HOW HAWAI'I TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS AND BEHAVIORS CALL FOR

CHANGE IN PUBLIC EDUCATION: AN ACTION RESEARCH STUDY

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Abstract

This multiple-case qualitative study involved six teachers in Hawai'i public schools who participated in a three credit course focused on increasing teacher-family collaboration. Five self-selected participants engaged in action research conducted over ten months in 2010-11, led by the principal investigator as co-participant. The research question was: (1) In what ways do Hawai'i public school teachers' perceptions of, and behaviors toward, family collaboration change given participation in a for-credit professional development (PD) course on family collaboration? The sub-questions were: (a) Do demographic characteristics of the PD teachers and their students influence any changes in the teachers' perceptions and behaviors? and; (b) Do specific PD teacher driven strategies result in changes in the teachers' perceptions of, and behaviors toward, family collaboration? Results show: (1) all six teachers' perceptions of family collaboration were positive and persisted or deepened as a result of their PD coursework, especially their increased efforts to collaborate, 75% of which teachers perceived were effective; (a) links between teacher and student demographics elicited no clear findings, but raised questions about how cultural mismatches between home and school, as well as gender, influence collaboration; (b) teacher driven strategies resulted in some changes in teachers' perceptions and behaviors – strategies used were both traditional and new and teachers' perceptions of their effectiveness depended on individual preferences. Notable hindrances to family collaboration identified were lack of attention to students as mediators of communications between teachers and parents/guardians, and excessive demands on families' time to engage in school-related activities. Teaching students to adopt mediator and activist roles and empowering families through positive and meaningful school-community activities are offered as ways to ameliorate this. Results also suggest teachers should pursue collaboration activities that build authentic relationships over time, which may be achieved simultaneously with other teachers, families, students and community members who explore and adopt new roles and learn and take action together in school-community change agent teams. These recommendations may also help stakeholders address other educational issues in which teachers, students and families currently lack a voice and power to influence public schooling.

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Abbreviations

BOE – Board of Education
CAT – Change Agent Team
DOE – Department of Education
ELL – English Language Learners
EA – Educational Aide or Assistant
ESEA – Elementary and Secondary Education Act
GCM – Generative Curriculum Model
HCE – Hawaiʻi Creole English
HSTA – Hawaiʻi State Teachers' Association
IEP – Individualized Education Plan
NCLB – No Child Left Behind Act
NEA – National Education Association
PAR - Participatory Action Research
PCNC – Parent Community Networking Center
PD – Professional Development
PD3E – online Professional Development system in Hawaiʻi
PPS – Parents for Public Schools
PTA – Parent Teacher Association
SCC – School Community Council

Chapter 1

What are the Issues?

When this study began, most at issue appeared to be the well documented challenges students, their families and teachers face in today's standards based, western oriented classrooms (American Youth Policy Forum & Center on Education Policy, 2001; Kober, Jennings, Stark Rentner & Yeager, 2005). In culturally diverse places like Hawai'i student success seemed to be influenced by decreasing involvement at each grade level by family members who feel alienated by the traditional public school system (Izzo, Weissburg, Kasprow & Fendrich, 1999; Lee & Bowen, 2006). Questions arose in the principal investigator's mind: Are families or schools to blame for poor student outcomes? Are teachers doing enough to initiate and strengthen better teacher-family collaboration? Are federal mandates and the state's excessive workload, for special education in particular, inadvertently or intentionally, thwarting all these stakeholders' efforts (Darling-Hammond, 2000, 2007; Bashaw, 2008)? Perhaps the societal macro-systems in which these individuals and groups work and live were simply marginalizing the family, ignoring a cultural mismatch between home and school that hinders best practices and stalls discovery of potential avenues to better outcomes.

Indeed, the perceptions of the participants involved in this study show all these issues do have an impact on teachers, and their ability to work with families to better educate students. The surprise to this author is that all of these issues – culture, alienation, workload and federal mandates – when seen through a critical theorist's lens, support the view that there are shifting perceptions as to who does and should have power in education today. Furthermore, fundamental questions are raised by these fluctuating perceptions about what each stakeholder's role in education is and could be. Of yet more concern, how and why the diverse players who have vested interests in education are being intentionally kept powerless also came to the forefront.

The study in context – teacher morale in 2010-11. In the 2010-11 school year educators witnessed multiple crises between teacher unions and government across the United States, and media portrayals of teachers were, as they have mostly been since the 1980s, largely negative. Did this effect teacher's efforts to collaborate with their students' families and improve student outcomes? In Hawai'i, teachers had just survived almost a ten percent salary reduction due to 17 furlough days imposed upon them by their governor in the 2009-10 school year. The participants in this study, like all Hawai'i public school teachers, ended the school year in which this study took place with no contract at all because their newly elected (and union supported) governor imposed a non-negotiated contract with a five percent salary reduction, plus seven "leave without pay" days which further reduced their salaries. The Hawai'i teachers union did little to address this, and as the teachers in this study completed their last evaluations of the professional development (PD) course they participated in, teacher morale continued to

fall. Two of the six women participants contemplated leaving their jobs, yet in August of 2011 five returned to the "pink ghetto" which some feel education has become over the last 30 years (Kleiman, 2006). This is better odds than the minimum 50 percent of all new teachers in Hawaiʻi and nationwide who leave the profession within five years of entering it (NEA, 2011).

Of course, these teachers had no illusions about making the big bucks when they entered the profession. Average teacher salary in Hawaiʻi is about $49,000 which is the fourteenth highest nationally (NEA Research, 2010); however, "the state ranks dead last in the "salary comfort index," probably due to Hawaiʻi's high cost of living" (Dempsey, 2010). In fact, teacher pay in Hawaiʻi and nationally is low enough that many teachers work through the summer or hold second and even third jobs each year (NEA, 2011), and increasingly many teachers now work at other jobs during the school year, as one of this study's participants often does. Given these facts, it is not surprising few participants were found to take part in a study designed to increase their work with students' families.

However, one ironic and positive effect of Hawaiʻi's low teacher salaries is that it often does increase teachers' efforts to work harder. Participation in professional development, such as the course which formed the basis of the action research in this study, is for Hawaiʻi's public school teachers tied directly to salary increases, and the state offers an impressive array of options for teachers to earn both university and Hawaiʻi Department of Education (DOE) credits towards reclassification on the pay scale. Negative effects, obviously, are teachers' time and energy are being stretched too thin, and when added to job stress related to the demands of current accountability and reform measures, teachers understandably have less to offer students and their families – student outcomes could easily suffer, and collaboration with families, as some participating teachers state in Chapter 4, moves low down on the list of their concerns.

The study in context – implications for collaboration. The job satisfaction outlook for teachers is no better, and well we know it. How does this effect teacher-family collaboration? The trend in teacher pay has been decreasing since 2007, nationally (NEA Research, 2010). In Hawaiʻi, teachers' automatic increases for experience and higher education have been frozen for years, and recently a push to lock teachers into a six year salary schedule failed even to match the projected rate of inflation (HSTA, 2012). Needless to say, decreasing pay and benefits were surely not anticipated by today's teachers. Educators' response to the clear message inherent in the pillaging of their contracts – that they will *not* be fairly compensated for the work they do because they are *not* valued for the work they do – may well lead to a nasty spiral of diminishing returns for diminishing rewards. Participants in this study referred to several downward spirals they perceived: in morale at their schools; in their own ability to sustain interest in increasing their collaboration efforts with families; and in the negativity of families and students they interacted with and whom, in some cases, they watched lose interest in better student achievement, ignoring teacher efforts to chivvy them.

Despite this negativity, teachers feel they are working harder than ever, spending "an average of 12 hours each week on non-compensated school-related activities" (NEA, 2011). In Hawaiʻi they donate an average of 13 hours of unpaid overtime per week (Vorsino, 2011), and all participants of this study met or exceeded that average. Meanwhile, journalists nationwide continue to report that schools are not succeeding, a predominant trend in mainstream media since *A Nation at Risk* – a study unsupported by research – was published in the 1980s, giving American schools and teachers a failing grade (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983; Worthen, Sanders & Fitzpatrick, 1997). Teachers hissed at the presentation of this specious document to the National Education Association (NEA) in 1983 (Toppo, 2008). What must they be thinking now, nearly 30 years later, when ubiquitous school reform and accountability measures have resulted in rampant scrutiny and public condemnation of teachers efforts?

In fact, many demands on teachers now come without their "buy in" such as meeting with restructuring teams to address the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act's goals and preparing students for high stakes tests, the results of which some states want to link directly to teacher pay (NEA, 2011). Indeed, such so-called merit pay is now tied to federal Race to the Top funds which the Hawaiʻi DOE grapples to acquire (Armario, 2012). Research shows none of these efforts actually improve student outcomes, or teacher output (NEA, 2011), while other activities which teachers do "buy into" and which are supported by research, such as family collaboration, are being ignored by the reformers. Yet those with power to dictate improvement efforts persevere in schools today – data be damned! They ignore research based, expert advice more often than not. Does this not raise questions about the true goals of the upper echelon in charge of public education? Likewise, what valuable research is being side-stepped in this fray?

Opportunities for change – family, culture and place-based learning connections. Teacher as authority or all-knowing expert is not just a fading stereotype today, it really has never been the *only* mode in which educators operated. Human history has long demonstrated a natural tendency to educate inter-generationally and communally, from local experts to neighbors, from elders to parents to youth. Little of this shared wisdom is directly accessed and used in schools today. Yet, this method of learning does still occur where indigenous traditions are strong and where informal education happens within diverse families and community groups. In particular, it is happening where another revived tradition in education, place-based or experiential learning, is also being promoted as a vital part of culturally responsive education (Benson, Harkavy & Puckett, 2007; Bowditch, Galloway & Roberts, 2009; Dewey, 1938; Field, 2007; Saltmarsh, 2008; Sobel, 2004). In fact, one researcher believes place-based education might even be applied as a critical pedagogy in which cultural connections and community resources not only make modern content relevant to diverse learners, but could be used to bring about greater social justice for diverse students nationwide (Gruenewald, 2003).

For example, learning has been formally revitalized recently in Hawaiian public charter schools, immersion schools and other select programs that "infuse cultural significance and place-based relevance to the educational process for Native Hawaiian children" (Policy Analysis & System Evaluation, 2005). In such settings, "the level of achievement [albeit, on traditional state assessments] and school engagement for Hawaiian children is higher than that of their counterparts in conventional public school classrooms" (PASE, 2005). This education can often include visits by adults, parents and elders, as well as community members and occasionally higher education personnel who impart their expertise about Hawaiian traditions, language, history and values both to students and their teachers. In doing so, they very well may be collaborating with teachers, perhaps relieving some of the demands and stresses on western trained teachers linked to the diversity of students (particularly in special education), and quite possibly contributing much to the successful educational outcomes most of these schools are witnessing in Hawai'i.

Researchers believe "school professionals want more parent involvement but have few tools to accomplish this" (Forum on Educational Accountability, 2007, p.11). The recent dramatic increase in charter schools nationally and in Hawai'i provides evidence that parents also want more involvement in school decisions and activities (Stewart, 2002). In fact, a growing number of such schools now require some parent involvement in school activities (Center on Educational Governance for the National Resource Center on Charter School Finance and Governance, 2008), as private schools have done for generations. Eccles and Harold (1993) believe that because adolescents, particularly in high-risk communities, are being lost "to the dangers of the street culture … increased family/community/school cooperation is essential" (p.568). Yet, not enough is being done to effectively address this in Hawai'i's traditional public schools. While many of the state's 29 public charter schools are collaborating with families and bringing family and community expertise into their classes, as well as taking their students out into their communities to work hand in hand with others, the traditional public high schools are, but for a few enterprising teachers, ignoring this option.

Most promising about infusing cultural, place-based and family and community involvement strategies into traditional education is its empowerment potential. Perhaps getting diverse men and women together in their own communities to negotiate how, by whom, and even why their children will be educated may actually give all these stakeholders in education the sense of power they need. Perhaps, greater collaboration can be achieved at the school-community level, and ultimately, families, teachers and students working together could re-define the roles and expectations of 'teachers' and 'learners' in schools today, and even revolutionize our public education system.

Opportunities for change – negotiating teacher and learner roles to empower school level stakeholders. When this study ended, the many additional questions which arose as a result of asking the research questions (stated in the Abstract and at the end of

Chapter 2) did appear to have answers. If insufficient family collaboration and the myriad other challenges to better student outcomes are to be addressed effectively, where they originate, rather than superficially, where it has become popular to place the blame, one must consider the reality that the interests of the students and families, whom public education is supposed to serve, are not truly the focus in schools today, as at least one critical theorist believes (Tollefson, 2010). Thus promoting the evolution of the roles of teachers, family members and students in public schools has appeal as a possible solution.

In Chapter 5, recommendations are given for this author and other teachers, as well as the stakeholders whom they may be able to influence, such as their students and students' families, their administrators and their school-community members. These recommendations are, in fact, strategies to transform school level stakeholders into empowered advocates and activists. They guide teachers to promote themselves (Kleiman, 2006) in order to promote their profession, and ultimately defend and raise the status of the educational system, all of its students, and their families as valuable and valued members of society who can be equal partners in teaching and learning, and who may, in fact, upset the hierarchical balance of power under which they labor.

Purpose and Goals of the Study

Anticipated teacher participant outcomes. The purpose of this exploratory study was to attract a small cadre of teachers working in conventional Hawaiʻi public schools to enroll in a state Department of Education (DOE) professional development (PD) course focused on helping teachers increase collaboration with their students' family members and then examine any changes that resulted from their actions and/or any hindrances that thwarted their efforts. The principal investigator acted simultaneously as the participating teachers' PD instructor, as a participating teacher in her own study, and as a participatory action research guide for those teachers in the course who chose to share their data. Thus, the outcomes anticipated for the teacher participants were: introduction to and practice in participatory action research; increased knowledge of educational strategies and theories; development of learning e-Portfolios, and; presentation of, and participation in, possible social change in the classroom and/or school community.

