



Resources for Enrichment,
Athletics, Culture and Health
R.E.A.C.H. Pilot Program
Review Report
May 2015



**R.E.A.C.H. PILOT PROGRAM REVIEW
INTRODUCTION**

PROGRAM HISTORY

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In March 2013, Lt. Governor Shan Tsutsui launched the R.E.A.C.H. Afterschool Initiative. R.E.A.C.H., an acronym for Resources for Enrichment, Athletics, Culture and Health, seeks to provide an organizational framework and funding base for schools to offer expanded learning opportunities during after-school hours for public middle and intermediate school students.

The mission of this program is to assure that students in grades 6 to 8 receive the academic and community-based support they need to stay on track towards high school graduation by engaging them in various programs and activities. The programs offered under the R.E.A.C.H. framework fall into three general categories- academic enrichment, athletics, and the arts (which includes culture, digital media, etc.). This program has been implemented in nine public intermediate and middle schools.

In December 2013, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) Board of Trustees (BOT) approved the authorization of funding \$75,000 from OHA’s 2014 Fiscal Reserve Authorization to the State Office of the Lieutenant Governor (OLG) to support the R.E.A.C.H. Program at Moloka’i Middle School and Hāna High and Elementary School due to the large Native Hawaiian student population at these schools. The program was implemented in these two schools in January 2014.

Program goals

The following goals and objectives were proposed by the OLG:

- Participating programs shall have a mechanism for tracking and reporting data on student:
 - ◊ Attendance in school
 - ◊ Behavior in class
 - ◊ Course marks or grades



Program goals (continued)

- Programs shall foster the development of core values in youth- confidence, respect, responsibility, and a sense of community.
- Programs shall provide a supervised, safe, learning environment for young adolescents to be engaged, and stay on the right path towards high school graduation.

Program budget

The total grant award for the program totaled \$75,000 to be allocated as follows:

- Molokaʻi Middle School to receive \$45,000; and
- Hāna High and Elementary School to receive \$30,000.

The funds were transferred from OHA to the OLG, where upon the OLG would transfer the funds to the Department of Education (DOE), where finally the DOE would transfer the funds to the schools.

Stakeholders

There are four groups of stakeholders involved in the R.E.A.C.H. program: (1) the OLG, (2) OHA, (3) the DOE and participating schools, and (4) the program participants.

The responsibilities of the OLG, OHA, and the DOE are outlined in a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). The OLG was responsible for the disbursement of funds to the DOE, the selection of schools that would implement the R.E.A.C.H. program, and the coordination, monitoring, and reporting to OHA regarding data and the impact of the program. OHA is the funding source for the two participating schools in this agreement. The DOE is responsible for the disbursement of funds to Molokaʻi Middle School and Hāna High and Elementary School, ensuring that funds are used for the program, and the collection of expenditure and evaluation reports at the end of the project period.

SCOPE OF THE REVIEW

The purpose of this review is to determine what impact the program has had for the program participants. This review includes an examination of the program documents- specifically the MOA, the OHA BOT action item, the schools' progress reports, and the final R.E.A.C.H. assessment report. This review concentrates on program activities that occurred between the implementation in January 2014 to the end of the agreement in June 2014.



PROGRAM RESULTS

In reviewing the program report form sent to OHA from the DOE, results were reported by individual school, and therefore key findings are discussed by individual school.

Moloka'i Middle School results

The school reported that prior to the implementation of the program, 131 students participated. After the program was implemented, 12 new students joined during the second semester. The school reported that school attendance dropped from 96.2% to 93.7% and was attributed to (1) the loss of the school's Social Worker resulting in a reduced approach to absenteeism and family contact and follow-ups, (2) changes in the DOE policy that no longer allowed documented illnesses and medical/dental treatment to be excused absences, and (3) the larger number of 8th grade absences due to interviews and testing requirements for Kamehameha Schools. Based on the verification and review of the school's disciplinary reports by the school, the school reported that student behavior has improved. And finally, student course marks/grades did improve in the 2nd semester compared to the 1st semester.

Academic enrichment. The school was able to offer study hall classes called Reach Out Study Hall to students who were identified to have been at-risk due to low grades, incomplete class work, and failure to do homework. As a result, all students reportedly passed their core subject classes.

The school also offered activities that created incentivized learning. Vex Robotics classes were offered on Mondays and Wednesdays from 2:00-3:30 p.m., with increased hours of instruction prior to tournaments. As a result of these classes, boys and girls teams were able to gain points through various statewide competitions to qualify for the World Competition in Los Angeles in March and the International Competition in July. The school also allowed tournament participation for *Vex Robotics*, chess, and bridges classes during January to February. The school reported that the opportunities to participate in these competitions were incentives for learning, goal setting, and striving for success.

