U.S. continent for three years so she did not attend KANU from fourth through sixth grade. She expressed that what she liked best about KANU was learning and practicing ceremonies and other cultural events and activities. Pua shared that she wanted to go to college and study “indigenous art and cultural art and learning how to express the culture in art to other people.”

### **Data Sources**

Data were collected using the framework Linde (2009) used when she studied institutional narratives identified in an insurance company. As such, I focused on collecting data that addressed the following: (a) the institution’s core stock of stories; (b) occasions of remembering; and (c) member (student) narratives. The process of data collection occurred in three phases. In the first phase, I focused on eliciting the core stock of stories and occasions for remembering them through semi-structured interviews and observations. In the second phase, I focused on collecting student narratives through semi-structured interviews that were videotaped and reviewed with students. In the third phase, I re-interviewed three of the adults and two of the students to clarify and confirm the core stories identified following the first two phases. I felt confirmations and clarifications with half the interviewees would be sufficient.

**Observations.** I scheduled three visits to KANU between May 10, 2017 and November 30, 2017. Each visit covered three days. During the first visit, I conducted observations of schoolwide activities, classroom activities, and between class interactions.

**Adult interviews.** Semi-structured interviews allowed me to engage with members of the Hawaiian culture-based charter school in a way that invited them to inform me of their culture, their values, their beliefs, their thoughts, and their experiences. According to Spradley (1979), “language is more than a means of communication about reality: it is a tool for constructing reality” (p. 17). Interviews complemented observational data by allowing members of the organization to be the informants of their own lives.

Between May 10, 2017 and June 22, 2017, I conducted semi-structured interviews with seven adult members of KANU. Between November 28, 2017 and November 30, 2017, I conducted second interviews with three of the previously interviewed adults. All interviews were scheduled at the date, time, and location of the participants’ choosing. For the first interviews, three participants chose to be interviewed in their classrooms and four chose an empty room in the administrative buildings. For the second interviews, all interviewees chose to be interviewed in their respective classrooms and office. The first interviews lasted between 18 and 112 minutes, and the second interviews ranged between 16 and 40 minutes.

The semi-structured interview questions included primarily descriptive questions (Spradley, 1979; Harrell & Bradley, 2009). See Appendix A for the interview questions. Descriptive questions allowed for the interviewees to share a detailed narrative, experience, or example around a particular cultural scene. They are broad in scope. Such questions typically answer the question of “How?” and can be phrased in both personal or cultural terms. For example, “How did you come to choose Kanu o ka ‘Āina?” In addition, descriptive questions included native-language queries, or inquiries into specific cultural terms or language, which was important as this study focused on members of a culture-based school. This descriptive approach to the interview encouraged the telling of stories that held meaning to the teller. According to

Polanyi (1985), “*stories* are told to make a point, to transmit a message—often some sort of moral evaluation or implied critical judgment—about the world the teller shares with other people” (p. 12). These stories are of past events involving specific agents and objects. They bring the past into the present and as such, provide insight into the cultural text of a group of people, those to whom the story holds truth and relevance (Polanyi, 1985).

**Student interviews.** Between May 10, 2017 and June 22, 2017, I conducted semi-structured interviews with four students of KANU. Between November 28, 2017 and November 30, 2017, I conducted second interviews with two of the previously interviewed students. I felt two of the four students would be sufficient. In addition, by the time of the second interviews, two of the students had graduated and left Hawai‘i island. All interviews were scheduled at the date and time of the participants’ choosing. All participants chose to be interviewed in an empty room in the lower school’s administrative building. The first round of interviews ranged between 14 and 38 minutes and the second interviews ranged between 15 and 18 minutes.

**Narrative inquiry.** I collected student stories using narrative inquiry. Following Clandinin’s (2013) model of narrative inquiry, I focused specifically on the following:

- (a) temporality or how students positioned themselves in the present, past, and the future;
- (b) sociality or how students were affected by their individual feelings, hopes and dispositions as well as how they were affected by experiences related to family or other relationships; and
- (c) place or how place affected how they understood or how they expressed who they were.

These three aspects provided a framework around which I constructed semi-structured interview questions. See Appendix B for these questions.

**Video-recording.** While video as a qualitative research tool has not been used as prevalently as photography and still images, there has been in recent years an increase in

literature and attention being given to video (Pink, 2001; Ylirisku & Buur, 2007; Underberg & Zorn, 2013; Pink, 2004; Shrum, Duque, & Ynalvez, 2007). Since the 1980s, new video technology has made video recording more convenient and accessible, abetting its use and value as a research tool. Some ethnographers now argue that videography tools need to be an essential component of ethnography. According to Shrum et al. (2007), “field notes, audio recording, and photographs are no longer adequate for ethnographic data collection, and a text-based orientation to presentation is no longer adequate to the task of sociological understanding” (p. 225)

Video-recording allowed me to capture not only the words being said, but also the facial expressions and other visual details not available through audio-recording. In addition, two of the interviewees were interviewed a second time during which they were asked to review edited portions of their videos for further exploration and clarification of stories captured in the video-recording. Having interviewees provide feedback allowed for addressing if there were any factual errors or misinterpretations of data (Mishler, 1986; Laslett & Rapoport, 1975).

### **Data Analysis**

I first transcribed the adult interviews and culled the transcriptions looking for repeated stories. These were narratives that Linde (2009) described as “retold tales: narratives told by a speaker who was not a participant or witness to the events narrated but heard them from someone else” (p. 73). Retold tales are specifically targeted because in using them, those in institutions actively remember their past and in doing so, use the past to create current identities for both the institution and its members (Linde, 2009). Retold tales are important, not only in actively remembering the past as a means of sustaining a current institutional identity; but also, as a means of propelling an identity into the future. When a story is embraced and told by a new



generation of tellers, appropriation has taken place, further driving the life of the story and its effect on an institution's identity.

Through the adult interviews, I identified what appeared to be core stories and themes that provided a school narrative embraced by the participants. Next, I wanted to know to what extent the stories and experiences shared by students were reflective of these core stories and themes shared by the adults. In what ways, if any, did students place their identities within the school narratives. According to Linde (2009), the strength of an institution's narrative lies in the extent to which core stories are embraced and passed on by members of the institution. Thus, I transcribed and culled the student interviews, looking for repeated stories told among the students. The adult data and the student data were treated independently of each other, so that findings from the adult data would not influence findings in the student data.

**Coding.** I used grounded theory methods to analyze these stories, and through conceptual ordering, I closely examined and thematically categorized and sub-categorized the stories (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). According to Corbin and Strauss (2015), conceptual ordering "refers to the organization of data into discrete categories (and sometimes ratings) according to their properties and dimensions, then the utilization of the description to elucidate those categories" (p. 61). Properties refer to the characteristics or attributes of a category and dimensions refer to the degree to which these characteristics differ (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). A continuous analysis of the data allowed me to make multiple updates and revisions of concepts and categories, until I identified dominant themes and their relationships to one another. Emergent themes from the observations and the interviews were compared and those themes that appeared in both observations and interviews were considered to be core themes that shaped the institution's narrative. This use of multiple methods, or triangulation, contributed to a more in-depth

understanding of the case at hand (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). Once a final set of themes were identified, I created a visual map representing the stories and how they related to one another. I then reviewed them with three of the adult participants to verify the relevancy of the themes. Feedback from the interviewees provided another level of checking for factual errors or interpretations misaligned with the speakers' intent (Mishler, 1986; Laslett & Rapoport, 1975).

**Video and visual mapping.** For the analysis of the student narratives, I also transcribed the interviews, then incorporated conceptual ordering to categorize and sub-categorize the data into thematic groupings, which were then diagrammed into a visual map (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). Next, I identified the recurring threads and tensions found within each student's interview, and then edited each videotaped interview into an approximately 15-minute clip, capturing the stories that addressed the identified themes. In the second level of analysis, I met with two of the student participants and asked them to view their video clip and respond to them, affirming or clarifying the points they made. This reviewing of the video with the informants themselves allowed me to strengthen or rework the recurring threads and themes I had earlier identified, which was the third and last level of analysis. I felt two students would be sufficient to determine if there were any significant deviations to my findings. In addition, the two students re-interviewed were then seniors and available to meet and review their video clip together. The two students who were not re-interviewed had since graduated and were not present at the school.

A valuable aspect of using video in capturing individual narratives was the ability to review what was shared with the informants themselves, giving them the opportunity to affirm or clarify their previous statements (Mishler, 1986; Laslett & Rapoport, 1975). The process of reviewing the video with students invited informants to hear their own voices and reflect upon

the stories they shared such that analysis of the video data was not left solely to the discretion of the author.

### **Role of the Researcher**

While I have laid out the structure of the research design, I would also like to provide a brief background of myself and address my role as the researcher. I was born and raised in Hawai‘i, but I am not Hawaiian. My mother’s grandparents moved from Japan to Maui where she grew up, and my father moved from Japan to O‘ahu as a young man after graduating from college. My interest in education began first as a school counselor at King Intermediate School in Kāne‘ohe on the island of O‘ahu. I have since spent the last nine years as an independent video producer, contracting with primarily educational institutions. In the process, I have visited schools and filmed students in over 100 classrooms across the state of Hawai‘i. My experience as a counselor and as a filmmaker have taken me deeply within some schools as well as broadly across many schools.

While I am not Hawaiian, I have great respect for the Hawaiian language and culture. However, I understand that as a researcher, I observed and reflected from a non-Hawaiian lens. In order to minimize bias in the collecting and analyzing of data, I kept a field journal to help me constantly reflect on what I was seeing and hearing and how I interpreted what I was seeing and hearing. Continuous reflection prompted me not to assume anything but rather to return to participants to ask them to clarify or expound upon their responses.

## Chapter 4: Results

### Observations

There were two main themes that emerged through my observations. First, learning was strongly grounded in the natural environment, and second, culture was integrated in learning. From the moment I arrived on campus, the school felt different. I had never been to Kanu o ka 'Āina. All I knew was that it was in Waimea, a town in the northern part of the island of Hawai'i. On my first visit to the school, I arrived at Kona International airport, inputted the schools' address into my global positioning system, and headed north. Approximately 75 minutes later, I arrived in Waimea, and eventually turned off the main road onto Kamamalu Street. There were residential homes on my left and right, and signs that instructed drivers to slow down. Ahead, I could see nothing but a vast area of green, empty land. I turned onto Hi'iaka Street and there ahead of me on the right in the middle of mountains and pastures was a beautiful complex of buildings that somehow blended with the environment. Made of wood in asymmetrical shapes that was more reflective of a beautiful home than an educational institution, the school was immediately inviting and welcoming simply in its architecture.

The buildings were surrounded by native trees and foliage that made this school feel as though somehow it was part of the land and exactly where it needed to be. As I walked on campus later that day, I noticed that all the classrooms were built with windows and sliding glass doors that opened up into a huge grass field and in the backdrop was a perfect view of Mauna Kea, the highest mountain in Hawai'i. Children moved freely between the indoors and outdoors. Throughout my visits, this outdoor area seemed to be used just as much as the indoor areas.

Another example of how the physical environment was intentionally designed to connect students to nature was the preschool's natural playground. The playground was made of rocks

and wood, enormous logs and other natural material. There were no plastic slides or swings or monkey bars. Yet, children were just as animated, and perhaps even more imaginative, in their play.

Not only did the architecture and design of the school connect students to their natural environment; teaching and learning were also integrated with the natural environment. This was particularly evident in the younger classrooms. Here, classroom walls were filled with collages of the ocean, paintings of the sun, trees that were painted or pasted from floor to ceiling, diagrams of taro depicting family genealogies, and different phases of the moon. The hallways of classrooms for older elementary students were filled with pictures of student excursions outdoors, such as voyaging on canoes and restoring forest land. I did however, note that while elementary school classrooms colorfully displayed this abundant connection to nature, middle and high school classrooms were quite bare, and therefore, less reflective of the natural environment. However, students in all grades spent class time both indoors and outdoors.