Participatory action research goals. Over the 2010-11 school year (August to May) the participatory action research team engaged in a spiral of steps, alternately working with the principal investigator (via email, telephone and small group meetings at one of two island sites) and then on their own at their schools. They worked recursively: planning, taking action, observing, reflecting and evaluating the results of action (Master, 2000) as the PD course proceeded (see Appendices G and I). The qualitative data each participating teacher generated was combined with basic descriptive quantitative data

(such as demographic information on the participating teachers, their students and some students' families) in order to formulate a stronger theory to support the findings.

Thus, the goals of the action research in this study were: 1) to explore teachers' perceptions and behaviors related to increasing family collaboration as a potential way to improve outcomes for students at risk of school failure; 2) to empower teachers and families through acquisition of knowledge and increased collaboration; 3) to effect social change in the classroom and possibly beyond to the whole school, the community and/or other school communities with similar populations where change in practice could benefit similar students (Brofenbrenner, 1979; Johnson, 2005; Masters, 2000; Shank & Villella, 2005) (see Appendix H: Research Hypothesis Model).

Chapter 2

Literature Related to the Study

Overview and Purpose

This chapter provides a broad view of literature which informed the study and research questions (given at the end of Chapter 2). A definition of family collaboration with evidence supporting its potential value as a means to improve student outcomes, especially for those at risk of school failure, is given. Reasons why parents and teachers have not collaborated closely thus far in most public school settings are offered, and components of a variety of successful programs will be discussed which provided useful strategies for the action research team to explore. Literature on culture and power for diverse teachers, students and families is also presented to provide context for the multiple case studies and findings given in Chapters 4 and 5.

The purpose of this study, ultimately, is to positively influence all students' achievement, behavior and well-being. Hence, important research on both majority and minority families will be described which teacher-researchers considered when trying to increase family collaboration with sensitivity and respect. Diverse families' cultural affiliations, what values influence them, how they interact with the western oriented school system nationally and in Hawai'i, and how all these considerations effect students' success at school and, thereby, teacher-family relationships, are described as they provide a foil against which to view the progress and outcomes of this study. The reader's patience is requested. While the literature may seem at times too broad in relation to the central research question, all that is presented here will be referred to in the case studies of participants and/or the findings in the chapters below.

Finally, just to test the readers' mettle, three theories informing the proposed study – experiential learning, participatory action research including self-study, and ecological systems theory – and their suitability to participants, as well as the intent of this project, are presented. Dare the reader proceed?

Definition of Terms

What is family collaboration? The term family collaboration is not found in the literature nearly as often as parent involvement and participation. In their comprehensive literature review on the subject, Desforges and Abouchaar describe the latter (2003, p.5):

> Parental involvement takes many forms including good parenting in
> the home, including the provision of a secure and stable environment,
> intellectual stimulation, parent-child discussion, good models of
> constructive social and educational values and high aspirations relating

to personal fulfillment and good citizenship; contact with schools to share information; participation in school events; participation in the work of the school; and participation in school governance.

There is a important distinction between these activities and the closely related term family collaboration. For the purposes of this study, the word 'family' will be used broadly to include not just parents and legal guardians, but also siblings, plus 'ohana and hanai family, which are familiar terms used throughout Hawai'i meaning, respectively, extended family members (i.e. grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins) and adopted family and/or close family friends. The word 'collaboration' will refer to actions taken by teachers and family members whose explicit intention is to work together as a team. The preeminent scholars on this topic (Epstein & Sheldon, 2006, in Epstein, Rodriguez Jansorn, Van Voorhis, Sheldon, Sanders, Clark Salinas & Simon, 2009, p.1) state in their action handbook:

> School, family, and community partnerships is a better term than parental involvement. The concept of "partnership" recognizes that parents, educators, and others in the community share responsibility for students' learning and development.

Clearly, partnership or collaboration necessitate involvement and participation; however, home and school involvement and participation do not always indicate true partnership or collaboration. While family involvement and participation may benefit students, these have little potential to change the roles of teachers or family members, or the power structure and decision-making, within the public school system – whereas genuine collaboration does. Exploring these possibilities were key goals of this study.

Promises and Hindrances to Teacher-Family Collaboration

Can family collaboration be effective? Desforges and Abouchaar (2003, p.7) assure us:

> The achievement of working class pupils could be significantly enhanced if we systematically apply all that is known about parental involvement. A program of parental involvement development initiatives taking the form of multi-dimensional intervention programs, targeted on selected ... areas and steered by a design research process is implicated.

Parent involvement and its effects are defined and measured in different ways. Three substantive studies offer evidence – hold on to your hats. Firstly, one notable study of 415 elementary students examined "the levels and effects on achievement of five types of parent involvement… among families of different social status" (Lee & Bowen, 2006,

p. 199). The parent behaviors analyzed were: attending parent-teacher conferences; attending programs featuring students; engaging in volunteer activities at school; providing help with homework; discussing the child's schoolwork and school experiences at home, and; structuring home activities (Lee & Bowen, 2006, p. 194). While, predictably, family socioeconomic indicators accounted for much variability in this study, parents' involvement at school and their educational expectations had the highest correlations with academic achievement. Lee and Bowen (2006) concluded parent involvement, if better understood, could be used as an effective strategy to close the achievement gap "among school children …associated with [lower] socioeconomic status and [diverse] race/ethnicity" (Lee & Bowen, 2006, p. 193). Good news.

Secondly, an earlier longitudinal study examined teacher perceptions of parent involvement in children's school performance (Izzo, Weissburg, Kasprow & Fendrich, 1999). The study involved, impressively, over 1200 students in Kindergarten through grade 3, and researchers noted that parent involvement declined before the third grade. (Spoiler alert: this finding is supported in Chapter 4 in the case study of 'Ida'.) Frequency of parent-teacher contact, quality of the parent-teacher interactions, participation in educational activities at home, and participation in school activities were examined and each variable correlated at least moderately with school performance, especially that of engaging in educational activities at home. This last finding may contrast with Lee and Bowen's finding that help with homework had the lowest association with achievement (Lee & Bowen, 2006); alternately, it questions the quality of parent educational efforts, or the match between school instruction and home instruction. However, this study did also conclude that enhancing parental involvement in children's schooling improves their social and academic functioning (Izzo, Weissburg, Kasprow & Fendrich, 1999).

A third body of evidence is presented by Epstein's (1995, 2001, 2009) decades of research on this topic. She attests there 'is no topic in education on which there is greater agreement than the need for family and community involvement' (Epstein, et al., 2009, p. 1). The success of Epstein's work further confirms that increasing family and community collaboration results in better student outcomes. Moreover, she acknowledges the need to tailor the types of participation possible in each of three spheres of influence – school, family and community – to best serve the unique students at a given setting. To achieve the kind of partnership which changes school climate and leads to student success in diverse settings, Epstein has long advocated the use of her framework with the following six specific types of involvement: 1) support for skilled parenting; 2) open, two way communicating; 3) multiple options for family volunteering; 4) options to increase learning at home; 5) inclusive decision making, and; 6) collaborating with the community to integrate resources and achieve specific goals (Epstein, 1995, 2002, 2009).   Are these the types of involvement teachers can initiate on their own? Read on!

How is the school system influencing family collaboration? The Forum on Educational Accountability (2007) reminds us that in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act "parents are mentioned over 650 times in the law" clearly showing "parent involvement is a cornerstone of ESEA" (Forum on Educational Accountability, 2007, p. 11), or perhaps merely attesting to the excessive verbiage of bureaucratic legalese. Regardless, Lovell, an education policy expert, states the No Child Left Behind Act (ESEA, the very same act, was reauthorized under this appellation) "includes a very modest emphasis on parent involvement" (Evaluation Exchange, 2008, p.17). Does this show that the idea of better family collaboration remains just that – an idea rather than a practice?

The National Parent Teacher Association (NPTA) has developed six "National Standards for Family-School Partnership" which guide families and schools to a greater focus on collaboration and clearly imply the need is not yet met (Evaluation Exchange, 2008). Their standards bear much similarity to Epstein's framework: 1) welcoming all families; 2) communicating effectively; 3) supporting student success; 4) speaking up for every child; 5) sharing power, and; 6) collaborating with the community (p.34). The Evaluation Exchange (2008) reports there is some indication of success with specific strategies advocated by the NPTA, but more examination is needed to discover their impact and replicable strategies. What a surprise – more research!

What is Hawai'i doing to influence family collaboration? While at the federal level some experts feel a "very narrow pathway for parent-school relationships" exists and there is a need for a "more expansive menu of opportunities" (Evaluation Exchange, 2008, p.20), in Hawai'i it appears much progress has been attempted in the past decade. The Hawai'i Board of Education's (BOE) *Parent/Family Involvement Policy #2403* asks schools to develop, implement and evaluate comprehensive, coordinated efforts to attain six specific goals related to communication, support, community resources, decision making and the Hawai'i Content and Performance Standards (Hawai'i Board of Education, 2003, p.1). Is six the magic number?

In response to the BOE's policy, data collected in the 2006-07 school year show 4312 activities – obviously a wide variety – were conducted statewide to meet the BOE goals to increase family support and collaboration (Hawai'i State Department of Education, 2005, 2007, 2008). In fact, most state schools employ a part-time Parent Community Networking Center (PCNC) facilitator to help families access copious resources online, as well as participate in and give input to myriad activities in the school-community. The participants of this study give color to the range of success achieved by the PCNC facilitators in the state, ranging from their being busy Amway moonlighters (data provided in the first workshop by a participant who dropped) to vital links to collaboration with English Language Learner students' families (see several case studies in Chapter 4). What is decidedly not reported in the state data is clear evidence of

the effects these efforts have had on student outcomes, and – I may be getting the hang of this – the need for more research.

Hawaiʻi has also recently joined the growing Parents for Public Schools group with chapters across the US. Their website states they value "public education as an ... essential element of democracy, and for the richness in diversity if offers our children" (Parents for Public Schools, 2011, p.1). As well, they see "effective parent involvement as critical to strong public schools" and they seek "the constructive involvement of parents in the governance of schools as a bridge between the schools and community" (Parents for Public Schools Hawaiʻi Chapter, 2011). These are ideals the reader is asked to remember through this long, dark chapter and well into those that follow, as they hit upon essential themes that arose as the action research was conducted and, so conveniently, tie to the theory and findings ultimately presented. I bet the reader can hardly wait!

What are the influences of demographic characteristics on collaboration?
According to Christenson (2002) home support for learning – or what Walberg (1984, p. 400) labels the curriculum of the home – "predicts academic learning twice as well as the socioeconomic status of families." Yet, many variables influence how families participate and collaborate with schools, and whether they choose to do so or not. Blue-Banning, Summers, Frankland, Lord Nelson and Beegle (2004, p.167) have examined why the "development of collaborative partnerships between parents and professionals is too often unsuccessful" and discovered communication barriers have much to do with this. Socioeconomic factors still frequently point to underlying facets of the problem.

Lee and Bowen (2006) believe some parents from non-dominant cultural groups may have psychological barriers to school involvement. Some studies report less privileged parents have stated they lack confidence in their interactions with the school system and often defer to the "experts" rather than become involved and share their opinions (Lareau, 1994; Reay, 1999; both in Lee & Bowen, 2006). Other researchers agree, and extend the list of barriers for parents to include: "… feelings of inadequacy; previous bad experiences with schools; suspicion about treatment from institutions; limited knowledge about school policies, procedures, or how to assist with schoolwork; and economic (e.g., transportation, daycare) and emotional (e.g., daily survival) constraints" (Liontos, 1992, in Christenson, 2002, p.3). Much of this was confirmed by the participants of this study, as will be seen in Chapter 4.

These findings are also consistent with studies that indicate economically disadvantaged parents are less hopeful about their child's education (Crosnoe, Mistry & Elder, 2002, in Lee & Bowen, 2006). Meanwhile, gender is seen to play a role in some research. Desforges and Abouchaar (2003) cite one study which found "... home discussion to be a significant force on student achievement" and noteworthy factors

associated with parents and students discussing their learning were: (Sui-Chu & Willms, 1996, in Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003, p.21)

> First there is a strong gender effect. Females report considerably more home discussion than males. Second, children with behavioral problems get less home discussion but significantly more school communication. Third, there are ethnic differences in the degree of home discussion. Asian and Pacific Island families engage significantly less than white families in home discussion.

These researchers also found (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003, p.49):

> There were apparently, strong gender differences amongst the children with girls much more actively in support of parental involvement and that in their home especially. There was also an age effect with secondary school children less comfortable with parental involvement – especially in school.

The six teachers who participated in this study, as a group, supported several of these statements, as shall be seen. However, Lee and Bowen (2006) cite numerous researchers who report parents with diverse racial, ethnic, educational and economic backgrounds are involved in their child's education whether or not they are formally involved in their child's school-community activities (Bempechat, 1998; Drummond & Stipek, 2004; Lopez, Scribner & Mahitivanichcha, 2001, in Lee & Bowen, 2006). Pena (2000) seems to summarize the many influences, finding in her study that "parent involvement was influenced by factors like language, parent cliques, parent education, school staff attitudes, cultural factors, and family issues" (p.42). Of importance to this dissertation study is Pena's conclusion that "overall, teachers did not recognize the influence of these factors on parent involvement" (2000, p.42). I will posit the action research participants in my study did indeed recognize these influences, but were virtually powerless to address them, begging the question who can and should do so, and why have they not?

What are the influences of legislated collaboration? While "more than 35 years of research has proven the positive connection between parent involvement and student success" (Forum on Educational Accountability, 2007, p.11) federal policy seems to simultaneously acknowledge the importance of family involvement, but provide insufficient funds to increase it, and school districts themselves "are focusing on compliance as opposed to a statement of belief that parent involvement is integral" and "extremely important" (Evaluation Exchange, 2008, p.16). Darden states a "culture change" needs to happen at all levels (Evaluation Exchange, 2008), and she may well be right.

In Lee's and Bowen's (2006) study exploring family attitudes toward communication with schools, they made what they described as several "disheartening"

discoveries. First, many parents with children with mild disabilities perceived the written materials sent to them from schools were condescending, and even appeared to reveal the school's effort to control them. Second, the "advocacy-oriented approach" of some information the school sent home may actually lead to parents developing "attitudes that are adversarial towards the school" (Lee & Bowen, 2006, p.263). Third, families sometimes have negative expectations regarding school communications because they more often occur when there is a problem. Boy, was this borne out by the teacher participants whose case studies follow!

