



**NATIVE HAWAIIAN
EDUCATION COUNCIL**

2023 Annual Report

I lāhui na'auao Hawai'i pono, I lāhui Hawai'i pono na'auao.

There will be a culturally enlightened Hawaiian nation;
There will be a Hawaiian nation enlightened.





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Priority Recommendations for Native Hawaiian Education



PRIORITY FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NATIVE HAWAIIAN EDUCATION

- 01 Prioritize Hawaiian Language-Medium Instruction and Culture-Based Education Programs
- 02 Strengthen Connection to 'Āina, Culture, and Language
- 03 Address Achievement Gap Measurement and Standards
- 04 Focus on Implementation and Mastery



VERBIAGE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEXT APPLICATION FOR NEW AWARDS; NATIVE HAWAIIAN EDUCATION PROGRAM (NHEP) - FEDERAL REGISTER

- 01 Section 1 - Full Text of Announcement, Funding Opportunity Description, Background
- 02 Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Native Hawaiian Education Priority Activities
- 03 The use of the Hawaiian language as a medium of instruction.
- 04 The use of āina-based, culture-based programming.





Priorities & Criterion

FY23 Priority Recommendations for Native Hawaiian Education

The Education Council shall use funds made available through a grant under subsection (a) to [...] (6) prepare and submit to the Secretary, at the end of each calendar year, an annual report that contains [...] (D) recommendations to establish priorities for funding under this part, based on an assessment of—

- I. the educational needs of Native Hawaiians;
- II. programs and services available to address such needs;
- III. the effectiveness of programs in improving the educational performance of Native Hawaiian students to help such students meet challenging State academic standards under section 1111(b)(1); and
- IV. priorities for funding in specific geographic communities.”

—SEC. 6204(D)(6) OF THE NATIVE HAWAIIAN EDUCATION ACT





Priority Funding Recommendations for Native Hawaiian Education

I. Prioritize Hawaiian Language-Medium Instruction and Culture-Based Education Programs:

Prioritize Hawaiian language-medium instruction and culture-based programs for Native Hawaiian learners to enhance equity, resilience, and social-emotional well-being, and narrowing achievement gaps. This focus is crucial due to:

- **COVID-19 Impact on NHPI Communities:** Given the heightened vulnerability of NHPI communities to emerging COVID variants in 2023, stabilizing a learning continuum and preserving cultural practices is of utmost importance. NHPIs face disproportionately high rates of COVID-19 cases and fatalities, necessitating targeted efforts to safeguard their well-being (Hofschneider, 2020; UH News, 2020);
- **Cultural Context and Vaccination Hesitancy:** The historical context of population decimation and cultural loss due to American imperialism, it is imperative to address the resulting mistrust and vaccination hesitancy among NHPIs. Recognizing the power of culture-based programs and belief systems in navigating the pandemic, efforts such as the Community-Based Subsistence Fishing Area exemplify the potential for integrating cultural practices with public health initiatives (NHEA, 2015; UH News, 2022; Kamaka et al., 2021); and
- **Impact of Maui Wildland Fires on Education and Well-being:** Address the mounting impacts of health, well-being, and education loss resulting from the August 8, 2023 Maui wildland fires. This catastrophe that destroyed an entire community, including destruction of three schools, left approximately 3,000 students displaced. With the additional challenges of distance learning during the pandemic and now destroyed school facilities, bridging learning gaps and trauma-informed approaches to student well-being are critical concerns for our Lahaina, Maui learners (UH News, 2023).

Priorities & Criterion

Priority Funding Recommendations *for Native Hawaiian Education continued*

2. Strengthen Connection to 'Āina, Culture, and Language:

Native Hawaiians' deep ties to 'āina, culture, and language have a profound impact on their social and cultural well-being. The pandemic has underscored the significance of these connections, as reflected in feedback from community consultations. Participants emphasized the need for cultural programming, values, learning 'ōlelo Hawai'i, and 'āina work for success, signaling a shift in perspective brought about by the pandemic (Kaholokula et al., 2020; Native Hawaiian Education Council, 2022).

3. Explore Community-Driven Definitions of Student Achievement in Culturally-Responsive Curriculum vs. Western Achievement Gap Measurement and Standards

The examination of the achievement gap underscores the influence of colonialism, as the very concept of a "gap" implies a departure from the Eurocentric, White, Western benchmark for student proficiency (Wright et al, 2023). When considering Native Hawaiian education, such as Hawaiian immersion schools that predominantly instruct in the Hawaiian language, it becomes evident that English-based standardized tests are inadequately designed to accurately assess the capabilities of students (Tagami, 2023). In light of community feedback, it is crucial to not only recognize the importance of existing priorities related to Kula Kaiapuni but also to ensure they are effectively implemented. Participants expressed a need for clarity regarding assessment measures and standards, particularly in closing achievement gaps. Emphasis was placed on prioritizing Kula-specific standards that align with the unique context, curriculum, and approach of Native Hawaiian education. Participants also called for a thoughtful consideration of what constitutes "achievement" for Native Hawaiian learners, emphasizing the need for community-driven definitions (FY23 community consultation feedback).

4. Focus on Implementation and Mastery of Skills:

To maximize the impact of Native Hawaiian education, there is a need to prioritize the initial stages of the first priority—asserting Hawaiian language-medium instruction and culture-based education. This entails honing proficiency in these areas before moving on to consider the broader outcomes. This approach ensures that the foundational elements are well-established and form a strong base for achieving broader educational objectives (FY23 community consultation feedback).





Verbiage Recommendations *for* Next Application *for* New Awards; Native Hawaiian Education Program (NHEP) — Federal Register

In alignment with the Education Council's priority recommendations, we propose amendments to the grant notice to invite applications (NIA) and competitive preference priority for Native Hawaiian Education Priority Activities section:

Section 1 - Full Text of Announcement, Funding Opportunity Description, Background

"In accordance with section 6204 of the ESEA, the Native Hawaiian Education Council (NHEC) was established in 1994 with the statutory responsibility to coordinate, assess, and provide guidance to appropriate Federal, State, and local agencies on the effectiveness of existing education programs for Native Hawaiians, the state of present Native Hawaiian education efforts, and improvements that may be made to existing programs, policies, and procedures to improve the educational attainment of Native Hawaiians. In its 2022-2023 annual report, the NHEC recommended the Department prioritize funding projects that (1) assert Hawaiian language-medium instruction and culture-based education programs; (2) strengthen connection to 'āina, culture, and language; (3) address student achievement gap measures and standards, with emphasis on kula-specific standards that align with the unique context, curriculum, and approach of Native Hawaiian education; and (4) focus on demonstration of implementation and skills mastery of culture-based education and Hawaiian language proficiency. The Department encourages applicants to review NHEC's most recent program recommendations (available at: <http://www.nhec.org/nhec-reports/annualreports/>) prior to applying, so that applicants can benefit from the research and community outreach that informed NHEC's recommendations."

Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Native Hawaiian Education Priority Activities (up to 3 points):

Include Hawaiian language as medium of instruction in (d) so it will now read:

"(d) The use of the Hawaiian language as a medium of instruction."

Additionally, include a new priority (e) for 'āina-based and culture-based learning to now read:

"(e) The use of 'āina-based, culture-based programming."

By incorporating these changes, we seek to further underscore the critical role of Hawaiian language and culture-based education in Native Hawaiian student success and well-being, emphasizing their importance as we move forward in promoting Native Hawaiian self-determination and educational excellence.

Priorities & Criterion

Priorities Criterion—Criteria *for* Determining Priority Recommendations

Criterion Background

FEDERAL TRUST RESPONSIBILITY OWED TO NATIVE HAWAIIANS

The United States government bears a federal trust responsibility to Native Hawaiians, a solemn obligation rooted in the historical and political context of Hawai'i. Despite the tragic chapter in our history involving the unlawful overthrow of Queen Lili'uokalani in 1893 and the dissolution of our government, Native Hawaiians have steadfastly upheld our right to self-determination. This enduring commitment is supported by an extensive body of federal legislation, with over 150 Acts of Congress explicitly recognizing the unique political and trust relationship that exists between the United States and Native Hawaiians.

Key legislations that directly benefit Native Hawaiians include the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act of 1920 (42 Stat. 108, 1921), the Native Hawaiian Education Act (20 U.S.C. 7511), the Native Hawaiian Health Care Improvement Act (42 U.S.C. ch. 122), and the Hawaiian Homelands Homeownership Act, which is incorporated into the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act (Title VIII, 25 U.S.C. 4221). These laws exemplify the United States' commitment to promoting Native Hawaiian self-determination and addressing the unique needs of our Indigenous, once-sovereign people. By acknowledging and upholding this trust relationship, the federal government is actively fulfilling its responsibility to support the well-being and self-determination of Native Hawaiians.

ROLE OF THE NATIVE HAWAIIAN EDUCATION COUNCIL IN PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

The federal trust responsibility to Native Hawaiians, deeply ingrained in the history and political landscape of Hawai'i, underpins a commitment by the United States government to uphold the rights and well-being of the Indigenous people of Hawai'i. This responsibility is enshrined in over 150 Acts of Congress. These laws illustrate the federal government's dedication to promoting Native Hawaiian self-determination and addressing their unique needs.

In conjunction with this federal trust responsibility, the Native Hawaiian Education Council, established under the Native Hawaiian Education Act, holds a pivotal role in advising and providing recommendations to the U.S. Department of Education for priority funding areas. As outlined in Section 6204(d) (6) of the Native Hawaiian Education Act, the Education Council is tasked with evaluating the educational needs of Native Hawaiians, assessing the effectiveness of existing programs, and identifying funding priorities in specific geographic communities. By fulfilling this mandate, the Education Council



plays a vital role in aligning federal resources with the educational needs of Native Hawaiians, thereby contributing to the realization of their right to self-determination and self-sufficiency in education.

EFFORTS TO STRENGTHEN HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE USE AND FEDERAL LAW

In the context of federal law, it is established that neither the federal nor state government can enact laws restricting the use of non-English languages. However, there is no federal duty to provide non-English speakers with programs or services in their native language.

Unique Hawaiian Language Situation: Efforts to promote and strengthen the use of the Hawaiian language create a unique situation since most Hawaiian immersion students use English as their first language and Hawaiian as their second language. The Native American Languages Act (NALA) is the primary federal law addressing the concerns of Hawaiian language advocates by promoting education in Indigenous languages, including Hawaiian. However, federal courts have taken a restrictive stance in implementing NALA.

Federal Court Cases: Two reported cases under NALA involved Native Hawaiians. In one case, the court rejected a claim that NALA prohibited giving a deposition in English. In another case, a claim under NALA and state law was dismissed, as the statute did not impose an affirmative duty on the state to provide specific resources for Hawaiian language programs.

State Recognition of Hawaiian Language: Hawai'i is the only state in the U.S. with a language in addition to English as its official language - Hawaiian. Hawai'i has constitutionally recognized and protected the Hawaiian language. The state constitution promotes the study of Hawaiian culture, history, and language and mandates the provision of a Hawaiian education program in public schools.

No Court Interpretation: Despite these provisions in the state constitution, no court has provided a definitive interpretation of the legal effect and scope of these amendments. State courts

have yet to define the legal impact of Hawai'i's "official language" constitutional provision.

Affirmative Duty to Protect Traditional Practices: In contrast, the Hawai'i Supreme Court has interpreted Article XII, Section 7, of the state constitution as imposing an affirmative duty on the judiciary and the executive branch, including administrative agencies, to protect and perpetuate traditional and customary practices, subject to state law. This includes practices such as speaking the Hawaiian language. In the pivotal 1995 case of *Public Access Shoreline Hawaii v. Hawaii County Planning Commission*, often referred to as the PASH case, the Hawaii Supreme Court established an essential legal precedent. This precedent revolved around the interpretation of Article XII, Section 7 of the state constitution, which reaffirms and protects traditional rights exercised for subsistence, cultural, and religious purposes by ahupua'a tenants of Hawaiian ancestry.

The PASH case clarified that Article XII, Section 7 doesn't create a brand-new, independent enforceable right. Instead, it serves as a means to uphold existing traditional and customary rights recognized under state law. Within this landmark decision, the court articulated certain guidelines - collectively known as the "PASH criteria" - for assessing the nature and scope of these protected rights.

According to the PASH criteria, those seeking to exercise traditional practices must demonstrate that the right they wish to uphold is "reasonable," "traditional," and has existed prior to November 25, 1892. Upon establishing the validity of such a custom or practice, the burden shifts to those opposing the exercise to prove that it would cause actual harm. The state, as a guardian of these rights, is obligated to protect the legitimate exercise of



Priorities & Criterion

such rights to the greatest extent possible. It's important to note that state officials have the authority to regulate the exercise of these rights; however, they are not granted unrestricted discretion to eliminate these rights entirely.

