

Assessment Systems in Indigenous Contexts

Sharon Nelson-Barber
WestEd

Lucy Fredericks
North Dakota
Department of Public
Instruction

Kameha'ililani Waiiau
Ke Kula 'o Samuel M.
Kamakau Laboratory
Public Charter School

Katie Gao
McREL International

Using the Zoom Platform

A few helpful tips...



Please stay muted when not talking to reduce background noise.
If you cannot hear audio, call 1-838-4375-1766 and enter the code 655706.



Look for the flashing orange alert, which will take you to the chat. Send to “all panelists and attendees.”



Closed captions are available from the menu below.



This webinar is being recorded, and it will be made publicly available.

Webinar Panelists



Sharon Nelson-Barber
Director of Culture and Language in STEM Education
WestED



Lucy Fredericks
Director of Indian/Multicultural Education
North Dakota
Department of Public Instruction

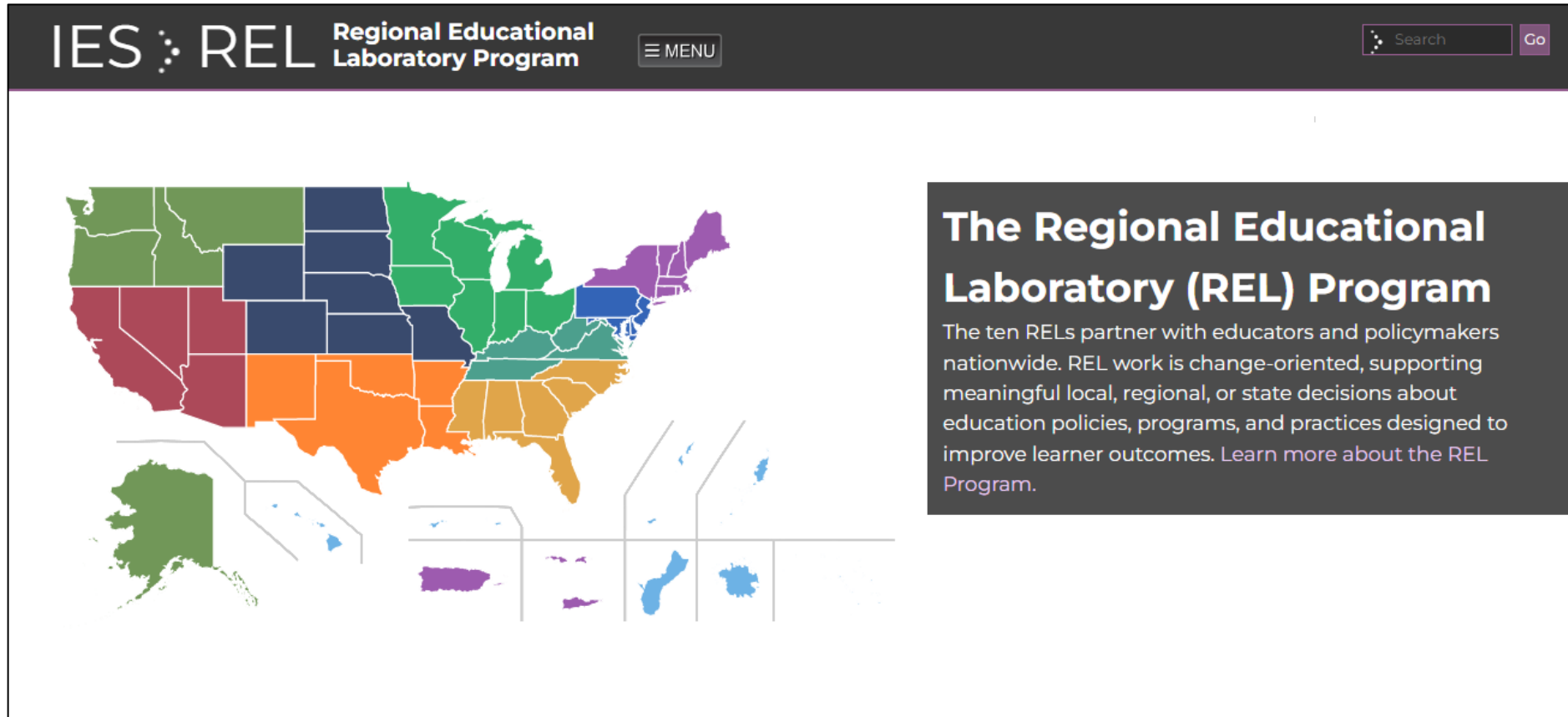


Kameha'ililani Waiau
Hope Kahu (Principal)
Ke Kula 'o Samuel M. Kamakau
Laboratory Public Charter School