A second theme I observed was that instruction was highly integrated with Hawaiian culture. This was reflected in the abundant use of the Hawaiian language, in traditional Hawaiian protocols, in chanting and singing, and in instruction grounded in Hawaiian history and values. One example of this was piko, a daily morning gathering of all staff and students. Piko was a protocol that included students and staff chanting a variety of declarations from permission to enter school grounds to recognizing the land and its winds to reciting genealogies and remembering those who have paved the way through the present.

On one of my visits, I participated in this gathering and observed it be very ceremonial, an almost spiritual experience. Before school began, everyone gathered outside in the open field of grass with Mauna Kea standing majestically in the background. The morning light from the

sun was still gentle and the wind was cool. In the silence, in the open air surrounded by mountains and blue sky, I felt connected to the land upon which I was standing. The adults lined up on one side by age; students were opposite the adults, lined up in rows according to their grades. Then began a ritual of chanting in Hawaiian. Students chanted asking for permission to receive knowledge from teachers. Teachers chanted a welcome to students. It continued with other chants done in unison that recognized the place upon which they stood and the ancestors that came before them. The chanting was done with sincerity by staff and students, signifying the importance of this morning ritual. If students came late to school and were late to this gathering, they were to stand on the side. They could not join their classmates until they chanted their own request to enter and were received in turn.

The integration of Hawaiian culture in learning was further evident as I observed kindergartners singing the months of the year in Hawaiian, fifth graders practicing a chant for their Hula Drama performance, middle schoolers printing banana leaves, symbolic of humility, on their hula skirts, and seniors washing kukui nuts they gathered and drilling holes in them to make lei (a garland of flowers, shells, or leaves) for graduation.

While much of the instruction I observed was reflective of Hawaiian culture, there were examples where culture was not integrated into learning. One example was the college counseling room. In this room the walls were blank except for rows and rows of college flags. This, I thought, was very typical of any Western counseling office.

### **Adult Interviews**

**The founding story.** All adult interviewees shared what I will call the founding story, and while the story differed slightly in detail, the core of the story was always the same. The primary founder, Kū Kahakalau and her husband, Nālei had been teaching at Honoka‘a High

School on the Island of Hawai‘i. They taught Hawaiian language and Hawaiian history courses, and their students thrived. However, these same students were failing their other classes, their English classes, their math classes. They were getting deficiencies and cutting school. Kū and Nālei couldn’t believe these were the same students. So, they started summer immersive camps in Waipio Valley and invited these students. Here, the students were immersed in Hawaiian language, history, culture, and land-based projects. Again, the students thrived. They didn’t want to leave. At the end of the summer, the students all went back to Honoka‘a High School only to resort back to their past challenging behaviors. They were again cutting classes, getting deficiencies, and failing school. Kū and Nālei wanted these students to believe in themselves, graduate, and have a good future. They wanted others to celebrate the strengths they saw in these students. Seeing that the summer immersive camps were not having sustainable effects, they started a Hawaiian Academy, a school-within-a-school at Honoka‘a High School. Classes comprised of project-based, culture-based, Hawaiian curricula that were grounded in the ‘āina or land. Maya, one of the teachers interviewed, did not attend the school-within-a-school herself but had friends and family who did. She described what she heard of the school, “It was just that deeper connection, getting back, knowing our ‘āina, our water resources, our plants and our animals as like real life entities and not just things, but they have life involved. So, connecting our life with other’s lives.” Nālei shared the vision he and his wife had as follows:

It always seemed like Hawaiian studies or Hawaiian associated curriculum was always considered less than. It was always for the special education or special motivation students, something to keep them busy. So, we were ...on a mission to change that, to let everybody know that Hawaiian curriculum is just as rigorous as Western curriculum, if not more than.

The Hawaiian Academy started in 1997. Three years later, Kū and Nālei established their own charter school, Kanu o ka ‘āina New Century Public Charter School. Allyson shared how Kū thought that,

maybe if she offers the learning in a different model . . . you know, grounded in Hawaiian culture, Hawaiian knowledge, ancestral knowledge, the Hawaiian values, really trying to get the kids to feel like they’re a part of a family and . . . you know, she called it ‘Education with Aloha.’ And if you can get these students to just feel like they’re, you know, they’re part of a family unit and that there’s people and ‘ohana (family) who believe in them and will help them and nurture them, then maybe they’d be successful.

The school began in tents built by the hands of those in the community and served a primarily Native Hawaiian population. It was Hawaiian education for Hawaiian children, built on cultural practices, immersed in place and land, and taught with compassion and aloha. This was the founding story and its telling by all the interviewees was particularly significant as the primary founder Kū Kahakalau had left the school in late 2010. This was more than six years prior to the interviews, and yet, even those teachers who joined KANU after 2010 shared this story with me.

While the founding story was a core story and one often repeated by the interviewees, there were several other common stories shared as well. I found that many of these stories were nestled within the founding story, and that they could be described by three themes: (a) respect for time, (b) respect for people, and (c) respect for land and community. All three themes supported the founding story of providing Hawaiian education for Hawaiian children.

**Respect for time.** Many of the stories interviewees shared made it clear that learning was not confined to a single point in time, but rather that learning was an accumulation of knowledge through a continuum of time: past, present, and future. Students existed not for themselves in the



here and now; but were tied to a much larger world of ancestors and kupuna (elders) and as such, were responsible to receive knowledge from those before them, actively practice that knowledge, and then share it with the next generation. Keōmailani described this as:

Taking our ancestral knowledge and taking that knowledge, opening up that child so their innateness, their innate abilities can awaken, and they can discover who they are and what talents they have and how they can lend them to the world . . . I think that's one of the most powerful things, making them see that knowledge is power and not only new knowledge but ancient knowledge and how does that relate and how does that take me further in the world.

Allyson explained that it was a responsibility and privilege for students to learn from their elders, “to learn the traditions and the mo’olelo that belong to your ‘ohana or . . . those stories in your families.”

There were two sub-categories within which many of the stories around time could be seen. The first was ceremonies. Students and staff actively participated in Hawaiian ceremonies throughout the year. These ceremonies ranged from the Pu‘ukoholā ceremony done every August to mend the wounds inflicted upon others by King Kamehameha to piko, a daily morning gathering on school grounds where students and staff chanted in Hawaiian to remember their ancestors and to acknowledge the places from which they came. These ceremonies gave staff and students opportunities to remember who they were and why they were there. The ceremonies were also a way to pass on the stories, the history, and the culture of the Hawaiian people.

Allyson explained,

Just to see our culture alive and thriving is another part. That it's there. It's important and it has life and it has meaning and we have to pass that on, you know, to the next

generation and why it's important to pass that on . . . If we stop teaching our students and showing them the importance of why we celebrate Makahiki (Ancient festival) and why we have Makahiki competition, yeah, who's going to pass it on? . . . Even the same with hula and learning the oli (chant), and how you haku (compose). And that's not everybody's gift to haku mele (song, poem) or oli. Not everybody can do that. But if there are students who have that gift, how do we nurture that or be models for them so that they will be able to do that? And then they will be able to teach their next generation to do that.

A second sub-category within the theme of respecting time was knowing one's genealogy. At graduation, the seniors chant their genealogy in Hawaiian. According to KiTeya, The students are called up one by one, alphabetically, and they do their mo'okū'auhau, their genealogy and ho'olauna, an introduction about the kinds of things that they like . . . like what is their river, their mountain, their beach, naming the different places that are important to them. And it helps to identify them . . . who they are as a person and then also as a genealogy.

There is an understanding that one's identity is part of a continuum, and that each person has a responsibility to continue their lineage in the most positive way possible. Maya explained the importance of students citing their genealogies during daily morning gatherings called, Piko. "I think it's huge for them to reflect on their genealogies, and where they're coming from too is a great way to start the day . . . and then setting forth on how they're going to continue their genealogy and make their kupuna (elders) proud."

**Respect for people.** A second theme found throughout the interviews was the importance of respecting people, whether this was between students, between teachers, or between students

and staff. The foundation of this respect for people lay in aloha or love and goes back to the founder's desire to provide "Education with Aloha." Keōmailani explained,

Aloha runs deep through every aspect of this school. . . I feel like I can go to anyone at any time and be totally open and I know we're going to have a discussion and if we have . . . ways that we need to work through to further the school, we're going to work together and we're going to make it happen. And that's what I'm about is . . . that aloha, that aloha that's going to push us forward as a school but not only as a school, but a school that benefits the whole lahui (nation), the whole 'āina (land), the whole community.

According to this teacher, aloha was the foundation and the guiding value from which people treated one another.

There were two sub-categories within which this respect for people was seen. The first was the repeated description of the school as family. The elementary school administrator described how when assessing student needs, she would just need to ask, "who can help me with these four [students] over here? And everyone just jumps on and figures out how to best do that . . . so that all of the staff kind of become like an 'ohana (family) . . . where we can rely on each other, help each other out, talk with each other, problem solve with each other." The affinity for others in this school community was particularly evident in three of the interviews when the interviewees became emotional and teary-eyed when talking compassionately about their school and their students.

The interviews also revealed how students cared for one another like family, how they helped each other, protected each other, and stood up for one another. Scot described the students as such, "Our kids love one another. You can go out there, you can see it . . . They're always

trying to help each other. Constantly, you know, willing to help each other . . . They appreciate what they have. They don't want to leave KANU." Allyson shared how students embraced fellow students with special needs. "They're very tolerant of individual students that have special needs. So, whether it's a student who has seizures or who is autistic or has tics . . . they're so accepting of it."

The second sub-category of this respect for people was a focus on teaching to individual strengths. All students were respected for their own skills, talents, and abilities. Students were not assessed by a single standard or scale; they were not expected to perform the same as everyone else. This could be due in part to the strong emphasis on their mission which all interviewees referred to at some point. Their mission, *kulia i ka nu'u* (strive for the highest) focused teachers and students on knowing that no one was being compared to anyone else. Each person strived for their own personal best, and that would look different for each person. Allyson explained,

We always tell kids too, 'Do your personal best. You know, you're measuring your own growth from one year to the next year or from the beginning of the year to the end of the year. You look at your own growth. Did you grow? Doesn't matter if you didn't meet that national standard. Yes, we're striving for it and we know that that's the standard that everyone wants to hold you accountable for, but if you showed growth, even if you're not all the way at that standard, that's still a success for us and you should be, you should feel successful.'

Keōmailani shared this same emphasis:

We make it one of our priorities to get to know the child because we value that once you get to know the child, you can foster what their interests are and then they can open up as

a child and become a holistic learner and that's what makes Kanu o ka 'Āina different is we, we target specifically the individual learning style and the individual child, and the way they learn, the way they operate, the way they think, the way their na'au (heart, mind) and their whole passion needs to be fed. And then they can learn to the best of their ability.

**Respect for land and the community.** The third theme that emerged from the overall founding story was a deep respect for land and the community, or perhaps more broadly, a respect for place. The two sub-categories of this respect for place was hands-to-the-ground learning and giving back to the community.

The focus on hands-to-the-ground learning was a continuation of the founders' initial summer immersion camps in Waimea valley where students learned directly from and on the land. While these immersion camps were no longer offered, teaching and learning at KANU was still grounded in land-based, place-based curricula. This was reflective in everything from language to ceremonies and chants to classroom assignments and projects. The fifth grade teacher described the school as follows:

This school is rooted in the land and that's very important because we are products of the land. We are products that grew out of this land and I think our whole educational philosophy are rooted back to the land, and if, if we can do that as a school which we do, our students are going to flourish. That's why we say, 'kalo kanu o ka 'āina.' It's kalo (taro) planted on the land. We're establishing and maintaining our relationship with the, with the 'āina in order to progress and grow new generations.

This respect and relationship with the land was also evident on the walls of the classrooms for younger children, where depictions of the ocean, the sky, and the land were abundantly, colorfully, and largely displayed.