While the PASH case initially concerned access and gathering rights, it is crucial to recognize that the same standard should be applied to various other traditional and customary practices that individuals of Hawaiian ancestry seek to exercise. These practices encompass a wide range, including the Hawaiian language. This interpretation underscores the significance of preserving and promoting the Hawaiian language as an integral cultural and educational asset in Hawaii, within the broader context of safeguarding "all rights" articulated in Article XII, Section 7.

IMPACT OF COLONIZATION ON TRADITIONAL WAYS OF KNOWING AND LEARNING

Native Hawaiians, akin to other Indigenous communities, grapple with the enduring repercussions of colonialism. The historical trauma stemming from the forced displacement from ancestral lands (*āina*, *kulāiwi*), which sustained their well-being, has spawned a web of interconnected health disparities. Native Hawaiians describe a collective sense of "kaumaha" (a profound and oppressive sorrow) brought about by the collective dispossession of land, the overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom, cultural erosion, and the premature loss of loved ones. While historical trauma has been correlated with elevated rates of substance abuse, depression, suicidal tendencies, and mental health disparities in American Indian populations, there exists a dearth of empirical research examining the manifestation of historical trauma among Native Hawaiians.

Despite being one of the fastest-growing populations in Hawai'i, Native Hawaiians disproportionately grapple with physical, mental, and social challenges. Historical trauma is characterized as the cumulative emotional and psychological wounds endured

Balancing Interests: The Hawai'i Supreme Court's interpretation establishes criteria for evaluating traditional and customary rights exercised by persons of Hawaiian ancestry, such as speaking Hawaiian. These criteria include demonstrating that the right is reasonable, traditional, and existed before November 25, 1892. Once established, the burden shifts to opponents to show that actual harm would result from exercising the practice, and the state must protect the legitimate exercise of these rights, regulating them only to the extent necessary.

Applying PASH Criteria: These criteria, as outlined in the PASH case, should be applied equally to other traditional and customary practices exercised by persons of Hawaiian ancestry, including speaking Hawaiian, as the state constitution mandates the protection of "all rights." This interpretation affirms the importance of preserving and promoting the Hawaiian language as a fundamental cultural and educational asset in Hawai'i (*Lucas, 2000*).

throughout one's lifetime and passed down through generations. Globally, historical trauma is pervasive among survivors of colonization, genocide, and dispossession and is closely tied to elevated rates of substance use, depression, suicidal tendencies, and other mental health disparities. This is rooted in a history of colonization and compounded in contemporary times by persistent racism, microaggressions, and epigenetic expressions, which reflect the trauma of the environment within one's genetic makeup (*Riley et. al, 2022*).

The priority criteria for Native Hawaiian Education Program funding include recognizing and supporting the Hawaiian language and acknowledging the state's affirmative duty to protect traditional practices, including speaking Hawaiian. Additionally, five criteria focus on innovative approaches, collaboration, representation, economic disadvantage, low-performing schools, and community involvement to address the well-being and academic success of Native Hawaiian students:



Summary of Criteria

CRITERION 1: The project focuses on innovative approaches to address COVID-19 impacts in Native Hawaiian communities.

- The project emphasizes collaboration with key stakeholders and community leaders to assess social, emotional, physical, mental health, and academic needs.

CRITERION 2: The project targets the designated school or community where the representation of Native Hawaiians equals or surpasses the average percentage of Native Hawaiian students within the HDOE system.

- The project highlights the significant representation of Native Hawaiians in the state's education system.

CRITERION 3: The project prioritizes schools with higher proportions of Native Hawaiian students eligible for free or reduced-price school lunch program.

- The project recognizes economic disadvantage as a crucial factor affecting educational opportunities for Native Hawaiian students.

CRITERION 4: The project addresses persistently low-performing schools in the Hawai'i Department of Education.

- The project acknowledges the need to support schools with historically lower academic performance, particularly those with high Native Hawaiian student populations.

CRITERION 5: The project emphasizes collaboration with the Native Hawaiian community.

- The project promotes community-based participatory research and mutual trust in project development and implementation.

In summary, these priority criteria reflect the commitment to the federal trust responsibility owed to Native Hawaiians, emphasizing the protection of cultural and educational assets, while the five criteria address the specific needs of Native Hawaiian students in various aspects of their education and well-being.



Activities of The Council

Technical Assistance

"The Education Council shall use funds made available through a grant under subsection (a) to (1) provide technical assistance to Native Hawaiian organizations that are grantees or potential grantees under this part; (2) obtain from such grantees information and data regarding grant awarded under this part; [...] (5) assess and evaluate the individual and aggregate impact achieved by grantees under this part in improving Native Hawaiian educational performance and meeting the goals of this part..."

– SEC. 6204(D) OF THE NATIVE HAWAIIAN EDUCATION ACT





Impact Assessment and Learning Study of The 2020 NHEP Grant Awards – Year 2

In the year 2023, the Native Hawaiian Education Council (NHEC) continued its collaboration with the American Institutes for Research (AIR) to conduct an in-depth study of the 2020 cohort of Native Hawaiian Education Program (NHEP) gran-tees. This three-year initiative aims to assess data collected by the grantees and provide technical assistance for improving coordination and collaboration between the NHEP, the Hawai'i State Department of Education (HIDOE), and the grantees. This report summarizes the activities undertaken during the second year of the study, from September 2022 to August 2023, and outlines the plans for Year 3 (2023-2024).

Summary of Year 2 Activities

Phase 1: Project Planning, Communication, and Management During Year 2, AIR, NHEC staff and project standing committee members engaged monthly in progress meetings to refine data collection and analysis plans. The collaboration focused on technical assistance, data visualization dashboards, grantee engagement events, and grantee case study design. Monthly status reports were submitted through August 2023.

Phase 2: Data Collection and Management AIR and NHEC co-designed and co-facilitated all-grantee meetings in September 2022 and April 2023. The April event aimed to share insights on submitting Annual Performance Reports (APRs) and prepare for future submissions. Efforts to engage specific Native Hawaiian communities were challenging; therefore, the community engagement approach was revised to focus on case study grants, including grants to Ke Kula 'O Nāwahiokalani'opu'u Iki, 'Aha Pūnana Leo, Inc., and University of Hawai'i - Hilo. Data collection included the review of grant award notices (GANs), APRs, and additional outcome indicators, such as K-12 student assessment data.

