

Innovations Public Charter School



Educating the whole child - body, mind, and spirit!

ANNUAL REPORT 2002-2003



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	i
Director's Message	1
School Profile	2
Governance	3
Organization of Instruction	4
Instructional Program Benchmarks	
1. Student Centered / Non-traditional	5
2. Project-based	6
3. Language Arts and Math	8
4. Hawaii Content Standards	9
5. Balanced Curriculum	12
6. Safety and Family Values	13
7. Community Collaborations	14
8. Special Education	15
9. Technology	16
10. Student Council	17
Administrative Program Benchmarks	
1. Recruitment and Admissions	18
2. Fiscal Management	19
Accountability Plan	
Academic Accountability	20
Fiscal Accountability	21
Other Accountability	22
Parent Survey Results	23
Student Survey Results	25
Barriers, Improvements, Modifications	
School Improvement	
Assessment Tools	26
Curriculum - Service Learning	27
State Barriers / Need for Improvement	
SPED	28
Facilities	28
Funding	29
Technical Support	30

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This, our second year of operation, has been a year of celebrations and challenges for Innovations Public Charter School. Fully operational with three grades (3-5) and 95 students, IPCS opened its second year in August 2002 on the campus of Kahakai Elementary. Three portables, three regular classrooms, a courtyard and assembly area made up our campus. One successful year under our belt, we continued to focus on the development of curriculum, assessment tools, student support services and school operations.

Students and parents continued to thrive in the instructional environment offered. Parent and student surveys show a high satisfaction rate. Academic achievement on state wide testing showed that Innovation students are able to outperform their same age peers in the district and the state. Making AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress) unconditional, in good standing, on the 2003 Hawaii Content and Performance Assessment was a major success for the school. Fifty percent of the students tested were third graders and had been with the staff for only eight months before being tested. Although there is much room for improvement, early indications show students are impacted positively by the curriculum. Fifth graders, who had been at the school a total of 2 years when tested, outperformed third graders. Next year, fifth graders who are tested, will have been at the school a total of three years. Results from that testing will yield data that indicates how well our programs are working to help students improve academically. In the meantime, we are very pleased that our students performed well on both the Stanford Achievement Test and HCPS II Assessment.

Testing is just one success indicator. There were many others. The school implemented instructional frameworks that made the school a success in the eyes of parents and students. Project-based learning, Inquiry and Interest Clubs contributed to a learning environment that is student centered. Multiage groupings and switching teachers and classes throughout the day set up a non-traditional environment that led to improved attitudes about school.

Students felt empowered in their learning through projects and community service. The year long theme of Interdependence while studying the Rain Forest biome led students to care for their world and take actions to help protect this valuable resource. Students collected pennies and adopted animals at the Pana'ewa Zoo, made an educational video about rain forest preservation to share with other elementary students, produced an educational play, held debates, and actively pursued information that will make them informed citizens of our global community.

Project Aloha, an Interest Club centered around community service, offered students opportunities to volunteer in their community. Students helped at the West Hawaii Humane Society, organized and collected food for Hawaii Island Food Bank, visited senior citizens at the Regency Retirement Home, and participated in a variety of other service oriented activities. Project Aloha was selected to receive the "Everyday Hero Award" from the American Red Cross for its volunteer efforts at the West Hawaii Humane Society. Students were invited to an awards breakfast where they received certificates and recognition for their outstanding service to their community.

Interest Clubs, like Project Aloha, offer students a balanced curriculum that includes exploration of fine arts and humanities along with the pursuit of basic skills. Interest Clubs allow students to pursue interests in a variety of disciplines that enhance their learning. In addition, daily resource classes enrich student experiences in the arts, music, P.E. and technology.

Students feel safe at Innovations. They feel the school has helped them get to know themselves better and to be kinder and more caring toward others. They appreciated the opportunities presented that allowed them to develop leadership skills and gain control over their learning. They liked experiences that taught them they can make a difference!

Innovations has an outstanding, experienced teaching staff of dedicated educators who go above and beyond to help students progress in their learning and enjoy the process. Teachers from Innovations were invited to present at the Third Annual Ellison Onizuka Science Day held at the University of Hilo January 25, 2003. It was an honor to be invited and included among the many distinguished presenters which included a NASA astronaut, local scientists from Gemini and W.M. Keck Observatory, and university professors. Students attending the IPCS workshop session, "The Big Yolk" crafted a vehicle for an egg drop. This yearly Science Day attracts hundreds of students from all over the island.

At the request of parents, IPCS received approval from the Board of Education to expand its charter from K-5 to K-6. Parents wanted their children to have one additional year of instruction at Innovations before moving to the middle school. IPCS staff successfully negotiated space at Kahakai to allow for expansion. Although the classroom space requested was not agreeable to Kahakai administration, a small cafe dining room was offered to the school. The office was moved during the summer into the cafe dining to make room for the additional classroom needed for SY03-04. In addition to 6th grade, the school will enroll 20 second graders. We look forward to our expansion to five grades (2-6) and 120 students.

Innovations financial practices are sound and administration has managed to maintain a positive bank balance in spite of severe funding inadequacies. Charter schools received about half of regular public school funding - \$3805 compared to \$6850. Innovations monitors its budget carefully and controls spending to ensure fiscal responsibility. This was largely possible because IPCS does not have major facility costs. Sharing a state school campus made it possible for the school to maintain a positive balance.

One of the year's biggest challenges was tackled by members of the Local School Board. Knowing that Kahakai enrollments are growing and that Innovations will have to eventually move to another site, it began the process of strategic planning. The board members schooled themselves in the strategic planning process and worked on creating a business plan to share with potential community investors. A slide show presentation was developed and shared with community groups to get the word out into the community that Innovations was looking for a relocation site. The Board continues to put all of its energy into the relocation efforts.

Parent volunteerism was high. Sixty-six volunteers supported the school and logged over 857 hours of time working with students and helping the staff and school. Teachers worked extra hours on a consistent basis to make improvements to the school and curriculum. Working together as a team, the Innovations community was responsible for a highly successful and rewarding second year.

Year two showed that we have again tested the ongoing experiment of a cooperative-run school and found it to be up to the challenge. The positive feedback and comments received this past year rekindle our community spirit as we continue with our mission of "turning minds on" and helping children reach their full potential.

Respectfully,

Lynne Donkerbrook
Chair, Innovations Local School Board