

## **Education and Socio-Economic Status Native Hawaiian Students**

There are two specific policies in place in the state of Hawai'i that promote Native Hawaiian education. Those policies are Policy 105-7 in which the Board of Education recognizes the importance of Hawaiian education and its implementation in Hawaii's public education system, and Policy 105-8 which provides bicultural and bilingual education through the Kaiapuni Educational Program.

Policy 105-7 (Hawaiian Education) “Hawaii’s public education system should embody Hawaiian values, language, culture and history as a foundation to prepare students in grades K-12 for success in college, career and communities, locally and globally. Hawaiian language, culture, and history should be an integral part of Hawaii’s education standards for all students in grades K-12. The Board of Education recognizes that appropriate support for and implementation of Hawaiian education will positively impact the educational outcomes of all students in preparation for college, career and community success.”

Policy 105-8 (Ka Papahana Kaiapuni) “Ka Papahana Kaiapuni (“Kaiapuni Educational Program”) provides students with Hawaiian bicultural and bilingual education. Additionally, the program contributes to the continuation of our Hawaiian language and culture. The Kaiapuni Educational Program offers students an education in the medium of the Hawaiian Language. The comprehensive program combines the use of Hawaiian teaching methodologies, language, history, culture and values to prepare students for college, career and to be community contributors within a multicultural society. The Department of Education (“Department”) shall develop the necessary rules, regulations, guidelines and procedures as well as an updated strategic plan for the program. Every student within the State of Hawaii’s public school system should have reasonable access to the Kaiapuni Educational Program.”

Family income can greatly impact a child’s academic achievement. Children from low-income homes are less likely to have access to academic tools such as school supplies, books, or computers. Along with the barriers associated with household poverty including poor nutrition and unstable housing, families living in high poverty communities may also be affected by the lack of quality schooling, availability of resources, and peer support. 18.6% of families with Native Hawaiian children under the age of 18 income fell below the poverty level in Hawai‘i, 4.4 percentage points higher than all children (14.2%).

### Free or Reduced-Price Meal Program:

In the Hawai‘i public school system, the free or reduced-price meal program is used as the indicator to determine socioeconomic status—eligibility is established through family size and household income as reported by parents. 69.9% of Native Hawaiian students in Hawai‘i public schools were participating in the free or reduced-price meal program compared to 46.7% of non

Hawaiian students (SY2015). While Native Hawaiian students make up only 26.0% of the total public school population, they represent 34.5% of all students using the free or reduced-price meal program.

#### Proficiency Rates of Native Hawaiian Students:

Research shows that the academic history of students living in poverty from as early as kindergarten include decreased academic achievement, lower test scores, lower school completion rates, and often enter the workforce without a post-secondary degree. 77.0% of Native Hawaiian kindergarten students start their educational careers living in an economically disadvantaged household. Indicators of a student's likelihood of dropping out of high school include higher levels of emotional and behavioral problems, low attendance and high retention rates, and low academic achievement; all of which economically disadvantaged students are at an increased risk of experiencing. There is also a noticeable decrease in the percentage of economically disadvantaged Native Hawaiian students in high school (between 68-57%). This could be attributed to early dropout rates rather than the increase in their economic status.

Native Hawaiian students in general, regardless of socio-economic status, fall behind in math and reading proficiency rates compared to non-Hawaiian students. In math, there is a 10.5 percentage point gap between economically disadvantaged Native Hawaiian and non-Hawaiian students (23.7% and 34.2%) and a 18.5 percentage point gap between non-disadvantaged Native Hawaiian and non-Hawaiian students (38.8% and 57.3%). For reading, there is an 11.0 percentage point gap between economically disadvantaged students (29.0% and 40.9%) and an 18 percentage point gap between non-Disadvantage Hawaiian and non-Hawaiian students (47.7% and 65.7%). Native Hawaiian students also have higher rates of retention in middle and high school. In SY 2015, 1.3% of Native Hawaiian students were retained in 8th grade, compared to the total public school population rate of 0.9%. In the same year, there is a 4.7 percentage point gap between the graduation rate for Native Hawaiian students (77.2%) and all students (81.9%).

#### Special Education Services

14.6% of Native Hawaiian students were enrolled in a Special Education program (SY2015) Native Hawaiian students represent 39.1% of students enrolled in a Special Education program compared to representing only 26.0% of the total public school population.

#### Sources:

“A Native Hawaiian Focus on the Hawai‘i Public School System” (SY2015), Office of Hawaiian Affairs: Research Division, Ho‘ona‘auao (Education) Fact Sheet Vol. 2017, No.1 (pp.12-14) <https://19of32x2yl33s8o4xza0gf14-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/A-Native-Hawaiian-Focus-on-the-Hawaii-Public-School-System.pdf>

State of Hawaii Board of Education Policy 105-7, Hawaiian Education

State of Hawaii Board of Education Policy 105-8, Ka Papahana Kaiapuni