The second sub-category within this deep respect for place was giving back to the community. There was the sense that Kanu o ka 'Āina was a part of the larger community around them, and not a separate, independent entity. When the school first started, students met in tents built by members of the community. Reciprocally, students were taught to be conscious of their responsibility to the community. The interviewees all mentioned this importance of students being a part of their community, learning from their community and giving back to their community. This was, in fact, an original intention stated by Nālei who said that what he wanted to see were his students graduating and being active participants of their community, “that they wouldn’t just be docile members of [their] community, that they would get out and do stuff like vote, get involved in community issues . . .” Toward this goal, students were encouraged throughout their school years to be community-minded. Allyson described KANU students as follows:

I see everything that they’ve learned here at KANU going with them no matter what they choose to do in the future . . . and that they’ll always use the academic skills, but even just what they’ve learned socially, emotionally, spiritually, culturally. I see all of that as . . . just seeing them thrive and always working for their community, yeah, whether it’s being a community leader, a community server, but with ‘ohana (family) and community remaining equally important yeah . . . in their future you know, or career whatever career pathway they choose too, that they’ll always have . . . like they’ll always know that their

‘ohana and community is important too. And want to always contribute to that and grow their community.

She also described how students were given opportunities to find and use their voices to engage in community issues they believed in.

You’ll definitely see that they are really caring individuals, helpful individuals. They, they are growing to be leaders in their community. We definitely . . . we give them a lot of opportunity to, to kind of speak out and speak up. We encourage them to, you know, if it’s something they believe in, finding that voice and getting that message out appropriately is really important. So, we try to instill that in our students from when they’re young.

This connection to the community was important to all interviewees. It was a connection that was also described within the context of the school’s physical structure and natural surroundings, a description from a cultural lens. Keōmailani described the campus as follows:

There’s a central piko (navel, center). So, all of our energy is kinda circulating but it’s, it’s incorporating the ‘āina (land) and it’s all generating towards here but then we can radiate out from the piko . . . I love coming to this campus because the energy is circulating, just like the wind of Waimea. The wind of Waimea circles and it just pulses. It kind of nurtures, it kind of saturates right in the center. And then we send our kids out . . . we radiate out into the community.

Her description reflected what I saw. The campus was built slightly in a half-circle. There were sliding glass doors that opened on the side of the inner circle, and it was there that you had an incredibly large open field of green grass and right behind it stood Mauna Kea, completing the circle. This teacher described the school as having a center, a piko, around which the school

energy circulated; but the energy did not just stay in the school, it poured out into the community. The school then was part of an energy that circulated and ultimately, included the community. According to this teacher's description, there was little separation between school and community.

**A counter-story.** The three themes mentioned above, respect for time, respect for people, and respect for land and community, all supported the founding story that encompassed building Hawaiian education for Hawaiian children. However, infused within these stories were narratives that supported what seemed to be a counter-story, a story that ran counter to the founding story. According to Linde's (2009) use of the term, counterstories are "accounts explicitly oppositional to specific, and usually more official, accounts" (p. 200) of an institution. This counter-story was that the school had to fight an ingrained public perception that KANU was less than other schools; that KANU served only those students who couldn't make it anywhere else. Every interviewee expressed that they felt this battle. They shared that the school was continually introducing practices to debunk this perception, from offering dual credits where students could earn college credit during high school to offering AP and honors classes to offering travel abroad opportunities. The contradiction lay in the fact that according to the founding story, KANU was created exactly for those students who were failing, for those students who were not succeeding in their current school setting.

The interviewees had all shared the founding story of KANU being created out of a desire to provide Hawaiian education for Hawaiian children. They knew how the founders had seen their students thrive in their Hawaiian language and Hawaiian history classes; but fail in their other classes. They knew KANU was created from a desire to provide culture-based, project-based learning; education with aloha where all students knew they mattered; and a place



where their students would begin a journey in school and beyond of success and not failure. Yet, every interviewee shared strong feelings about wanting to change the public's perception that KANU was less than, and in doing so, the school began adopting what could be seen as Western educational practices, including hiring teachers from the mainland specifically to improve standardized test scores. Allyson expressed,

In the past, a lot of times . . . I think it's a mindshift too. Like, we're trying to change. So, when KANU first came to be, if I could to be blunt about it, a lot of families sought KANU out 'cause they saw it as an alternative for their, for their students . . . That's kind of why KANU was created, right? Students were failing in one system so maybe here's a system that might work better for their child. And so, as KANU grew and grew and became bigger and larger, a lot of parents still thought that about us . . . 'Try KANU, you know, yeah, you know they might work for you. They try to do more hands-on . . . So, if your kids are not able to focus at the other school, maybe that might be the school for you.' You know, that's how people described us to each other. And so, we were kind of looked at as an alternative school and a lot of times parents who came here, it was because they were failing at the other schools. They were cutting school. They didn't want to go to school. They wanted to drop out. And KANU was their last hope.

Again, I saw this as a counter-story because the interviewees did not want to be chosen as a last resort for students; they wanted students and parents to choose their school for its academic rigor and for the academic opportunities available for students. Allyson stated, "parents were still trying to come to KANU because they felt if their kids were failing somewhere else, KANU could be some place where they could succeed. So, it took a long time to get that turned around. I, I still feel like we're still trying to change that."

As I listened to these concerns, I began to wonder whether this focus on public perception would change the founding mission of the school. By what standards did the school feel the public was judging them? Were they assessing their success based on what could be perceived as Western models of success, such as standardized test scores and college acceptance rates? If so, how would this affect the very mission and vision of the school? For these reasons I called this a counter-story. Taking all the themes and their categories and sub-categories, I created a visual map (see Figure 1) to represent the findings that emerged from the adult interviews.

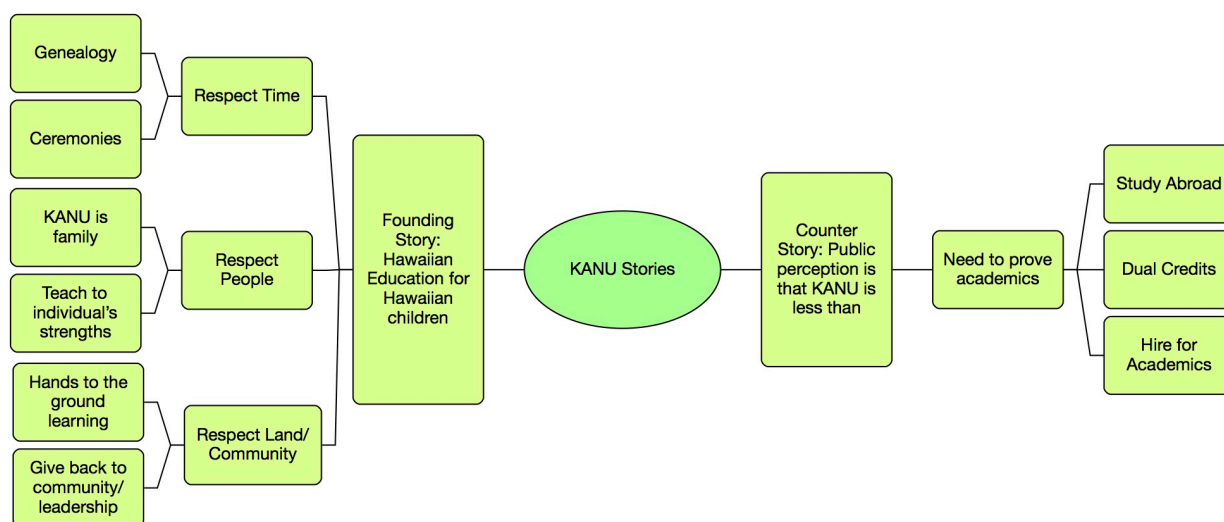


Figure 1. Stories Identified in Adult Interviews

### Adult Second Interviews

As an effort to confirm, clarify, and correct the findings from the adult interviews, I set up a second round of interviews, randomly choosing three of the seven participants. With each interviewee I shared the visual map (Figure 1), reviewing first the founding story and its subsequent themes and sub-categories, followed by the counter-story. All the interviewees agreed with the founding story, its themes and sub-categories. They made comments such as, “The categories are perfect for lack of a better term. It really works well.” “I totally agree with all of this.” “I like it.” “I think you hit it right on the nail.”

When reviewing the counter-story, the teachers also agreed with the findings. They agreed that there existed a public perception that KANU was less than and they were constantly trying to counter this perception by improving the academic success of their students. According to all the interviewees, the story that KANU was less than had existed from its very beginning. It was a result of the perception that Hawaiian education was not equal to Western education.

According to Nālei,

This one actually stems from many years of looking at Hawaiian culture as being less than. For example, in many schools, mainstream schools, if you are in special motivation or special [education] or . . . ALC alternative learning centers, yeah, that's really where you're gonna learn the cultural stuff, 'cause it's, it's more like, well just Hawaiians busy. Just keep 'em busy, keep them entertained and then just pass them. Get them, get them through this, you know kind of stuff. So, it was, it was used as more of a . . . what I would call less than education. Then it's not, it's not real education. There's no validity behind that.

The goal was always to prove that Hawaiian education was not inferior to any other education. According to the founder, "it was always treated as less than in, in the public system, yeah. So, our goal was, 'no, it's not less than; it's just equal to.'"

Maya shared that she in fact, came to the school believing this public perception that KANU was less than. She had gone to a private high school in Waimea and then received her teaching credentials from the mainland. She came back to Waimea and began working at KANU with the idea that she would bring her Western teaching to better the school.

I definitely felt this . . . counter story or thought of KANU as this counter story. I actually learned the founding story after having arrived here. And so, [I] believed in the counter

story. I was like, 'Okay, I need to come here with that open mind.' Like I'm going to better this place . . . I'm from Waimea, but I went away, and I got my palapala, I got my teaching credentials, and I'm bringing what I know from Western teaching to these, these students and this, this school. And they're going to improve that way . . . That's what I can offer and that's how I can make KANU more than what I perceive them to be.

This teacher validated that there existed a public perception that KANU was inferior to other schools. She believed it herself. However, her experience at KANU had shown her otherwise, and now she did indeed feel the need to prove that KANU was more than what others believed it to be.

I think today now that I've you know, encountered the founding story, and I truly believe in our purpose and why we are here today . . . and I don't believe this counter story anymore. I definitely think there's a lot of great education both cultural and Western that's going on at this school. But I definitely still feel like there's this like barrier we're still trying to . . . puka (make a hole) through. Like, like whether it's the [Charter School] Commission and we're having to provide all this you know, data. It's all these numbers and they're not realistic. They're not the whole picture of our students. And that's why I believe in the founding story now. I don't believe in the counter story anymore. That counter story is something that . . . affects us still, but it's not what's happening here. And so, yeah, I, I think it's part of our story, but I don't think it's the vastness that our story is.

Interviewees were clear that they agreed that there was a public perception that KANU was less than, and that there was a constant need to prove themselves. However, they themselves did not believe that KANU was in any way less than any other school.

After speaking with the participants, it became clear that the “counter-story” was in fact present *before* the founding story. Thus, perhaps it was not a counter-story at all. Stepping back, I had to remember to contextualize KANU within the history of education in Hawai‘i. With the arrival of Western missionaries in the 1820s came the establishment of educational institutions that promoted American values while disenfranchising Native language, culture, values, and identity (Kahakalau, 2000; Meyer, 2001). Disconnected from their cultural history and identities, Hawaiian children have not been as successful in Western educational constructs as their non-Hawaiian counterparts. From this perspective, what I termed the “counter-story” could instead be seen as the dominant educational narrative perpetuated by a system that esteemed Western values and practices, a narrative that deemed Hawaiian culture as less than and that labeled Hawaiian students as less than.

Nālei shared the goal of starting KANU was always to prove that Hawaiian education was equal to Western education. He stated Hawaiian culture was not valued in schooling and Hawaiian-based programs were not seen as “real education.” Maya shared that she believed her Western teaching credentials and experience would help her better KANU students until she encountered the founding story. Now, she no longer believes Western education is better than Hawaiian education. These educators were fighting the dominant institutional narrative of education as it existed from the 1820s and that continues to exist today. From this perspective, the founding story in actuality was the counter-story. KANU’s very existence was based upon a desire to dispel the notion that a Western education was the best education for all and to prove that an education rooted in Hawaiian culture was valuable and effective.