Ultimately, Lee and Bowen determined that "having knowledge about special education and being provided with information about special education were negatively related to parents' attitudes toward communication with the schools" (Lee & Bowen, 2006, p.193). Happily, this study did reveal that while sending written information to parents left them feeling negatively about the school's efforts to communicate, interpersonal communication had the opposite effect. Specifically, telephone calls from school staff led to enhanced parent attitudes and even helped teachers begin to see parents as collaborators (Lee & Bowen, 2006).

Welch (1998) offers one hope he believes is inherent in the mandate ensuring all students with disabilities have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), albeit his stated hope, he reminds us, is yet unmet. He writes: "The IEP has the intuitive appeal and potential to serve as an action plan developed through collaboration. Smith (1990), however, maintain[s] that the IEP has been nothing more than mechanistic and a procedure for compliance" (in Welch, 1998, p.128). Can teachers help change this?

What Influences Teachers' Perceptions and Behaviors?

The Forum on Educational Accountability assures us better family involvement "is linked to higher teacher and administrator morale and increased job satisfaction" (Evaluation Exchange, 2007, p.11). Yet, well documented are the barriers teachers experience to building partnerships with parents. These include (Leitch & Tangri, 1988; Mendoza & Cegelka, cited by Chrispeels, 1987; Swap, 1993, in Christenson, 2002, p.3):

> ... limited time for communication; frequency of ritualized contact (e.g., parent-teacher conferences, back-to-school nights); differences in parent-professional perceptions; lack of funding; and lack of clarity about parents and educators roles and responsibilities.

Christenson adds lack of training in collaboration, plus various negative attitudes some educators have towards partnerships with families (i.e. stereotyping, lack of commitment) to the barriers educators encounter (Christenson, 2002).

Additional teacher perceptions congruent with these are given by Kim (2009) who studied minority parent participation and cites barriers evident in teachers' perceptions about the capacity of minority parents to participate and their efficacy. Other demographics also may play a significant role in teacher perceptions. Teachers gave higher involvement ratings to parents with better education, to those with children in lower grades, and they gave lower ratings to single parents despite evidence that single parents spend more time than couples helping their children with homework (Patrikakou, 2008). Lastly Patrikakou notes teachers believe "more contact with parents increases teachers' … responsibilities and raises various concerns about … heavy work load [and] limited resources" (2008, p.5). The case studies below support these findings, as well.

Henderson, a community involvement researcher, asks what practices might increase "teachers … capacity to engage families?" (Evaluation Exchange, 2008, p.38). Bartels and Eskow found providing for-credit training to "school professionals enhanced their ability to engage families and [experience] positive changes in attitude toward family-professional collaboration" (2010, p.45). It would appear I am on the right track with this study! Another researcher who may provide an answer to this question concludes many teachers do not see themselves as change agents and likely lack the training for it since very few teacher preparation programs offer training in parent collaboration beyond how to conduct a parent conference (Patrikakou, 2008).

Patrikakou writes, although the vast majority of teachers agree parent involvement leads to more successful students and schools, "only a third of teachers feel that it is their responsibility to involve families, and only half believe that they can change parent behaviors" (Patrikakou, 2008, p.4). Clearly, this belief can lead to reciprocal poor perceptions between teachers and families, and so the reverse could be true. If educators can acquire sufficient, appropriate training and support to collaborate with diverse families in such a way that positive perceptions arise in the family members they interact with, then teachers' own perceptions of what their students' families want to and can do may improve and pave the way to the success promised by experts (Evaluation Exchange, 2007, p.11):

> Schools with well-structured, high quality parent and family involvement programs see better student grades, higher test scores and higher graduation rates, as well as a decrease in drug and alcohol use and fewer instances of violent behavior.

Influences on student achievement linked to teacher-family collaboration. How can diverse students' achievement and well-being relate to family collaboration? Imagine you are parent and your child comes home with low grades, exhibits school-related stress, or is "raging against the machine" – do you want to collaborate with the child's teachers, have you done so already to no avail, or have your life experiences led you to blame the system and adopt a fatalistic view regarding school outcomes for your

child? These scenarios are all too familiar to teachers like those who participated in this study. Thus, a close look at the influences on student outcomes is necessary to fully appreciate the case study data gathered and presented in Chapter 4. Besides which, it is also interesting stuff! (Granted, I am biased.)

   Cultural bias – effects on student achievement and teacher perceptions. Henig, too, asserts "[d]ifferences in student, family, and neighborhood backgrounds outweigh differences in school practices as predictors of achievement" (2009). Why is this so, and how does this effect teachers who try to increase collaboration with students' families? A cultural and historical context for achievement is given by Chapman, Davison and Panet (2002) who cite Schlesinger (1991): "For better or worse, the white Anglo-Saxon Protestant tradition was for two centuries – and in crucial respects still is – the dominant influence on American culture and society" (p. 6). These authors state the Anglo-American experience has now become established as the standard for public education, and that all students in the American system are forced to subordinate their culture in order to stay in the mainstream. Many culturally diverse students have not been able to do this, and do not benefit from public education.

   Evidence of cultural bias in the school system appears in diagnosis, placement and individualized education. Diverse students experience unequal placements in alternate education such as special education (Fordham Foundation, 2006) and their low achievement on assessments, such as intelligence tests, have "isolated those who were unable to conform to the constructed standards of the norm" (Chapman, Davison & Panet, 2002). North Central Regional Educational Laboratory researchers (1997) confirm this, stating norm-referenced tests are biased against ethnic minorities who typically score low because high-stakes assessments are not culturally or contextually based within students realm of experience.

   Not long ago significant efforts were made in the federal legislature by leaders of national education, civil rights, as well as religious, disability and children's organizations to reduce mandated testing and bolster local assessments using multiple and authentic tools to better gauge student achievement (FairTest, 2007). They called for changes to the NCLB Act which would help educators base assessments on a much broader definition of achievement, and allow more diverse community input in educational decision making. Pilot studies in some states have even been developed to emphasize local, classroom-based student assessment and limit standardized testing (FairTest, 2007). Such a scenario would benefit greatly from good teacher-family collaboration. Yet, as stated in Chapter 1, current accountability zeal at the federal level, now incarnated in the Race to the Top initiative, does nothing to support this, and few of Hawai'i's DOE teachers can help, as virtually all have been trained in the very same western paradigm which created the problems associated with assessment bias. Indeed this fact was known to some of the teachers who participated in this study, yet the

participants unevenly acknowledged or even attempted to address the problem. Thus, the principal investigator valiantly – humbly? – tries to do so in Chapter 5 recommendations.

Hawai'i's major populations – effects on student achievement and teacher perceptions. Studies by Hill and Taylor (2004) and McNeal (1999) confirm a relationship between family demographic characteristics and achievement outcomes exists. They found race/ ethnicity and free/reduced school lunch participation (i.e. poverty) were significantly associated with achievement over and above the effects of parents involvement. This contradicts Christenson's (2002) assertions cited above, and those of Bogenschneider (1999, in Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003, p.729) who reported results consistent with the 'pan-ethnic' effects of parental involvement. Drawing relationships between involvement and achievement in a sample of 10,000 high school students, she concluded that parental involvement was a force on achievement as a:

> … process with considerable validity across the contexts of the child's and parents' gender, parents' education, family structure and ethnicity …. Parents who are more involved in their adolescents' schooling, regardless of parents' gender or educational level, have offspring who do better in school, irrespective of the child's gender, ethnicity or family structure' (p.729). Parental involvement works for everyone.

The debate of these researchers speaks to the need for further research and makes an examination of the major culturally and linguistically diverse groups in Hawai'i essential here. Also, as the reader has likely grasped, understanding the cultures of students and families was a concern for the teachers in this study, as was our lack of such understanding.

Hawaiians. Despite having enjoyed high achievement in all forms of language literacy – estimated at 90% in Hawaiian language late in the nineteenth century – the banning of the Hawaiian language as a medium of instruction in public schools in 1896, and the punishment of children speaking their native tongue, saw a reversal of this trend (Kapono, 1998) that suspiciously paralleled the beginning of decreased achievement for Hawaiian youth throughout the 1900s (Cooke, 2001). Sato (1985, p.256) states a "linguistic imperialism which suppressed the Hawaiian language in the late 1800s still manifests itself a century later with respect to Hawai'i Creole English" (HCE) and, it can be argued, with respect to most areas of achievement.

Familiarly known as "Pidgin" in Hawai'i, HCE is a considered by scholars to be a distinct language in wide use by Hawaiians and many other "local" families in Hawai'i, yet its use in the classroom continues to be debated in the state Department of Education as well as by classroom teachers and families of all ethnicities (Sato, 1985). What is important to remember is that with language suppression, so too comes socio-linguistic stigmatization and oppression of cultural identity (Sato, 1985). Over the last couple

decades one study has attempted to bridge this gap for Hawaiian children: the Kamehameha Early Education Program (KEEP) (Au, 1980 in Sato, 1985; NCREL, 2007). Successful components of this program, which led to increased achievement in reading, were identified as "culturally appropriate participation structures" – familiarly known as "talk story" in Hawai'i – which children need to "develop language in a natural context" (Pang, 1990, p.269 & p.423).

Regardless whether Hawaiian students speak HCE or Hawaiian in the home, Hawaiian educational experts contend that Hawaiian parents have generally taught their children to "Leave your Hawaiianess (sic) at home" and that "school was separate" (Sing, Hunter & Meyer, 1999, p. 12). While this expectation is changing somewhat with the growing renaissance of Hawaiian culture in education, the mismatch of home and school cultures endures, and is particularly acute when collectivist values of local children collide with the individualism prized in mainstream schooling. The school outcomes for Hawaiian and part-Hawaiian youth continue to be much poorer than any other population in the islands (Grigg, Lauko, & Brockway, 2006). In the case study of 'Roz' below, the existence of a cultural mismatch can be inferred from the perceptions of this White teacher regarding native Hawaiian families whom she found to be defiant. This is examined in Chapter 4.

Other Pacific Islanders. The misalignment and gaps between home and school cultures can be seen historically in many of the other diverse Pacific Islander groups, as well, who have been present in Hawai'i for over 100 years. Fijians, Guamians, Marshallese, Samoans, Tongans and others have suffered similar challenges to their achievement in public schools, doubtlessly due in part to language barriers, but also resulting from their values and modes of learning. For example, Pang (1990) cites the challenge presented to the Samoan culture which is "highly verbal" and may not "understand the policies and culture of schools" (p.419). Most Pacific Islanders, like Hawaiians, also consider success from a group orientation, in contrast to most schools' emphasis on each individual's independent achievement.

Hawai'i's currently burgeoning Micronesian immigrant population, the Chuukese, offer another example. In studying this group, Iding, Cholymay, and Kaneshiro (2007, p. 10) found that "traditional forms of parental involvement do not apply to many Pacific Islanders." They add (p.13):

> …opportunities for cultural sharing … in addition to increasing teachers' awareness of distinct and different cultures … can contribute to the creation of more effective educational experiences for all in multicultural settings.

Filipinos. Filipino Americans are a growing ethnic group in the US and Hawai'i, having first arrived in the early 1900s. Despite often knowing English well as a result of family educational values, many Filipino students have been subjected to prejudice from

classmates, and teachers have frequently failed to appreciate the cultural differences and learning styles of these students (Bautista, 2002). Adding to their challenges, many Filipino students, whether they are new immigrants or third or more generation Filipino Americans, are "forced to live in two worlds: being Filipinos and being Americans" (Bautista, 2001, p.1). Educators also do not always understand that different Filipino groups such as "Tagalogs … Kapampangans or Pampanguenos … Ilocanos … Ilongos … and others, have their own characteristics, beliefs, and ways of life" (Bautista, 2001, p.2). Nadal (2008) states there are deficiencies in educational attainment of Filipino American youth and recommends "providing culturally-competent classrooms for Filipino Americans" to address this (p.155). The case study teachers at Site B, where Filipino student population is the majority, reflect often on the cultural differences between themselves and their students' families (see Chapter 4).

Asians and Caucasians. Immigrants from both the east and west began arriving in Hawai'i en masse over 200 years ago, and they continue to come. While statistics on Asians and Caucasians are not often considered together, it is useful to do so here because of their apparent higher success rate in American schools, including Hawai'i. Yet Pang (1990) warns: "… researchers may think mistakenly that Confucian values are similar to American mainstream values …[which] are quite different, yet they both encourage academic achievement" (p.420).

Pang also cautions against further misconceptions related to achievement in various Asian cultures. First, she reminds us of the dangers of grouping widely disparate cultures such as Asian Indian, Cambodians, Chinese, Hmong, Khmer, Lao, Japanese, Korean and Vietnamese, into general categories as it leads to stereotyping. As well, Pang identifies assumptions often made about the pressure Asian families put on their children to have "an aggressively competitive attitude towards academic success" (p.415). This was found to be inaccurate in many of these cultures, just as another researcher found this attitude towards, and achievement in, public education not to be true for some Caucasian groups (Purcell-Gates, 1995).

Additional areas affecting achievement for Asian students include their families' attitude towards authority (in the home and at school), the desirability of assimilating to the mainstream culture, and group versus individual achievement which all differ greatly depending not only on culture, but whether or not such students are new immigrants, first generation children of immigrants, or from families with long histories in America (Pang, 1990). Finally, it is also important to consider school culture and how peers react to Asians and Caucasians and their achievement, or lack of it. For both these races, acts of school violence have occurred, obviously negatively effecting their overall success (Pang, 1990; Brown, 2006).

Mixed Ethnicities. Hawai'i enjoys the highest birthrate of children with mixed ethnicities in the country, with half of all new borns currently having mixed ethnicity and

approximately one-fifth of the state's entire population now claiming heritage in two or more ethnic groups (US Census, 2006). As it is for the other minority cultures in the country, a gap may occur for such students between what they understand to be successful "ways of knowing" at home and strategies for success as schools perceive it, which are too alien for children to understand fully and adopt as their own (Heath, 1983; Purcell-Gates, 1995). For mixed race students, and all other cultural groups in Hawai'i and elsewhere, it is vital to consider each student's and their family's cultural affiliation, or lack of it. Below, Berry and Kim (1989, in Rezentes, 1996) elucidate important acculturation patterns which anyone attempting to work with or serve diverse people should understand.