Activities of the Council

Summary of Year 2 Activities *continued*

Phase 3: Technical Assistance and Evaluative Analysis AIR worked with NHEC needs and insights in developing data visualization dashboards using Microsoft PowerBI, gathering feedback from NHEC, as a primary user for the database, for audit and revisions. Initial findings were shared with grantees during the September 2022 engagement event. The assistance provided valuable insights into data interpretation.

Phase 4: Impact, Assessment, and Learning Report

The draft and final reports for this phase are due in June and July 2024, respectively.

Phase 5: Presentation and Dissemination AIR plans to submit conference proposals by the end of the contract, seeking input from the NHEC on appropriate venues. A briefing on Year 2 activities was provided to the full Council in August 2023.

Overview of Year 3 Project Activities

Phase 1: Project Planning, Communication, and Management

In Year 3, AIR will revise the NHEP logic model based on input from the NHEC, grantees, and communities. The focus will be on describing program activities and outputs and finalizing long-term outcomes. Monthly progress meetings will continue, with monthly status reports submitted through July 2024.

Phase 2: Data Collection and Management AIR will continue to work collaboratively with NHEC in co-designing and co-facilitating an all-grantee meeting in Spring 2024, focusing on case studies related to Hawaiian Language Medium of Instruction. Community engagement will be led by Jackie Ng-Osorio, gathering qualitative data from participants' experiences in the programs. Measurement of outputs and outcomes will continue, including additional outcome indicators.

Phase 3: Technical Assistance and Evaluative Analysis

A revised data dashboard will be delivered in January 2024. AIR will collect guidance from the NHEC on data display. Case study data will be analyzed qualitatively, and periodic analysis memos will be shared.

Phase 4: Impact, Assessment, and Learning Report

Draft and final reports are scheduled for June and July 2024.

Phase 5: Presentation and Dissemination AIR plans to identify conferences and events in collaboration with the NHEC to present findings and engage with experts in Indigenous education. The Year 3 briefing to the full Council is expected by July 2024.





Impact Assessment and Learning Study—Case Study of Hawaiian Language Medium Instruction Programs

In pursuit of its technical assistance statutory mandates, the Native Hawaiian Education Council (NHEC) engaged in a comprehensive analysis of grantee programs with a special focus on Hawaiian language medium instruction (HLMI). The Council has a long-standing position on Hawaiian language as a medium of instruction and culture-based education for priority recommendations to the U.S. Department of Education as evidenced in the follow annual reports:

- FY20 and FY21 Annual Report Priority Recommendations for funding of Native Hawaiian Education to assert Hawaiian language-medium instruction and culture-based education programs, frameworks, and values as principal in addressing equity, resiliency, and social-emotional well-being for increased Native Hawaiian learner outcomes and closing achievement gaps; and
- FY18 and FY19 Annual Report Priority Recommendations 1D(iii)-Integrate Priority Strategies/Services in strengthening Hawaiian immersion schools with family, parent, community programs; and 3C-Leverage Hawaiian Culture-Based Education Values, Guidelines, Methodologies and Frameworks; and
- FY17 Annual Report Advocacy report and recommendations under State-level in supporting SB848 regarding development and funding of Hawaiian language instruction implementation plan throughout the University of Hawai'i (UH) System and Hawaiian medium education coursework pilot project.

The analysis was carried out by the American Institutes of Research (AIR) team, which diligently examined documents from 17 grants, constituting 71% of the 2020 grantee cohort. These grants were specifically geared towards addressing the use of Native Hawaiian Language in Instruction, and were categorized into four distinct groups:

1. Hawaiian Language Medium Programs:

These grants centered their efforts on the use of the Hawaiian language as a medium of instruction.

- ### 2. Hawaiian Language as a Subject:
- Programs in this category primarily taught the Hawaiian language as a subject and assessed its outcomes.

3. Reference to Hawaiian Language and Culture:

These grants incorporated elements of Hawaiian language and culture to some extent, although they did not measure Hawaiian language outcomes..

4. Lack of Evidence of Hawaiian Language Instruction:

Grants in this category lacked clear evidence of any Hawaiian language instruction.



Activities of the Council

CASE STUDY

Of the four distinct groups, Group 1 was selected for the case study focus and only contained three NHEP 2020 grantee programs. AIR embarked on an initiative to conduct in-depth interviews and engagement with the three programs for the case study. The study is designed to directly capture insights from program participants regarding the impact and implementation of the grantee programs. Multiple data sources are being utilized to narrate the journey of these programs, exploring their origins, operational aspects, the challenges encountered, and the valuable lessons learned during implementation.

The central focus of the case study is Hawaiian Language Medium of Instruction (HLMI), aligning with the core purpose of the Native Hawaiian Education Act, which places 'Ōlelo Hawai'i at its heart. By concentrating on grants that employ HLMI, the Council endeavors to gain a profound understanding of these grantees' experiences in designing and implementing their programs, as well as the experiences of the participants (or their guardians) and the impact on their communities. This approach will unearth critical insights and lessons that can inform the design and implementation of high-quality HLMI programs for future grantees.





The initial phase of the case study process involved a meticulous review of the grant applications and annual reports of the 2020 NHEP grants. From this review, three grants stood out as having a strong focus on HLMI. AIR subsequently conducted interviews with the project managers of these grants, aiming to delve into their goals, activities, challenges, lessons learned, and the identification of participants and other key community members and/or participants who might be interviewed for additional insights. The preliminary analysis of these interviews revealed several common themes across the three grants, including the challenges in finding qualified teachers fluent in the Hawaiian language and the limited number of HLMI schools that participants can transition to within their communities upon completion of these grant programs.

The forthcoming steps in this endeavor involve outreach to participants of the case study programs and other key informants, to secure their involvement in in-depth case study interviews. Further activities will include follow-up interviews with case study project directors and other key informants, as well as in-person visits to observe program events and activities.

Activities of the Council

Community Consultations

"The Education Council shall use funds made available through the grant under subsection (a) to hold not less than 1 community consultation each year on the islands of Hawaii, Maui, Molokai, Lanai, Oahu, and Kauai, at which [...] (2) the Education Council shall gather community input regarding [...] (B) priorities and needs of Native Hawaiians; and (C) other Native Hawaiian education issues; and (3) the Education Council shall report to the community on the outcomes of the activities supported by grants awarded under this part."