It became clear that efforts made to improve KANU, such as dual credit and study abroad opportunities, were to prove that KANU students could both be grounded in Hawaiian culture

and identity *and* successfully navigate a primarily Western world. The challenge was in how the latter was measured, because measurement outcomes were what affected public perception and measurement outcomes were still based on Western standards of success. To address this, educators at KANU were in the process of creating a cultural assessment for students, which would provide another way to recognize student achievement and school progress. Maya explained,

We're in the process of creating a culturally relevant assessment so that at each grade level, we can have more numbers and more data to produce to the [Charter School] Commission and to the Board of Education and say, 'You know what, this school is awesome. Our school, our students are not just their English language score grade, they're not just their STAR math assessment grade, they're this and they're much more.

Through these second interviews, it was clear two stories existed. The first was the dominant institutional educational narrative that Western education is the standard and that Hawaiian education was inferior to Western education. The second story was the school's founding story that sought to prove that education built on Hawaiian culture, language, and values could provide a place for Hawaiian students to thrive as individuals. This story emphasized that being rooted in Hawaiian cultural practices, knowing the Hawaiian language, and understanding one's place in the natural world around them, were all sources of strength, advantages and not disadvantages, from which students could grow and thrive, become leaders in their communities, and contribute positively as good citizens wherever they lived. The founding story was a story of identity and cultural preservation as much as it was about education. It challenged the dominant educational discourse by grounding students in a narrative rooted solidly in generations of cultural history, traditions, language and values, all of which were

present before the introduction of Western schooling. Maya explained the intentional focus on identity during the elementary school years:

We're establishing that identity of who you are. Well, who's your 'ohana of who you are, you know. Like the first question you're asked is like, 'What waters do you come from? What is your name?' You know, and we're not asking what actually is your name, but we're asking where do you come from? Who are your parents? Who are your grandparents? . . . To understand who you are 'cause they're always with you . . . and are a big part of your identity. And then yeah, and we, we start to go out to community, but this is where we like solidify 'ohana and genealogy, this is where we solidify place, and this is where we solidify all that. So, by the end of elementary, we can gift middle school with, okay, they've got a solid sense of who they are and who they are in their 'ohana, who they are in their class, who they are within this KANU community, and within Waimea. They are soccer players; they are chefs; they are . . . you know, letter writers or they are . . . wa'a (canoe) builders, a lot of wa'a family here, or they are ranchers . . . and then when they get older, they can you know, delve more into that.

### **Student Interviews**

In addition to interviewing the adults, I also interviewed four students. I analyzed their data independently from the adult data and found that student stories fell into four broad themes:

- (a) Hawaiian culture and identity;
- (b) Give help, receive help;
- (c) KANU is family; and
- (d) Voice and leadership.

**Hawaiian culture and identity.** The students all shared the importance of learning the Hawaiian culture and how they saw their culture as truly a part of their identity. Kaleo remarked, "the culture means to me . . . it shows our identity and it shows, shows our personality." He

continued, “I love how we get to learn our culture and we get to perpetuate it and we get to go out to the community and learn about different places and learn different things about our community.” The emphasis of schooling throughout all the interviews was on being grounded in Hawaiian culture and identity. Pua stated, “this school is different from like all the schools around because they teach us about our culture and like the true history of Hawai‘i.” Upon further inquiry, I identified three sub-categories within which students have embraced Hawaiian culture as their identity.

The first sub-category was taking an active part in ceremonies. Ceremonies were seen as an opportunity to engage in cultural practices. Kaleo stated, “I love doing ceremonies and practicing my culture and coming back and giving back to my community.” He shared that he had been doing ceremonies since he was in sixth grade and that he was particularly grateful to Uncle Nālei who taught him and continued to teach him about ceremonies. He described what he felt when doing ceremonies, “Like, when you’re in the ceremony, you feel, you feel different. You feel different energy over there. Like you feel like your ancestors is with you. It’s like, it’s really powerful when you do ceremonies.” Pua shared how her favorite school activities were the ceremonies, such as the Makahiki games, and how she appreciated not just learning about ceremonies but actually doing them.

A second sub-category of Hawaiian culture and identity was having a deep connection to the land and the places students came from. Kaleo expressed,

The ‘āina (land) is like our mom, she feeds us and takes care, takes care of us, so that’s why we have to mālama (to take care of) the ‘āina and take care of it because the ‘āina gives back to us and we give back to the ‘āina. Kōkua aku kōkua mai. Give help and



receive help. So yeah . . . And the ‘āina has like a lot of history so you can learn from the ‘āina anywhere you go.

This familial description of the land like his mother reflected an intimate connection and identification with the land. Malie shared how those who worked at the school shared their own deep connection to place with the students, grounding teaching and learning of culture in place. “We have kapa makers (tapa as made from bark) and we have lei hulu (garland of feathers) people and you know, people who know this land you know, by heart. They know every single pu‘u (hill). They know every single story about this place.” In a book of essays, poems, reflections, and photos written by staff and students in 2014, Pua wrote, “We are able to learn and observe the water, currents, tide, waves, and the living creatures that are in the waters. Not only do we observe the water but we observe the clouds, the winds, the weather and anything that can affect the ocean in any way” (Kanu o ka ‘Āina Public Charter School, 2013-2014, p. 9).

A third sub-category of Hawaiian culture and identity was seen in students knowing their genealogy. Knowing one’s genealogy was an important part of knowing one’s identity. Pua stated,

This school just helps you identify who you are as a culture. It helps you identify yourself culturally. Even if you’re not Hawaiian, they’ll still teach you to be proud of who you are and like when you do your mo’o kū‘auhau or your genealogy, you really look back at where you come from and where your grandparents originate from and if they migrated from other places . . . And really root yourself to who you are inside.

**Give help. Receive help.** A second theme within which student stories could be captured was seen in the value of giving help and receiving help, kōkua aku kōkua mai. This was, in fact, one of four specific values embraced by the school, values which were all based on Hawaiian

proverbs. While this theme may seem reflective of the theme of Hawaiian culture and identity, it was a value repeatedly recognized throughout the student interviews; and thus, I separated it as its own theme. Teachers were instrumental in modeling this value. It was the help that students received from teachers that in many cases propelled them to want to help others. Noah shared how, as a senior, he really hoped to step up and become a leader for the younger students. When asked where this desire came from, he stated it came from a teacher. “His name is Nālei Kahakalau. He’s really pushed us . . . he’s pushed every class. But I feel like he’s pushed us a lot. And I just wanna make sure that I’m a leader and make him proud.” Malie shared how her teachers have taught her to be giving regardless of the return.

Well, the teachers have taught me that even if you don’t have a lot, you . . . just still give it away . . . you know, they don’t get paid much, but they invest a lot. They’re always looking for kids improving, not only on their score, but improving like their mindsets, improving in maturity levels and that’s you know, that’s one of the biggest things . . . It’s not always about how much you’re losing but it’s how much the kids are gaining.

Malie not only received much from her teachers, but she was also generous in helping others. She shared, “I often find myself putting or investing my time and my money and pretty much anything else into you know, education, students, like helping kids. Because that’s what I’m passionate about; that’s what I found here.” She also embraced this value of giving help to students in other charter schools. She stated she was a part of a group of students who ran an annual charter school conference, which focused on improving all charter schools. Here, she described the conference:

So, whenever we host other schools, not only do we say . . . ‘Look at our great gym’ or you know, ‘Look at our field.’ We say, ‘This is how we got it. Like, how do you guys need help? This is how we get our money. This is how we got our funding.’

Together, they shared their concerns, and then discussed ways to tackle them. She continued, We brainstorm. Okay, how can we improve that? How do we do our program? We get our money from these people. And you know, through our relationship, maybe they can help you or maybe you can create a relationship between another organization.

Kaleo shared how he felt the responsibility to share wisdom gained from his kumu or teacher to the next generation. When asked what’s important to him, he explained, “sharing my mana‘o that I learned and my mo‘olelo (story) that I learned from my kumu and passing it on to the younger generation. ‘Cause if you don’t then who’s going to teach it to them? So that’s my goal.”

**KANU is family.** The third theme found within the student interviews was a strongly stated belief that KANU was family. This was repeated again and again by all four interviewees. One way they shared this was in how they described the close relationships they had with students and teachers. Kaleo declared,

This school is more, more like a family. Like, we know, we know each other. And, like if you went to a different school, you would only know like certain people and not everybody’s close like how we are at this school. The teachers care more about us over here, about our education. And we get to learn life skills and stuff.

Noah stated, “It’s family. Over here it’s . . . everybody’s close. We all get along. We may have some disagreements at some times with students or teachers, but at the end of the day, we’re . . . it’s family. I love it here.” Pua shared, “Over here, everybody’s friends and you know everybody and we’re all family and you’re nice to all the little kids and all the big kids.” Malie stated, “we

appreciate the conversations and the relationship between us and administration or us and you know, the teachers.” The school was a community that they referred to as their family. Malie shared a story about one of her favorite school activities, an overnight camp at the beginning of the school year, where students bond with each other. It’s a story that illustrated how bonds were created not just with a few students, but with everyone.

I mean we bond through team work and we bond through forgetting, just forgetting our shyness and leaving our egos behind because I mean that’s, that’s one of the biggest things that breaks, breaks people apart. And so, we leave all that behind. Everyone has to go work in the mud and everyone participates in the mud fight. And there’s no person left out. No one’s left clean. So, it, it’s kind of bringing all the kids down to one level of understanding. Especially when kids from public schools come in. That’s, that’s one of the biggest problems that we have. Because when they come in through public schools, they have that mindset of, ‘Oh, who’s the popular kids? I need to be the popular one. I need to, you know, I need to be the boss. I need to, you know, be at this level. If not, then you know I’m going to be bullied.’ You know, it’s this whole crazy idea. So, when they come here, they try to perpetuate that and we’re like, no . . . you know, and then throw mud at them. It’s, it’s, yeah, it’s just bringing them down to one level of understanding that we are all the same you know, species. We might have different backgrounds but no one’s better than the other, yeah.

This was an interesting inside look at how students treated their relationships with each other. Regardless of who you were, everyone was close, everyone was part of a family. They identified themselves as not just students, but family members of the school, which connotes a much more intimate relationship. Pua, when asked how she would identify herself, stated that she would

identify herself as “a family member in the school, I guess because I’ve done a lot of things in school like some of the younger kids look at me as like one of the people that always get involved and stuff.”

Another sub-category of KANU being family was how students were proud of their school and proud to be a part of their school. Kaleo shared, “the value that this school taught us is to always be proud of where you come from and to always represent your school, your family, your teachers, your community, and your nation. So, I just gotta represent those and keep moving forward.” Not only were students proud to be a part of their school, they took that pride to the greater community. This third sub-category was that students loved representing their school in the community or wherever they were. Contrary to the adults’ desire to fight what they believed to be a negative public perception of the school, the students loved representing their school in their community. Kaleo stated, “our school, we have logos, our school logo. So, like when you go around town, like, you’ll see like kids with the logos and a lot of kids love representing KANU and they love what, what we do over here.” Malie used her internship as an opportunity to share not only her school’s accomplishments, but also the needs and challenges they had, in hopes of receiving funding to improve the school’s science program.

‘Look at our school, we have so many accomplishments, but we don’t have a strong science program or astronomy program. What can you guys do to help us?’ So, they spend millions of dollars on education and like, just all observatories . . . they spend so much money but it’s going to certain schools that already have a lot of money. And it’s like, ‘Hey look at us.’ You know, so, through my internships, they kind of looked at, okay, how can we take some of our funding and you know, funnel it to these smaller schools instead of big you know, big name schools.