Katie Gao
REL Pacific Partnership Lead
McREL International

Overview of the REL Program

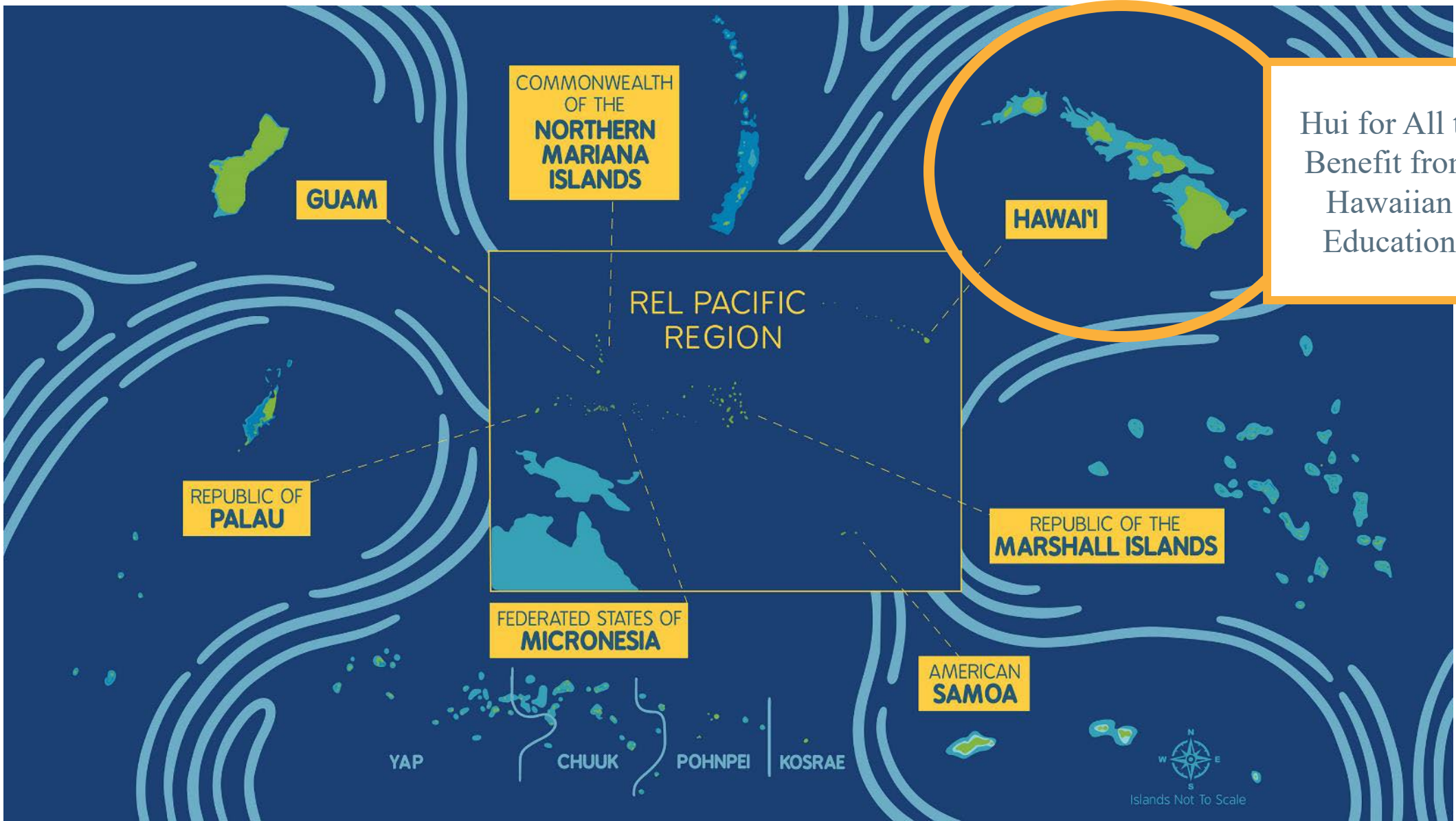


The screenshot shows the IES REL website header with the text "IES REL Regional Educational Laboratory Program" and a "MENU" button. A search bar with "Search" and "Go" buttons is also visible. The main content area features a map of the United States divided into ten colored regions: West (green), West-Central (dark blue), Central (green), East-Central (orange), South (orange), Southeast (yellow), Northeast (purple), and Alaska (green). Below the map is a text box with the following text:

The Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Program

The ten RELs partner with educators and policymakers nationwide. REL work is change-oriented, supporting meaningful local, regional, or state decisions about education policies, programs, and practices designed to improve learner outcomes. [Learn more about the REL Program.](#)

<https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/rel/>



Hui for All to Benefit from Hawaiian Education

Webinar Learning Goals

- Learn about the state of the field related to assessment in Indigenous contexts and assessment of Indigenous students.
- Discuss considerations and challenges for making assessment systems culturally responsive for Indigenous students at different levels of the education system.
- Learn about how frameworks of Indigenous cultural understandings in Hawai‘i and North Dakota are informed by and are informing conversations around assessment systems.

