

**U.S. Department of Education**  
**2016 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program**

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [X] Title I    [ ] Charter    [ ] Magnet    [ ] Choice

Name of Principal Mr. Ernest Muh

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Helemano Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 1001 Ihi Ihi Avenue

(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Wahiawa                      State HI                      Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 96786-1225

County Honolulu County

Telephone (808) 622-6336                      Fax (808) 622-6340

Web site/URL http://www.helemano.k12.hi.us                      E-mail Ernest\_Muh@notes.k12.hi.us

Twitter Handle \_\_\_\_\_ Facebook Page \_\_\_\_\_ Google+ \_\_\_\_\_

YouTube/URL \_\_\_\_\_ Blog \_\_\_\_\_ Other Social Media Link \_\_\_\_\_

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent\*Ms. Kathryn Matayoshi

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

E-mail

kathryn\_matayoshi@notes.k12.hi.us

District Name Hawaii (Central)                      Tel. (808) 831-6853

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board

President/Chairperson Mr. Lance Mizumoto

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

*\*Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

## Part I – Eligibility Certification

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The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The public school has met their state's accountability requirements (i.e., avoided sanctions) in participation, performance in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics, and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate) using the most recent accountability results available for the year prior to nomination.
3. To meet final eligibility, a public school must meet the state's accountability requirements (i.e., avoided sanctions) in participation, performance in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics, and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate) for the year in which they are nominated (2015-2016) and be certified by the state representative. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2010 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
6. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, or 2015.
7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's application and/or rescind a school's award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

## PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2015-2016) unless otherwise stated.

### DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 171 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 38 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 39 High schools
  - 7 K-12 schools
- 255 TOTAL

### SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
- Urban or large central city
  - Suburban with characteristics typical of an urban area
  - Suburban
  - Small city or town in a rural area
  - Rural
3. Number of students as of October 1, 2015 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	9	7	9
K	56	54	110
1	47	38	85
2	52	47	99
3	47	70	117
4	43	60	103
5	40	35	75
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
<b>Total Students</b>	294	311	605

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 42 % Asian
  - 8 % Black or African American
  - 17 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 13 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 16 % White
  - 4 % Two or more races
  - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2014 – 2015 school year: 32%

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	87
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	112
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	199
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2014	624
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.319
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	32

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 4 %  
27 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):  
Ilokano, Samoan, Spanish, Tagalog, Tongan

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 66 %  
Total number students who qualify: 399

8. Students receiving special education services: 13 %  
76 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- |                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| <u>13</u> Autism               | <u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness              | <u>5</u> Other Health Impaired                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness        | <u>33</u> Specific Learning Disability         |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>5</u> Speech or Language Impairment         |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment    | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>0</u> Mental Retardation    | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |
| <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities | <u>20</u> Developmentally Delayed              |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 8
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers	26
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	19
Paraprofessionals	18
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	3

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1     23:1

12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

<b>Required Information</b>	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011
Daily student attendance	96%	95%	94%	95%	95%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2015.

<b>Post-Secondary Status</b>	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes      No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

15. In a couple of sentences, provide the school's mission or vision statement.

Our mission is to provide a safe and caring environment, develop partnerships between all stakeholders, provide students appropriate learning opportunities to think, create, and succeed.

16. **For public schools only**, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.

## PART III – SUMMARY

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Helemano Elementary School has a humble pineapple plantation heritage and was first established in 1957. Located in Whitmore Village in Wahiawa, Hawaii, within the central upland plateau of O’ahu, Whitmore Village was established as a place of residence for the plantation employees of the Dole Pineapple Company. The campus is surrounded by a scenic view of the Waianae mountain range and prime agricultural land. The initial enrollment of 270 students in grades K-8 has grown to the present enrollment of over 620 students in grades preschool through fifth grade. By utilizing our resources and committing ourselves to the success of our students, we have witnessed our students’ growth and success.



## PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

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### 1. Core Curriculum:

#### English Language Arts

Helemano Elementary's English Language Arts instruction focuses on supporting the rigorous learning targets in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). We work on developing students who are college and career ready in reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Teachers use the Multisensory Structured Language/Orton Gillingham (MSL-OG) approach to address the CCSS Foundational Skills. We believe in a systematic, sequential, and structured format to support the needs of our student population who benefit from direct and explicit instruction. In grades K-2, phonics, phonemic awareness, and word recognition are the skills being addressed. In grades 3-5, students are taught syllabication and morphology. Teachers use the McGraw-Hill Wonders Series and other supplemental fiction and non-fiction texts to address the areas of reading comprehension, vocabulary, oral communication, and listening. The combination of these resources produces accurate and fluent readers who are able to read closely and answer text-dependent questions. To address the CCSS Writing Standards, we implement a combination of Step Up to Writing strategies, Thinking Maps, and the Six Traits model for explicit writing instruction to teach writing opinion pieces, short/focused research, informative/explanatory texts, and narratives. Vertical curriculum alignment ensures that learning is scaffolded from one grade level to the next using common language, organizational tools, and rubrics that address grade-appropriate standards.

#### Math

Helemano Elementary's math curriculum is designed to address the expectations of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for Mathematics. All teachers use a combination of Math Investigations, Stepping Stones, and supplemental resources to emphasize the eight mathematical practices, basic math skills, conceptual understanding, and problem solving. In addition, teachers use practical hands-on activities to help students see the relevance and practical application of mathematics. The emphasis for students in grades K-2 is to master the basic math facts while being introduced to our school-wide problem-solving process. In grades 3-5, the focus shifts to developing students with procedural fluency and helping students become multi-step problem solvers.

#### Science

Science education at Helemano Elementary is guided by the Hawaii Content and Performance Standards (HCPS) while we gradually transition to the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). The goal is for students to become confident with the scientific inquiry process. As a result, all grade levels have designed units that incorporate Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education to address life, physical, earth, and space sciences. The units are built with a big idea so students are able to understand the relevance of the topic. Next, the ideas are framed around essential questions so students can connect to the content. Through the use of non-fiction text, students gather facts and content knowledge. Finally, the theories are tested with hands-on learning activities designed to challenge students' creativity and thought processes. For example, the first-grade students use live crayfish to determine what structures help them survive in their environment. Our second-graders discover how plants and animals depend on each other by observing habitats surrounding the campus. Fifth-grade students investigate the relationship among producers, consumers, and decomposers by building their own eco-column. These types of problem-based lessons facilitate and enrich student learning through the integration of academic content and the community.

#### Social Studies

Social Studies content is aligned with the Hawaii Content and Performance Standards (HCPS) and addresses history, political science, cultural anthropology, geography, and economics. Teachers have designed units that integrate language arts curriculum with social studies content. The purpose of our social studies curriculum is to help our students develop the ability to make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world. Additionally, teachers incorporate relevant extension activities to enhance the units of study. Kindergarten students meet community members during their community helper day. Police officers, firefighters, and paramedics bring

equipment and vehicles to the school as part of their presentations. First-grade students determine if businesses provide goods or services by taking a field trip to a shopping center. Our third-graders visit Hawaii's Plantation Village to experience the life of early immigrants to the islands. The fourth-grade students work on a lo'i (taro) patch as part of their unit on sustainability. Through interaction with members of the community, students gain valuable insight into and empathy for the world around them.

#### Pre-School Program

The special education pre-school program at Helemano Elementary focuses on providing an appropriate early childhood education based on the foundational skills necessary for success in kindergarten. The Hawaii Early Learning and Development Standards (HELDS) help to prepare students for the transition to kindergarten. We provide individualized instruction in mathematics, English Language Arts, motor development, social and emotional development, and communication skills. Integrated units incorporating music, physical education, and art have been developed for social studies and science. In addition, opportunities are provided for our pre-school students to interact with their kindergarten peers which helps them assimilate into the school environment.

