



Accrediting Commission for Schools

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INITIAL VISIT HAWAII ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS VISITING COMMITTEE REPORT

Part I

Name of School: Aina Haina Elementary School

School Address: 801 W. Hind Ave., Honolulu, HI 96821

Grades Reviewed: K - 5

Initial Visit Chair: Cheryl Avalos

Initial Visit Team Member(s): _____

Date of Visit: January 27, 2016

I. Introduction

Initial Visit School Description.

Aina Haina Elementary School, built in 1950, is located in a stable upper middle class neighborhood in East Honolulu. The school embraces the belief that high student achievement is the result of a standards-based rigorous, balanced and relevant curriculum for all students. Aina Haina School is currently an International Baccalaureate candidate school. The parent organization fully supports the school's effort to educate the whole child through the funding of the physical education, art, dance, and technology teachers to create meaning and make connections for students to the core academic areas. Many parents and community members are available to volunteer at the school for a variety of special programs and events, including tutoring, both during the school day and outside school hours.

Aina Haina utilizes project activities to successfully involve community partners, parents, staff, and students such as the annual Haunted House for Halloween, which is open to the community. Aina Haina also offers students regular Technology, Library, Hawaiian Studies, Drama and Nihongo curricula to all students. After school enrichment include: Japanese, chorus, multiple art forms, theater, hula, inventions, early kinesthetic learning and Lego robotics.

The library and computer lab are located in the center of campus, and function as the heart of the learning community. The campus is currently wireless from corner to corner. Every class visits the library bi-weekly to use the extensive technology resources and services of the support staff. Before school, parents are welcome to use the library resources with their children. A daily live morning announcement program on closed circuit TV, staffed by students, lets everyone start their learning day together.

The school has also identified and serviced significant numbers of both Special Education (preschool through grade 5) and Gifted and Talented (grades 2-5) students. The special needs students also have the opportunity to balance their learning through adaptive PE, Art and Music therapy classes. A Primary School Adjustment Program, along with two grade level counselors and a Behavioral Health Specialist, works to maximize academic success by promoting positive behaviors through early interventions and empowering students through the building of coping and resiliency strategies.

Aina Haina also provides athletic and fitness opportunities through its Jaguar Jog, Jump Rope for Heart, Basketball, Track and mentor PE classroom teams.

Academic and Financial Plan (AFP).

The Aina Haina Elementary School's Academic and Financial Plan (AcFN) includes the three required Hawaii Board of Education goals and the objectives for each goal. In response to the goals and objectives, the following strategies are planned for the 2015-16 school year:

- Deepen teachers’ understanding of the Common Core Standards so they can integrate these shifts into their teaching practices and embed them into the existing IB units.
- Implement “**Wonders**” ELA program materials in Gr. K-2 (initial implementation in Gr. 3-5 in 2014-2015) and “**Stepping Stones**” mathematics program materials in Gr. 3-5 (initial implementation in Gr. K-2 in 2014-2015) .
- Provide training for teachers including the following topics: **Level 1 IB**, “inquiry as an instructional strategy,” differentiation, and technology to support the implementation of programs and enhance instruction.
- Reflect on and revise current IB unit plans to incorporate priority strategies (Common Core shifts, use of common core programs, assessment, differentiation, inquiry)
- Educate parents about the shifts in Common Core Standards and the IB PYP, including information about the various components of the PYP and benefits for the students
- Develop a system to monitor student progress so that struggling students can be matched up with appropriate, targeted interventions
- Develop an induction program for new staff that provides information about the IB Program and
- Integrate IB Learner Profile characteristics and Attitudes into the positive behavioral support system (3B’s) currently in place
- Provide opportunities for all special needs students participate in adaptive art and PE programs

2014-15 HSA assessment for all students (SBAC)

Number of Students Tested and Percent of Students at Level 3 or above for Students in Aina Haina Elementary, 2014 - 2015

ELA/Literacy

Grade	Number of Students Tested	Percent at Level 3 or Above
Grade 3	87	61%
Grade 4	102	75%
Grade 5	75	69%
Grade 6	N/A	N/A

Mathematics

Grade	Number of Students Tested	Percent at Level 3 or Above
Grade 3	87	66%
Grade 4	102	81%
Grade 5	75	65%
Grade 6	N/A	N/A

Science

Grade	Students Tested	Percent at Level 3 or above
Grade 4	102	80%

II. General Comments

Category A. Organization

Vision and Mission Statements

The school uses the 3 B's: **Be Kind, Be Safe, Be Responsible** as a positive behavior support system. The school plans to integrate the IB Learner Profiles into the behavior system during the next school year.

INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE (IB) LEARNER PROFILE

- **Inquirer-** I love to learn about the world around me. I ask questions to learn and know more. I love to learn at school and on my own!
- **Communicator-** I listen carefully. I can express myself in many ways. I work well with others.
- **Caring-** I am compassionate & care about others and their feelings. I show concern for others and our world.
- **Knowledgeable-** I know a lot about many different things. I learn about things that are important to me, my community and the world.
- **Balanced-** I understand that it is important to be balanced & take care of my needs: mind, body and feelings.
- **Principled-** I am honest and fair. I am respectful of others and do the right thing. I take responsibility for myself and accept the consequences of my choices.
- **Reflective-** I think deeply about my learning and my experiences. I know what things I do well and what things I need to get better at. I always try to make myself a better person.
- **Courageous -** I am brave enough to try new things and take chances. I stand up for what I believe in.
- **Open-minded-** I am willing to listen to others' ideas and points of view. I realize I may learn from them too.
- **Thinker-** I use my mind to think things through. I work to find solutions to problems. I make good decisions.

In addition to the 3 Be's and the IB Learner Profile, the school has the following Vision, Mission and Schoolwide Learner Outcomes.

SCHOOL VISION

Explore and Excel Through Academics, Arts & Athletics.

SCHOOL MISSION

“Aina Haina School strives to be the Heart of our Community where:

- Every child matters and has a gift to share
- Teachers and staff are dedicated, collaborative and caring

- Families are supportive and involved as part of the community of learners
- Community partnerships are encouraged
So that the academic learning environment, enriched by the arts, athletics and altruism, enables each child to child to participate productively in our global society.”

SCHOOL WIDE LEARNER OUTCOMES

By the end of grade 5 at Aina Haina School, all students should be able to...

- communicate effectively; (read, write, speak, listen, relate)
- work cooperatively and effectively with others;
- apply problem-solving strategies;
- show technological competency and adaptability;
- make meaningful connections to understand universal concepts.

The School’s Planning Process

The Leadership Team, includes the Principal, the Vice Principal, the Curriculum Coordinator, the International Baccalaureate Coordinator and the Student Services Coordinator, encourages all staff members to be a part of schoolwide planning and decision-making. Teachers have collaboratively developed and continuously update six IB Units for each grade level and use the Data Team processing to ensure student progress. To accomplish this, each grade level is released every other week for five hours while students are engaged in physical education, art, music, and technology.

Are the Program and Resources aligned to the AcFN?

Yes. The program is in alignment with the DOE and State Board Policies and programs. There is an Academic Review Team and the grade-level Data Team process is used during the articulation time.

The School Community Council

The School Community Council includes the Leadership Team, a classified representative, a community representative and two parents. A variety of issues are discussed at the meetings throughout the year, and the SCC has served as the Academic Review Team (ART) this year.

Qualifications of the Staff

All teachers at the school are identified as Highly Qualified. The IB program requires that all teachers receive the appropriate training to develop units and deliver them in a rigorous manner. One of the teachers has agreed to have her classroom become a lab classroom for teachers to visit and observe. The school is also considering implementing Peer Observations as a way to improve instruction.

Induction and Mentoring

As part of the Farrington-Kaiser-Kalani Complex, the probationary teachers are assigned a district level, full-release mentor that they work with on a regular basis. The AHES administration meets quarterly, at minimum, with the full release mentors. AHES also has school level mentors at every grade level. In addition, AHES has set up a system where faculty members are partnered with other faculty/staff to serve in a more intensive mentoring role, as needed. The administration and coordinators work closely together to provide time and training for any initiatives that the school is implementing (EES, *Wonders*, *Stepping Stones*, RtI, IB) as part of its induction process.

The Internal and External Communications Processes

Both internal and external communications are effective at the school. The bi-weekly articulation meetings allow teachers to communicate with each other on a regular basis. The coordinators also provide communication opportunities across grade levels. Parents receive a monthly newsletter and have access to the school website that provides updated information about the school and its activities. Teachers regularly communicate through email with parents regarding assignments and student progress. There is also a monthly parent training offered to help parents understand the Common Core Standards and the International Baccalaureate Program.

Adequacy of resources to meet the needs of the current educational program

Resources are adequate to provide the IB program to all students. Parents and corporate sponsors also raise over \$100,000 each year to supplement the school's budget.

Are the facilities safe, orderly, and support the learning process?

Yes. The facilities are well maintained.

Category B. Standards-based Student Learning: Curriculum

Aina Haina provides a rigorous, relevant and standards-based program via the International Baccalaureate Program. The school is currently an International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (IB PYP) candidate school and will have their IB Team visit to become an official IB school at the end of the month.

The school has developed six inter-disciplinary units for the year for each grade level. The themes for the units include: *Who we are*, *Where we are in place and time*, *How we express ourselves*, *How the world works*, *How we organize ourselves*, and *Sharing the planet*. Each grade level uses the themes to develop units that are appropriate to the grade level incorporating mainly social studies and science standards. The *Wonders* and *Stepping Stones* programs are used for ELA and mathematics although they are working to include more of these standards in the units.

The biweekly articulation meetings allow time for teachers to review the units and update when necessary. Aina Haina meets with other IB schools and has articulation meetings with the middle

school to compare and share successes and changes that need to be made.