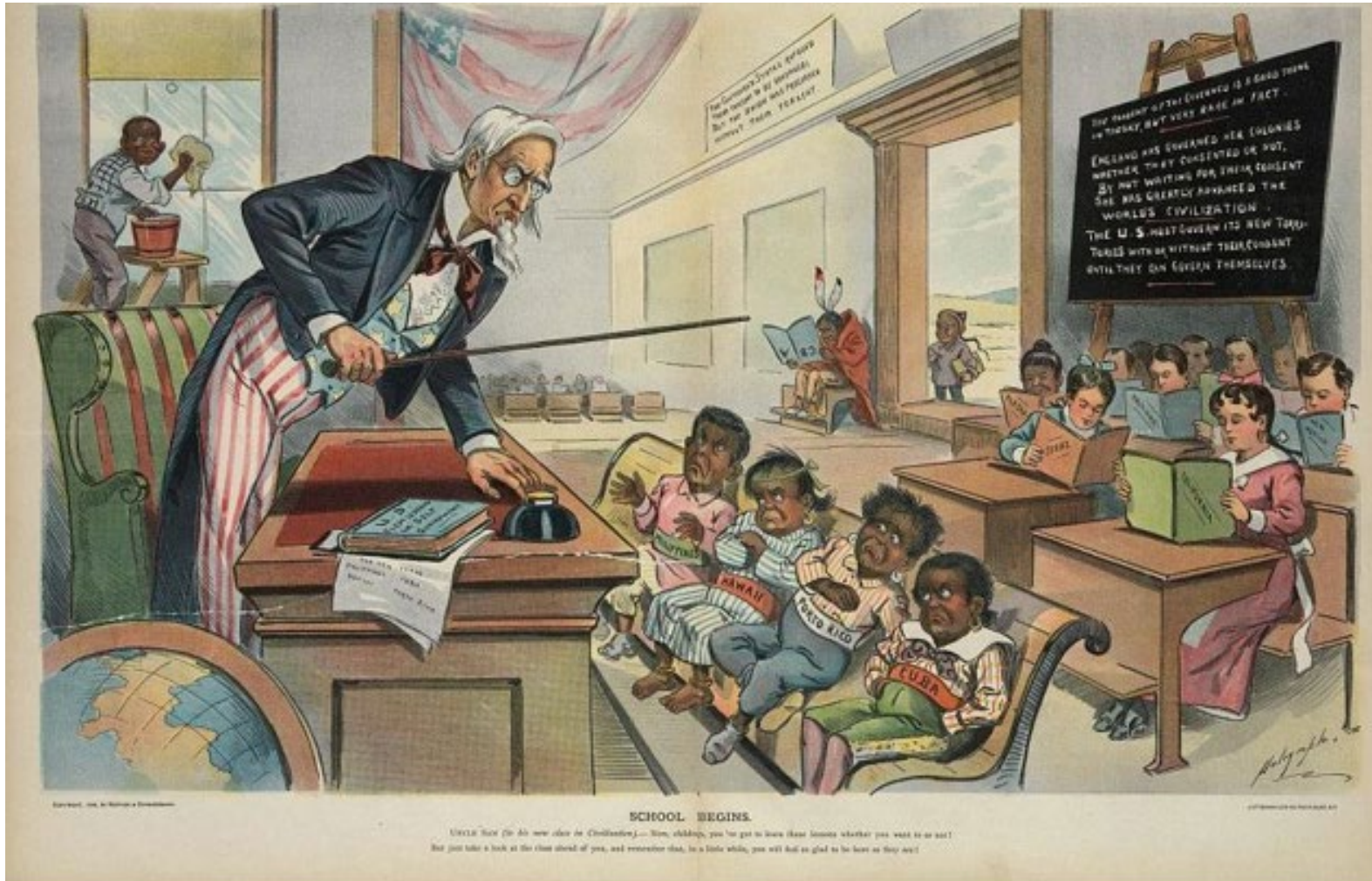
Setting the Context of Indigenous Student Assessment in the United States

Sharon Nelson-Barber
WestEd

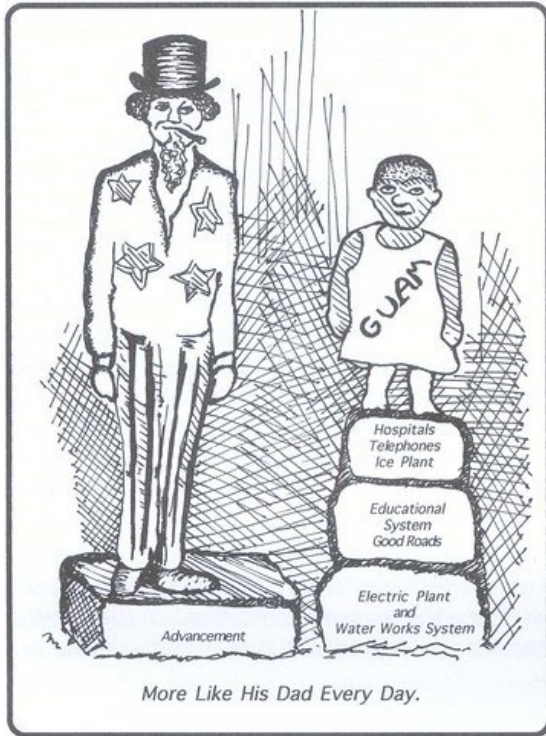
A Time to Refocus

- These are challenging times.
- The education field is asking for bold innovations and looking for transformations on how to advance racial equity.
- Indigenous narratives can help address some of these challenges.

Colonizing Influences



“School Begins”
by Louis Dalrymple
Puck Magazine
January 25, 1899



Guam Magazine, July 1912

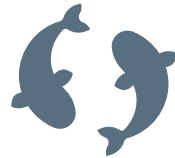


No Child Left Behind Act, ~2005
Republic of the Marshall Islands,
photo courtesy of Sharon Nelson-Barber

Why focus on Indigenous students?



1. Historical and cultural trauma.



3. Indigenous knowledge systems.



5. Indigenous socialization.



2. Sovereignty and self-determination.



4. Environment and place.



6. Language and cognition.

(for example, see McCarty & Lee, 2014)

Movement Toward Culturally Responsive Education

- Research on learning and development shows need to connect schooling with learners' own lived experiences.
- Schooling must be responsive to community perspectives and socialization practices.



