

‘Āina-based Education, Place-based Education, and Project-based Learning

Research on learning and development demonstrates a need to connect schooling with learners' own lived experiences.^{1,2} **Education models designed to provide students with authentic learning opportunities include fostering connections to the place and local culture(s) where the school is located and working on real-world projects that students may encounter outside of classrooms.** This infographic summarizes components of three models implemented across many classrooms and schools in Hawai‘i: ‘āina-based education, place-based education, and project-based learning. These models are not mutually exclusive and have overlapping goals and methods.

Building on the practice-based evidence from Hawaiian-focused Charter Schools, the Buck Institute, and others on the implementation of these models, **this infographic showcases the core components and the design principles that drive instruction to provide common talking points for cross-system discussions among teachers and school leaders using and wanting to use ‘āina-based education, place-based education, and project-based learning.** The information in this infographic was compiled from the resources listed on the following page and collaboratively with members of the Hui for All to Benefit from Hawaiian Education, a partnership with REL Pacific.



See page 2 for a list of Hawaiian language terms.

	‘ĀINA-BASED EDUCATION	PLACE-BASED EDUCATION	PROJECT-BASED LEARNING
Culture	Genealogy and relationship with ‘āina.	Historical significance of setting.	One of several forms of personal authenticity.
Place	Intuitive, historical, observable, ethical, cultural characteristics of location.	Observable, measurable characteristics of location.	Project contexts and audiences (both classroom and public).
Student Relevance	Develops students who know ‘āina as a piko and a foundation for making larger connections.	Anytime, anywhere learning that leverages the power of place, and not just the power of technology, to personalize learning.	Engages students in deep, long-lasting learning that inspires for them a love of learning and personal connection to their academic experience.
Outcomes	Community and cultural reclamation, improvement, stewardship, and maintenance and personal kuleana and call to action.	Environmental stewardship and community improvement and call to action.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hearts and minds engaged in learning. • Deeper learning. • Exposure to careers and adult role models. • A sense of purpose. • Success skills. • Rewarding teacher relationships. • Creativity and technology.

¹ Hammond, Z. (2014). *Culturally responsive teaching and the brain: Promoting authentic engagement and rigor among culturally and linguistically diverse students*. Corwin Press.
² Aronson, B., & Laughter, J. (2016). The theory and practice of culturally relevant education: A synthesis of research across content areas. *Review of Educational Research*, 86(1), 163–206.

Design Principles

THAT DRIVE INSTRUCTION

‘ĀINA-BASED EDUCATION

- Cultural academic approach.
- ‘Ike kupuna based.
- Kuleana-centered.
- Past context to future solutions.
- Perpetuate culture and identity.

PLACE-BASED EDUCATION

- Interdisciplinary approach.
- Inquiry-based.
- Learner-centered.
- Design thinking.
- Local to global context.

PROJECT-BASED LEARNING

- A challenging problem or question.
- Sustained inquiry.
- Authenticity.
- Student voice and choice.
- Reflection.
- Critique and revision.
- Product to benefit the public.



What is ‘ĀINA-BASED EDUCATION?

‘Āina-based education provides learning experiences that allow learners to create authentic, reciprocal relationships with the land, people, and resources of a specific community. These relationships become an integral part of the learner’s identity and a catalyst for a personal commitment to the health and well-being of that community. ‘Āina-based education is situated in learning that honors the past, present, and future in order to ensure the sustainability and productivity of all forms of life. ‘Āina-based education embodies the wisdom of the ‘ōlelo noeau: ‘O ka hā o ka ‘āina, ke ola o ka poe (The health of the land is the health of the people).

This definition was composed in June 2021 by teachers from Hakipu‘u Academy, Ke Kula ‘o Samuel M. Kamakau Laboratory Public Charter School, and Mālama Honua Charter School who participated in the 2020/21 Ko‘olau Hawaiian-focused Charter School ‘Āina Hui facilitated by Dr. Alice Kawakami.

‘ŌLELO HAWAI‘I TERMS

- **‘āina:** land, earth.
- **‘ike kupuna:** ancestral experiences, insights, perspectives, knowledge, and practices.
- **‘ōlelo no‘eau:** Hawaiian proverbs, wise sayings.
- **hui:** partnership, organization.
- **kuleana:** responsibility, privilege.
- **piko:** a conceptual center or point; literal meanings include navel or summit.

Resources

PLACE-BASED AND ‘ĀINA-BASED EDUCATION

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- Kuwahara, J. L. (2013, February). Impacts of a place-based science curriculum on student place attachment in Hawaiian and Western cultural institutions at an urban high school in Hawai‘i. *International Journal of Science and Mathematics Education*, 11(1), 191–212.
- Powers, A. L. (2010). An evaluation of four place-based education programs. *The Journal of Environmental Education*, 35(4), 17–32. <https://doi.org/10.3200/JOEE.35.4.17-32>
- Sobel, D. (2004). *Place-based education: Connecting classrooms and communities*. Orion Society.

PROJECT-BASED LEARNING

- Buck Institute for Education. (2019). *Why PBL? PBL Works*. <https://www.pblworks.org/why-project-based-learning>
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- Mergendoller, J. R. (2018). *Defining high quality PBL: A look at the research*. High Quality Project Based Learning. <https://hqpbL.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Defining-High-Quality-PBL-A-Look-at-the-Research-.pdf>.