   Acculturation patterns effecting students, families and teachers' perceptions. Berry and Kim (1989, in Rezentes, 1996, pp.72-75) define four ways in which individuals and families may respond to their own cultures and the mainstream culture where they live. The first acculturation type they label "integration" where both one's own and the mainstream culture and values are integrated in one's life. This type generally would not be expected to suffer poor school outcomes. The second type, they call "assimilation," is where one's minority culture is relinquished in favor of the mainstream culture. This behavior has been promoted in America as the "melting pot" and has failed to work for many diverse people. Assimilating may threaten student outcomes, especially if students' families do not also assimilate, or if the reverse occurs and the family chooses to assimilate while the student does not. The third type, called "separation" is almost the opposite, and occurs when one affiliates strongly with one's own culture and disassociates from the mainstream. In this case, the challenges minority cultures have historically faced in public education are very likely to continue to thwart student success in mainstream schooling. Finally, the group most at risk, can be typified as "marginalized" because they do not strongly identify with either their own culture or the mainstream, possibly seeing no avenue for success for themselves either way. Such people would likely feel alienated by the school-community and, as with all students and families, relationship building for them would have to be undertaken with great care by school staff who first received adequate training.

   Influences on student well-being linked to teacher-family collaboration. The paradigm of thought in which parents alone are responsible for students well-being and only schools provide their education is outdated. The Whole Child Initiative states, with emphasis in the original text: "For each learner to be successful, they must be *healthy*, *safe*, *engaged*, *supported*, and *challenged"* (ASCD, 2010). Shriver and Weissburg concur that "promoting students' social and emotional skills plays a critical role in improving their academic performance" (2005, p.1) and other prominent researchers over the past several decades would agree (Goodlad, 2003, 1987; Lave & Wenger, 1990; Lee, 2003; Vygotsky, 1993). Several bodies of evidence which expand the scope of this argument as well as support the critical need for student well-being, and thereby the equally vital need for effective family collaboration to ensure well-being, are provided next.

Intergenerational and Indigenous Learning. Three interesting explorations of the possibilities of attending to student well-being and educational achievement at the same time are found in Canada and in Hawaiʻi. Bovin and Morohashi (2002) identify the Generative Curriculum Model (GCM), developed by the First Nations Partnership Program in Canada in 1989 and used through the 1990s, as a good example of the benefits of collaborating with extended family members. These researchers describe the GMC model as being "constructed through the participation of community members, especially Elders, who articulate, teach, and demonstrate culturally important ideas and practices" (p.200). This program sees great value in "the creation of a self-sustaining, inter-generational community of learners" who "re-conceptualize success" (p. 206) in a more appropriate, culturally responsive manner.

To Hawaiian educational experts, such a community of learners is known as kauhale (Kahakalau, 2004) which translates simply as "our house" or "education center" but actually encompasses an ideology that places great value not only life long learning, but also on other crucial outcomes of the interactions of learners of all ages working together: shared values, a sense of being valued, and achieving community goals. In fact one program, the only formal one of its kind in the nation, over the last three decades has brought approximately 250 kūpuna into elementary classrooms to "offer the collective wisdom of elders to our keiki [children]" (Padello, 2007). Although this has happened sporadically, it speaks to the desire of family and community members in Hawaiʻi to help out in the classroom, impart their cultural knowledge and values to students and their teachers, and nurture the well-being of the state's school children.

Hawaiʻi's charter schools, especially the 13 schools with a Hawaiian culture focus, also offer educational programs that are overtly more nurturing than typical public schools. Students themselves attributed their "sudden significant successes in education" at these schools to "the feeling of aloha" they experienced at school (Na Lei Naʻauao-Native Hawaiian Charter School Alliance, 2006, p.3). Researchers involved at these schools believe because "an entire learning ʻohana or family of learners cares about them, students begin to care not just about themselves and their future, but also about ... their families and communities, their native culture and the environment" (NLN-NHCSA, 2006, p.3). Such schools are growing in number and variety across the nation, and many have parent involvement requirements. This itself attests to family interest in, and belief in the value of, increased collaboration and integrated student well-being.

Group vs. Individual Achievement. Another important aspect of student well-being and achievement which must be acknowledged has both multicultural and mainstream advocates. Kohn (1992, 2007) criticizes the role of competition as the means to achievement for any student in American society or our schools since it creates one winner and many losers, and the well-being of so many "losers" should be of concern to us all. Kohn also criticizes standardized tests for their competitive character and for assessing "what matters least" (2007, p.32). He joins Johnson and Johnson (1989),

among many others, to advocate for the use of cooperative learning strategies which also, it so happens, allow students to create a culturally plural society within the school (Webb & Palincsar, 1996), and prepares them to continue to do so in their adult lives. This approach – thinking as a member of a group and acting for the benefit of many – is a popular one in multicultural education, too.

Hawaiian educators places a high value on that alternate view of achievement found in cooperative learning and living (Sing, Hunter & Meyer, 1999; Ewalt & Mokuau, 1995), noting that culturally and linguistically diverse groups value interdependence and reciprocity over competition. Further in contrast to the individualistic achievement sought in most public schools, is the non-western conceptualization of personal identity which is not expressed through unique traits and self-directed behavior, so much as through acceptance and exploration of one's role within the group (Black, Mrasek, & Ballinger, 2003; Ewalt & Mokuau, 1995). Such values are common among many minority populations, and they inherently allow students to achieve in ways that also support their social and emotional development.

Social and Emotional Learning. Current education traditions may actually be seen to thwart two fundamental, natural processes in human learning. First, family members rarely participate as teachers, experts, contributors or learners in schools, especially at the high school level. Second, schools today typically "dichotomize cognition and emotion" (Freire in Darder et al, 2003, p.507) reducing the potential for more meaningful learning between anyone assuming teacher or learner roles. Vygotsky (1993) would doubtlessly agree as his research asserts learning happens in a "zone of proximal development" where teachers, family, siblings, peers and others share "tools" or concepts through social learning. Vygotsky would contend that such social interaction *is* learning.

Weissburg (in Shriver & Weissburg, 2005) conducted the largest-ever quantitative analysis on this subject and proved that social and emotional learning programs improve students' academic performance significantly. Moreover, Weissburg believes benchmarks for social and emotional growth as well as civic learning should be added to state standards and assessments, as is being done in promising pilot projects in some Illinois schools (Gordon, Ji, Mulhall, Shaw & Weissberg, 2011).

Shriver and Weissburg (2005, p.1) describe social-emotional learning as "the process through which children learn to recognize and manage emotions." In furthering their definition, they provide additional justification for all of the important educational methodologies suggested in the literature reviewed thus far. Firstly, in stating that social-emotional learning allows students to "understand and interact with others, to make good decisions and to behave ethically and responsibly," we clearly see that cooperative learning, values based education and cultural learning can be a part of social and emotional learning. Secondly, when these researchers explain that the "best social and

emotional learning programs engage not only children, but also their teachers, administrators and parents," we see this methodology ties in the ideals of culturally responsive education and family collaboration by promoting meaningful home-school community interactions. Finally, when Shriver and Weissburg state that "well designed social-emotional learning programs" turn out "students who are good citizens committed to serving their communities and cooperating with others" they allow us to see how the goals of place-based education are also addressed through socio-emotional learning, and may even link to the social action called for by critical pedagogy theorists. More literature clarifying and supporting this is also offered below.

Promising Collaboration Practices for Teachers

Several successful programs and promising recent efforts described in this chapter offer an array of family collaboration practices. Additional notable work is found in the ongoing studies of the Funds of Knowledge researchers (González, et al., 1994; González, Moll & Amanti, 2005) who provide a consistently beneficial approach to uncover diversity through teacher and family interactions which first reveals what families know, and then demonstrates that this knowledge is valued in the classroom. The Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL, 2005b, p. 2-4), also citing considerable research from 1994 to 2007, outlines common characteristics of culturally responsive practices many educators are now using with success: a climate of caring, respect, and the valuing of students' cultures is fostered ...; bridges are built between academic learning and students' prior understanding, knowledge, native language, and values; educators learn from and about their students' culture, language, and learning styles...; local knowledge, language, and culture are fully integrated into the curriculum, not added on to it; staff [have] high standards and ... expectations for all students; ... classroom practices are challenging, cooperative, and hands-on, with less ... rote memorization and lecture ..., and; school staff build trust and partnerships with families, especially [those] marginalized by schools in the past. This last recommendation was found to be highly important to the participants in this study, as will be shown in Chapters 4 and 5.

Lastly, place-based curriculum and critical pedagogy hold an allure as the "magic bullet" that promises not only to improve individual students' achievement by teaching what common sense dictates will be relevant to them (i.e. linking content to the "place" they live – the nexus of their environment, people and cultures) but, moreover, it appears its proponents believe place-based education can unite students, their families and their communities through projects which address social concerns and even, ultimately emancipate those who are being treated – and educated – unequally and unjustly (Ball & Lai, 2006; Gruenewald, 2003; Sobel, 2004). While some feel, legitimately, this approach is threatened by the federal push for national standards and standardized testing (Jennings, Swidler & Koliba, 2005), which Gruenewald (2003) views as "placeless" curriculum, Chinn's work, *All of a Place: Connecting Schools, Youth and Community*

(2001) promotes place-based learning as something that can hardly be argued against as it can positively impact student achievement in all subjects, nurture students' social development and family involvement, revitalize teaching and contribute to education reform while simultaneously building the capacity of communities and funders to address local concerns. With such glowing support, no wonder place-based education is happening across the nation, and in Hawai'i, particularly at the state's charter schools, where it is proving to be both culturally responsive and successful. In fact, as will be seen in my own case study in Chapter 4, it holds promise for my continued research, as well.

Suitability and Purpose of Theories Informing the Study

If the goal of this study is to help teachers achieve true collaboration with families, then the theories which influenced this study and which the principal investigator promoted to the teacher participants and used herself must be examined, particularly to heed the call for respect of the diversity of all the stakeholders in public schools, which the literature reviewed above requests. Additional theory which specifically and directly informs the methods will be given in Chapter 3.

Overview. Hawaiian wisdom prior to contact with outsiders includes the development of numerous olelo no'eau or wise sayings, one of which is pertinent here: Ma ka hana ka 'ike – In the doing is knowledge. It is offered as appropriate wisdom that applies to both the theory and method used, and described later, in this study. Literature which helped me devise the theoretical framework at the beginning of the project, and the development and validation of new strategies and theory as the study progressed and findings were analyzed, are given next. The reader is then advised to have a cookie to celebrate the end of this long, but hopefully thorough, chapter.

Learning by Doing – Experiential Education. Dewey may be considered the father of experiential learning (Kehrberg, 2007; Woodhouse & Knapp, 2000), which is characterized as authentic, hands on, or project-based learning instead passive reading and rote memorization which was the standard for his day (Dewey, 1938), and sadly persists in schools still. Traditional education, Dewey feels, made "no demand that the teacher should become intimately acquainted with the conditions of the local community ... in order to utilize them as educational resources" (Dewey, 1938, p.36). He suggests, teachers "should know how to utilize the surroundings, physical and social, that exist so as to extract from them all that they have to contribute to building up experiences that are worth while" (Dewey, 1938, p. 35).

Place-based learning, already described above, certainly is an extension of Dewey's experiential learning approach, and it paves the way to possible new theory. Kehrberg states place-based education defies precise definition because it is "a broad term that not only refers to a method of teaching, but a growing movement to redefine

schooling, and a theory about how we should ultimately view education" (2007, p.1). Might the natural extension of place-based education then be a redefinition of the roles of teachers, family, community members and students so that they may be empowered as equal participants in the co-construction and sharing of knowledge, thereby having a voice in local and global social action? If so, this study encourages teachers to learn and use a place-based approach, and thereby help lay the foundation to further develop educational theory on each stakeholder's new role in reciprocal teaching and learning, or a'o, in Hawaiian conceptualization. The reader is asked to keep these thoughts in mind, as they will be revisited in Chapter 5.

Learning by Doing – Sociocultural Learning Theory. Dewey also stated: "Education must be conceived as a continuing reconstruction of experience; that the process and goal of education are one and the same thing" (1929, in Flinders & Thornton, 2004, p.21). This idea is akin to the views of Vygotsky who also believed in the importance of experiential learning and the continual reciprocal process by which humans create and develop their knowledge (Vygotsky, 1978). Both theorists firmly believed in the social, interactive nature of learning and the value of re-conceiving the roles of teachers and learners as negotiators in the learning process (Dewey, 1938; Vygotsky, 1978). Two advances of this thinking in particular show promise for Hawai'i's educators and students: Situated Learning Theory (Lave & Wenger, 1990) and Cultural Modeling (Lee, 2003).

Situated Learning Theory. In Situated Learning Theory learning is: "embedded within activity, context and culture"; learners become involved in a "community of practice"; and the "more active and engaged they become within the culture" they are believed to eventually "assume the role of an expert" (Lave & Wenger, 1990, p.1). In this way learning … "both outside and inside school, advances through collaborative social interaction and the social construction of knowledge …"(Lave & Wenger, 1990, p.1). In my study, all players (researchers, teachers, family and community members and students) had the potential to become the 'learners' in this theory, and activities engaged in to increase family collaboration and improve student outcomes became the 'context' for everyone's learning and the development of a 'community' whose purpose is simply to collaborate and develop expertise.

Cultural Modeling. Cultural Modeling also links ideas of how we learn to where our knowledge leads us on a societal level. Cultural Modeling allows educators to use "multiple mediational resources" to "draw upon … culturally responsive ways to support ... learning" (Lee, 2003, p.393). By this Lee refers to the interactions or dialogues (where meaning is mediated or negotiated in Vygotsky's "zone of proximal development") between what a learner is capable of on his/her own and what he/she can do with assistance from "more knowledgeable others" (i.e. a teacher or other source of instruction such as a parent, peer or written text). Specifically, this researcher advocates the value of encouraging students to speak in their own manner, language and register to

access the prior knowledge they bring to school from their home environments and to link these "funds of knowledge" (Moll, Amanti, Neff & González, 1992) to the concepts of school curricula. Such knowledge, known to Vgyotskians as "spontaneous" or "everyday" concepts or "tools" includes families' histories, traditions, values and cultures.