#### 2. Other Curriculum Areas:

##### Art

At Helemano Elementary, a full-time art teacher provides lessons to each class at least once per quarter. All students learn how the arts are organized by applying the elements of art such as line, shape, color, texture, value, space, and form into their own artwork. In upper grade levels, students further their understanding of how elements can be building blocks to create principles of art such as, pattern or repetition, rhythm, movement, unity, harmony, balance, emphasis, and contrast. In each standards-based lesson, students learn the elements and principles of art through visual cultural images and art history works. Students gain a larger understanding of their own culture and preparation for worldwide citizenship through the study of the arts.

##### Music

Weekly music lessons are taught by a full-time music teacher. Students at Helemano Elementary experience a music education that contributes to their emotional, intellectual, aesthetic, and physical development. Music is a fundamental way to express oneself and those students who are provided with a music education have access to tools that can help them to achieve a fuller life. Our students acquire essential skills by singing, performing on instruments, composing music, reading/notating music, listening/analyzing music, and connecting music with other cultures or disciplines. Music lessons also reinforce concepts taught in other content areas such as, numbers, decoding multi-syllable words into known rhythms, cultural songs, and exposure to the Hawaiian language. Participation in our end-of-the year Hoi'ke provides the venue to showcase performances in dancing/singing as well as the visual arts.

##### Physical Education/Health/Nutrition

Students are taught all the skills needed to be physically literate individuals according to the national benchmarks published by SHAPE America. Age-appropriate activities are conducted in a safe and non-threatening environment. Each weekly lesson taught by a full-time physical education teacher has four main components. The psychomotor domain focuses on locomotor and manipulative skills. Cognitive domain activities are geared towards understanding strategy, space, levels, and pathways. The affective domain provides positive experiences during exercise. Component four emphasizes the five health-related fitness components (cardiovascular endurance, muscular endurance, muscular strength, flexibility, body composition) and skill-related fitness components (agility, coordination, balance, power, reaction time, speed). Physical education lessons are integrated to cover health content such as anatomy, systems of the body, and nutrition. Other examples of integration include reinforcing multiplication/addition skills using a dance/step curriculum, graphing data after completing a fitness activity, and using body parts to practice spelling words.

##### Technology

Technology is used to support and enhance instruction and learning opportunities for students. The school has a static Mac lab and four mobile laptop labs. Each classroom is equipped with desktop computers and

iPads. In grades K-2, students visit the computer lab once a week and are provided basic keyboarding lessons by their classroom teacher. The students also use web-based programs, such as RazKids, Tumblebooks, and Math IXL to supplement the instruction they receive in reading and mathematics. The students in grades 3-5 have weekly advanced keyboarding lessons taught by a part-time teacher. During this instructional block students also use KidBiz to increase their exposure to non-fiction text.

### 3. Instructional Methods and Interventions:

We believe that effective instruction and a system to support all students are the foundation for increased student achievement. Our efforts are invested in quality instructional practices and a comprehensive student support system which result in positive student learning outcomes.

Teachers introduce lessons by using “I can” or “students will be able to” (SWBAT) statements to share learning objectives and clarify expectations for students, including the lesson’s importance and purpose. This is followed by direct instruction, modeling, and guided practice. Throughout the lesson, teachers use ongoing formative assessments to determine if they need to adjust their instruction to accommodate student learning needs. Before students begin independent practice, they are involved in setting criteria by which their work will be evaluated. Teachers share examples of products at various levels of performance so students understand the difference between quality products and products that do not meet expectations. After completing assignments, students formatively assess their work with rubrics or checklists. Lastly, teachers identify students who require extra assistance through exit passes collected at the conclusion of a lesson.

Another unified instructional practice uses Thinking Maps to promote metacognition in students. Teachers have found utilizing a common language to be effective in helping learners understand content through a visual representation of their thinking. This has allowed teachers in all grade levels to observe evidence of students’ learning across all content areas and clarify any misconceptions.

Despite the use of effective instructional practices, students still have diverse needs. At Helemano Elementary we developed a system to support the needs of all learners. Each grade is assigned an additional block of time within the school day to ensure all learners are receiving instruction to meet their specific needs.