– SEC. 6204(e) OF THE NATIVE HAWAIIAN EDUCATION ACT

FY23 Community Consultation Overview

The 2023 community consultation process served as a dynamic platform that united a diverse array of voices, symbolizing Kula Kaiapuni (Hawaiian language immersion schools) and their affiliated school communities throughout the state of Hawai'i. The consultations took place against the backdrop of the enduring COVID-19 pandemic. The decision to focus the 2023 consultations on Kaiapuni schools stemmed from recommendations originating in previous Education Council annual reports and the findings of a portfolio analysis conducted on the Native Hawaiian Education Program (NHEP), with a specific emphasis on its grant funding distribution. This year, six community consultations were conducted, encompassing Kaiapuni schools and school community-based programs across pae'āina, spanning Hawai'i, Kaua'i, Maui, Moloka'i, Lāna'i, and O'ahu.

As the pandemic continued to evolve, students, teachers, school staff, and families persevered in their efforts to mitigate the educational challenges arising from pandemic-related school closures and remote learning. Insights shared by participants in the community consultations underscored the ongoing impact on overall well-being, particularly in terms of mental and emotional health, affecting not only students but also their families, teachers, school staff, and the broader community. Participants emphasized the urgent need for access to 'āina (land) and opportunities to establish pilina (connections, relationships) with 'āina to facilitate healing.

While the stories presented many instances of Kaiapuni schools successfully navigating the ever-shifting landscape of the Native Hawaiian education system, it was unanimous that there is an enduring requirement for increased financial support and resourcing for their endeavors. Participants strongly affirmed that 'ike Hawai'i (Hawaiian values and culture) and 'ike 'āina (knowledge of the land) are integral to intergenerational learning and the flourishing of the lāhui (Hawaiian community). Consequently, there is a pressing need to further nurture and consolidate the cultural connections between students, families, schools, and 'āina.



Community Consultation Design

The 2023 consultation process was meticulously tailored to concentrate on Kula Kaiapuni and their respective school communities. This decision was informed by prior annual reports' recommendations and the 2021 portfolio analysis of the Native Hawaiian Education Program (NHEP), which pinpointed Kula Kaiapuni as a category that necessitated explicit consideration in the NHEP granting process. The objectives for the 2023 process were rooted in the core principles of the Native Hawaiian Education Act and guided the direction of the consultation process:

- 1. Making data relevant:** Developing new and more pertinent approaches for presenting, interpreting, and communicating data that resonate with and amplify the voice of the community.
- 2. Ground-truth insights:** Provoking deeper engagement opportunities to inspire community members to assemble and deliberate over data regarding Native Hawaiian education through their unique experiences and perspectives.
- 3. Benefiting the community and the Council:** Uncovering novel and superior methods for gathering and analyzing data with Native Hawaiian communities to enhance their ability to employ data for their social and civic needs while also enriching ongoing dialogue with The Council and grantee programs to address community strengths and challenges.

The design of the consultation process encompassed several key components, including the formulation of concise and accessible guiding questions, a comprehensive community engagement and recruitment plan, a communication strategy to keep the community informed and engaged throughout the process, and the development of various materials to facilitate engagement. To accommodate the busy schedules of school community members and provide opportunities for participation across different days, times, and platforms, a four-month consultation schedule was devised. The recruitment strategy primarily revolved around cultivating existing relationships, capitalizing on school events, meetings with various stakeholders, and creating opportunities for engagement in new school community meetings.



Activities of the Council



Methodology

As delineated in Table 1, a total of six consultations were scheduled from April 12 to May 31, 2023. Four virtual consultations were hosted, while facilitators were able to host two consultations in-person at the request of the school community. Originally, all consultations were intended to be conducted in-person. However, at the recommendation of school community members, virtual meetings were suggested to enhance participation.

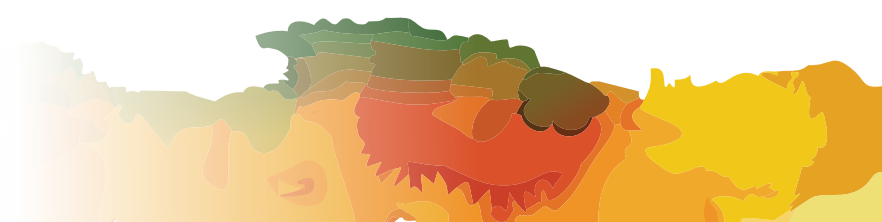
Community Consultation Questions

The following questions formed the cornerstone of our community consultation process:

1. Based on the 2022 priorities, what elements remain relevant?
2. What aspects require better representation?
3. What is no longer a priority?
4. What priorities are currently absent or not yet represented?

External Challenges

Facilitators encountered challenges related to connecting with participants on Lānaʻi, despite multiple attempts to engage schools directly and indirectly. Consequently, the moʻolelo (stories) recounted in this report may represent only individuals who responded to the call for participation but do not work within the school or Hawaiian immersion program. This omission is significant as it means that representatives from the Hawaiian immersion program on Lānaʻi are notably absent from the conversation. For future efforts, The Education Council will continue to seek, establish, and maintain stronger relationships with the schools and Hawaiian immersion program staff and flexible engagement strategies for future consultations.





Discussion and Reflections

Participants shared that, although all priorities from 2022 remain relevant, they are not adequately addressed. Moreover, participants emphasized the interconnectedness of each priority, highlighting that resources allocated to one priority can unlock resources for others. Nevertheless, participants described conditions where they have received limited support in recruiting qualified candidates for Hawaiian language medium instruction. Additionally, Kula Kaiapuni described the challenges of retaining kumu (teachers) due to competition in the labor market and the scarcity of resources available within the community to retain these educators. Consequently, participants have had to rely heavily on existing staff lines, mākua (parents), and the broader school community to fill the gaps where qualified teachers are lacking.

In their efforts to create and maintain a successful school environment, Kula Kaiapuni have worked in collaboration with 'āina-based programs that are deeply rooted within the community. Participants expressed the need for a closer bridge connecting schools and 'āina-based programs, functioning as an intermediary. This connection would help cultivate kuleana (responsibility) for 'āina within the broader community and expand the collective of 'āina-based practitioners. Moreover, participants aspire to exercise ea (sovereignty) and self-determination in determining the metrics, evaluation approaches, measures, and data collection practices by which student learners are assessed. They emphasized the importance of having Kula-specific standards that are relevant to the place, curriculum, and approach, in addition to broader standards.