After a decade of successful research, which Lee began on the topic in 1993, she writes: "I have begun to envision Cultural Modeling as sitting inside the matrix where microsystems such as family and community life meet in the learning trajectories of students" (2003, p.407). She adds (Lee, 2003, p.407):

> I believe the power of …culturally responsive bridging is the reapplication of cultural norms across activity settings… [such as] school, home, and routine interactions in peer social networks. This bridging is a crucial design in a culturally responsive zone of proximal development.

Further, in citing Brofenbrenner's belief that such activity in the Social Ecological Model's "microsystem" overlaps into the "mesosystem" of inter-related social environments, Lee's thinking parallels that of critical pedagogy theorists and their views of how the ideology and behavior of dominant cultures influences marginalized ones (Lee, 2003, p.407; Darder, et al, 2003).

The value of these theories for this dissertation study is found in the notion that culturally responsive collaboration amongst a community of learners can effect not just their microcosm, but the meso- and ultimately the macro-systems in which all schools, school systems and the people which inhabit them exist. This, too, can be seen to influence the case studies in Chapter 4 and the idea is revisited in Chapter 5.

__Researching by Doing – Participation and Social Transformation.__ If the best learning happens through doing, then should not the best research happen neither by remote or ostensibly objective observation, but rather by active and personal participation of the researchers involved in a study? The primary theoretical framework which guided this study comes from the tradition in critical theory known as radical humanism, which includes action-oriented and/or participatory research, and to a lesser extent, self-study.

Merriam (1998) states that in critical research "education is considered to be a social institution designed for social and cultural reproduction and transformation" (p.4). Knowledge that is generated through this kind of research is an ideological critique of power, privilege and oppression in educational practice. She adds that some forms of critical research have a strong participatory, action component (Merriam & Simpson, 1995 in Merriam, 1998).

In conducting research from this framework the researcher holds the subjectivist point of view, seeking to emancipate the oppressed, and seeing "praxis" (i.e. the linking of theory and action) as important (Conrad, 1993, pp. 19-20). Moreover, as Janesick (1998) states, action research "should be transformative for the people of concern as well as for the researcher" and she cites Bogdan and Biklen (1992) for a definition of action research: the "systematic collection of information … designed to bring about social change." This dissertation study was designed to meet these criteria.

__Researching by Doing – Involving and 'Evolving' the Researcher.__ Additionally, this study was heuristic. Moustakas (1990, in Kahakalau, 2004) presents heuristics as a disciplined process to deepen the researcher's understanding by involving him/her on a personal level. Kahakalau (2004) in citing heuristic origins, states that contrary to most western research the heuristic approach:

> … actually necessitates involvement by the researcher, keeping the scientist
> as a human being in the picture at all times…" (Moustakas, 1990; Rogers,
> 1968) … through continuous self-search, self-dialogue, and self-discovery
> … allowing the research question and methodology to flow out of inner
> awareness, meaning, and inspiration (Douglas & Moustakas, 1985;
> Maslow, 1966).

This approach is a movement away from traditional research methodologies wherein the researcher was never viewed as a subject or participant in his or her study, nor could participants be involved as researchers themselves. Later, action research "had a strong influence on self-study research" which arose in the 1990s when an important "... shift in [action] research focus was that the role of teachers and teacher educators changed as they began to investigate and question their practice" (Samaras & Freese, 2009, p.4-5). These authors caution "[a]ction research is more about what the teacher does, and not so much about who the teacher is" while "self-study is designed to lead to the reframing and reconceptualizing of the role of the teacher" (2009, p.5).

In this study the principal investigator tackles both participatory action and, to a lesser extent, some self-study research methodologies, and even asks participants to do the same. Data collection focused on what the principal investigator and participants did. However, who the participants are as teachers directly influenced what they did, how effective they were, and what relationships they developed with students and their families. Ultimately, discoveries participants made through the course of this study did cause some of the teacher-researchers to reframe their beliefs and practices, and re-examine their role as teachers. See Chapter 4 Data Analysis for more discussion on this.

Thus, this study continues these recent trends in research, attempting to integrate appreciative inquiry (Ludema & Whitney, 2003) throughout the process, as it advocates beginning from a stance where participants look at what is right with a system and

building on its strengths rather than following the typical western paradigm of looking at what is wrong, and attempting to ameliorate that by focusing efforts on the negative. Perhaps, the integration of these theories may advance both of them in valuable ways, and Meyer's call to "change the culture of research" to better serve diverse stakeholders can also be heeded (2008, p.229).

Suitability of Theory to Participants. These theories are uniquely suited to this exploratory study which was conducted primarily on six teacher participants, and secondarily on some of their students and the students' family members who became involved in the teachers' activities. All participants influenced the research process itself, as the interactive methodology described in Chapter 3 below made this possible. Thus, the potential for this research to be transformative for all stakeholders is evident in the research design, and some social change in the diverse settings studied may have been achieved, in particular in the ongoing efforts of the teachers who took part in this study and continue to teach.

Purpose of Theory. While the scope of this study was limited, the intention was not. Public education is the foremost institution where positive social change can occur. World leaders, both good and evil, have proven this for millennia. Yet public education is also the means by which long-standing exclusionary ideology continues to oppress most minorities today. Hence, this study, although it explored but a small possible avenue for change for a few teachers in the current educational system in Hawai'i, may contribute valuable recommendations for a farther reaching and much needed larger change in mainstream educational, and even societal, thought on the roles, definitions, and scope of influence of students, family members and teachers in public schools.

Conclusion of Literature Review

Perhaps at this point it is difficult for the reader to believe the literature reviewed above all led to the formation of the research question and sub-questions below. In fact, a little of it stemmed from the study and findings, and were added after the action research phase was completed. Shockingly, there is even more literature found in Chapter 5! Regardless, I feel the reader will see in Chapter 4 that the six teachers involved in this study actually considered, as a group or independently, all of the complexities presented above. It is a challenging profession, and when a seemingly simple question is asked, finding answers can be like peeling an onion, revealing layer upon layer of pertinent information which it is better to consider than omit, and thereby err entirely.

Exploratory Research Questions

This study was guided by the following exploratory research question and sub-questions:

Central research question. In what ways do Hawaiʻi public high school teachers' perceptions of, and behaviors toward, family collaboration change given participation in a for-credit professional development (PD) course focused on increasing family collaboration?

Sub-questions:

a) Do demographic characteristics of the PD teachers and their students influence any changes in the teachers' perceptions and behaviors?

b) Do specific PD teacher driven strategies result in changes in the teachers' perceptions of, and behaviors toward, family collaboration?

Chapter 3

Methods

Overview

Overview of theory. Extant theory that informs the framework of this study comes primarily from the qualitative field of social sciences which has influenced human understanding of multiple, relative truths since the time of the Sophists some 2500 years ago (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie & Turner, 2007). In the last century, constructivism and grounded theory (Lincoln & Guba, 2000 in Creswell, 2003; Lincoln & Guba, 1985) have extended this school of thought, enabling this research to "inductively [develop] during a … constant interaction with the data" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967 in Maxwell, 2005, p.42). Such paradigms paved the way for this study to implement a variety of recent methodologies, listed below, that are compatible with qualitative traditions. It is hoped this study contributes to a new theory related to the transformative paradigm (Janesick, 1998) which moves beyond recognizing the unique axiology of research participants and their individual values to the actual promoting of social change for all in the setting studied.

Methods statement. The methods of this study are formally more sequential than concurrent (Mertens, 2007), as seen in Figure 2 in the Appendices. Gall, Gall and Borg (2007, p.32) note "quantitative studies about a particular phenomenon combined with … qualitative studies about the same phenomenon can provide richer insights." While primarily intended to be a qualitative study of teachers perceptions and behaviors, this study originally also sought to vicariously conduct a quantitative study of the participating teachers' students and those students' family members with whom they interacted. This was to be achieved through the teachers' own quantitative data collection. The descriptive quantitative data was to be formally compared to the qualitative data after the study was completed. While limited quantitative data were collected, and teachers' opinions on any possible links between student outcomes and family interactions were gathered qualitatively throughout the study, the two methodologies did not combine in a way that deepened insights much. Hence, the exploratory research methods and findings are presented alone, and comments regarding quantitative data and links between those and qualitative data are sprinkled in only where they are relevant.

The rest of this chapter will present a justification and details of the methodology. The proposed research plan (see Appendices G and H) is also included to present how the conceptual framework discussed in Chapter 2 and the methods stem from the research questions and interact to support the purposes of this study and ultimately validate the findings. This chapter culminates in a full description of the procedures engaged in

throughout the study so that readers may better understand, perchance even enjoy, the case studies that follow in Chapter 4.

Justification for methodology. Janesick (1998) states "action research captures the active role of the researcher directly involved in the cause for which the research is being conducted" (p.115). As a secondary teacher and curriculum writer, the principal investigator of the study participated as a peer and colleague with the teacher participants, as well as an educational researcher having experience and expertise not shared by any of the participating teachers. It is assumed all of these individuals have a professional stake in improving the educational outcomes of students in public education in Hawai'i and elsewhere.

Self-study or action research? While there are elements to self-study evident in my role as principal investigator and participant in the action research conducted in this study, the methods I used do not meet enough of the criteria for the self-reporting given in Chapter 4 to be called self-study. The reasons for this are elucidated by experts in the field, one conveniently being one of my dissertation advisors.

Feldman (2002, p.971 in Samaras & Freese, 2006, p.5) states self-study researchers "problematize their selves in their practice situations" in order to reframe their beliefs and practice. This I did through the use of the reflective portfolio and inquiry inherent in the PD assignments I completed along with the other teacher-researchers (LaBoskey, 2004a; Samaras & Freese, 2006 in Samaras & Freese, p.5). In this regard, my own experiences served as the resource for the case study I conducted on myself, and to this limited extent my work includes self-study elements.

However, the purpose of the study of both my participants and myself was decidedly "to modify or transform one's practice or situation, or those of the community or institution" and to critically analyze and plan actions that address "the institutional barriers" perceived (Samaras & Freese, 2006, p.953). Samaras and Freese (2006, p.953) make clear this purpose is quite distinct from that of self-study, which puts "the accent ... on the word *self"* so that "self becomes the focus of the study". My "self" nor my participants' "selves" in this study are the focus here; their students and actions which served them at all times took center stage.

Culture matters. An additional reason for conducting this study with the methodology chosen was to acknowledge the role and needs of the culturally diverse families who were involved in this research. A "hotpoint" in research today concerns the cultural affiliation of researchers, especially when their culture differs from those they study, which was the case for all the teacher-researchers involved in this study. In various social sciences and education, conducting research on a particular cultural group has been approached by outsiders and insiders to the group, and both methods have their limitations and advantages (Smith, 1999). In this study participating teachers acted both

as "insiders" exploring collaboration opportunities with culturally diverse family members who may be considered "outsiders" to the school setting; however, participants may also be seen as "outsiders" in that their cultural affiliations did not match the majority of their students and their families. Hence, this helps address the limitations and the needs of cultural researchers in the field of education, and those with, and for whom, they conduct their research.

Procedures and Key Participants

   Role of the researcher. As principal investigator I obtained approval from the State of Hawaiʻi Department of Education professional development branch, PD3E, to conduct the three credit professional development (PD) course that formed the basis of this study in the spring of 2010. As principal investigator I was an active participant in the emic, or co-constructed, research (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). As stated in Chapter 1, this study was designed so that the principal investigator could act as the participating teachers' PD course instructor and, simultaneously, as a participating teacher directly studying her own efforts (perceptions and behaviors) alongside the other participants. In this way I was deeply involved in all aspects of each participating teacher's component of the study, and in the development of the new literature (educational materials and strategies, findings and emergent theory) which this research produced.

   The obvious advantages to this included easy access to participants and data. However, there were also significant limitations, foremost among them being my subjectivity as a participant researcher. This is discussed in the Analysis section in Chapter 4 below.

   Population and attainment of participants – teachers. The professional development course entitled *'Ohana Collaboration for Student Success* was open to registration on April 29, 2010 for any of the 12,000 plus teachers working in state schools in Hawaiʻi. However, teachers who were unable to travel to Oʻahu or within Maui County for four planned face-to-face workshops were not likely to participate; thus, three of the five outer islands were not represented in this study. The course fee, to cover the Principal Investigator's travel, was $125 but, as the syllabus states, the fee could be waived if it presented a hardship to participants (this was done for two of the teachers who completed the course and, one must agree, could not possibly have effected their evaluation of the PD course – hold this thought for the limitations discussion).

   The online course description stated: "Ideal participants are high school teachers in special education and/or general education (where students at risk of school failure are included) who are highly qualified or seeking to become highly qualified in their field" (Galloway, 2010). Up to 20 secondary teachers were sought. The participating PD teachers were recruited through normal DOE channels via PD3E updates (the online

professional development notification system used statewide) and, when sufficient numbers were not found, by word of mouth (i.e. the principal investigator and her principal, the DOE sponsor, announced the course offering to teachers they knew personally and thought might be interested).

Who's who? In the case studies presented in Chapter 4 all teachers who completed the majority of assignments in the PD course will be referred to as "the participants" when I am not referring to myself, and as "teachers" or "teacher-researchers" when I am referring to them and myself.

Population and attainment – students and family members. The teachers' students and the students' family members were not intended to be direct participants in this study. Nevertheless, in order for the participating teachers to assess their own perceptions of, and behaviors toward, family collaboration, teachers were required to identify and survey "target" students (those enrolled in a class the teachers considered to have the highest number of students at risk of school failure). If possible, participating teachers were asked to survey these students' family members, and to gather other data related to the topic of this study (i.e. communication documents and/or field notes on face-to-face or telephone interactions). As a result, student and family member inclusion in this study became a matter both of chance – teachers do not normally choose which students will be in their classes each year – and of design – teachers did select which classes they targeted for their PD course work, if they taught middle or high school. The reason participating teachers were asked to specifically target classes that included students who were at risk of school failure for their intervention activities was the hope that this study would benefit those students and families most in need.

