

Ka Lau

August 24, 2015

2015/2016, Issue 3



SEL Morphs into Papahana Waipunalei

LCPCS has received two separate grants to increase its emphasis on Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) for all students. Principally, a \$45,000 grant through the assistance of the Hawaii Community Foundation has been used to purchase two nationally recognized curricula: *The Second Step*, and *School Connect*. The lessons are designed to decrease bullying and other risky, disruptive or aggressive behaviors; increase respectfulness and cooperative conflict resolution; foster responsible and ethical behavior; and increase academic performance, motivation, and a sense of safety and well-being. With the funding, LCPCS has established its Papahana Waipunalei initiative.

Under guidance from the new curricula, kindergarteners through 5th graders focus on subjects like making friends, managing emotions, and solving problems. Sixth through 8th graders are coached in how to navigate adolescence, with exercises about making good choices and avoiding the pitfalls of peer pressure, substance abuse and bullying. High school students will be asked to explore such subjects as social awareness, apologizing and forgiving, coping mechanisms, relationship skills and responsible decision-making, which, of course, are critical to success in school, the workplace, and life.



Elementary students working on a puzzle before school in Kipuka last Wednesday.

To supplement this academic focus, the school has opened the “Kīpuka” center, a “wellness oasis” in the old conference room next to Paki’s office. From 7 to 7:50 am the center provides a safe space for elementary students to mentally transition from the home to the school environment. It is also open from 11:30 to 12:30 for both elementary and middle school

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Get Your Box!!



Some of “da box” contents last week

The Hawaii Island Food Basket is now using LCPCS as a drop-off location for its Ho’olaha Ka Hua, or “Da Box” Program. What is this? Put simply, you pay for a 10-week subscription, and each week you get a big box of around six to eight different fresh, locally-grown fruits and vegetables. The week before last, as an example, the box contained bananas, ‘ulu, leafy greens, green onions, mushrooms and sweet potatoes, along with information about how to prepare some of the items and several ‘ono recipes.

The program, in which anyone can participate, is designed to increase the island’s food sustainability through connecting local farmers and consumers. Also, by requiring that participants pay for a 10-week subscription in advance, the program helps to improve the farmers’ cash flow, minimize waste, and insure very competitive prices. The price is

\$16 a week, or \$10 a week for families on SNAP. For more information, go to www.hawaiifoodbasket.org/get-your-box, or call Produce Coordinator Kamea Wong at 933-6030. Payments can be made via cash, check, Paypal or EBT.

Calendar



- Saturday, August 29: 7:00 am to 11:00 am — 2nd annual **MY SCHOOL COLOR RUN**. A super fun way to show school spirit, celebrate healthy living, and raise money for programs at the school. Register at www.LCPCSMSCR.eventbrite.com.
- Monday, September 7 — NO SCHOOL: Labor Day

Papahana Waipunalei, continued

students after they've eaten their lunches. For the rest of the day, any student with a referral can access the comfortable room to relax, regroup or confer with school counselor, Karen Holderman. There are books, games, rugs and pillows, but not florescent lighting, in order to maintain a calming environment.

In addition, a morning "Safe Zone" has been established for middle school students near the teaching kitchens. From 7 to 8 am, they may visit the Safe Zone to hang out, play board games, work on homework, or listen to music. Papahana Waipunalei Program Administrator Jessica Kaneakua is there to reinforce the lessons the students are learning through the SEL curricula.

For both the Kīpuka Center and Safe Zone, all students who enter are asked to complete a short survey to assist staff in knowing whether help is needed, and, if so, what kind. In both spaces, students can ask for a range of social and emotional support.



Seasider Spotlight



Jessica Kaneakua

"If I'm not at work, I'm usually at the beach surrounded by family and friends," says LCPCS Papahana Waipunalei Program Director, Jessica Kaneakua. She grew up in Minneapolis, but Ms. Kaneakua's father is Hawaiian, and she has been exploring family connections all over Hawai'i and O'ahu since she moved back to the State in 2012. Prior to that, she earned a Master's Degree in Human Development and Family Studies from the University of Connecticut. From 2012 to 2013, she worked as Director of Health and Wellness at Moloka'i Community Health Center where she was head of multiple programmatic initiatives, including Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), Early Intervention Services (EIS), case management, behavioral health, and diabetes management.

Papahana Waipunalei is the new term for LCPCS's social and emotional learning program, which Ms. Kaneakua will be coordinating and expanding. She is also LCPCS Data Coordinator, and, in addition, she is on the Board of Directors for Hawaii United Individuals, a community-based organization that dedicates itself to providing individuals, families, and communities on Hawai'i Island access to affordable mental health and wellness resources.