



*What's
Working* in
Hawai'i's SCHOOLS

Highlighting Practices Schools are Proud Of



Featuring
**Differentiating
Instruction through
the Arts**

Focusing our strengths is a proven way to build on them, a way to spark enthusiasm and plant the seeds of innovation, creation and collaboration. In this spirit the Center on Disability Studies contacted Hawai'i teachers and invited them to identify What's Working in their school. We asked that the chosen practice be an outgrowth of current research and what they shared demonstrates how individual schools have chosen to craft their unique approach to what the research tells us. These examples are not necessarily DOE endorsed, they do however reflect practices that each of these schools feels proud of and has identified as "What's Working" for them.

Kauluwela Elementary School

Contact: Jamie Kaneshiro, 587-4447

At Kauluwela Elementary, Jamie Kaneshiro has been weaving together the arts and social studies through a project known as **Scrolling Through China**. This assignment teaches second grade students how the arts shape and reflect Chinese history and culture by creating and presenting Chinese landscapes. **Scrolling Through China** was created as a way to integrate the Core Knowledge units of China, Geography, and Fine Arts through the study of geographical landscapes, the history of ancient China, the study of its' people and their culture. The students then apply the core knowledge units of Fine Art through the creation of Western, Eastern and Chinese landscapes. The Core program is a curriculum designed to build a foundation of knowledge that includes Language, and Literature, History and Geography, Visual Arts, Music, Mathematics, and Science.

Through this activity, students are able to incorporate their knowledge of the color wheel, composition, and the use of different mediums to create Western and Eastern landscapes that reflect on the culture of each society. The students were able to learn about the culture and history of China through the arts, using hands-on experiences. A professional painter and teacher acted as a mentor to the second graders, demonstrating the use of water colors and prints were borrowed from the Academy of Arts to enhance the lessons. **Scrolling Through China** has been an effective way to provide a variety of experiences for diverse learners. The use of

different media helped children with different abilities to succeed. This project also provided the students with a well-rounded curriculum that integrates History, Geography and the arts.

Wilson Elementary School

Contact: Robin Larry, 733-4740

Sixth grade teacher, Robin Larry, has successfully used drama as a teaching strategy to enhance the language arts skills of her students through the **Tableau**. A Tableau is a group of statues working together to communicate an emotion, event, or scene. Students in Robin Larry's class utilized the **Tableau** to create a series of frozen positions that helped students break down a story, analyze the sequence of events, identify the important aspects of the story, and bring it to life using both verbal and non-verbal communication skills. The students were required to use only facial expressions and body movements to communicate during the scene and could only use three Tableaux to tell the story; this entailed being able to pick out the most important aspects of each scene, facilitated group communication, negotiation skills and reaching a consensus. Robin Larry collaborated with George Kon, the drama instructor for Farrington High school and director of the T-Shirt Theatre to teach the sixth graders about drama production, voice projection and instilling personality and emotion into one's voice. The **Tableau** also promoted a greater understanding of the characters and the scene by requiring students to portray the scene through movement and drama before adding the dialog, creating a script and performing before the class. Students learn characterization as well as the roles of each character in the story being dramatized.

As a result of using the **Tableau** in her class, Robin Larry has seen an improvement in her student's ability to read a story and visualize it and bring it to life. From a teacher's standpoint, the **Tableau** helped students to visualize the story and facilitated comprehension. Robin Larry was able to see when misunderstandings occurred and correct the students during the process. Students increased their communication and social skills through working in groups, communicating a story non-verbally and verbally, and performing the scene before their peers. This helped the students to develop their presentation skills; boosting confidence, building drama skills, and improving projection. Students were also able to give feedback and suggestions to each other. By weaving drama produc-



tion into lessons that teach the elements of a story, students really got into the process of creating their projects and learned a great deal without it feeling like work. As a result of her success with this practice, Robin Larry plans to continue teaching the **Tableau**.

Kula Elementary School

Contact: Diane Peters, (808) 878-7610, x242

Every year since Diane Peters began teaching, she has directed a play with her fifth grade students. Three years ago, she decided to use the activity as a way to strengthen her social studies curriculum and get her students excited about American history. **“America Live”** was the perfect fit. During the course of this play, students cover the history of the explorers, the puritans, the patriots, and the pioneers. By the end of the ninth act, students have put themselves in the shoes of both confederate soldiers and slaves, while listening to President Abraham Lincoln deliver the Gettysburg Address.

Diane feels that her students make a personal connection to the subject matter when the arts are incorporated into learning, deepening their understanding and true expressions of life and culture. “Children learn in different ways,” she says, “and if they act, sing, and dance something they most certainly know it.” Although **“America Live”** is humorous and fun, the students thoroughly absorbed American history by way of drama. When tested on the epochs of history covered in the play, the lowest grade was an 85%, and that child had a reading disability.

“America Live” is run as a free after school program for fifth graders that meets twice a week. Fifth grade teachers Diane Peters, Caroline Walker, and the music director Fulton Tashombe (a local musician) volunteer their time to coordinate the performance. Thanks to the success of “America Live,” the PTA has provided a budget of \$2000 for costumes, props, and to compensate Donna Breeden (a drama specialist from the Maui Academy of Performing Arts) and Mardi Swatek (a dance specialist). **“America Live”** is performed once for the students, again in the evening for families, and the musical portion is presented before the long term residents at Kula Hospital to connect the project to community service.