Bounding the case – time. The study was conducted during the 2010-11 school year, with data collection occurring primarily within the PD course start and end dates of August 20, 2010 to May 31, 2011. No formal pilot was conducted, except for some field testing of the principal investigator's survey instrument which was piloted in June 2010. All participatory action research between the principal investigator and teacher participants culminated with final member cross-checks in January, 2012 and sharing the published manuscript in April, 2012.

Data collection – participating teachers. Data were gathered from consenting participants (see Appendix C, Consent Form) using a pre- and post-survey (see Appendix A), emails, written reflections (see Appendix B), observations with field notes, conversations by telephone, and from evidence of participant dissemination of findings which they included in an electronic PD portfolio and submitted for grading at the end of the PD course. The participating teachers also individually collected qualitative data from their students and family members, which was only shared with the principal investigator anonymously, with assurances that the privacy of the students and family members would be protected. The data included some or all of: family and student

surveys and demographics; evidence of print materials sent home to families, and; one or more principal investigator-observed family collaboration related activities.

In order to match the best methods to the research questions given at the end of Chapter 2, qualitative data gathered included these types:

1) *(observations)* principal investigator's meeting observations and observations of participant interventions

2) *(telephone conversations)* principal investigator's one-on-one telephone calls with participants

3) *(print)* (a) principal investigator's: journal, coded field and observation notes; pre-/post-participant surveys; and ... (b) participating teachers': pre-/post-surveys of students and/or their family members; teachers' PD course assignments (electronically submitted Reflections, etc. – see Appendix B: Syllabus with 'ohana Collaboration Course Portfolio Checklist and Assignment descriptions); some anonymously submitted data on students' achievement (grades, test scores), behavior (absences, tardies, time on task, class conduct, detentions, referrals, suspensions), and well-being (mood, demeanor, attitude, social skills, peer relations, stated level of happiness, self-esteem self-image, self-efficacy), and self-identified cultural affiliations and ethnicity.

Procedures. This study was conducted in three phases with the participants being engaged primarily in Phase II, and to a lesser extent contributing to Phase III. The focus of each phase is given below.

Phase I (August to October). On August 20, 2010, teachers met for the first workshop in Honolulu (Site A) and began to generate qualitative data (see Fig.1 Research Design). This workshop was repeated at a second outer island site (Site B) on August 29th. The principal investigator and participants conducted a review of relevant literature. Described in Chapter 2 and found in the Appendices, the six readings included: (1) Appreciative Inquiry (Ludema & Whitney, 2003); (2) Epstein's Framework for Involvement (1995, 2001, 2009); (3) Social Emotional Learning (Shriver & Weissburg, 2005); (4) Standards for Parents (Hawai'i State Department of Education, 2005); (5) Hawai'i BOE Policy (Hawai'i Board of Education, 2003), and; (6) Family Involvement in Special Education. Teachers all shared thoughts on these readings with the whole group, then shared past experiences related to family collaboration, wrote a reflection, discussed the PD course objectives and finally brainstormed *'Ohana Gathering* Assignment ideas. The principal investigator did the above activities as a co-participant and also: administered each teacher the pre-survey with quantitative demographics; recorded observations/field notes; and later securely stored participant data in her private residence.

In September through November teachers were asked to gather quantitative data on their target classes (i.e. student and family demographics) and administer their own student and, if possible, family surveys related to collaboration with teachers and student outcomes. They were asked to gather qualitative data in the form of print materials and to document personal contacts with target students' family members. Teachers then: invited students and family members to an *'Ohana Gathering;* documented any initial interactions with family members (to set relevant collaboration goals); and observed, reflected in writing and evaluated the results of their gathering, when possible with input from other participating PD teachers and the principal investigator, before planning their next steps. The principal investigator continued to record observations/field notes and began to code qualitative data for emerging themes which she shared with participating teachers at subsequent meetings and via online and telephone communications.

Phase II (October to May). During this period teachers' data included documentation of their own: family collaboration perceptions and goals; research questions and/or hypotheses; evidence of their first Intervention Assignment, a teacher driven strategy to increase family collaboration (completed by February); and reflections and evaluation of outcomes of the first Intervention, when possible with continuing analysis and input from other PD course participants. The principal investigator continued to take part as in Phase I, and directly observed and gathered field notes on one class activity related to family collaboration from some of the participating teachers. Where this was not possible, participants were encouraged to submit a video to the principal investigator as similar evidence to be reviewed; however, no videos were submitted, and both participants at Site A were never observed in person by the principal investigator, although they did observe each other. Participants' observations of each other helped provide data at Site B as well, when they were done between myself and "Abby". All observations were compared to teachers behaviors and perceptions throughout the data gathering period and any discrepancies between them were analyzed by the principal investigator, and with input from some of the participating teachers.

From January to May teachers conducted their second Intervention Assignment, building on the first, and some extended their research by doing an additional Bonus Intervention. They continuously built on their previous actions, observing, reflecting and evaluating their results in order to plan their next steps, sometimes with the input of another teacher participant and/or the principal investigator, as well as some input from students and their families. Teachers gathered and shared evidence of their activities in the same manner as above and submitted further qualitative data to the principal investigator, including reflections on their research roles, methods and results.

During Phase II the Principal Investigator continued to record observation field notes and code qualitative data for emerging themes, cross-checking with the other teacher-researchers and conducting follow-up questions as needed. She began to generate theory where it was warranted and shared this with participants as well.

The processes above were repeated as often as necessary and possible within the time frame of the action research period (nine months). All of this phase of the study was focused on qualitative research and data collection was interactive and recursive throughout, with the principal investigator "watching, asking and reviewing" to obtain the depth and breadth necessary for comprehensive analysis (Merriam, 1998, p. 148). Additionally, heuristic inquiry was included in this phase by the principal investigator, and to some degree, by the teacher-researchers, as they analyzed their own experience as researcher's and included this as part of the data (Merriam, 1998).

Later in Phase II, from April to May 2011, some teachers administered post-surveys and gathered quantitative data from students and families to compare with the pre-survey they administered in Phase I. They also assessed their PD course activities and analyzed their data on student outcomes and family collaboration and interactions to see if they could attribute any changes to their teacher driven strategies (i.e. *'Ohana Gathering* and Intervention Assignments). Teachers documented this in an Assessment of Effects Assignment which required them to consider their students': achievement (grades, test scores); behavior (absences, tardies, time on task, class conduct, detentions, referrals, suspensions); and well-being (mood, demeanor, attitude, social skills, peer relations, stated level of happiness, self-esteem self-image, self-efficacy).

Teachers were asked to prepare a presentation of their findings to an audience of their choosing who might benefit from their information, such as their department, school faculty or other stakeholders interested in education in their community, or at a similar school community. Evidence of their presentations and the information and recommendations they shared was included in their PD Portfolio with captions as to their relevance and value. Teachers also identified possible next steps to extend or expand the scope of their own action research at this stage. Finally, teacher-researchers reflected on their own perceptions of, and behaviors toward, family collaboration compared to the beginning of the school year and their enrollment in this PD course. This and all of the above data provided the principal investigator with rich qualitative data which lends additional support to the findings and overall validity of this study, as discussed in Chapters 4 and 5.

Phase III (June 2011 to March 2012). To conclude this study the principal investigator did a final analysis of the data in order to formulate the emergent theory related to the research questions and purposes. All valuable teacher driven strategies and recommendations to other educators were compiled and made available to interested stakeholders, as well as to the principal investigator's dissertation committee and action research participants. Their final input was integrated in February and March, 2012.

Human subjects – IRB approval and respect for participants. It was necessary to obtain human subjects approval from the University of Hawai'i to conduct this research with teachers and public school students and family members who

participated directly in this study, as well as to collect data on student outcomes. Parent/ guardian permission to collect and share data was obtained through letters by PD teachers that were sent home with their students, where necessary. IRB approval was obtained in the summer of 2010 before the study began.

Of equal importance to this study was that appropriate cultural protocols were applied in all interactions with families. Where prudent, face-to-face introductions between all teacher-researchers and willing participants were sought, and thereafter these individuals were consulted about the appropriate ways to engage in activities to increase family collaboration and improve student outcomes. As well, family input was encouraged regarding how the research was conducted, to what ends, how all participants communicated with the researcher and vice versa, and what research themes and findings ultimately evolved. Final presentation, publication and dissemination of the results was also discussed with all participants; the principal investigator encouraged all teacher-researchers to share this information with the students and families involved in their collaboration efforts, to ensure cultural integrity.

Presentation style of the material. No where is it written that dissertations cannot be funny. This does not guarantee that the chapter below will be, however it is an assurance that the author will try to be. Why? Other than heeding the old adage that we either must "laugh or cry" about many difficult things in life, I ask the reader to consider two points: (1) even dissertations should be somewhat engaging to the reader, and humor is widely recognized to be a good attention getting strategy, and; (2) the research to practice gap exists, in part, due to the obfuscation that arises through excessive use of academic-only language. Thus, if I dare to hope than someone will ever read this unwieldy publication, I simply must take pity on that poor soul and attempt to make the reading accessible – or at least not entirely narcotic. At the very least, this alone could be my best contribution to future research and even add to that "culture change" called for in research in Chapter 2! I humbly ask you, dear reader, to be the judge.

Chapter 4

Findings

This chapter first describes data gathered from all participants who signed the Participant Consent Form (see Appendices) and contributed in any way at meetings, by telephone and/or in writing as required for the PD course which formed the basis of this study. The chapter then focuses particularly on observations, conversations and print data gathered by the principal investigator on herself and from five key teacher-researchers who completed all or nearly all of their coursework (see Appendices), including: meetings (in person and/or by telephone); pre- and post-surveys; 25 written reflections; three or more major intervention assignments which the participants planned, conducted and evaluated in writing, and; a presentation and self-evaluation of findings.

The rich, descriptive data are presented to showcase each individual participant as a case study first; however, these data have been gleaned to emphasize how each participant contributed to the emerging themes. Data which was neither very salient and directly linked to the findings and emerging theory, nor anomalous and noteworthy as such, are not given below, lest the reader be overly tempted to nap. The compiled data is then analyzed, as is the principal investigator's "lens" on interactions with participants. This is followed by a cross-case analysis of common themes which emerged from all six teacher-researchers' experiences. Quality and triangulation of data are described thereafter along with limitations, bias and alternate explanations. This chapter concludes (finally!) with statements regarding researcher bias and the credibility, replicability, reliability and validity of the study. There is much to say, but it should be a fun romp due to the fascinating "action figures" each research participant proved to be!

Was it something I said? – completing and non-completing participants' data. At the time of the course start date, August 20, 2010, eight participants had enrolled or intended to, and two others enrolled later, one in September and another in October. Yet, like all good parties, by the end of the Phase II, only four participants were still enrolled, the last of the non-completers having dropped the PD course just two weeks before it ended while the rest quietly stopped participating between October (when the first written work was over-due) and February (when the first major assignment could no longer be completed). Reasons given for not completing the course ranged from lack of time to complete the coursework, personal crises such as death in the family, and lack of confidence in understanding how to write up the assignments in order to receive a passing grade (attempts were made to assist this participant, 'Ida' whose case study is given below, but evidently were not sufficient nor timely enough).

Of the original ten enrollees, three were unsolicited (i.e. learned of the course only through the online PD3E system) and these three dropped the course, while seven learned about the course through word of mouth (i.e. from the principal investigator who knew

the teachers personally, or worked with them, or from a colleague who knew the principal investigator). While initially only secondary teachers were sought as participants, the interest expressed by, and interactions with, middle and elementary school teachers persuaded the principal investigator to modify the parameters of the study. It appeared, and proved to be the case, that a broader range of input could enhance the action research to be conducted and the potential findings.

Of the ten individuals total who signed up for the course, five completed all or most of the course activities, and four submitted portfolios of their work sufficient to receive the three credits towards reclassification in the state system. Reclassification credits were cited as the primary reason all enrollees were interested in the course, as all teachers hoped to see an increase in their pay as a result – surely not the first public servants to "dream big". Most participants actually expressed an interest in increasing collaboration with families, as well, and seeing their students do better in their classes. Three daring participants even expressed some interest in learning more about research methods, as they were considering pursuing graduate level degrees one day; two of these three dropped the course within a week. Though their actions speak volumes about the allure of academic research, clearly, the principal investigator did not take their hint.

Male participants – the quiet minority. Only two of all participants were male, and both dropped the course, one within two months and the other by January 2011. The first of the male participants provided no more data than the pre-survey and comments made at the first two Site B group meetings. It should be mentioned that this participant is married to the principal investigator; a condition which may have been entirely incompatible with professional development and/or marital bliss, I note. The other male participant never met with the principal investigator or any other participants, despite multiple opportunities to do so at either Site A or B. This participant, in fact, expressed the desire to complete the course only by doing one-on-one work with the instructor, which was approved. This teacher communicated via email between September and January. He completed the pre-survey, four reflections and one and a half of the four larger assignments.

One of the male participants is white and the other is mixed race (Filipino, Hawaiian, Chinese, Japanese and white). Both are high school teachers who have a masters degree, one participant's undergraduate and graduate degrees being in a core subject and the other's being in physical education and special education. The male participants' ages were 31 and 40 at the start of this study.

The stated and only reason both male participants gave for enrolling in the course was to earn more credits towards reclassification and higher pay. Both male participants expressed no keen interest in increasing their collaboration efforts with families, and in the opinion of this researcher, they likely had less belief that there is sufficient time in the work week to attempt this and/or evidence that collaborating with families will truly have

a positive impact on how well their students do in school. This stands in marked contrast to the perceptions and efforts of all of the female participants in this study.

Female participants – the loquacious majority. Of the eight female participants enrolled in the PD course, three dropped after attending one meeting (two within a week, the other within two months). One of these participants completed three written reflections, one attended a second meeting with just the principal investigator, and the third (and presumably smartest one) did no work after surviving the first workshop. One of these non-completing participants is white, one is Japanese and the other is mixed race (Chinese and Japanese). Their degrees range from Bachelors only, to Masters, to Masters plus 15 credits of graduate coursework; their majors were in history and education at the primary, elementary and middle school levels. The ages of these three participants at the start of this study were 34 and 38 (two participants). One teacher taught primary English Language Learners, and the others taught high school math and middle school math, reading and health.