Furthermore, participants conveyed the challenge of validating their evaluation approaches, curriculum, and instruction to overseeing institutions and funders. They proposed attending professional development rooted in Hawaiian ways of being initially, which would subsequently enable schools to adapt it to their specific context. Participants also expressed a need to review the requirements for NHEP grant reviewers and offer technical assistance to potential reviewers from Kula Kaiapuni communities. The consensus was that this would be particularly impactful if provided through learning cohorts across Kula Kaiapuni.

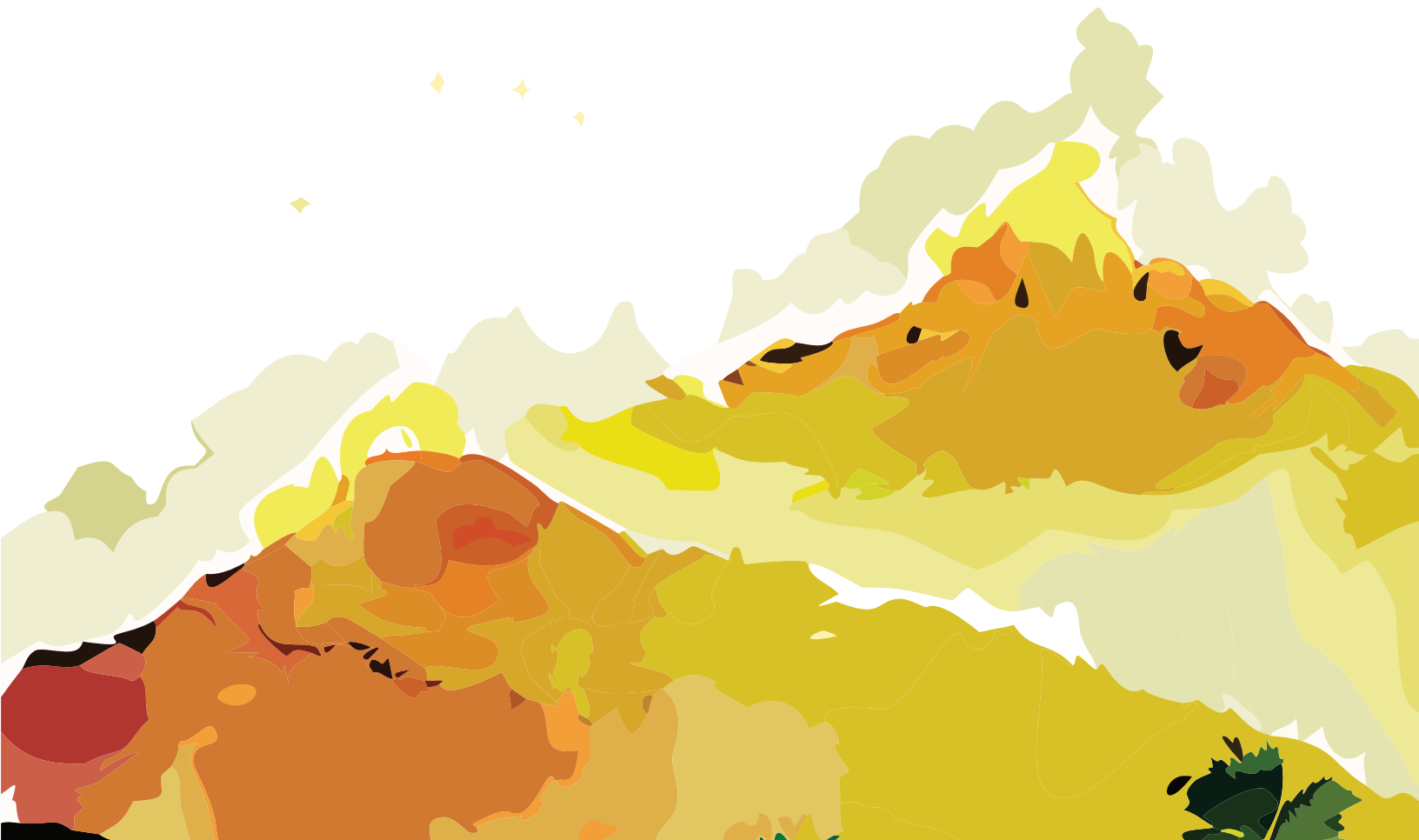
In conclusion, a range of structural issues is obstructing the growth and success of Kula Kaiapuni. However, despite limited support, language and culture-based programming, 'āina education, and social-emotional well-being remain pivotal priorities for schools. Beyond advocacy, NHEC can support Kula Kaiapuni by providing technical assistance to access NHEP funds and by facilitating the process of becoming an NHEP reviewer. This support would be especially meaningful if delivered via learning cohorts involving Kula Kaiapuni.

Activities of the Council

The strengths of the methodology design for this year's consultations encompassed working with an affinity group, Kula Kaiapuni. The explicit selection of Kula Kaiapuni for the 2023 consultations allowed for a targeted understanding of current conditions within the Hawaiian Immersion School experience. Another notable strength was the introduction of a new framework, community dialogues, for gathering feedback. This approach, while focusing on an affinity group, facilitated the inclusion of an expanded base of constituencies and voices, including youth and grassroots leaders, particularly at the event on Hawai'i Island. Participants at this event were connected to the hosting school but represented diverse identities. This setting also enabled rapid capture of feedback and distilled priorities in Native Hawaiian education, encompassing a broader audience than other sessions.

Areas for improvement in future years include conducting more than one consultation on each island, as there are numerous Kula Kaiapuni throughout Hawai'i, each with unique needs and stories that may not be fully captured in this year's consultations. Furthermore, more relationship-building is required for Lāna'i to ensure comprehensive collection of mana'o (insights) on Native Hawaiian education priorities on the island.

Participants also advocated for reviewers who are ma'a (proficient) with Kula Kaiapuni. Suggestions included providing technical assistance to become a reviewer alongside the process of becoming a grantee. The consensus was that this assistance should be offered collectively within a cohort.





Coordination Activities

"The Education Council shall use funds made available through a grant under subsection (a) to carry out each of the following activities: (1) Providing advice about the coordination of, and serving as a clearinghouse for, the educational and related services and programs available to Native Hawaiians, including the programs assisted under this part."

– SEC. 6204(c) OF THE NATIVE HAWAIIAN EDUCATION ACT

Overview

Since 2021, the Education Council has been poised to initiate an in-depth Impact, Assessment, and Learning (IAL) study focusing on the Native Hawaiian Education Program (NHEP) 2021 grantees. Parallel to the IAL Study conducted for the NHEP 2020 grantees, this comprehensive study was designed to longitudinally monitor the progress of the 2021 grantees throughout their three-year funding period. The salience of this study is underscored by both the substantial financial investment and the expansive scale of the grantee programs.