During this instructional period, we provide lessons tailored to the needs of each individual student. Struggling students receive focused intervention support from a resource teacher. Another resource teacher challenges students, who are excelling, with enrichment writing. Specific language instruction for English language learners is provided by the ELL teacher. The remaining students meet with their classroom teacher who offers differentiated instruction in a small-group setting based on student needs.

Effective instructional practices and a system of support have benefited all students. Clear communication and expectations permit teachers to assess teaching methods and provide appropriate assistance. Catering to the needs of all students through assisting, challenging, and maintaining high standards for diverse learners has allowed our students to excel.

### 4. Assessment for Instruction and Learning and Sharing Assessment Results:

At Helemano Elementary, assessments are an essential component that drives instructional decisions. A variety of assessments guide decision-making to improve student performance.

AIMSweb is the school’s universal screening assessment for literacy and is administered three times a year. Teachers analyze the results and identify students who need immediate assistance or are at risk of falling behind. Identified students receive intensive, focused interventions four times a week during the school day. At the end of each quarter, the students who meet pre-determined benchmarks are exited from the program and replaced with other at-risk students. This cycle is repeated throughout the school year.

All students have their progress monitored monthly to determine if they are on target to meet expected

benchmarks. Grade-level teams meet with the intervention coordinator to share their progress monitoring results, set new goals, and determine instructional adjustments needed to help all learners.

Helemano Elementary School administers a pre-writing assessment for opinion, informative/explanatory, and narrative pieces. Each grade level uses a common writing prompt for each pre-assessment. Once this is administered and scored, teachers meet with the literacy coach to analyze results, set goals, and plan mini-lessons to address areas of improvement identified from the assessment. Student exemplars are also selected to share with students to illustrate the performance standards by which they will be evaluated. This process is repeated after the interim and post-writing assessments are given for all three genres.

The same process of analyzing student assessment data, setting goals, identifying student exemplars, and identifying instructional adjustments is also used for reading comprehension, math, and science assessments.

The school's use of assessment data is also evident with our kindergarten orientation. We administer the Helemano Kindergarten Assessment (HKA) to incoming kindergarten students and use the results to create balanced classroom assignments. After children are assigned to a class, a kindergarten parent orientation is conducted and their child's assessment results are shared. The HKA is administered at the end of each quarter and progress is communicated at parent conferences after the first three quarters.

Parent-teacher conferences, newsletters, and school community council meetings are additional opportunities the school uses to communicate to stakeholders the student learning results and implications from school-level assessments and Smarter Balanced Assessments.

Using assessment data to inform instruction is an essential practice to improve student learning results. The cycle of assessment, analysis, and action is indispensable for increasing student achievement.

## **PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS**

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### **1. School Climate/Culture:**

All living things need some basic things to survive. Likewise, a positive school climate and culture are essential for students and adults to thrive. Heleman Elementary strives to ensure a positive environment exists for all students and adults on campus.

We have instituted a positive behavior support system to create a safe learning environment for students and teachers. The system outlines the expectations for students at all locations on campus. These behavior expectations are demonstrated to the students in the actual location where the behavior is expected as they rotate to various spots on our campus on the first day of school and reinforced throughout the year. Other critical components of our positive behavior support system are the constant acknowledgement of appropriate student behaviors by all adults on campus through positive verbal reinforcement, greeting students at the door each morning, and verbalizing high expectations. Students who have difficulty following the school-wide behavior expectations are assigned an adult mentor, who is someone other than their classroom teacher, for personalized support. Each morning, the mentor checks in with the student to provide encouragement and guidance. To support our students transferring in during the school year, student council members welcome these new students by hosting a campus tour and introducing them to key staff members. These types of activities help provide a safe and caring setting conducive to student learning.

We appreciate the contribution of all who work at Heleman Elementary. Therefore, all employees are invited to participate in our opening day meeting which includes the sharing of appreciations, student achievement results, and school goals for the upcoming year. To ease the transition to a new workplace, all new employees are provided with an orientation to review the school's vision/mission, tour the campus, and review policies/procedures. The administration also meets regularly with the school administrative services assistant (SASA), head custodian, and school food services manager to praise the work in their respective areas and determine how to support the employees they supervise. Professional development is provided for our teachers, part-time teachers, educational assistants, and classified employees. The school works to validate the importance and contribution of all adults on campus.