The remaining five participants (four of whom completed the PD course and obtained the highly sought after three credits), along with the principal investigator, provided this study the depth and breadth of data necessary for a comprehensive qualitative multiple-case study. For this reason their data are given below (under aliases intended to protect their anonymity, excepting the author's, of course).

As principal investigator, I have chosen to present my own data first, as I can fairly be viewed as the central figure in the action research that was conducted. This is especially true as the original design of the study – that being for all participants and myself to form a cadre of teacher-researchers who worked closely together – was not realized. Rather, the participants naturally formed two groups on both islands, and both groups interacted with me almost entirely independently (but for a few shared emails). Moreover, each participant also formed a relationship with me quite independent of the other participants. This was largely due to the fact that none of the participants were able to complete their work on the same schedule as each other, and also because I encouraged them to speak with me on their own if they needed extra help and/or did not want to include the group in their discussions. This may have been poor judgement on my part (I am somewhat of a 'softy' and empathize perhaps too much when it comes to accommodating all learning styles.) All five of these key participants communicated with me one-on-one throughout the study. Naturally, I also talked to myself quite a bit.

The next section of this chapter presents and begins to analyze the data each participant provided. The key participants' individual experiences throughout this study are showcased alongside their experiences as members of a sub-group at Site A or B. Because the teacher-researchers worked independently, and more or less simultaneously, on similar hypotheses, parallels arise in the case studies presented below; these are later

analyzed in full in the cross-case comparison and presentation of emergent themes in the latter part of this chapter.

Six Case Studies: Action Researchers in Action

The six case studies presented below are organized in this manner: an introduction to the uniqueness of the participating subject, followed by a presentation of her pre- and post-survey results, her other written data, any telephone and/or observational data of the participant, and finally a look at how her data align with the four main themes which emerged in the study. As the participants are also presented in two sub-groups, additional data on their interactions will be addressed in the sub-sections entitled "Kit, Mae and Sam in Action" and "Roz, Abby, Ida and Sam in Action". The author humbly recommends the reader make a pot of tea in order to better relax and enjoy the read.

It's all about me – the principal investigator as participatory teacher-researcher. I work in a rural school (Site B) where the student population is approximately: 57% Filipino; 22% Hawaiian or part-Hawaiian; 5% Japanese; 3% white; and 10% either Hispanic, Samoan or "other" which includes the locally termed 'poi' youth of mixed race students (Accountability Resource Center Hawai'i, 2011). I am a teacher of a core content area in a general education setting where special education students are usually taught in inclusion. I have a Bachelor of Arts degree in English Language and Literature with minors in Art and Creative Writing (is it obvious?), and a second B.A. in Secondary Education. I also have a Master's degree in Special Education, and when this study was conducted I had completed all of the coursework towards a Doctoral degree in Education with a specialization in Curriculum and Instruction Studies. I have over ten years of classroom experience teaching core content and electives and over five years experience writing grants, doing disability research, and writing curriculum and instructing teachers in its delivery. I am white and was 47 years old at the start of this study (I now feel and look 67, but am 48).

I hail from a Canada where I was raised by one Irish immigrant parent and a Canadian-born step-parent, both whom instilled in me, more or less by happenstance, blue collar, socialist thinking that continues to influence me strongly today. Paradoxically, I also suffer both from my mother's locomotive-like work ethic (likely the reason I would even consider writing a dissertation while also teaching full time!) and my step-father's craftier work ethic, best encapsulated in the phrase "close enough for government work." I am the first member of my family, which includes three brothers, who has obtained or even sought a college degree. However, they are probably better looking than I.

I believe my most noteworthy traits are described by friends who made these two statements years ago: "You are the most philosophical person I have ever met!" and "I have never seen anyone work harder to make things better." I must confess, the first

comment is often reiterated by a close friend (see case study "Kit" below) primarily for the sake of our mutual amusement, and the second comment was made by another long term friend, and briefly lover, who continues to think far too highly of me. Nevertheless, these statements resonate with me, so may have merit here in giving the reader a sense of the values and perspective of the author of this tome. If this is not the case, I refer the reader to the section on bias later in this chapter, as well as Appendix K.

'Sam' I am – you mean I have to do my own homework? Just for fun I will identify myself as case study 'Sam'. So busy was 'Sam' designing what I hoped to be a near perfect study, it was actually a surprise to me that I would have to do everything I asked my participants to do, if I wanted to claim myself as a co-participant. Then, as the study got underway, like the other teacher-researchers I, too, naturally procrastinated, whined and skimped whenever possible in doing the all the required written work. Also like the other participants, though, I was very keen to do the real "action" in this study, my own interventions. These are described below along with the other primary sources of data collected.

Sam's pre- and post-survey data. There are notable changes in my own perceptions evident in the survey instrument right at the start (see Appendix A) . I completed the pre-survey on August 20, 2010 and the post-survey on July 18, 2011 and in that time my estimate of families I contacted at least once per year rose from less than 10% to 51-75% (Item #1.a). The increase occurred in telephone and Internet communications, where a decrease is noted in letters sent home (Items #2.b, 2.c and 2.a). Item #3 shows a strong increase in my communication with parents/legal guardians and moderate increases in my communication with siblings, extended family members and close family friends or hanai family. My reasons for communicating showed only minimal change (Item #4), a disappointing reality as I had hoped to increase my contacts with families in reporting commendable behavior much more. I shall have to devise harsher consequences for myself should this poor behavior continue.

Item #5 also shows little change in my perceptions of who benefits as a result of my contacts with family. However, Item #6 shows some improvement in my attitude in that telephone calls, Internet communications, and especially face-to-face contacts convinced me that "true collaboration" was actually occurring. For this I should get chocolate! My ideas to successfully increase collaboration given in Item #7 include: starting the school year with inviting communication in a letter or syllabus; offering a fun activity with free food; creating a newsletter to invite families to future activities; and getting to know families over years to develop collaboration. I also seemed to think follow up calls to non-responders to written material sent home was a good idea, but it now occurs to me this might seem to border on harassment for some folks. More on this is found below.

Item #8 shows expansion of my perceptions of the challenge we face when trying to increase collaboration with families. Initially I identified language and culture barriers alone (clearly, my response was minimal considering the knowledge I had on the issues at that point, most of which is found in Chapter 2). However, by the end of the action research period I was able to cite these hindrances: lack of time and energy, and; knowing which families to put the time and energy into since some appear not to want to get closer to their students' teachers. Looks like I must have cashed a reality check.

There were only very slight changes in my desire to collaborate with family members shown in Item #9, such as the decrease in wanting to collaborate regarding students' commendable behavior from every month to every quarter (Item #8.a), and an increase in desire to collaborate regarding invitations to family for a school activity from every quarter to every month (Item #9.d). I also expressed a desire for families to get a student progress report each week, and never to need a poor behavior report. I was obviously dreaming when I wrote this comment.

Item #10 proved difficult for some participants to answer, and consideration of its inclusion in the data at all are addressed below. Needless to say, I knew what information was being asked, having designed this instrument myself, albeit somewhat poorly (especially this item), and so the data for 'Sam' can be considered valid. The question first asks what changes (i.e. student behavior, grades, well-being) does the survey-taker believe increased collaboration can bring about for students, classmates or the school. Then the question asks if increased collaboration can change other stakeholders' (i.e. teachers, families and community) thinking or behavior, such as respect for others' efforts, others' challenges, and desire to be involved.

My perceptions of the changes increased collaboration can bring about focused on the belief that the behavior and well-being of students, their classmates and the school could be effected positively; this remained unchanged from the pre-survey to the post-survey, and included the belief that all students' grades could also be effected. In both surveys I also responded that I believed teachers, families and community changes could be attributed to increased collaboration. How nice that surviving Phase II of my own study did not persuade me the efforts made were fruitless!

Sam's written data. Like other participants I: completed 25 Reflections, but not on time (half in mid-January and half in mid-July); did two intervention assignments, and; most of the other work outlined in the PD Course Syllabus (see Appendix B). Unlike the others I did not write a full evaluation for every project, and for this I will serve detention. I promise. For example, for Assignment #2 my input is limited to a contribution in an email thread amongst the participants and myself sent during the first week of September. I noted three activities my school offers related to family collaboration and evaluated them thusly:

1. Like we discussed, not much comes f/ the SCC at this point & I have no time to help out. I know our PCNC is helpful translating at IEP meetings etc. for the Filipino families, but not sure what else. And I still haven't met our Na Pua No'eau rep. who seems to do lots with the Hawaiian students. Guess I should try harder to meet her!
2. Not sure what families get if it doesn't come from me! (yikes)
3. But I bet it all does effect students ... I know Na Pua No'eau is great at getting students off island & involved in things good for them & Hawai'i.

What a beacon of enlightenment I must have been to my participants! However, as I now submit my "late work" evaluating my school's School Community Council (SCC), Parent Community Network Coordination (PCNC) facilitator and Na Pua No'eau (NPP), I find these three activities offer much opportunity for collaboration. Perversely, only two of them achieve it. I did finally meet the NPP liaison and learned she gets together on Sundays on campus with students to farm kalo lo'i (taro patches) – a success I failed to achieve in my intervention projects! As well she successfully engages students and family members throughout the year in various Hawaiian cultural activities.

The PCNC facilitator definitely serves students' families on campus, and I later learned she also uses her cultural knowledge and language skills to help community members off campus to inform them of important civic issues which effect them. I sense her having resided in our town for so long, and her being active at school, church and elsewhere in the community, makes her much more able to form communication bridges between school and home than other PCNC facilitators in the state, such as those at participants' schools describe in the case studies below. However, there is no indication that her skill and even emotional support empowers students' family members to truly collaborate with teachers.

Likewise, the SCC, which meets once a month to discuss the most important school decisions, is poorly attended and, ironically, may even discourage collaboration; this is my opinion now, and was expressed in my Reflection 4. I attended one meeting prior to conducting my action research, and found the venue (a classroom lit with fluorescent lights), the time (a weekday, early evening) and the atmosphere (a regimented, officious agenda) did almost nothing to inspire my return, let alone passionate discussion with all of our representative stakeholders on how to best serve our students. I spoke with the principal about this once afterward and he acknowledged and lamented that it was difficult to find a parent and students to serve on the SCC board, and that he felt constrained by the DOE guidelines to stick to the business-like format of the meeting. I offer more thoughts on this in Chapter 5, Recommendations.

For Assignment #3 I really showed my genius. I created a welcome letter to gauge how often guardians wanted to hear from me and for what reasons (see Appendices). From my target class of 12 students (8 being special education in an

inclusion setting), I collected seven forms. No surprise, four of the students most at risk did not return these forms and I could not ascertain if their families had ever received them, or chose to ignore them. The seven forms which were returned represented four students at moderate risk and three at very low risk (yes, this means I felt none of the 12 students in this class were "no risk" – they are teenagers, after all!).

Four of the responding seven guardians did not request other contact from the teacher for any reasons beyond the twice-quarterly report cards sent home (notably, two of these parents work on campus, and one is comfortable dropping by to converse, while the other parent, of the more at risk student, never visits me). The other three guardians wanted to be informed if their child's grade fell below C (two) or D (one), and if their child was not behaving well (three) or did something commendable (two). As well, two of these respondents wanted to know if there was a class activity they could see or join. Ultimately, only one parent actually joined in one class related activity that school year and, as this project ends, I can happily report she and her family continue to develop a good relationship with me, not just as future teacher to her younger children, but as a neighbor, friend and community member. Hey – an eight percent success rate towards collaboration is better than none!

Also, as part of Assignment #3, I created a now laughable Homework Survey which required students to interview an adult at home directly about collaboration, and to consider its benefits to them (see 'Sam's Homework Survey' in the Appendices). A whopping three students handed this in for a grade, none of them being at much risk of school failure. The highest achieving student in class felt collaboration with his family would positively effect his achievement, behavior and well-being, and his mother agreed. Two other students, admitted introverts, with good achievement, felt the effects of collaboration might help them, while their mothers were certain of the positive effects. Could this be an indication that student-family collaboration regarding learning happens in these homes? If so, this supports much of the literature in Chapter 2.

The last page of this homework assignment had students find out more about their family's interest in class related activities: two were interested in planting and field trips, and all were interested in class visits, movies and gatherings. One parent added a prophetic comment that also is anticipated in the literature by Liontos (1992, in Christenson, 2002): "These are wonderful idea (sic) however parents that are not well educated will feel intimidated and not come!" How right she was! One parent attended one event, bringing the student's grandmother and sibling. She is my own 'personal parent of the year'. The follow-up to this assignment (#5A) was a post-survey which I did not attempt.

Assignment #4A, an *'Ohana Gathering*, I attempted on a Saturday in mid-November, and I deemed it neither a success nor failure at the time. Some students did attend the Greenhouse Day clean up effort and potluck (costing me fifty bucks), but not

those most at risk, naturally. My 'personal parent of the year' brought a plant cutting to share and encouraging smiles. In Reflection 9, after the event, I state: "The gathering attracted more siblings than adults, so this may be an avenue to explore."

Such was the thrill of this level of response for me that I did not even attempt Assignment #4C, the first intervention. My excuse (I have a dog but he refused to eat my homework) was that my efforts were better spent on attempting collaboration from a different tack: I used my time to write a grant that will connect school, family and community members in a project of benefit to them all. I expressed this in Reflection 17 as a way "to 'sow seeds' that will bear fruit over the years ahead." This strategy has so far proven fruitful, as the non-profit environmental group I joined (comprised of a small, diverse group of local people interested in helping a kupuna restore a reef ecosystem) has obtained $20,000 for our pilot project. We plan to use these funds, in part, to bribe students and families with free good food, handsome T-shirts, and fun in the sun this year and in 2013 as we do some back-breaking labor on our place-based learning endeavors. Finally, something meaty to add to my Recommendations below!