**Voice and leadership.** The fourth theme found in the student interviews was how students embraced their voice and leadership. Students shared how the school provided multiple opportunities for them to find and express their voice, whether it was through projects or presentations. Kaleo remarked, “Everyone is confident because in school we get to do different projects and we get to present to the whole class so that builds up our confidence. And being able to talk in front of a big crowd and like, yeah, learning how to talk.” He shared that he was not naturally one to get up and speak before people. “I got to interact with more people ‘cause I used to be quiet before. Also, I learned how to speak to other people, like speak to a crowd. ‘Cause before I couldn’t do that.” All four students shared this desire to use their voices to lead and enact change around them. This was seen in three ways: how students were an active voice in school change; how students looked for opportunities to serve in their community; and how they publicly voiced their opinions on political issues. Thus, the sub-categories of this theme of voice and leadership were (a) school change, (b) community action and (c) political engagement.

Perhaps due to the close relationships amongst teachers, students, and administrators, students shared that they felt the freedom to discuss changes they desired to see in the school. They also knew that their voices would be heard and considered, and that their voices could affect change on their school campus. Noah shared how he could discuss school concerns or desires amongst classmates and if they all felt strongly about something, they would share that with the principal who would then share it with the school board. An example of a change that took place after student discussion and initiation was bringing back a two-night, three-day camp for middle and high school students at the beginning of the year. This was a camp that many students missed and wanted to bring back, and as a result, Noah shared they would be having the camp again from the following year. He also shared,

Over here, we all have a voice. We've had our ups and downs but this, these past few years, we've been, been able to express ourselves to the faculty and tell them maybe what we want or not want, what we need, and they've done their best to give it to us.

Malie shared how students could speak directly to their teachers about whatever they felt was obstructing their learning in the classroom.

And a lot of students have a say in things. If they, you know, for example if a teacher isn't really appealing to them, especially middle school, like at that age, they have a very short attention span, so they tell teachers like, 'Okay, this is a problem.' Whether it's the tone of voice or whether it's the words they use, they ask, 'Can you please explain that word? or Can you please not speak in a monotone voice?' I don't know if that happens in other schools.

The second sub-category of voice and leadership was community action. Students demonstrated voice and leadership in how they used their voices to make a difference in their community. Malie shared a story that demonstrated this focus on voice and leadership at KANU.

It's good to come to a place where we actually get to develop a voice because a lot of times we're told, 'Oh don't say that, you can't say that.' So it's like, 'Hey you know, I actually, I have a voice, I have an opinion.' And a lot of kids who come from public schools, like it's, it's really hard for them to transition into that kind of mindset, but once, once they get that, it's amazing of what the things that they say. Like one of the girls in the senior class, she came from public school, and she was more into the mainstream things. She like, her conversations only, you know, it was only gossip and that kind of stuff. What's going on with celebrities, things that we don't really care about. But she learned that there's more things to talk about. So, she talked about community issues, oh

you know, sedimentation of the ocean. How can we fix that? And she became really connected through those conversations and she put together a junior marine biology camp where she hosted a bunch of kids from Kauai, from here, and then she got mentors and she put together this camp, and they all you know tried to inspire each other to really pull together that marine biology community and just inspire kids to follow that.

Students were aware of what was happening in their community and they were encouraged to engage in discussions around community issues during class. Malie shared, “We’re all from this community and when there’s a problem, we all you know, we talk to our teachers, like ‘Hey did you hear about this? Can we talk about this in the class?’ As long as it matches the class.”

The third sub-category was political engagement. Students were not only serving others and helping to solve problems in the community, they were also politically minded and engaged in voicing their opinions on the political front. Malie remarked,

You know, we can talk about, you know, the current, the current political system with elections or you know the TMT<sup>2</sup> and things that are affecting us, and many times we have taken the whole school and gone to protest and you know done a lot of those things and we’re able to do that and we’re really glad.

The theme of leadership was prevalent, not just in enacting change on school, community, and political levels, but also as a characteristic, which students embraced for themselves and their lives. Noah shared,

---

<sup>2</sup> TMT refers to ‘the Thirty Meter’ telescope that astronomers would like to build on Mauna Kea, a volcano site on Hawai‘i island. This would be the biggest and most expensive telescope in the Northern Hemisphere, but approval of the building permit has been stalled in the Hawaii Supreme Court with members of the Hawaiian community opposing its building on the grounds that Mauna Kea is of historic and cultural importance and should not be built upon.



I think if I was at a different school, I don't think I would be the person I am today. I don't think I would, I don't think . . . oh I would want to be a leader, but I don't think I would take it as seriously as I would if I was at this school. 'Cause at this school, we, they want leadership and most kids want to show it. So that's what I think . . . this school's really shaped me.

A visual map of the themes that emerged from the student interviews can be seen in Figure 2.

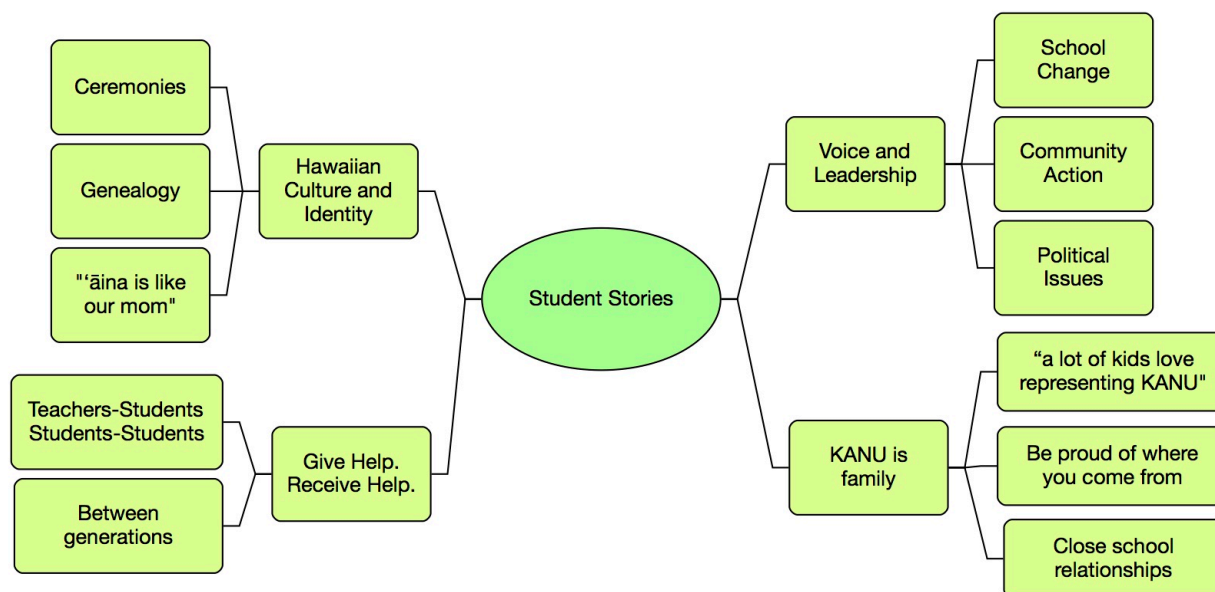


Figure 2. Stories Identified in Student Interviews

### Student Second Interviews

During my third visit to KANU, I re-interviewed Noah and Pua who by then had become seniors. During this second interview, students first watched an edited clip of the prominent themes that appeared in their initial interviews. Students were given the opportunity to affirm, clarify, or further explain anything they had originally said.

Both students replied that they still agreed with everything they had said and that they had nothing to add. We then reviewed the visual map together and students were given an opportunity again to affirm, clarify, or further explain anything they did not agree with. Both

would nod their agreement as we went through the map. At one point, Noah was not only nodding, but smiling. I stopped and asked him what his smile meant, and he replied, “I agree with everybody . . . I feel like it’s all connected, that we feel like the same; so, just it’s good that everybody’s on the same page and wanting to do something for this school and this community.” When sharing about KANU being like family, Noah added another story to affirm the pride students felt toward their school.

When our Makahiki team goes to Molokai to play, . . . we wear our red KANU shirts and whenever we get out of the van, they know that KANU’s there and ready to play . . . But we also keep this humbleness where we’ll be proud of who we are and play really hard but we won’t boast about the school and think that our school’s better than your school.

Noah also affirmed his agreement with the visual map.

Actually, I feel like all this right here is KANU. This is KANU right on this piece of paper. It’s who we are. I feel like all the people who’s been interviewed had really put in and loved this school. So, I agree with everything that everybody said and agree with what I’ve said, so yeah, I think this, everything there is . . . good.

As we finished up his interview, I asked him if he thought students ten years from now would share similar stories resulting in similar themes as the ones we discussed today. He answered with a nod and a smile,

Most definitely. Yeah, I feel like the younger generation is getting more more like involved in, they’re getting more nurtured too when they come up to high school. So, I totally agree in ten years if you were to come back and interview KANU students, they would say the same things that are right there.

Pua also affirmed everything she said in her video. She also agreed with the visual map and didn't have anything to add. However, she did add a comment affirming her view on the political sub-category of voice and leadership. She said,

I think the political part is good . . . We're trying to step up in that too. I know Uncle Nālei said that one time in the beginning stages of KANU, he took his students to a rally on O'ahu or like a, what is those things . . . contested hearing . . . Yeah, and like they, they talked . . . All the kids went up and told them like, 'No you can't do this; you can't build this.' It was something about building a . . . knocking down a bunch of trees to build something, and the kids were like, 'No, we can't do this.' And they were like a day away from signing that paper, and then once the kids came, like they were like, 'Okay, we can't do this.' Like that, that stuck with me when he told us about that. And I was like, 'Oh my God. That was so cool.'

Pua also shared the influence KANU has had on all students, "KANU definitely helped to influence . . . the kids' lives, to be proud and just stand up for what you believe in."

The second interviews with students affirmed the visual map of student stories. The next section will address the extent to which these student stories reflected the school narratives as formed through the stories shared by the adults.

### **Comparing the School Narrative and Student Stories**

The dominant story repeated by the adults was that of the founding story, a narrative that KANU was created to provide Hawaiian education for Hawaiian students, education that was place-based and project-based, education that was rooted in Hawaiian language, history, and culture, education that put the student first with aloha. The narrative continued through prominent themes present in the school today, including respect for time as seen through the

importance of ceremonies and knowing one's genealogy, respect for people as seen through KANU being a family and students being encouraged for their individual skills and interests, and respect for place as seen in hands-to-the-ground learning and giving back to the community.

The second story that emerged was that there was a public perception that KANU was less than when compared to other schools, a perception that belied the actual accomplishments of the school and its students. The story in fact stemmed from the historically dominant institutional narrative that Western education was valued above Hawaiian education. While teachers and staff struggled with this perception and saw the school increasingly address Western standards of accomplishments, such as offering dual college credits and AP and Honors classes, they themselves were not assessing their success based on these standards and were in fact creating a culturally based rubric to provide an alternate means of assessment for their students.

To what extent, then, do the student stories reflect these school narratives? When reviewing the student stories, the strongest argument that supports students affirming the founding story was their strong identification with the Hawaiian culture that was seen through the themes of respecting time, people, and place. The students embraced this respect for time by acknowledging their responsibility to learn from their elders and then to teach the younger generations, to continue practicing ceremonies, and to know their genealogies. They embraced a respect for people by giving and receiving help with classmates and teachers and by nurturing close relationships with all school members. They embraced a respect for place as seen by their deep connection to the land as well as their strong desire to be involved in their community through service and leadership. There was a strong connection between culture and identity.

In regards to the second story that emerged from the adult interviews, the students did not share the same sentiments as the adults regarding fighting the public perception that KANU was

inferior to other schools. In fact, students were proud to be a part of KANU, they were proud to wear the KANU logo in their community, proud to represent their school. They did not see themselves as receiving an education that was less than other schools. By contrast, they felt they were getting more education, they were getting cultural knowledge and grounding while at the same time being prepared for life. Noah shared,

What I like best about this school is . . . it's not always in the classroom. We're not always looking through textbooks 24/7, eight hours a day through the whole day . . . We go outside, we put our hands to the ground, we get our hands dirty, we plant. It's just different from other schools. I'm not saying other schools don't go outside and do that stuff, but over here we try to balance it like [we can] be outside working with our hands and also be in our classroom getting us ready for life.