A positive school climate is critical for all students and adults. Heleman Elementary values and respects each individual and tries to help all succeed. We work continuously to nurture a positive school environment so that staff and students flourish.

### **2. Engaging Families and Community:**

Helman Elementary believes all students can achieve to their highest potential. As a result, we know it is critical to develop strong partnerships with parents and community members to support student achievement and school improvement efforts.

Open house, regular school newsletters, parent conferences, coffee hours, phone messages, surveys, volunteer opportunities, and grade-level parent involvement activities are some of the traditional ways the school continually reaches out to the school community. However, we knew other areas could benefit from increased support.

Only 40% of incoming kindergarteners at Heleman Elementary attend pre-school. This low percentage is partly due to the fact that there are no pre-school programs within the school boundaries. To address this need, Heleman Elementary partnered with the Waipahu Community School for Adults to support a parent and child pre-school program. Parents register as adult school students and bring their children to a family literacy course, which is taught on our school campus. The instructor focuses on kindergarten readiness skills and provides parent training. As a result, these future kindergarten students are better prepared for

school and become acclimated to the school environment. Furthermore, parents gain valuable insight on strategies they can use at home to support their child's continued development.

Our annual school inspection identified numerous bare areas of dirt with the worst location being the playground. Whenever it rained, the playground would become a muddy mess. Through a joint effort between our school custodial staff, military partners, and a local landscaper, sod was planted over the dirt areas to create a fully-landscaped play area for the students. Parents, teachers, students, and the community continue to work together to improve our school through on-going campus beautification projects.

We have also worked with the military community to create regularly-scheduled fitness activities for our students. On these "Fitness Fridays", students participate in fitness activities with our military partners as well as guidance lessons with the counselors. During this time, the teachers, led by our science coach, use the learning team structure to improve their grade-level science curriculum, instruction, and assessments. This has contributed to an increase of our science scores on the Hawaii State Assessment from 43% in SY 2008-2009 to 81% in SY 2014-2015.

Parents and the community are rich resources in helping our students achieve. Increasing the participation of parents and community members has built stronger partnerships, improved our school, and increased the level of student success.

### 3. Professional Development:

Highly trained medical professionals treat patients in intensive care units. Likewise, Title I schools require highly-trained teachers to effectively meet the needs of their students. As a Title I school, our professional development must be fine-tuned to meet the needs of our student demographics. Professional development at Helemano Elementary is designed to develop capacity at the school level and focus on the most essential professional development needs.

Our school follows a consistent professional development process. The principal and curriculum coaches identify areas of need through student assessment data, teacher needs surveys, and classroom walkthroughs. The principal and curriculum coaches read professional literature, attend presentations conducted by the district and state, and meet with consultants. After careful consideration of the needs of our students and teachers, the curriculum coaches introduce the most pertinent information to the faculty.

Changes in teacher practice often do not take place immediately after a presentation. Therefore, our academic and financial plan supports on-going professional development sessions facilitated by curriculum coaches to support all teachers in mapping out their curriculum, crafting learning activities, and creating common formative and summative assessments. Curriculum coaches model or co-teach lessons, observe teachers, and provide feedback to ensure effective implementation of new initiatives.

This professional development process has been most recently used to successfully transition to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and implement Thinking Maps, Multisensory Structured Language/Orton Gillingham (MSL-OG), as well as the state-adopted Wonders literacy series and Stepping Stones math series.

In addition to this general professional development process, we offer professional development specifically for new teachers. Our induction and mentoring system is a comprehensive three-year professional development program aligned to district and state guidelines. It is designed to meet the needs of every new teacher at Helemano Elementary. Through monthly seminars, observations of exemplary teachers at the school, teacher reflection, and analysis of student work, the professional development focuses on developing a new generation of teachers who are prepared to meet the unique and diverse challenges of working in a Title I school.