(Castagno & Brayboy, 2008; Nelson-Barber & Johnson, 2019; Trumbull et al., 2015; Lipka, 2002)

Movement Toward Culturally Responsive Education (cont.)

- Acknowledgement that there is not “one best way.”
- Research what works for different students, and infuse findings in curriculum, instruction, and assessment.
- The incorporation of Native culture and language in curriculum and pedagogy holds promising effects to improve student learning, but greater systemic change is likely required.
- But assessments are not always included in discussions about educational equity.



(Castagno & Brayboy, 2008; Nelson-Barber & Johnson, 2019; Trumbull et al., 2015; Lipka, 2002)

Emerging work on culturally responsive assessment theory, practice, and policy

National Council on Measurement in Education (NCME) forthcoming volumes:

- *Culturally Responsive Assessment in Classrooms and Large-Scale Contexts: Theory, Research, and Practice*. C. Evans & C. Taylor, (Eds.).
- *Socioculturally Responsive Assessment: Implications for Theory, Measurement, and Systems-level Policy*. R. Bennett, L. Darling-Hammond, & A. Badrinarayan (Eds.)
 - Invited article: The Case for Cultural Validity in Assessment, with a Focus on Applications in Indigenous Communities.

NSF Division on Research and Learning completed grants:

- Elicitory Test Design: A New Model for Understanding the Relationship Between Test Item Features and Student Performance on Large-Scale Assessments (0733329)
- Identifying Linguistic Factors Associated with Differential Student Performance on Middle School Science Assessments (1348622)

In culturally responsive assessment, it is essential to build on assets that exist.



Autonomy is essential—allow choice and self-regulation.



Allow students to help each other, when possible.



Provide opportunities for modeling and demonstration.



Use visual input and supports (not only verbal).



Allow choral (whole-group) response.

(Trumbull & Nelson-Barber, 2019)

Toward Culturally Responsive Assessment Practices in the Classroom

- Integrating cultural information into conventional content brings authentic experience to classroom learning.
- Build relationships within classrooms and with families.
- Immerse yourself in local social contexts.
- Identify community cultural liaisons.



(Preston & Claypool, 2021; Trumbull & Nelson-Barber, 2019)

To make a difference at the classroom level, we must work at the system level.



- People are culturally socialized to participate in routine practices across settings.

“...[M]isconceptions are based on limited understandings of culture and its pervasive role in human development. These misconceptions have also severely constrained the efficacy of many educational interventions aimed at improving achievement and life-chances for these populations.” –Carol Lee

(Lee, Spencer, & Harpalani, 2003, p. 6)

What can it look like for education leaders to support their systems (schools, districts, states) in moving toward culturally responsive education and assessment in Indigenous contexts?

Example from the State and District Levels: North Dakota Department of Public Instruction

Lucy Fredericks

North Dakota
Department of
Public Instruction

Scott Simpson

Technology & Innovation in
Education

Sharla Steever

Technology & Innovation in
Education

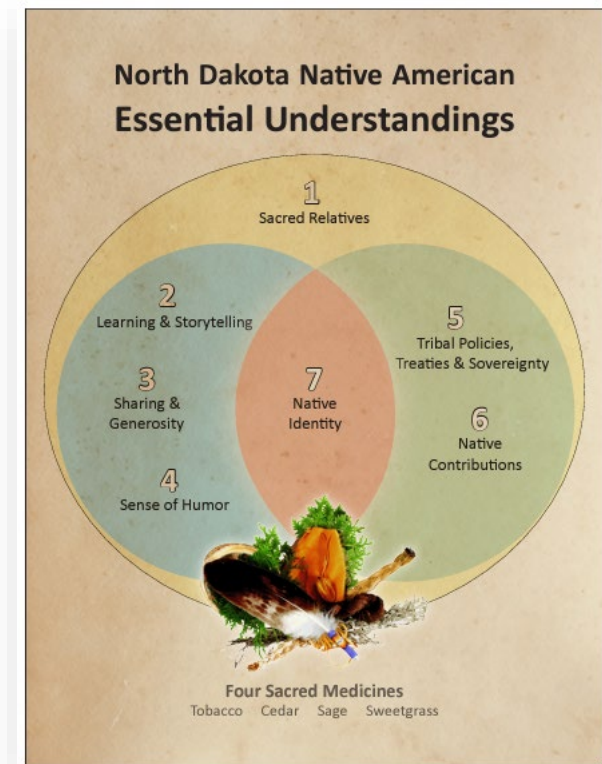
A Focus on Native American Education

- The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction's (NDDPI) Office of Indian/Multicultural Education addresses the needs of Native American students and provides opportunities to share information about Native American history and culture.
- North Dakota has approximately 13,000 Native American, American Indian, or Alaskan Native students in the K–12 school system, totaling nearly 10 percent of all K–12 enrollment in the state.



The North Dakota Native American Essential Understandings (NDNAEU) Project

- In April 2015, elder representatives from the North Dakota tribal groups joined together in sharing, storytelling, and wisdom conversations to determine the development of the *understandings* about Native culture, history, and lifestyle that are *essential* for all of North Dakota's children to know.
- This began the process of the development of the North Dakota Native American Essential Understandings (NDNAEU) project.