This student also affirmed that this was why the school was created, "We wanted to have those Hawaiian values and Hawaiian traditions come to this school and also be able to send kids to college and . . . get them ready for life." Malie remarked,

I know that if I did not come here, I wouldn't have the opportunities that I've gotten over the years . . . Like I've traveled around the world. I've done so many things because you know, that's what they want you to do. They want to train people, train students to become amazing world citizens and still give back to the community.

She continued, "When you come here, you see [Hawaiian cultural-based learning] actually does work. It's this whole new idea and I don't know, people believe in that idea more when they're here."

Not only did the students share an appreciation for their school, they also shared personal future aspirations that were not limited in any way by thoughts of being "less than," nor were

they limited by culture or location. When asked where they saw themselves in 10 years, Kalei saw himself “playing football and getting [his] education in mechanics and auto body.” He also shared how ceremonies were an important part of his life and that he wanted to continue participating in them even after graduation. Noah said he wanted to go to college to become an athletic trainer. He also shared the importance of keeping the values of KANU throughout his life. He stated,

One value is kulia ia ka nu‘u, which means strive to reach your highest. And I try to live that out everyday. Sometimes there’s some hard days where I just can’t do it and I don’t want to do it and I refuse to do it, but I want to really take that value and put it out into my life and ten years down the road, I want to still live that value . . . Another one is aloha kekahi i kekahi, love one another. That’s another one that I want to live by for the rest of my life.

Malie said she was considering pursuing a career in education because she was passionate about helping kids. She shared, “I often find myself putting or investing my time and my money and pretty much anything else into you know, education, students, like helping kids because that’s what I’m passionate about, that’s what I found here.” Her attitude reflected the cultural values of loving others and giving help where needed. Pua stated she wanted to go to college to study art, in particular indigenous and cultural art. She also shared that what she liked best about the school was learning and practicing the culture through events, activities, and ceremonies, particularly those that were held outdoors.

One explanation for students not embracing this story that KANU was less than other schools was that while the adults perceived this negative judgement by the public, there were no occasions for remembering that engaged students in this particular story. Based upon Linde’s

(2009) work, it is the occasions for remembering that bring core stories of the past into the present further connecting members to each other and to the organization. The story of KANU being less than was not told to students, nor could it then be repeated amongst the students, and thus it did not become part of their identity as members of the school. By contrast, the adult participants were perhaps wrestling with this story every time they saw standardized test results that did not reflect who they felt their students were.

## Chapter 5: Discussion

### Contributions to Practice

This study contributes to educational practice in that much of the research I found on organizational remembering and collective identity was based on organizational and management research, revealing the substantial relevance this literature can have to educational institutions. Of particular importance to educational organizations may be further exploration into the idea of occasions for remembering. This study indicated that occasions for remembering were of significant importance in helping KANU sustain its cultural narrative and identity in the midst of being continuously assessed according to Western scales of achievement. While this study was specific to a Hawaiian culture-based charter school, all schools could benefit from further understanding the role occasions for remembering play in creating an institutional identity shared by both staff and students.

**Occasions for remembering.** In this study of Kanu o ka 'Āina, I found there existed a core stock of stories that revolved around a dominant narrative that educators created KANU to provide a Hawaiian culture-based education that was rooted in a respect for time, respect for people, and respect for place. Within KANU's school system and structure were numerous occasions for students and staff to remember and repeat this core narrative on a regular basis, and this, perhaps more than the stories themselves, solidified students' identification as members of the school. These occasions for remembering were particularly effective in that they were: (a) practices of doing; (b) practices of collective unity; and (c) practices reflecting cultural values that dictated individual ways of being within the organization.

***Remembering as a practice of doing.*** The occasions for remembering were practices of doing, such that past stories were experienced and expressed in the present. Stories were not



simply shared orally or through written texts, they were remembered through a practice of action. According to Feldman and Feldman (2006), organizational remembering is “a complex, culturally and historically situated process and practice, enacted by socially defined and emotionally charged persons in their communities of practice” (p. 868). Similarly, Adoriso (2014) described organizational remembering as “narrative, where the storying organizes the selection and interpretation of past events in a relational and experiential remembering process that does not belong to the past but lives in the present from which it is activated and in which it crystallizes” (p. 466). Remembering the past is an active process such that the past is brought forth in the present and becomes a part of the experiences and memory of the members of the organization.

This idea that occasions for remembering are active processes and practices was particularly evident at KANU where rituals and events were created based upon historical and cultural stories. One example of how occasions for remembering were practices of doing was in piko. Many of the interviewees mentioned the importance of piko. It was a daily occasion for remembering and connecting students to the past, to place, and to each other. Scot, the sixth and seventh grade social studies teacher and the academy planning coordinator, shared that students who graduated would always come back and express how much they missed piko, indicating how piko was not just a recognition of stories, but was indeed a part of students’ memories and experiences.

***Remembering as a collective practice.*** The occasions for remembering were also collective practices, bringing students and staff together in collective experiences. Just as piko involved the collective actions of staff and students, there was also the annual Hula Drama event when all KANU students in grades K-12, performed hula, chants, and dramas about Hawaii’s

native history and culture to an audience of hundreds from the community. There were other events, such as the E Ola Pono (to live righteously; to do what is right) week-long camp for middle and high school students held at the beginning of the school year. Malie described this as a time for bonding and “bringing all kids down to one level of understanding” regardless of age or number of years one attended KANU.

Remembering as a collective practice was not limited to events and school activities; it was also present in daily classroom learning. Student interviewees shared how older students often taught younger students. During my observations, I often observed students working together as a class, in small groups, or in pairs. In addition, students and adults all shared how they felt KANU was a family, reflecting close relationships maintained throughout the school.

***Remembering as a reflection of cultural values.*** Finally, the occasions for remembering reflected everyday practices of cultural values, and thus, were a collective way of acting and being that filtered down to the individual level. According to Feldman and Feldman (2006), “Remembering that identifies goodness shows why organizational members should care about their organizations and others who work there. It may provide models for behavior and lead to gratitude that further deepens commitment to the organization” (p. 879). In every interview and in every classroom, the values held by the school were repeated. The four values were (a) aloha kekahi i kekahi (love one another), (b) kōkua aku kōkua mai (give help, receive help), (c) mālama i kou kuleana (take care of your responsibilities) and (d) mahalo i ka mea loa‘a (be thankful for what we have). In the majority of the interviews, these four values were shared with me first in Hawaiian, followed by their English translation. A couple of the adult interviewees also shared that the values were adopted from ancient Hawaiian proverbs. Thus, the school values were an integration of Hawaiian language, Hawaiian history, and Hawaiian culture,

reflecting a Hawaiian epistemology and worldview that was espoused by the school. Many of the interviewees described their school experiences in relation to one or more of these values.

The four values also supported KANU's core narrative identity. Aloha kekahi i kekahi grounded students in a respect for all people. The students and staff shared the love they had for each other and for the school, and how they felt they truly were a family, such that everyone knew everyone and everyone was accepted. Kōkua aku kōkua mai was a value that reflected a respect for people and for place. Students and staff helped one another. Older students helped younger students. Teachers helped students. Teachers helped each other. Students and staff also felt a responsibility to the place in which they lived, wanting to help others in their community. Mālama i kou kuleana reflected an appreciation for those who had paved the way for the present and a sense of responsibility to live in a way that took care of the present for the future, whether that meant taking care of one's land, one's family, one's community, or one's own character. And finally mahalo i ka mea loa'a reflected an appreciation for history, for elders, for family, for everyone and everything, past and present, that one has.

These values were repeated in all the interviews. They were repeated in stories shared about school activities and events, in stories shared about the school's history, in stories shared about personal aspirations. They were continually repeated by adults and students, reflecting the extent to which these values were embraced as a way of being. Having occasions for remembering tied to cultural values and everyday practices strengthened the life of the school's core stories by having them now live in the lives of students and staff.

Occasions for remembering that were grounded in collective, experiential practices and that were grounded in a values system that members of the school embraced allowed for core stories of the school to be brought forth from the past and to thrive in the present. The narratives

of the students interviewed suggested that students not only knew these core stories, but that they believed them to be true and important in their own lives.

### **Theoretical and Practical Implications**

The findings of this study highlighted the ways in which a Hawaiian culture-based charter school embraced a sociocultural approach to teaching and learning, where learning occurred within the context of social and cultural activities, mediated by language, artifacts, and other cultural tools. (Cole, 1990; Moll, 2000). The study was also consistent with literature on culture-based education (Kana'iaupuni & Kawai'ae'e, 2008; Kana'iaupuni, Ledward, & Jensen, 2010), which emphasizes "the grounding of instruction and student learning in the values, norms, knowledge, beliefs, practices, experiences, places, and language that are the foundation of a culture" (Kana'iaupuni & Kawai'ae'a, 2008, p. 71).

The core story told and retold by students and staff at Kanu o ka 'Āina revolved around Hawaiian values, culture, history, and traditions. reflecting an approach to schooling that was "*culturally mediated, historically developing, and [arose] from practical activity*" (Cole, 1990, p. 91). KANU provided learning that grounded students in stories of the land, in their genealogies, and in ancient ceremonies, practices, and knowledge, all of which were expressed in the Hawaiian language and rooted in Hawaiian cultural values. Students were placed in a learning context situated in everyday experiences and surroundings. They learned from the land; they learned from the ocean; they learned through dances and chants that told stories of their ancestors. Students and staff shared how learning took place on canoes, in valleys, in gardens outside classrooms and on fieldtrips. There had been little observed or mentioned of learning through textbooks or teaching for test-taking.

Not only was learning contextualized, but by placing students in a cultural, historical, and place-based context, the students themselves were contextualized within their environment. They became a part of the history about which they were learning. They became part of the land upon which they were learning. They became part of a story that included the past, the present, and the future, a story larger than an educational institution, a story that would continue long after they graduated from KANU. This was evident in students' familial descriptions of the land, in students' desires to pass down the wisdom they learned from their elders to the younger generations, in students' feelings of connection to their ancestors during ceremonies, and in students' expressing that knowing their genealogy was a part of knowing who they were.

Much of this sociocultural and culture-based approach to teaching and learning occurred through occasions for remembering that provided students with opportunities to engage in cultural practices collectively as well as to individually embrace the cultural values upon which these practices were rooted. Occasions for remembering such as the daily morning piko gatherings or the annual Hula Drama performance placed students in the center of actively and collectively engaging in storytelling through chants and hula and other traditional, cultural protocol. These occasions for remembering brought individual and social processes of learning together, another important component of a sociocultural approach to schooling (John-Steiner & Meehan, 2000). Students shared that they participated in both collective activities such as piko as well as individual activities such as one student's successful organization of a junior marine biology camp to address sedimentation of the ocean. In their interviews, students embraced their individual and their collective voices. They both identified as members of a KANU family as well as stated their comfort with expressing their own voice.

The practical implications of this study are two-fold. The first is that this study of KANU highlights the importance of knowing what occasions for remembering exist, whether intentional or unintentional, and the subsequent stories that are told and retold on these occasions. The second implication is to consider the importance of occasions for remembering in addressing equity in education at the policy level.

While educators may believe they know the core stories that contribute to social and individual learning processes and identities, a closer look at existing occasions for remembering may unveil the actual stories that are told and retold as well as the degree to which these stories are embraced by students and staff. Educators may consider what stories are being told by staff and students on a daily basis, what stories students are hearing and what stories students are repeating. Just as important as knowing the stories being told and retold, it is also helpful to know what stories are not being repeated. In this study of KANU, adult interviews revealed an often-repeated concern that KANU was inferior to other schools. Adult interviewees felt the public held a negative perception of the school, seeing it as a last resort for students who could not succeed in other schools. However, student interviewees did not express this same sentiment. They did not express that they felt inferior to students from other schools. In fact, two of the interviewees had left KANU for other schools and then returned, expressing a greater sense of belonging to KANU than the schools they previously attended. Students also expressed pride in being part of KANU and described the school as family. This suggests the importance of occasions for remembering in not only solidifying certain stories, but also ensuring there are no occasions to remember those stories which do not reflect the values or goals of a school.