The NHEP 2021 awards, comprising a historic aggregate of \$85 million sourced from The American Rescue Plan Act, provided financial support to 44 programs—an unprecedented number in the awards of NHEP. The magnitude of this awardee cohort necessitated a rigorous evaluation of program efficacy and impact.

Regrettably, despite concerted efforts, multiple appeals for increased funding to facilitate the design and execution of this statutory mandate activity—communicated through annual appropriations requests, the 2023 omnibus bill language advocating for "sufficient funding" for the Education Council, and direct petitions to the Rural Insular Native Achievement Program administrators overseeing NHEP—have been met with denial.

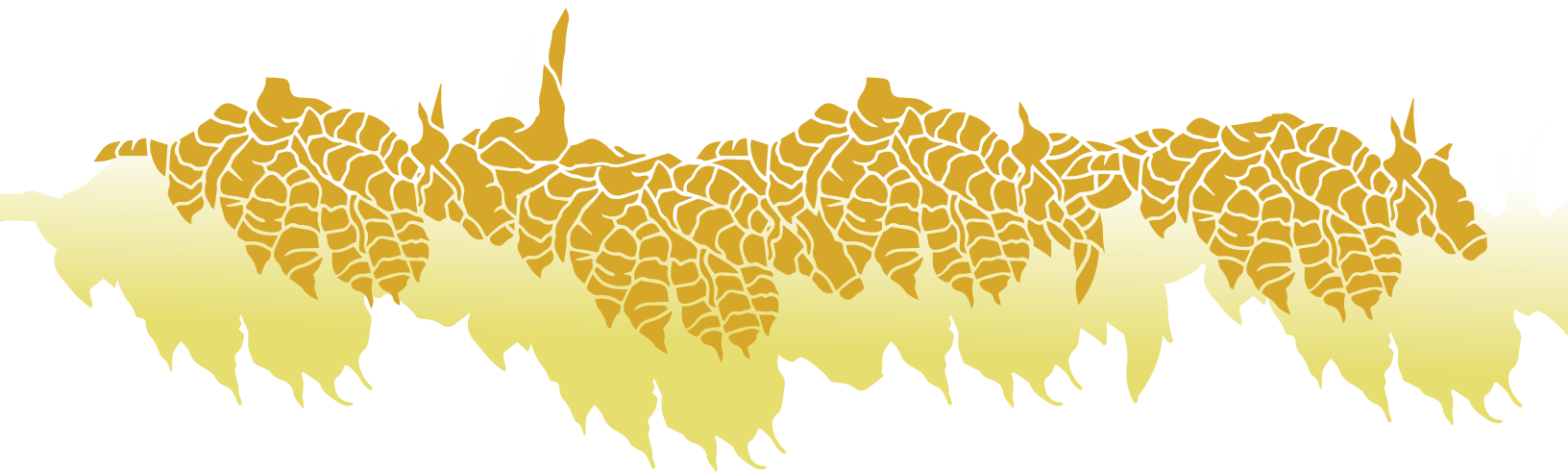
As a consequence of the financial constraints incurred from community consultations and technical assistance, the Education Council faced fiscal impediments that precluded the execution of the IAL study for coordination activities during Fiscal Year 2023.

The Education Council remains committed to upholding its responsibilities and endeavors to secure the necessary support to fulfill this critical evaluation in subsequent fiscal periods. The Council is dedicated to maintaining transparency, accountability, and ensuring the judicious use of allocated funds for the advancement of Native Hawaiian education.





About NHEC





Nu‘ukia

I lāhui na‘auao Hawai‘i pono.

I lāhui Hawai‘i pono na‘auao.

There will be a culturally enlightened Hawaiian nation.

There will be a Hawaiian nation enlightened.

Ala Nu‘ukia

Ma ka ‘uhane aloha o ke Akua e koi ‘ia ka ‘Aha Ho‘ona‘auao ‘Ōiwi Hawai‘i e ho‘olauka‘i, e ana loilo, e hō‘ike mana‘o a e ho‘omau i ka ‘ike po‘okela o ka ho‘ona‘auao ‘ōiwi Hawai‘i.

In the spirit of Aloha Ke Akua, the Native Hawaiian Education Council will coordinate, assess and make recommendations to perpetuate excellence in Native Hawaiian education.

Logo

NHEC’s logo depicts our place in navigating the connection between Western education systems and Hawaiian ways of learning/knowing through guidance by NHEC’s vision.

Storymap

Using visual mo‘olelo, NHEC’s storymap distills the unique complexities of our work and the role we serve within the Native Hawaiian education ecosystem (see pp.38-39).



FY 2023 Council Membership

APPOINTEE	CURRENT	DESIGNEE TO NHEC (if applicable)
The President of the University of Hawai'i	David Lassner	Mark Alapaki Luke Honolulu Community College
The Governor of the State of Hawai'i	Josh Green	
The Superintendent of the State of Hawai'i Department of Education	Keith Hayashi	
The Chairperson of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs	Carmen Hulu Lindsey	
The Executive Director of the Hawai'i Public Charter School Network	VACANT (no ED); designee assigned by HPCSN Board	John Thatcher HPCSN Board
The Chief Executive Officer of the Kamehameha Schools	Jack Wong	Shelli Kim KS Na Kula Kamali'i
The Chief Executive Officer of the Lili'uokalani Trust (formerly Queen Lili'uokalani Trust)	Dawn Harflinger	Ka'ohinani Daniels LT Learning Innovations Designer
An individual representing one or more private grant-making entities	Keahi Makaimoku	
The Mayor of the County of Hawai'i	Mitch Roth	Leilani Lindsey-Ka'apuni , Ka Haka 'Ula o Ke'elikolani College of Hawaiian Language
The Mayor of the County of Maui	Richard Bissen Jr.	
The Mayor of the County of Kaua'i	Derek Kawakami	Coty "Buffy" Trugillo , KS Dean of Community and 'Ohana Engagement for Residential Life
A representative from the island of Moloka'i or the island of Lana'i	Kainoa Pali	
The Mayor of the City and County of Honolulu	Rick Blangiardi	
The Chairperson of the Hawaiian Homes Commission	Kali Watson	
The Chairperson of the Hawai'i Workforce Development Council	Alan Hayashi	Dion Dizon , Hawai'i State AFL-CIO/Hawai'i Workforce Development Council

Native Hawaiian Education Council Staff

Elena Farden	Executive Director
Erika Vincent	Director of Operations

History

1988 Native Hawaiian Education Act (NHEA)

To address the findings of the 1983 assessment, Congress enacted the NHEA fund supplemental programs to benefit Native Hawaiians in five distinct areas:

- Family-based early childhood education
- Elementary curriculum development
- Higher education assistance
- Gifted and talented
- Special education

1983 Native Hawaiian Education Assessment Report

Congress called for a comprehensive assessment on the educational needs of Native Hawaiians, which found that Hawaiians scored below parity in national standardized test; were disproportionately represented in special education and gifted and talented programs; have educational needs related to their cultural situation.