Arts & culture. Classes in art, music, and performing arts were made possible in a new partnership with the Moloka'i Art Center that allowed for the school to create a contract for the instruction and provision of classes and workshops, along with Maile Services for violin instruction. Violin, woodwind/brass, Jammin Fridays (key board, guitar, bass, and drums), jewelry making, color pencil drawing, slam poetry, and expressive movement classes were offered to expose students to different mediums of creativity and expression. The classes culminated in the participants of the violin, Jammin Fridays, and slam poetry classes performing at the year-end after-school program's Family Night, showing the students' learning and achievements. The woodwind/brass students also held a performance in May. The performances were reportedly well received by friends, family, and the community members who attended.



Athletics. An optional flag football class was offered. Three student teams were sent to participate in the Lāhainā Intermediate Volleyball Tournament in April. The competition required participants to demonstrate skill building, focus, personal goal-setting, and sportsmanship that may not be possible to demonstrate solely with classes. A volleyball scrimmage was also held for students, families, staff, and community.

Hāna High and Elementary School results

The school reported that prior to program implementation 30 students were participating, which increased to 63 after implementation. Students' school attendance improved by 1% from a daily average absentee rate of 12% down to 11%. Behavioral referrals decreased by 15% in the 2nd semester. The school used test scores from the Hawai'i State Assessment (HSA) to determine course progress and have found that the math HSA test scores for the 70% of 6th graders achieved progress, the 95% of 7th graders achieved progress, and the 82% of 8th graders had achieved progress. The English language testing for 53% of 7th graders showed progress and 69% of 8th graders progressed.

Academic enrichment. After-school tutoring was conducted three days a week to support student academic achievement. 92% of the middle school students participated in the tutoring program.

Arts & culture. The school reported that because students participate in cultural activities as part of their normal daily activities, arts & cultural activities were not included.

Athletics. Originally the school had intended to offer 3-6 week units of basketball, volleyball, and flag football. However, they were unable to find a coach for the days when football was to be offered, therefore volleyball and basketball units were extended. A youth component for wrestling was also incorporated in the group.

FINDINGS

Because this program is a BOT initiative, typical analyses and review of performance measures were not able to be done in this case because none were required of the OLG or the DOE. However, given the information conveyed by the schools, there is still enough information to determine what impact was created. Both groups reported various impact to their participants, including but not limited to acquiring new skills and increasing academic performance. The impacts that preceded this discussion on findings have been identified but while both groups reported results that coincided in terms of impact, the individual



activities and challenges encountered were specific to the group.

Challenges encountered and lessons learned

Moloka'i Middle School. This school reported challenges with individual components of their program. In the instance of the Reach Out Study Halls, there was confusion between staff and students about the different approaches used between regular study hall sessions and the Reach Out Study Halls. This issue was remedied by clearly defining the difference between the two study halls, the criteria for entry into the Reach Out Study Hall, and by holding regular meetings with school staff and program staff to ensure consistent and maintain awareness of the lines of responsibility.

There was a challenge in attracting students and families in the family learning classes and the Leadership Day workshops and event. This issue was addressed for both programs by using the DOE messaging alternatives to inform families about these activities. These alternatives included social media, flyer distribution, and announcements in the island newspaper.

The last challenge encountered was with the Leadership Day Camp. The challenge was in the scheduling of the event due to the number of significant activities planned for after the spring break in the after-school program and school. The camp was re-scheduled and coincidentally conflicted with another event for the school's 8th graders. This was addressed by providing transportation for the 8th graders from their event to the camp.

The school reported that the most important lessons learned included identifying ways to retain and increase student participation in the program by offering a new selection of classes during each semester/quarter, and offering incentive events that allow student participation based on program involvement and engaging in behavior that is supportive of individual success.

Hāna High and Elementary School. The only identified challenge encountered by this school was that they were unable to find a coach to come on days where the football athletic component was being offered due to conflicting work schedules. In its place, the volleyball and basketball components were extended and a wrestling component was added. The concern that was addressed by the school was that while they wanted to have both tutoring and athletics daily, it would cause students to get home late into the evening.

This school also reported that they have found that an increase in the amount of tutors available will help students achieve better results in the classroom.



RECOMMENDATION

- In future initiatives such as these, OHA stakeholders can benefit from suggesting the inclusion of performance measures similar to those included in OHA grants funded by the Grants Division. This would provide data that could be used to craft future programs or the feasibility of performance measures in other programs and geographical locations. In future initiatives tailored to education-oriented programs, by receiving student Smarter Balanced Assessment data that includes original scores or proficiency level, the percentage of students who achieved progress, and finally a percentage of how much progress was achieved by student and as a group would be beneficial to determining the progress made by OHA-funded programs in achieving the OHA strategic results of exceeding reading standards from 55% to 65% and exceeding math standards from 32% to 45%.