The North Dakota Native American Essential Understandings (NDNAEU) Project



- This project allows students in schools to learn all of their usual academic subjects, gain an understanding of the traditional ways and concepts identified as essential by elders in North Dakota, and increase understanding and appreciation within the schools.
- The *Teachings of Our Elders* website houses a growing collection of elder interviews, K–12 lesson plans in all content areas, and many other resources for educators.

www.teachingsofourelders.org

North Dakota Senate Bill 2304


- North Dakota Senate Bill 2304, passed in 2021, requires all elementary and secondary public and nonpublic schools in the state to include curriculum on Native American history.
- This includes implementation within the required North Dakota Studies, which provides emphasis on the geography, history, agriculture, and the federally recognized Indian tribes in the state, in grades 4 and 8. One unit of United States history will include Native American tribal history.

www.teachingsofourelders.org/sb-2304-resources

SB 2304 Resources

Home / SB 2304 Resources

North Dakota Senate Bill 2304, passed in 2021, requires all elementary and secondary public and nonpublic schools in the state to include curriculum on Native American history. This includes implementation within the required North Dakota Studies, which provides emphasis on the geography, history, agriculture and the federally recognized Indian tribes in the state, in the fourth and eighth grades. One unit of United States history will include Native American tribal history.



The NDNAEU & SB 2304: 6 min version

[View the 9 minute version of this video.](#)
[View the 3 minute version of this video.](#)

Prairie Public, working with material from this DPI project, is publishing a series of excerpts from interviews with Native American elders. They come out once a week as part of Prairie Public's popular "Dakota Datebook" series. These are short (three-minute) audio pieces with an accompanying transcript. [Look at the series here.](#) The podcast is available on most podcast platforms.

Dakota Datebook: Teachings of Our Elders

Word Search Our Site
Type and hit enter ...

Search Site by Category
Select Category

Tag Cloud: Elder & Tribal Affiliation

Aileen Little Ghost, Alex Decoteau, Angelina Fourth Son Road, Arlene Wadsworth, Carmelita Lamb, Carol Davis, Catherine Howard, Charles Hunter, Charles Moran, Dan Jerome, Debbie Poirta, Demus McDonald, Dennis Fox Jr., Dusty Olson, Dyan Fox, Edna Cowanbaugh, Eugene Hale, Gerald Packireau, Gladys Hawk, Jerome Dawong Itai, Jesse Cree, Jesse Taken Alive, Josie Lawrence, JT Shining Oneside, Kade Ferris, Kathryn Froelich, Kenneth Jerome Hill, Kevin Finley, Leander MacDonald, Lipan Band of Apache, Lorraine Davis, Mandan Hidatsa & Arikara, Marc Bluestone, Mary Bateman, Oliver Gourd, Pam Belgard, Patricia Christensen, Scott Davis, Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate, Spirit Lake, Standing Rock, Turtle Mountain, Vincent Grant Sr., Wayne Fox

North Dakota (ND) Native American Needs Assessment and Action Plan

- The Native American Action Plan is designed to assist administrators and teachers in addressing the needs and areas of opportunity that have been identified through the annual needs assessment survey.
- The 2022–23 Action Plan includes evidence-based strategies and resources, with the goal to improve Native American student outcomes.
- Areas of need include:
 - responsive teaching practices and instruction for all students.
 - promoting social-emotional learning.
 - using equitable instructional practices.
 - engaging with the Native American community.

Our Key Learnings from Implementing Elements of the Needs Assessment

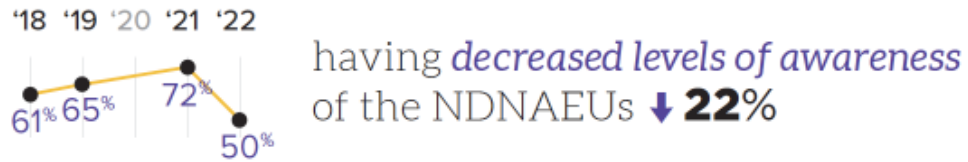
- The value of a “team of champions”; working with those who are interested and excited.
- Slow growing and slow moving; change hearts to change practice.
- If something becomes a requirement to implement, it’s possible it can do more harm than good; not mandating something in some ways may be more respectful than mandating.
- The makeup of the student body and the faculty makes a big difference in implementation.

Choices We Are Making About Assessment

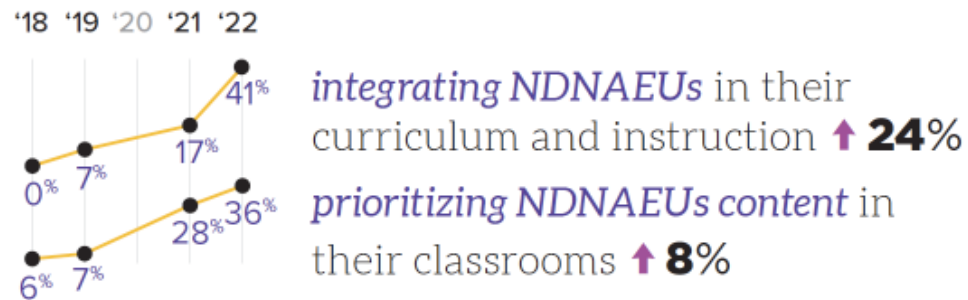
- Some in ND want mandated assessment of the NDNAEUs in order to “ensure” their implementation.
- Decision to not assess the NDNAEU as outcomes.
- Potential to assess teacher’s implementation of culturally relevant practices (North Dakota’s new Indigenous Learning Principles).
- Classroom-level assessment over state-level assessment (formative, low-stakes over high-stakes).