1994 NHEA Reauthorization

- Under the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994, the NHEA was amended to:
- Extend funding to curriculum development for secondary education and teacher training/recruitment and for establishing community-based education learning centers;
 - Establish the Native Hawaiian Education Council composed of 25 NHEA grant recipients, Native Hawaiian-serving organizations, and island reps to provide guidance and direction of Native Hawaiian education resources to government agencies; and
 - Establish five island councils of parents, students, and other community members to ensure island/community interest were represented within the Council.

2001 NHEA Reauthorization

- Under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, the NHEA was amended to:
- Give awarding priority to projects addressing beginning reading/literacy for K-3; the needs of at-risk children/youth; fields/disciplines of Native Hawaiian underemployment; and use of Hawaiian language in instruction;
 - Change the Council composition to 10 Native Hawaiian education providers, 10 Native Hawaiians or Native Hawaiian education consumers, and one Office of Hawaiian Affairs representative; and
 - Expand island/community representation to seven island councils.

Impact



Purpose

The Native Hawaiian Education Council was established to effectuate the purposes of the NHEA through the coordination and assessment of existing educational services and programs available to Native Hawaiians, and providing guidance and direction on future funding priorities to Federal, State and local agencies

Impact

Tech Support

Coordinate Input

Grantees

Grantees

Programs

Programs

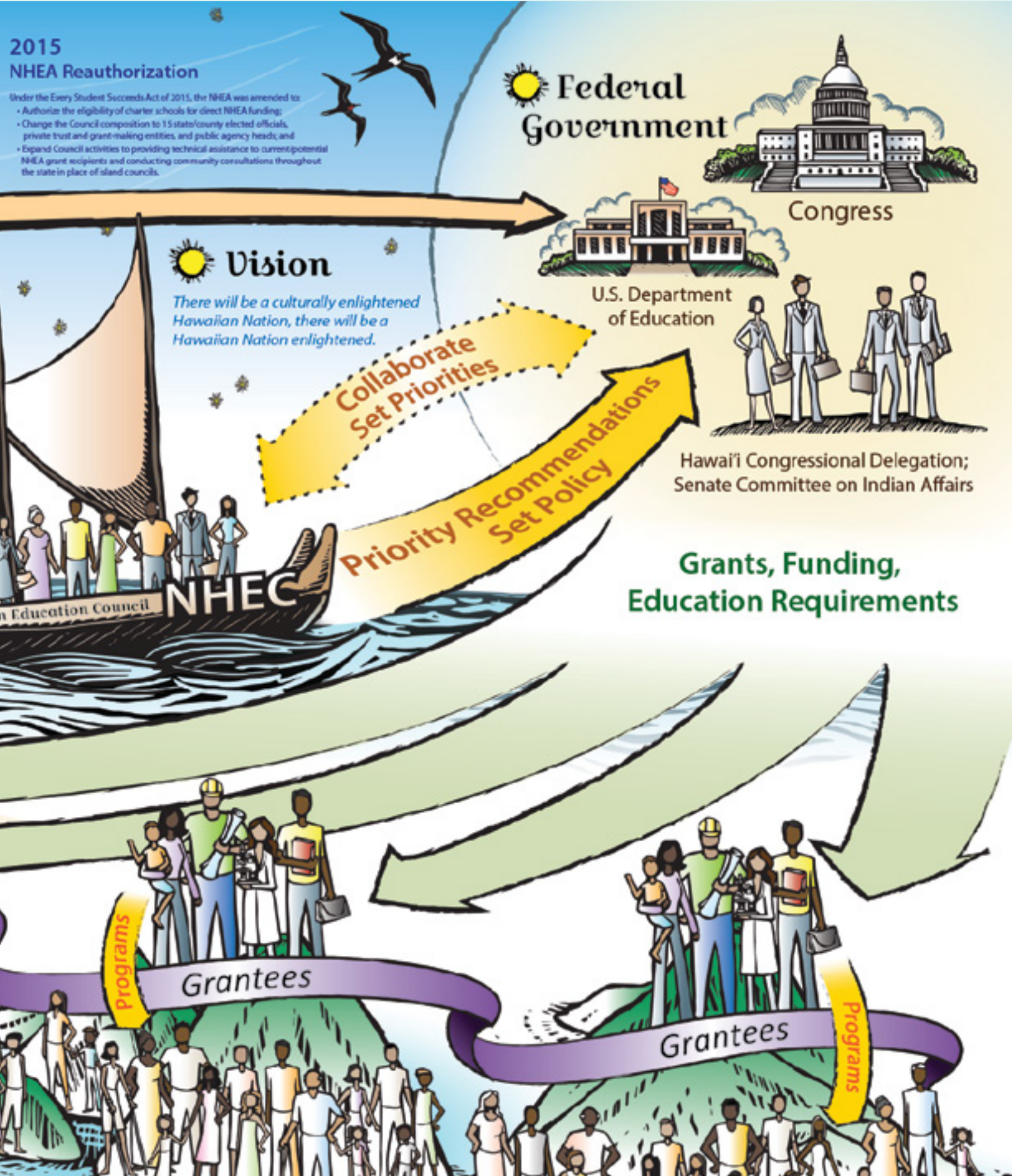


Lāhui



Native Hawaiian





Definition of Terms

Indigenous, with a capital “I” is used throughout this annual report as NHEC has adopted the United Nation’s definition that refers to Indigenous as the “peoples of long settlement and connection to specific lands who have been adversely affected by incursions by industrial economies, displacement, and settlement of their traditional territories by others” and has also become “a way for Indigenous peoples to articulate the common challenge they faced as communities impacted by colonialism” (Sapiens, 2023).

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