The most recent School Quality Survey (SQS) results validate the quality of professional development support provided to teachers. The data from the SQS indicated that 100% of teachers agree the school

provides them with the support they need to do their job well. In our Title I school, we know the value of providing focused and on-going professional development to sustain student achievement.

#### 4. School Leadership:

It has been said that many hands make light work. At Helemano Elementary, the principal believes all are invested in the work of helping students achieve their highest potential. Including everyone in this goal makes it easy for the work to be done. Our many hands all contribute to the success of each student and the growth of Helemano Elementary.

Several leadership groups collaborate with the principal to ensure that school improvement is an inclusive and continuous process. Each teacher is assigned to one of four focus groups, which is led by a focus group leader. Through analysis of data from the Hawaii State Assessment and Smarter Balanced Assessments, AIMSweb screening results, school assessments, and School Quality Survey (SQS), the focus groups collaborate on areas of strengths and growth. The reflection and data analysis lead to the development of activities that ensure adequate support for maximum student achievement. These activities are instituted in the current school year or included in the school's academic plan for the following year.

Focus group leaders also serve as the leaders for the academic review team (ART), so they are cognizant of school improvement initiatives that need to be implemented. This team is tasked with continuously reviewing the extent to which the school is meeting the goals outlined in our academic plan. The ART ensures that all of the state's six priority strategies and the school's academic plan are consistently being addressed.

If this team determines that adjustments or changes need to be made, this information is shared with the school's teacher support team (TST). The TST consists of all non-classroom teachers, including the counselors, librarian, curriculum coaches, and teachers for English language learners, physical education, music, and art. The TST meets regularly to ensure that support is being provided to classroom teachers so they can ultimately focus their efforts to innovate instruction that supports student learning.

A direct impact of this shared leadership philosophy is that it reaches out to incorporate each teacher. There is a strong sense of personal commitment and ownership in the success of Helemano Elementary. The most recent SQS results validate this inclusive, team-based approach to school improvement. The data indicated that 95% of teachers agree they are an integral, vital part of the educational community in which they work. The invaluable contributions of all who work at our school help us achieve our vision of seeing each student excel.

## Part VI – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

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We believe that small things can lead to big things. Implementing professional learning teams can be viewed as a small thing, but it is a crucial component for big things to happen at Helemano Elementary.

Student achievement will not significantly improve with just one teacher professional development session. In order for the learning to truly impact teaching practices, this support has to be sustained over time. This need for consistent support led us to establish professional learning teams.

Each learning team is facilitated by a curriculum coach and is focused on planning common grade-level curriculum, analyzing student work, reading professional literature, selecting specific instructional strategies, and setting goals. After the initial meeting, teachers conduct their lessons and assess student work. At the following meeting, teachers return with completed work samples and assessment data to share with the group. Each session focuses on what worked or what did not work in assisting students to meet the benchmarks on the assessment. If there is a lack of student learning as evidenced by the assessment data, teachers read professional articles to determine how to enhance instructional practices and revise lesson plans. Furthermore, teachers will use the collective input of grade-level team members to revise lessons and re-teach the content to their students. This learning team cycle repeats itself several times throughout the school year.

Using the professional learning team structure over the past few years has contributed to the success of the students at Helemano Elementary. Prior to the introduction of professional learning teams, little over 50% of students were meeting proficiency on state assessments. In the 2013-2014 school year, 80% of our students were determined to be proficient in reading and 80% were proficient in math, based on state assessments. Last year the state adopted a more rigorous assessment, the Smarter Balanced Assessments (SBA). The results showed that 70% of students were proficient in English Language Arts and 67% were proficient in mathematics, compared to state averages of 48% and 41% in those respective disciplines.

In recognition of our results, the school has presented our processes for success at several conferences. Additionally, over 40 school teams have visited Helemano Elementary to learn about our practices and observe our teachers in action. These big achievements are a direct result of well-functioning professional learning teams. This seemingly small change has allowed us to help all students achieve to their highest potential.