Occasions for remembering are also important when considering the context within which Hawaiian-based schools exist. The system and structure of schooling in Hawai'i has been

dominated by an educational discourse that situates Western values as the norm for educational policies and practices. Western standards have also dictated measurements of school and student success. However, KANU students shared their deep identification and respect for Hawaiian cultural values and practices, both personally and collectively as members of their school. They did not refer to themselves as being inferior to non-Hawaiian students. They did not refer to their education as being less than those of any other school. In fact, they knew their school provided cultural experiences not provided at other schools, and they saw this as an advantage and opportunity to be more deeply connected to their culture and community. KANU students also believed in their own voices and desired to use their voices to enact positive change around them. Students were connected to their learning environment and to each other. They knew who they were. They knew their genealogies; they were connected to their culture. They also had career aspirations and desired to be contributing members in their communities. The educational discourse that Western ways of knowing were the only way to succeed was not present in students' references to their school or themselves, nor was the narrative that Hawaiian students could not be successful in school. KANU educators provided their students with instructional tools and practices consistent with a Hawaiian epistemological worldview, completely replacing the dominant Western educational discourse.

Occasions for remembering stories on a regular basis helped ground KANU students in their cultural identities and contributed to solidifying an educational discourse based on a Hawaiian epistemological worldview. From a policy standpoint, this exemplifies the importance of re-contextualizing educational policies and practices to allow for multiple narratives across all public schools. What are the stories that dictate policy and that contribute to the dominant educational discourse? What are the stories and the occasions for remembering them that

continue to promote a monolingual, monocultural educational system? To provide equity in education means allowing for occasions for remembering to all students such that their stories will not be silenced. Whether through ceremony or the arts, these occasions for remembering were integral to the educational experiences of KANU students.

Another policy-oriented implication is to consider the notion that Hawaiian-based charter schools should not be the only place students can learn without their cultural identities being silenced. There is a responsibility of public education policymakers to embrace a multilingual, multicultural worldview in education that does not compromise students' cultural identities. Educators and educational leaders should support all schools, not just Hawaiian-based charter schools, to be more inclusive of occasions for remembering that allow students to celebrate and value who they are.

### **Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research**

The findings in this study were based on a case study of one Hawaiian culture-based charter school and thus are limited in scope to this one school. The stories and the resulting narrative were unique to this school and cannot be extended to other schools. However, the study did indicate that listening for stories and the occasions for telling and retelling them may be a useful way to identify existing school narratives in other schools as well as to assess the extent to which their students embrace and identify with those narratives. Future research might address what stories and narratives exist at other schools, both Hawaiian culture-based charter schools and other Department of Education public schools.

The findings in this study also captured the stories and narratives of KANU at a particular point in time. The findings are not definitive beyond the period of study. The school changed since its inception and continues to do so, which may in time affect the stories and school



narrative. For example, at the founding of the school, students applied and were accepted based on the school's belief the student would be a good fit. This resulted in almost 90% of students being part-Hawaiian (Kahakalau, 2003). Within the last seven years, the Charter School Commission changed school acceptance to a lottery system, which some adult interviewees expressed could affect student demographics, reducing the percentage of Native Hawaiian students. At the time of this study, Native Hawaiians comprised approximately 75% of the student population ("Kanu," 2016). Over time, it is possible that the lottery system could reduce the Hawaiian student population further. If so, future research could investigate whether or not this would change the extent to which students identify with the school narrative. Other potential changes, such as campus expansion or a change in leadership, could also change the stories told and the resulting school narrative. As KANU continues to grow and perhaps as their public perception changes, it would be interesting to conduct future studies of the school's core stories and their occasions for remembrance. Future research could address the following questions:

(a) As KANU increases their indicators of success from a Western perspective, will this change the school narrative and the cultural identification of its students to that narrative? (b) In what ways will the culturally relevant assessment being created affect the school narrative and the cultural identification of its students to that narrative? (c) What are the stories and narrative of KANU in 10 years? In 20 years? Only time will tell what stories remain and what occasions for remembering continue or perhaps what new stories are told and retold through new occasions for remembering.

## References

- Adoriso, A. L. M. (2014). Organizational remembering as narrative: 'Storying' the past in banking. *Organization*, 21(4), 463-476. doi:10.1177/1350508414527248
- Albert, S., & Whetten, D. A. (1985). Organizational identity. In L. L. Cummings & B. M. Staw (Eds.), *Research in organizational behavior: An annual series of analytical essays and critical reviews* (pp. 263-295). Connecticut: JAI Press Inc.
- Benham, M. K. P., & Heck, R. H. (1998). *Culture and educational policy in Hawai'i: The silencing of native voices*. New York: Routledge.
- Benamina, J. I. K. (2010). Tēnā: A learning lifestyle. *Hūlili: Multidisciplinary Research on Hawaiian Well-Being*, 6, 9-23.
- Brown, A. D. (2006). A narrative approach to collective identities. *Journal of Management Studies*, 43(4), 731-753.
- Clandinin, D. J. (2013). *Engaging in narrative inquiry*. Walnut Creek: Left Coast Press, Inc.
- Cole, M. (1990). Cognitive development and formal schooling: The evidence from cross-cultural research. In L. C. Moll (Ed.), *Vygotsky and education: Instructional implications and applications of sociohistorical psychology* (pp. 89-110). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (2015). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Corntassel, J. (2008). Toward sustainable self-determination: Rethinking the contemporary indigenous-rights discourse. *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political*, 33(1), 105-132.
- Coulthard, G. S. (2014). *Red skin, white masks: Rejecting the colonial politics of recognition*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

- Cummins, J. (2000). *Language, power and pedagogy: Bilingual children in the crossfire*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, Ltd.
- Davis, K. A. (1999). The sociopolitical dynamics of indigenous language maintenance and loss: A framework for language policy and planning. In T. Huebner & K. A. Davis (Eds.), *Sociopolitical perspectives on language policy and planning in the USA* (pp. 67-98). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2008). Introduction: The discipline and practice of qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The landscape of qualitative research* (pp. 1-43).
- Dotts, C. K., & Sikkema, M. (1994). *Challenging the status quo: Public education in Hawaii 1840-1980*. Honolulu: Hawaii Education Association.
- Dunford, B. (1991, December). Language and heritage: A controversial language-immersion program in Hawaii is preserving the native culture. *The Executive Educator*, 38-39.
- Eichstaedt, P. (2006). A matter of survival. *Diverse Issues in Higher Education*, 23(19), 28-31.
- Eyre, K. (2004). *Suppression of Hawaiian culture at Kamehameha Schools*. Retrieved from Ka'iwakīloumoku Hawaiian Cultural Center website:  
[https://apps.ksbe.edu/kaiwakiloumoku/makalii/feature-stories/suppression\\_of\\_hawaiian\\_culture](https://apps.ksbe.edu/kaiwakiloumoku/makalii/feature-stories/suppression_of_hawaiian_culture)
- Feldman, R. M., & Feldman, S. P. (2006). What links the chain: An essay on organizational remembering as practice. *Organization*, 13(6), 861-887.
- Finn, C. E., Jr., Manno, B. V., & Vanourek, G. (2000). *Charter schools in action: Renewing public education*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

- Fukumoto, K. (2002). *On the level? Policy, law and the charter school movement* (Report No. 4). Honolulu, HI: Legislative Reference Bureau.
- Goodyear-Ka'ōpua, N. (2005). *Kū i ka Māna: Building community and nation through contemporary Hawaiian schooling*. (Doctoral dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (305004097). Retrieved from <http://eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/305004097?accountid=27140>
- Goodyear-Ka'ōpua, N. (2013). *The seeds we planted: Portraits of a native Hawaiian charter school*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Goodyear-Ka'ōpua, N. (2014). Introduction. In N. Goodyear-Ka'ōpua, I. Hussey, E. K. Wright (Eds.), *A nation rising: Hawaiian movements for life, land, and sovereignty* (pp. 1-33). Durham: Duke University Press.
- Goodyear-Ka'ōpua, N., Kauai, W., Maioho, K., & Winchester, 'Ī. (2008). Teaching amid U.S. occupation: Sovereignty, survival, and social studies in a Native Hawaiian charter school. *Hūlili: Multidisciplinary Research on Hawaiian Well-Being*, 5, 155-201.
- Hanohano, P. (1999). The spiritual imperative of Native epistemology: Restoring harmony and balance to education. *Canadian Journal of Native Education*, 23 (2), 206-226.
- Hansen, A. D. (2011). *Kanu o ka 'Āina: Navigating between two worlds* (Master's thesis). Retrieved from <http://hdl.handle.net/10125/21101>
- Harrell, M. C., & Bradley, M. A. (2009). *Data collection methods: Semi-structured interviews and focus groups*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation. Retrieved from RAND Corporation website: [http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/technical\\_reports/2009/RAND\\_TR718.pdf](http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/technical_reports/2009/RAND_TR718.pdf)

- Hawai‘i State Department of Education (2016, February 9). Celebrating February as Hawaiian language month. Retrieved from <http://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/ConnectWithUs/MediaRoom/PressReleases/Pages/Hawaiian-Language-Month-English.aspx>
- Herzog, H. (2012). Interview location and its social meaning. In J. F. Gubrium, J. A. Holstein, A. B. Marvasti, & K. D. McKinney (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of interview research: The complexity of the craft* (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, pp. 115-128). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Hinton, L. (2011). Language revitalization and language pedagogy: New teaching and learning strategies. *Language and Education*, 25(4), 307-318.
- Ho‘omanawanui, K. (2004). Hä, mana, leo (breath, spirit, voice): Kanaka Maoli empowerment through literature [Special issue]. *American Indian Quarterly*, 28(1/2), 86-91.
- Ho‘omanawanui, K. (2008). ‘Ike ‘āina: Native Hawaiian culturally based indigenous literacy. *Hūlili: Multidisciplinary Research on Hawaiian Well-Being*, 5, 155-201.
- Howard-Grenville, J., Metzger, M. L., & Meyer, A. D. (2013). Rekindling the flame: Processes of identity resurrection. *Academy of Management Journal*, 56(1), 113-136.
- Humphreys, M., & Brown, A. D. (2002). Narratives of organizational identity and identification: A case study of hegemony and resistance. *Organizational Studies*, 23(3), 421-447.
- John-Steiner, V., & Mahn, H. (1996). Sociocultural approaches to learning and development: A Vygotskian framework. *Educational Psychologist*, 31(3/4), 191-206.
- John-Steiner, V. P., & Meehan, T. M. (2000). Creativity and collaboration in knowledge construction. In C. Lee, & P. Smagorinsky (Eds.), *Vygotskian perspectives on literacy*

- research: Constructing meaning through collaborative inquiry* (pp. 31-48). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- John-Steiner, V., & Soubberman, E. (1978). Afterword. In L. S. Vygotsky., & M. Cole. *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes* (pp. 121-133). Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Kahakalau, K. (2003). *Kanu o ka 'Āina- Natives of the land from generations back: A pedagogy of Hawaiian liberation* (Doctoral dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (UMI No. 3081054)
- Kamakau, S. M. (1992). *Ruling chiefs of Hawaii* (Rev. ed.). Honolulu: Kamehameha Schools Press.
- Kame'eleihiwa, L. (1992a). Kula Kaiapuni: Hawaiian immersion schools. *The Kamehameha Journal of Education*, 109-118.
- Kame'eleihiwa, L. (1992b). *Native land and foreign desires: How shall we live in harmony?* Honolulu: Bishop Museum Press.
- Kana'iaupuni, S., Ledward, B., & Jensen, U. (2010). *Culture-based education and its relationship to student outcomes*. Retrieved from Kamehameha Schools' Strategic Planning and Implementation website: <http://www.ksbe.edu/spi/reports/>
- Kana'iaupuni, S. M. (2005). Ka'akālai kū kanaka: A call for strengths-based approaches from a Native Hawaiian perspective. *Educational Researcher*, 34(5), 32-38.
- Kana'iaupuni, S. M. (2008). He pūko'a kani 'āina: Mapping student growth in Hawaiian-focused charter schools. *Journal of American Indian Education*, 47(3), 31-52.