The IB program hopes to develop “internationally-minded” students. All of the themes encourage real world applications of learning to a more global population. Examples of the units include the following: Earth’s Natural Cycles, Communities, Culture, Natural Resources, Citizenship, Human Impact, and Exploration.

Category C. Standards-based Student Learning: Instruction

Teachers use a variety of instructional strategies and resources that engage students in the learning. Students may do research about their family’s origins, or learn about food from another country. Students often work in groups and discuss issues from the units such as the perspective of different people during exploration of “The New World..” Student work was evident in all classrooms.

Students visit the library for lessons that are related to the work that they are doing in their classes. The librarian provides lessons and suggests books to supplement classroom activities. There are computers in the library and stations for students to explore ideas and concepts.

Category D. Standards-based Student Learning: Assessment and Accountability

Data Teams evaluate student progress during the articulation times. The teams were using the process and forms provided by the DOE although they found the forms very time-consuming. Adjustments have been made so the process can be recorded, but it does not take as much time to complete the forms. This allows the teachers more time to discuss plans of action to improve student learning. The information from the Data Teams helps teachers make changes in the units and their instruction to better meet the needs of the students.

Students are encouraged to employ the IB Learner Profile characteristics in all situations. Teachers identify examples of students demonstrating them and ask questions that guide students to utilize the Learner Profiles that are posted in each classroom.

The school encourages students to use the 3 B’s by giving students a “Gotcha” ticket when they catch a student doing something the models one of the 3 B;s. Student take the tickets to the office and may select a prize after explaining why they received the ticket. Any staff member can give a student the “Gotcha” tickets.

Category E. School Culture and Support for Student Personal and Academic Growth

There are approximately fifty students (500 student population) who are identified as special education students. The main special education category at the school is “autiism. ”There is a Student Support Services Coordinator who determines the services required for these students.

Teachers can also identify students needing special assistance with a particular subject. Small groups often work with the part-time teachers or tutors on ELA or mathematics.

The school displays a “sense of community” with all of the staff responsible for student learning and safety. Parents are involved as volunteers in the classrooms and participate in school-based activities such as the Haunted House. There is a Parent and Community Liaison that reaches out to the parents and community, and the SCC would like to determine ways to involve more parents in school activities.

In addition to its academic program, Aina Haina offers all students Technology, Library, Hawaiian Studies, Drama and Nihongo curricula during the school day. After school enrichment includes: Japanese, chorus, multiple art forms, theater, hula, inventions, early kinesthetic learning and Lego robotics, and an A+ program is also available for after school care. The support staff sponsors ten groups for the HEART (Helping Everyone Acts Responsibly Together) public service program.

III. Closing Comments: Summary and Considerations

Aina Haina Elementary School is dedicated to providing a quality education to all students. Its success can be attributed to many factors. The school is committed to the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme and its inter-disciplinary units so students become “Internationally Minded” and connect their learning to the real world. All stakeholders groups interviewed during the Initial Visit demonstrated the commitment to the program and the benefits it provides for students. Time is allocated to the improvement of the units through the biweekly articulation meetings. The Learner Profiles are emphasized in every aspect of the school program.

The leadership and staff of the school are stable with the principal having led the school for eight years. The assistant principal brings experience from the high school level that assists with vertical articulation of the IB program. The leadership team, including the coordinators, demonstrates a high level of expertise and collaboration focused on improving student achievement. The support staff shows concern for student welfare and developing the whole child. Parents participate in the School Community Council and many parents are involved in school activities that raise approximately \$100,000 each year so the school can hire part-time teachers to provide additional support to the educational program.

Students were actively involved in the learning through a wide variety of instructional strategies. Many curricular and co-curricular enrichment offerings are provided for students. The library is currently being updated to include books that are aligned to the IB units.

As Aina Haina Elementary begins the WASC/HIDOE Self Study Process, in addition to areas noted under General Comments, additional focus, dialogue, thinking and/or continued work in the following areas may facilitate the school’s continuous school improvement efforts and support the self-study process:

- The school indicated that the IB units focused mainly on the social studies and science standards. The teachers should explore ways to also incorporate the ELA and mathematics standards into the units so students can see ways that these areas are a part of the real world and important areas of study.
- The school should provide additional professional development in the area of Common Core mathematics so teachers can use a variety of methods to explain concepts and help students develop a strong understanding of the mathematics.

In closing, Aina Haina Elementary is clearly ready to begin the self-study process. In many areas they currently address the WASC/HIDOE Criteria at a very high level of effectiveness. The continuous growth that the school has made in student proficiency levels is evidence of the school leadership and staff in developing a school culture that focuses on the whole child. In addition the strategies and practices that are aligned to the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme has made a difference in students’ learning. The self-study process will assist Aina Haina Elementary staff and stakeholders in refining the current IB units and developing additional strategies to elevate the learning of all students.