“Diane Peters is an expert on integrating art into the curriculum. She has taught many workshops on literacy with art and did her masters thesis on literacy in connection with Howard Gardner's work. In addition, she

spent a summer at Harvard a few years ago attending his summer institute. According to Lesley Alexander, State Resource Teacher for SPED on Maui “She is a valuable resource and master teacher.” This year, Kula Elementary received a grant from the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts to continue their efforts to integrate the arts into education

Education Laboratory School

Contact: Suzanne Acord, (808) 956-4923

The Education Laboratory School at the University of Hawai‘i at Manoa is an institution committed to creating, demonstrating, and evaluating innovative instructional materials and activities that are suitable for a wide range of learning styles. The school uses teaching teams to integrate curriculum through lessons that are activity-centered to cultivate critical thinking skills. Suzanne Acord currently teaches social studies at the laboratory high school and uses a wide variety of art enriched activities to teach the curriculum to her high school students. Her classes use a mixture of oral presentations, cartoons, stories, poems, visual art projects and timelines to make learning both tangible and interesting.

One activity that the students particularly enjoy are the **History News Skits**. Six times a year students are assigned a historical event in small groups to present to the class as an on-location newscast. In order to complete the assignment, students need to learn the history of the past event: the who, when, where, why, how and the impact. Students then review the information as they work on their skit. When the skit is presented to the class, it becomes a review for all of the students, further reinforcing the learning and making it stick. The **History News Skits** need no resources and really strengthen the learning experience for the students through the process of reviewing the information. Best of all, the students really enjoy the project and their evaluations of the lesson are high. Suzanne Acord believes that, “to teach something, you have to know it,” and uses this project for larger scale history reviews where students are assigned a whole year in history and have to cover the important events in that year. **History News Skits** also give each and every student a chance to shine, even the kids that don’t want to speak in front of the class.

Suzanne also provides alternative assignments to assess student learning. Throughout the school year, students study current events as an important aspect of Social Studies. Each student must present ten articles a year, but

what makes the **Current Event Presentations** inventive is that they include a variety of ways for students to demonstrate understanding. For each international, domestic, or local event, a student must supply a written summary, a presentation to the class, a drawn map of the location of the event, and hold a discussion on how the event affects Hawai'i. The use of alternate assessments allow for students with diverse abilities to shine. Suzanne also allows students to choose the format of their end product in some **Current Event Presentations**. Each year students must turn in a project describing a geographical current event. The assignment requires each student to discuss the effects of the event on the people of that geographical area and the effects on people here in Hawai'i. Suzanne Acord gives her students the option of either a written paper or an illustration that clearly depicts these global relationships. By using student preference to drive an assignment, these students are more motivated and interested in their projects and it has been amazing to see how well students visualize the effects of geographic events on the population. Suzanne believes that, "art increases a student's memory of history because you aren't looking at words, you're looking at history."

What's Working in Professional Development Maui Arts and Cultural Center

Contact: Susana Brown, Educational Director, 242-2787, ext. 234, or e-mail at susana@mauiarts.org.

The Maui Arts and Cultural Center has received a prestigious grant from the Kennedy Center's Partners in Education Program for creating a professional development program focused on integrating arts and education. This project is funded to four national partners in The Professional Development Research Project. The Maui school district is using their grant to develop hard research to support the idea that integrating the arts into education can produce more motivated students who receive higher scores and better grades.

One exciting quality of the **Maui Arts Program** is the hands on training teachers get with local artists when learning about arts integration techniques. Following instruction, each teacher writes a lesson plan that uniquely applies the techniques taught. With the help of the artist, the lesson is later taken into the classroom and put into practice. Based on

classroom observation, teacher journals, interviews, and teacher performance, noticeable improvements have been made in the effectiveness of these trained teachers. **The Maui Center's Professional Development Program** offers workshops throughout the school year for a nominal fee. All workshops are aligned with the Hawai'i Content and Performance Standards and are approved by the Department of Education for professional development credits. For a full listing of classes being offered visit their website at http://mauiarts.org/artsed_teachers.html

Hawai'i Alliance for Arts Education

Contact: Hawai'i Alliance for Arts Education at www.arts-hawaii.org or Lei Ahsing, (808) 941-2787

The Hawai'i Alliance for Arts Education has created **Arts First: An Essential Arts Toolkit** in response to a need for teaching to reach standards and professional development and training opportunities. This publication provides examples, lesson plans, integration techniques, related curriculum standards and arts-based education practices in the four major disciplines of Dance, Drama, Visual Arts, and Music. The toolkit is designed for students in grades K-5 and demonstrates ways to integrate the arts into education. **Arts First: An Essential Arts Toolkit** will be released in schools throughout Hawai'i. For information on how to get a copy of this publication, please contact the Hawai'i Alliance for Arts Education. The Hawai'i Alliance for Arts Education, founded in 1980, is the only statewide private non-profit agency for the arts and is a part of the national Kennedy Center Alliance for Arts Education Network, a major program of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington DC.

Reference:

QED: Proving Arts Inclusion Improves Education. (2003, Spring)
Kennedy Center National Educational Review, 5, 10-11.

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