- Kana'iaupuni, S. M., & Kawai'ae'a, K. K. C. (2008). E lauhoe mai nā wa'a: Toward a Hawaiian indigenous education teaching framework. *Hūlili: Multidisciplinary Research on Hawaiian Well-Being*, 5, 67-90.
- Kana'iaupuni, S. M., & Malone, N. (2006). This land is my land: The role of place in Native Hawaiian identity. *Hūlili: Multidisciplinary Research on Hawaiian Well-Being*, 3(1), 281-307.
- Kanu o ka 'Āina New Century Public Charter School, Accreditation Self Study. (2009). [Reports]. Retrieved from <http://www.kanu.kalo.org>
- Kanu o ka 'Āina New Century Public Charter School, Accreditation Self Study. (2016). [Reports]. Retrieved from <http://www.kanu.kalo.org>
- Kanu o ka 'Āina Public Charter School (2013-2014). *Wa'a: He wa'a he moku he moku he wa'a. A year long journey of self awareness: A compilation of essays, poems, reflections and photos by the students and staff of Hui 'o pu'ukapu.*
- Kaomea, J. (2014). Education for elimination in nineteenth-century Hawai'i: Settler colonialism and the native Hawaiian chiefs' children's boarding school. *History of Educational Quarterly*, 54(2), 123-144.
- Kawai'ae'a, K. (2008). "Ho'i hou i ke kumu!" Teachers as nation builders. In M. K. P. Ah Nee-Benham (Ed.), *Indigenous educational models for contemporary practice: In our mother's voice volume II* (pp. 123-134). New York and UK: Routledge.
- Kent, H. W. (1976). *The Kamehameha schools: 1946-1962*. Honolulu, Hawaii: Masonic Public Library.
- Kikilo'i, K. (2010). Rebirth of an archipelago: Sustaining a Hawaiian cultural identity for people and homeland. *Hūlili: Multidisciplinary Research on Hawaiian Well-Being*, 6, 73-115.

- Laslett, B., & Rapoport, R. (1975). Collaborative interviewing and interactive research. *Journal of Marriage and Family* 37(4), 968-977.
- Linde, C. (2009). *Working the past: Narrative and institutional memory*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Luning, R. J. I. (2007). *The effects of a Hawaiian language immersion program on student and family development* (Master's thesis). Available from ScholarSpace (<http://hdl.handle.net/10125/20856>)
- Luning, R. J. I., & Yamauchi, L. A. (2010). The influences of indigenous heritage language education on students and families in a Hawaiian language immersion program. *Heritage Language Journal*, 7(2), 46-75.
- May, S., & Aikman, S. (2003). Indigenous education: Addressing current issues and developments. *Comparative Education*, 39(2), 139-145.
- McCarty, T. L., & Lee, T. S. (2014). Critical culturally sustaining/revitalizing pedagogy and Indigenous education sovereignty. *Harvard Educational Review*, 84(1), 101-124.
- McKeough, A., Bird, S., Tourigny, E., Romaine, A., Graham, S., Ottmann, J., & Jeary, J. (2008). Storytelling as a foundation to literacy development for Aboriginal children: Culturally and developmentally appropriate practices. *Canadian Psychology*, 49(2), 148-154.
- Merriam, S. B. (1988). *Case study research in education: A qualitative approach*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Meyer, M. A. (1998). *Native Hawaiian epistemology: Contemporary narratives* (Doctoral dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global. (304435200). Retrieved from



<http://eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/304435200?accountid=27140>

- Meyer, M. A. (2001). Our own liberation: Reflections on Hawaiian Epistemology. *The Contemporary Pacific*, 13(1), 124-148. doi:10.1353/cp.2001.0024
- Mishler, E. G. (1986). *Research interviewing: Context and narrative*. Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press.
- Moll, L. C. (2000). Inspired by Vygotsky: Ethnographic experiments in education. In C. Lee, & P. Smagorinsky (Eds.), *Vygotskian perspectives on literacy research: Constructing meaning through collaborative inquiry* (pp. 256-268). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Office of Education & The Kamehameha Schools/Bernice Pauahi Bishop Estate. (1983). *Native Hawaiian Educational Assessment Project* (Final Report July 1983).
- Oliveira, K. R. K. N. (2014). E ola mau ka 'ōlelo Hawai'i: The Hawaiian language revitalization movement. In N. Goodyear-Ka'ōpua, I. Hussey, & E. K. Wright (Eds.), *A nation rising: Hawaiian movements for life, land, and sovereignty*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.
- Palincsar, A. S. (1998). Social constructivist perspectives on teaching and learning. *Annual Review Psychology*, 49, 345-375.
- Pink, S. (2001). *Doing visual ethnography: Images, media and representation in research*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.
- Pink, S. (2004). Introduction: Situating visual research. In S. Pink, L. Kürti, & A. Afonso (Eds.), *Working images: Visual research and representation in ethnography* (pp. 1-12). London: Routledge.

- Polanyi, L. (1985). *Telling the American story: A structural and cultural analysis of conversational storytelling*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishers Corporation.
- Pukui, M. K., & Elbert, S. H. (1986). *Hawaiian dictionary* (Rev. ed.). Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
- Rowlinson, M., Booth, C., Clark, P., Delahaye, A., & Procter, S. (2010). Social remembering and organizational memory. *Organization Studies*, 31(01), 69-87.  
doi:10.1177/0170840609347056
- Schmitt, R. C. (1968). *Demographic statistics of Hawaii: 1778-1965*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
- Shrum, W., Duque, R., & Ynalvez, M. (2007). Lessons of the lower ninth: Methodology and epistemology of video ethnography. *Technology in Society*, 29, 215-225.
- Slaughter, H. B. (1997a). *An evaluation study of the ninth year of the Hawaiian language immersion program, school-year 1995-1996*. (A report to the Hawaiian Language Immersion Program, State of Hawai'i, Department of Education). Honolulu: University of Hawai'i, Mānoa.
- Slaughter, H. B. (1997b). Indigenous language immersion in Hawai'i: A case study of Kula Kaiapuni Hawai'i, an effort to save the indigenous language of Hawai'i. In R. Johnson, & S. Merrill (Eds.), *Immersion education: International perspectives* (pp. 103-129). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Smith, L. T. (2005). Building a research agenda for indigenous epistemologies and education. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 36(1), 93-95.
- Smith, L. T. (2012). *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and indigenous peoples*. London: Zed Books Ltd.

- Spradley, J. P. (1979). *The ethnographic interview*. Fort Worth: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.
- Spradley, J. P. (1980). *Participant Observation*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Stueber, R. K. (1981 September through 1982 December). An informal history of schooling in Hawai'i. In *To teach the children: Historical aspects of education in Hawai'i* (pp. 16-37). A publication accompanying the exhibition commemorating the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the College of Education and the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the University of Hawai'i. Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum, Honolulu, Hawai'i
- Sydney-Frey, A. (2013). He kuleana kō kākou: Hawaiian-language learners and the construction of (alter)native identities. *Current Issues in Language Planning*, 14(2), 231-243
- Tibbetts, K., Faircloth, S., & Ah Nee-Benham, M. K. P. (2008). A story shared. In M. K. P. Ah Nee-Benham (Ed.), *Indigenous educational models for contemporary practice: In our mother's voice volume II* (pp. 123-134). New York and UK: Routledge.
- Tobin, J. J., Wu, D. Y. H., & Davidson, D. H. (1989). *Preschool in three cultures: Japan, China, and the United States*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.
- Trask, H. (1999). *From a Native daughter: Colonialism and sovereignty in Hawaii*. Honolulu, Hawaii: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Trinidad, A. M. O. (2014). Critical indigenous pedagogy of place: How centering Hawaiian epistemology and values in practice affects people on ecosystemic levels. *Journal of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity in Social Work*, 23 (2), 110-128. doi: 10.1080/15313204.2014.903136.
- Underberg, N., & Zorn, E. (2013). *Digital ethnography: Anthropology, narrative, and new media*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). Afterword. In V. John-Steiner & E. Soubberman (Eds.). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes* (pp. 121-133). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Warner, S. L. (1999). "Kuleana": The right, responsibility, and authority of indigenous peoples to speak and make decisions for themselves in language and cultural revitalization. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly* 30(1), 68-93.
- Wertsch, J. V. (1991). *Voices of the mind: A sociocultural approach to mediated action*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Wertsch, J. V. (2002). *Voices of collective remembering*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Wilkinson, G. T. (1980). On assisting Indian people. *Social Casework: The Journal of Contemporary Social Work*, 61(8), 451-454.
- Wilson, W. H., & Kamanā, K. (2006). "For the interest of the Hawaiians themselves": Reclaiming the benefits of Hawaiian-medium education. *Hūlili: Multidisciplinary Research on Hawaiian Well-Being*, 3(1), 153-181.
- Wilson, W. H., & Kamanā, K. (2009). Indigenous youth bilingualism from a Hawaiian activist perspective. *Journal of Language, Identity & Education*, 8(5), 369-375. doi: 10.1080/15348450903305148
- Wilson, W. H., & Kamanā, K. (2011). Insights from indigenous language immersion in Hawai'i. In D. Tedick, D. Christian, & T. Williams Fortune (Eds.), *Immersion education: Practices, policies, possibilities* (pp. 36-57). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.
- Wist, B. O. (1940). *A century of public education in Hawaii*. Honolulu, HI: Hawaii Educational Review.

- Wong, L. (1999). Authenticity and the revitalization of Hawaiian. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 30(1), 94-115.
- Yamauchi, L. A., & Ceppi, A. K. (1998). A review of indigenous language immersion programs and a focus on Hawaii. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 31(1), 11-20. doi: 10.1080/1066568980310103
- Yamauchi, L. A., Ceppi, A. K., & Lau-Smith, J. (1999). Sociohistorical influences on the development of Papahana Kaiapuni, the Hawaiian language immersion program. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk*, 4(1), 27-46.
- Yamauchi, L. A., & Wilhelm, P. (2001). E ola ka Hawai'i i kona 'ōlelo: Hawaiians live in their language. In D. Christian, & F. Genesee (Eds.), *Bilingual education* (pp. 83-94). Alexandria, VA: Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages.
- Ylirisku, S., & Buur, J. (2007). *Designing with video: Focusing the user-centered design process*. London: Springer.
- Zundel, M., Holt, R., & Popp, A. (2016). Using history in the creation of organizational identity. *Management & Organizational History*, 11(2), 211-235. doi:10.1080/17449359.2015.1124042

## Appendix A

### Interview Protocol for Members of the School

1. How long have you been at this school?
2. How did you come to choose (to work at/send your child to/attend) KANU?
3. Tell me a well-known story about the history of this school.
4. What makes this school different from other schools?
5. What are important school events or activities and why are they important? What is the meaning behind those events/activities?
6. What has been your experience working at/with this school?
7. What three words would you use to describe this school and why?
8. What is something about this school that you wish more people knew about?
9. How would you describe the students/staff at this school?
10. Where do you see yourself in the next ten years?
11. What are the core values of this school and what do they look like in action?

## Appendix B

### Interview Protocol for Students of the School

1. How long have you been at this school?
2. Why did you choose to attend this school?
3. What did you know about this school before you attended it?
4. Tell me about one person from this school who has had a great influence on you.
5. What makes this school different from other schools?
6. What three words would you use to describe this school and why?
7. What do you like best about this school?
8. What are your favorite school events or activities and why?
9. Who are you as a student or friend or athlete or however you would describe yourself?
10. Where do you see yourself in the next ten years?
11. What values has this school taught you and how do you live those values?