Progress from the ND Needs Assessment

Administrators reported a decreased awareness of the NDNAEUs and that their teachers need support to integrate the NDNAEUs content. Of the respondents, they reported:



but reported increases in teachers:



Schools continue to improve in cultural responsiveness after slight declines from 2019 to 2021. Respondents reported the following changes in schools using culturally responsive strategies daily or weekly:



Results from annual North Dakota Native American Needs Assessment from 2018–2022

Prioritizing Closing the Achievement Gap

- In 2012, the NDDPI established a priority to reduce the disparity in achievement for Native American students.
- The NDDPI has seen progress for Native American students:



Graduation rate

52% → 78%

2012 2021



ACT scores

15.2 → 15.8

2020 2021



NAEP scores
grade 4 reading

202 → 206

2019 2022

Learning Pathway for Teachers

- The NDDPI Indian/Multicultural Office is sponsoring a Learning Pathway: *Responsive Teaching Practices for All Students*.
- A six-month course; addresses SB 2304.

Responsive Practices for All Students:
A Team of Champions Learning Pathway
([video overview](#))

TEAM OF CHAMPIONS
RESPONSIVE PRACTICES FOR ALL STUDENTS
LEARNING PATHWAY

To “**champion**” someone or some idea is to stand alone or with others in support of it. One isn’t “assigned to be a champion,” one chooses to “champion” freely and out of a personal sense of what is right or best.

- 6-month experience
- 6 grad hours
- Addresses SB 2304
- Begins 2022-23

IDI **The Intercultural Development Inventory**
The IDI helps individual educators become aware of their own skills and growth opportunities for navigating respectful and productive engagement with students, colleagues and community members who may have very different perspectives.

BCR **Being Culturally Responsive**
This is a video/discussion series in which small groups of educators engage in **Circles of Trust** to explore topics such as **Levels of Listening, Relational Accountability**, and the **Mindset of Culturally Responsive Educators**.

MGH **“My Grandmother’s Hands”**
This is a reading/journaling/group discussion journey through the groundbreaking NYT bestseller by **Resmaa Menakem** on becoming aware of and addressing personal and generational **traumas** that impact our capacity to learn, teach and grow.

I&C **Implementation & Coaching**
Teachers have opportunities to implement Responsive approaches and Indigenous content, including the **NDNAEU**, into their classrooms and receive coaching and support.

5S **5 Seminars**
The pathway includes a flexible combination of face to face and virtual whole-cohort gatherings to process our **Key Pathway Concepts**, identify and design ways of combining **Responsive Practices** with newly developed and existing North Dakota resources for implementing **SB 2304** Indigenous history requirements.

Are you or your school interested? Contact:
Lucy Fredericks- lkfredericks@nd.gov
Scott Simpson- ssimpson@tie.net
Sharla Steever- ssteever@tie.net

SCAN ME

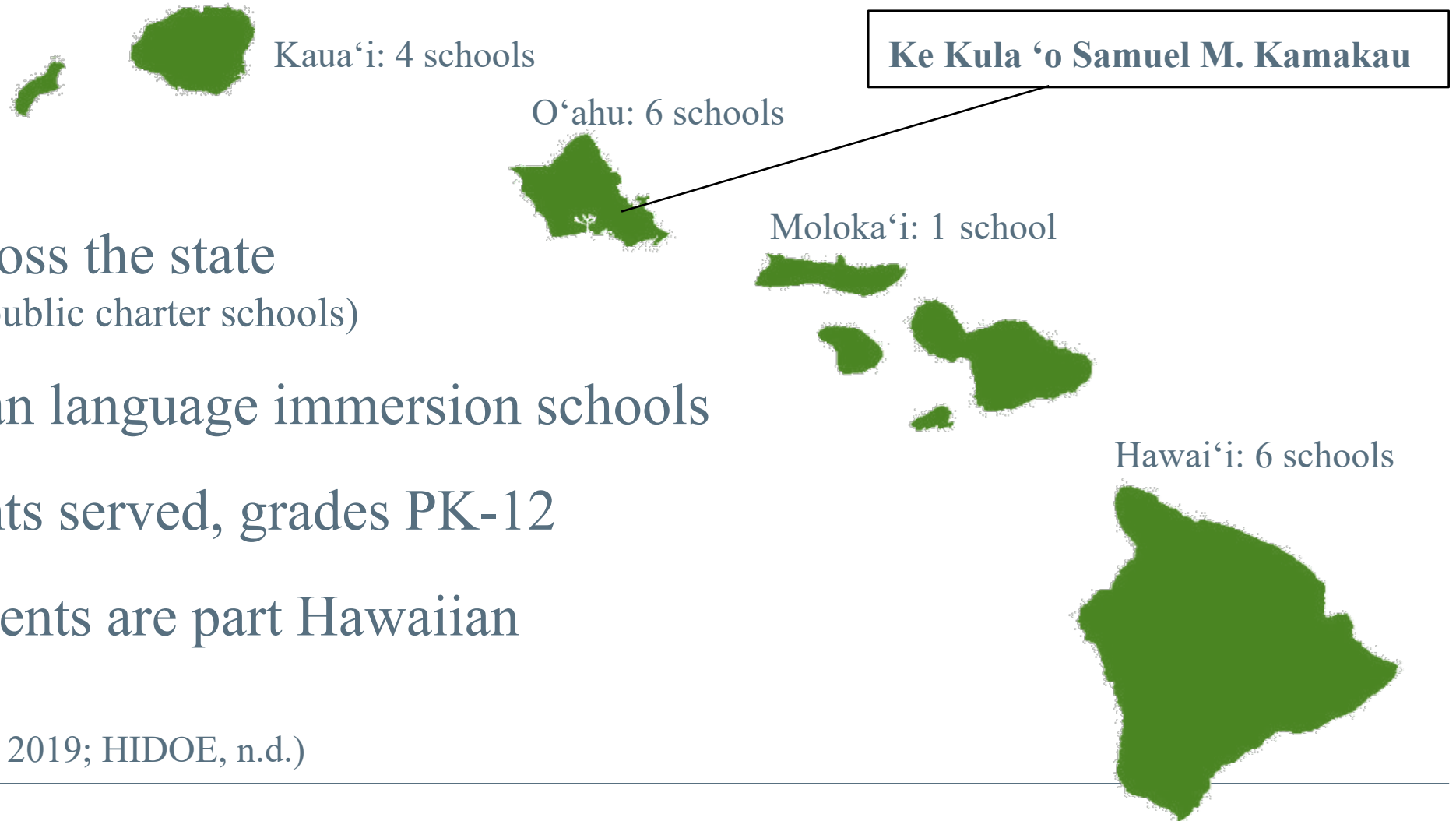
Example from the School Level: Ke Kula ‘o Samuel M. Kamakau Laboratory Public Charter School

Kameha‘ililani Waiau

Ke Kula ‘o Samuel M.

Kamakau Laboratory Public
Charter School

Hawaiian-Focused Charter Schools



17 HFCS across the state
(around half of all public charter schools)

6 are Hawaiian language immersion schools

4,700 students served, grades PK-12

81% of students are part Hawaiian

(OHA, n.d.; Espania et al., 2019; HODOE, n.d.)

Hawaiian-Focused Charter Schools: Common curricular elements

- ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i (Hawaiian language)
- ‘Āina (place/land)
- Self-determination
- Advocacy
- Spiritual/genealogical connections
- Protocol
- Ceremony
- Navigation and canoe culture

“...the work of educators reclaiming public K-12 education as a form of Hawaiian self-determination and sovereign practice.”

(Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua, 2013)

Ke Kula ‘o Samuel M. Kamakau Laboratory Public Charter School



Ke Ala Nu‘ukia (Mission)

‘O ko mākou ala nu‘ukia ka mālama ‘ana i Honua maui ola i waiwai i ka ‘ike a me ka lawena aloha o nā kūpuna i mea e lei ai kākou i ka lei o ka lanakila.

Our mission is to foster success for all members of our learning community by providing a culturally healthy and responsive learning environment.

Elements of the Ke Kula 'o Kamakau assessment system

- Where we started.
- Major milestones for our school-level assessment development.



Home Kahua kula Palapala Ākūloia Contact Us

Ke Kula 'o Samuel M. Kamakau
Laboratory Public Charter School

Donate

Ko Kamakau (About Kamakau) Papahana (Programs) 'Ohana (Family Resources) 'Uo Mamo (Governing School Board) Nā Papa Pūkana (Alumni) KAI LOA, Inc. (Non-Profit Support) School Resources & COVID-19

Video Gallery

School Video
Added Dec 14, 2015 • [Share this video](#) [Go to Video Gallery](#)

Here is Samuel Māhaikalani Kamakau School

0:22 / 4:57 360p

www.kamakau.com

Participating in assessment initiatives beyond the school-level

- Hawaiian-Focus Charter School Network's Culturally Relevant Assessment initiative.
- Kaiapuni Assessment of Educational Outcomes (KĀ'EO) – state-level standardized assessment project in 'ōlelo Hawai'i (Hawaiian language).

Current state policies that affect assessment decision-making at the school-level

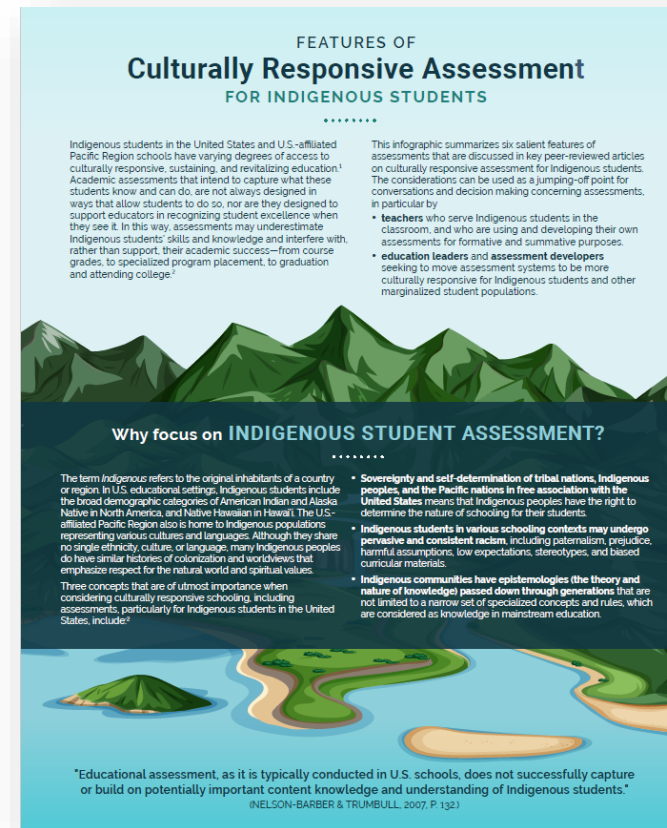
- BOE Policy 105-8 (2006): The Kaiapuni Educational Program offers students an education in the medium of the Hawaiian Language. The comprehensive program combines the use of Hawaiian teaching methodologies, language, history, culture and values to prepare students for college, career and to be community contributors within a multicultural society.
- BOE Policy E-3 (2015): Nā Hopena A‘o (“HĀ”) is a framework of outcomes ... to develop the competencies that strengthen a sense of belonging, responsibility, excellence, aloha, total-well-being and Hawai‘i (“BREATH”) in ourselves, students and others. The purpose of this policy is to provide a comprehensive outcomes framework to be used by those who are developing the academic achievement, character, physical and social-emotional well-being of all our students to the fullest potential.

Reflecting on our school assessment system journey.

Panel Discussion

Coming Soon: New REL Pacific Infographic

Features of Culturally Responsive Assessments for Indigenous Students



Following This Webinar

- Feedback survey (link posted in the chat).
- Webinar recording and slides will be posted to the REL Pacific website.
- **Questions?** Please contact us at relpacific@mcrel.org.

IES REL Regional Educational Laboratory Program

Home > REL Pacific

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS (CNMI) HAWAII

GUAM

REPUBLIC OF PALAU YAP CHUUK Pohnpei Kosrae

FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA (FSM) REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS (RMI) AMERICAN SAMOA

*Islands are not to scale or in the accurate geographic position

Regional Educational Laboratory Pacific

REL Pacific partners with educators and policymakers in American Samoa, Federated States of Micronesia, Guam, Hawaii, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Republic of Palau, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands to improve learner outcomes. Learn more about REL Pacific.

About REL Pacific Products Events

WHAT'S NEW AT REL PACIFIC

JAN 11 [A Community of Practice to Build a Culture of Data Use](#)
Among the many job responsibilities of educators at all levels is to examine a variety of data to inform critical decision making.
[> more info](#)

NOV 25 [Effective Approaches and Strategies for Educator Retention](#)
This infographic provides examples of promising approaches and strategies drawn from studies across the United States for increasing K-12 teacher retention. Developed to support a REL Pacific partnership project in the Republic of Palau, this infographic...

FEATURED PRODUCT

[Effective Approaches and Strategies for Educator Retention](#)
This infographic provides examples of promising approaches and strategies drawn from studies across the United States for increasing K-12 teacher retention. Developed to support a REL Pacific partnership project in the Republic of Palau, this infographic...
[> more info](#)

<https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/rel/region/pacific>

Thank you!

References

- Castagno, A. E., & Brayboy, B. (2008). Culturally responsive schooling for Indigenous youth: A review of the literature. *Review of Educational Research*, 78(4), 941–993.
- Espania, D., Kelling, M., Keehne, C., & Houglum, L. (2019, May 1). Culturally relevant performance assessments: Lessons from Hawaiian-focused charter schools. *Education Week*. <https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/opinion-culturally-relevant-performance-assessments-lessons-from-hawaiian-focused-charter-schools/2019/05>
- Hawaii State Department of Education [HIDOE] (n.d.). Kaiapuni schools — Hawaiian language immersion. <https://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/TeachingAndLearning/StudentLearning/HawaiianEducation/Pages/Hawaiian-language-immersion-schools.aspx>
- Lee, C. D., Spencer, M. B., & Harpalani, V. (2003). “Every shut eye ain’t sleep”: Studying how people live culturally. *Educational Researcher*, 32(5), 6–13.
- Lipka, J. (2002). *Schooling for self-determination: Research on the effects of including Native language and culture in the schools*. Charleston: ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural and Small Schools.
- McCarty, T., & Lee, T. (2014). Critical culturally sustaining/revitalizing pedagogy and Indigenous education sovereignty. *Harvard Educational Review*, 84(1), 101–124.

References

- Office of Hawaiian Affairs [OHA]. (n.d.) Hawaiian-focused charter schools. <https://www.oha.org/hawaiian-focused-charter-schools/>
- Preston, J. P., & Claypool, T. R. (2021). Analyzing assessment practices for Indigenous students. *Frontiers in Education*, 6, 1–11.
- Trumbull, E., & Nelson-Barber, S. (2019). The ongoing quest for culturally-responsive assessment for Indigenous students in the U.S. *Frontiers in Education*, 4, 1–11.
- Trumbull, E., Sexton, U., Nelson-Barber, S., & Johnson, Z. (2015). Assessment practices in schools serving American Indian and Alaska Native students. *Journal of American Indian Education*, 54(3), 5–30.

This presentation was prepared under Contract 91990022C0010 by Regional Educational Laboratory Pacific, administered by McREL International. The content does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of IES or the U.S. Department of Education, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.