In late April I finally mustered the gumption to invite families to another class related event (Assignment #4D), a movie shown at the community center on the highly contested issue of putting a wind turbine power plant on our island. Once again, students attended (this time some of the high risk ones in my target class and other classes), but their family members did not. None. Not even free popcorn and hotdogs worked to draw the other half of the crowd I hoped to see. Lastly, I attempted a Bonus Intervention, a tandem effort with another teacher participant in this study, 'Abby', and this I declared a success as it drew many students from middle and high school one Sunday each month to work together with adults, and visitors to the community, to help the island's animal rescue center. Initially, family members spoke with me and 'Abby' as they dropped off their students for the event, but as we now continue this activity in the current school year, only the students consistently attend, sometimes in high numbers, sometimes just a few, and potential for increasing communication and collaboration with their families seems to be diminishing. No fear, though, 'Abby' continues to bubble with ideas!

I did not write any evaluations for Assignments #5 and #6, as the latter *('Ohana Collaboration Presentation)* attracted no audience whatsoever at our school (no surprise as it was offered after the last staff meeting in May when any sane teacher is loathe to hang around for any reason), and the former assignment was both not done (#5A, noted above) or is so integral to the topic of this dissertation that 'pretending' to do my homework seemed ridiculous (#5B, Assessment of Effects).

Emergent themes. The four themes categorized below were identified in Phase III of this study, after multiple emergent themes were coded during Phase II and culled for those which have the greatest pertinence to the study overall and the development of emergent theory and literature. Each teacher-researcher's case study presents the

qualitative findings relating to these four themes: relationship building; expectations; alienation; diversity and power.

Emergent themes in Sam's data – theme one: relationship building. My concern over relationships was apparent early in this project in Reflection 3 when I described worry for my target class because they do not "relate well between all groups" and that "peer relations effect their learning." In Reflection 11 I wrote: "... clearly many teens do not want family to develop relationships with their teachers, so I will have to find out what's at the bottom of this (other than adolescent instinct!)." The research of Desforges and Abouchaar (2003), uncovered during Phase III of this study, supported this insight.

In Reflection 4 I noted relationships with school administration also concerned me, writing our principal is "authoritative, but sometimes seems authoritarian" and that I felt a "less paternal approach might surprise him" and allow teachers and parents to take more proactive roles "rather than waiting to be told what to do." My feelings in this regard have been strengthened, and while I continue to empathize with our soon-to-retire principal's challenging work, I believe now as I did last school year that his style, reflecting his "generation, culture and background," allows a western oriented approach – which does not serve diverse students and families best, as noted in Chapter 2 – to persist and even decrease the opportunities for true collaboration at our school. This ultimately influenced my recommendations in Chapter 5.

On relationship building with parents I reflected: "My hope is that as the community gets to know me over the years, parents will be more likely to talk openly with me and return my calls" (Reflection 14). Similarly, during the project and now I look to the future when my relationship building with teachers in grades K-12 will provide a foundation for better collaboration amongst staff, which in turn will enable us to work together to connect students of families who are more involved with those who are less so. In a giddy moment I fantasized: "perhaps the students can reach out and make the bridge for us" (Reflection 17). In fact, no shortage of research on student mentoring exists to attest this hope is not far-fetched. In Reflection 20 I confirmed my belief in the importance of "developing genuine relationships" with families and/or the community.

I am critical of my own efforts at building relationships, too, both during the action research period and now. In Reflection 5 I wrote: "I should make phone calls, but am reluctant due to time constraints and I don't want to intrude on their [families'] time." I ended this reflection with the thought that:

> I should try a Science Newsletter, maybe for K-12, to build up awareness & openness for involvement in students & 'ohana, that can nurture the relationships btw/ home and school more and more each year.

Lastly, in Reflection 24 I wrote: "I think I need to merge my work and public life together, and make a better effort to make friends with families when I bump into them in the community." This thought was expressed when I pondered the difference between living and teaching in a city versus in a small town where there are more opportunities to see students' family members, yet there is often more care taken on all sides to protect one's own and respect each others' privacy. Nevertheless, this idea was also found in literature reviewed during Phase III of the study, cited in Chapter 5 Solutions (Talbert & Rodgers, 2011).

Significantly, what my data show in terms of the theme of relationships is a link between my shift in focus and the GCM Model (Bovin & Morohashi, 2002). As just noted, my behavior changed during Phase II from simply wanting to increase family involvement and collaboration to seeking to develop long term relationships through meaningful school-community projects. First discussed in Chapter 2, the reader may recall the Generative Curriculum Model brought together community members, especially elders, and an "inter-generational community of learners" to engage in culturally important practices (Bovin & Morohashi, 2002). As discussed above, at the mid-point in my action research, I opted to pursue grant writing that would allow me to later facilitate and take part in just that kind of project in my school-community: an intergenerational community of learners led by a kupuna and engaged in the culturally important practice of malama i ka 'aina (sustainability) of one of our reefs. How about that? I actually learned something useful in graduate school!

Emergent themes in Sam's data – theme two: expectations. Oh, boy! Mom always says if you expect nothing you won't be disappointed. Naturally, she is right. Being part idealist and part realist I suppose I am not surprised that I decidedly expected too much of: (a) myself; (b) my students (c); their families, as well as; (d) my PD participants. I remain undaunted, however. In Reflection 5 I obviously wanted to do a better job contacting my students' families. This is still the case, but hope springs eternal that I will steadily improve in this regard – especially after this pesky dissertation is done. In the same reflection it appears I expected more response from my students and their families to my start of school welcome letter, just as I expected better attendance to my Greenhouse Day intervention. In hindsight, since filling in forms and messing about with plants can reasonably seem like work to a lot of people, this expectation was definitely naive. I show evidence of having learned that lesson immediately after the event when I write in Reflection 11: "... honestly, my 1st event was not as much fun as it was a Sat. of work. I bet family members feel the same way!"

In Reflection 10, aware of myself as being considered new to town in my second year at the school – in a community where "I've heard locals don't accept you as local until you've lived here 8 years!" (Reflections 8) – I pontificate much on the theme of expectations:

... it may be too much to expect to get folks together with a new teacher for school activities like this [greenhouse gathering]. I think they may not want to invest their time in someone who may leave, who may not understand local culture, who may have too many expectations of them, or even who may not accept the role of teacher they think is appropriate...

This comment ties neatly to other themes above and below, as well as those anticipated in the literature review (Leitch & Tangri, 1988; Mendoza & Cegelka, cited by Chrispeels, 1987; Swap, 1993, in Christenson, 2002).

The comment below (Reflection 23), written after the school year ended, may be taken as a road sign to where this study leads us.

... is it realistic to expect all families to be more involved in their children's education? ... is it realistic to expect teachers to make the time to take lots of actions to make collaboration possible?

Lastly, it is really the absence of deeper reflection on the work of my co-researchers that speaks to my excess of my expectations of them. The PD participant teachers inspired me twice to write that communicating with them was "very useful" (Reflection 18) and "very valuable" (Reflection 16), yet no hard evidence do I provide to back up these statements. This is because I expected them to do their coursework a little late sometimes, but not always, and not so very late. I also expected us to naturally form a cadre of researchers who communicated often via conference call, email and in person at our school sites. In fact, none of the three conference calls originally planned in the syllabus occurred, which I assumed to be my own fault until 'Roz' shared her thoughts with me in Reflection 19 (see her case study below). Her data confirmed for me that the expectation all participants could and would work at the same pace and be able to join and benefit from conference calls may have been unrealistic. Indeed, I even expected too much of my technology to achieve these calls, living as I do in a 'dead zone' of cell phone service and being unable to conduct inter-island calls at work because of the long distance charges. (I know the reader is shaking his/her head – I agree!)

I also expected every teacher to embrace the research opportunities this project sought and to write copiously and deeply when they evaluated their efforts. I can now only marvel that I thought all this might happen, given that we all were teaching full time, and my style of instruction is very attuned to learners' emotional needs. While my syllabus outlines challenging expectations with clear due dates, my emails to the PD teachers regarding their assignments often included comments to: do the work "when you can"; "let me know if you want a conference call" or to just "talk story"; and "hang in there." What a tough cookie! Yet, what a tough year it was for all six of us. In my and

their defense, I must confirm that the most important expectation I had was not only met, but exceeded: we all diligently and creatively worked to increase family collaboration.

A common thread which appeared early, and stayed perniciously throughout the gathering of my written data, is the issue of time and the expectations all those involved in this study seem answerable to, somehow from on high. Quotations taken from my reflections below show what an issue this is:

> I just haven't found the time in my work day to make enough calls (Reflection 12) ... sometimes I resent the idea that I have to work in the evenings (Reflection 24)

> Yes, I slowed down at various times this year because I already felt I was working overtime, and simply was too tired and did not have enough time to do more. (Reflection 13 Alternate)

In a member-check with my 'personal parent of the year' I learned she "feels some family members might not be comfortable about attending a high school level event where they could be expected to learn or know certain things." Also, she feels that "families are very busy or could be working at the hotels on Saturdays." (Reflection 22). Offering more on this issue I wrote (Reflection 14):

> To me the main theme is issues with time. I don't have much contact with parents, but those who I do speak with all work, and volunteering to do more at school with their children, in or out of class time, seems to be a lot to ask.

This sense of obligation to do more, and having no time to do so, is just as strong in the other case studies below, just as teachers' concerns over the limited time parents have is also often expressed. Modern living! It makes one wonder why so many of us buy into it!

> ***Emergent themes in Sam's data – theme three: alienation.*** Luckily for the reader this theme appears less in my own data than in that of the other case studies. (It is perfectly alright if the reader chooses now to take a few moments to stretch, by the way). As is already mentioned above, I felt alienated by being a new teacher in town. I also felt a twinge of alienation in writing these two comments (Reflection 12):

> ... about the collaboration I am trying to achieve. I think lots of family members, esp. in my target class, still don't even know I am trying this! Family members are very much a missing voice in my research ...

> I think having no children myself leaves me out of the loop in ways I cannot avoid when I am talking to my students' parents. All parents share a world of understanding

with each other – like a private club – and being childless means I can never share that.

The latter comment was made when I observed 'Abby' succeeded in relationship building with parents in ways I did not. Spending 40 or more hours a week with other people's children, I can assure the reader, did not cause me to lament my child-free home life! But I digress, when there are two more interesting comments in my own data I must share, as they say more about how I may alienate others, than how I myself may feel alienated in my work.

In Reflection 5 I state "I find some special ed. students' families are more likely to ignore tel. & email messages at the high school level" and in Reflection 8 I wrote "I think the main problem is changing the habit of non-involvement that I believe was the norm before I came here." Does the reader detect bias, criticism, and even arrogance, in these passages as I do now? I shudder to think what behaviors I exhibit that might match thoughts like these, and how alienating this could be to those I purport to help. Again, I fail to live up to my own expectations sometimes.

Emergent themes in Sam's data – theme four: diversity and power. While these are clearly two distinct themes rolled into one, I insist on addressing them in tandem as I believe that *diversity is power,* or at least is can and should be, and to separate them here is to allow them to be separated always. This, as the reader shall see in Chapter 5, is not simpatico with this project and my findings. Hence, I will offer here those data in my case study which give color to the themes of diversity, and power, separately and together. This way the reader can enjoy some extra cognitive 'heavy lifting' for a several moments. Think of it as a stimulant!

On the topic of cultural diversity I wrote and spoke many times during this study. The PD participants at Site B and I discussed the differences in thinking and behavior between ourselves, our students and their families. We are white, educated women entrusted with some authority to serve a population that is mostly non-white, less educated than us, and, most concurred, more likely to respect men as the authority. Yet the PD group shared the perception that in the majority cultures here in the Site B community (predominantly former plantation worker families) respect for – or at least outward acceptance of – a culturally different authority is the norm. As well, an 'old world' attitude of unquestioning respect for teachers we believed to be not uncommon here either. Yet it is clear from all our data that each of us wants to share the authority and power with students' families in the education of their children. Whether or not we actually behaved in ways to achieve this, and if this was perceived by students and families to be the case, is not evident in the data. My own thoughts on this were as follows:

If time and culture are the main challenges to more collaboration, then my entire

hypothesis is not respectful of families time or culture. I think I am rushing things, and may make some families uncomfortable, by "aggressively" inviting them to participate more. (Reflection 14)

By describing how "I regularly negotiate with students about assignment criteria, due dates, and when I can, even content" (Reflection 7) I wrote:

> ... [this] reflects my "shared leadership - shared responsibilities - shared benefits" beliefs about education and life. This is sometimes a much harder path to take, but to me it is more "21st century" than being the authority.

I reiterated this sentiment in regards to families as well: "I believe the easiest ways [to collaborate] will be the best ways, and that teachers, families and students (esp. middle & high school) need to share the responsibilities equally" (Reflection 6). I even envisioned where the sharing of authority and responsibility might lead to in Reflection 17 when I hoped "families may eventually see themselves as members of the 'action research team' ... collaborating on community ... projects like the ones in the grant I am writing." Talk about sharing the workload – why not make everyone do my research and grant projects! Yet it is not *my* work I want others to do – humor aside for a moment, I do believe diverse partnerships are the path to success in regards to most of the world's problems, including the narrow one addressed in this dissertation.

Reflections 4 and 25 allowed me and the other PD teachers directly to consider who has power in our school-communities. I have noted above that our principal at Site B has much. Early in the year I wrote "He runs a tight ship, but may not easily see that bending rules a little or evolving a more modern approach of shared leadership might be effective." I restated this at the end of the school year, then added a new insight regarding a form of passive power families exert:

> ... the principal and the company in town have the power, and this has not changed. But I also now see there is just as much power in not doing, as there is in doing. I see that families who keep away from interactions with school more have a certain power as well – they are clearly saying we choose not to get more involved. This is quite different from them not knowing how, or not feeling secure about it, or not being invited. This is not all families exerting this power to decline involvement, but it's true for some.

Ultimately, my data show that the very socialist thinking I warned the reader I am born and bred to arises in my vision of who should have the power in public schools. I wrote:

> ... perhaps more shared power will evolve, where those who want to influence what

goes on in our town become able to, because they were involved in school-community activities all along. In this way, I see I have power as a facilitator.

and:

I still firmly believe collaboration is a valuable and under-utilized tool for teachers, but it could be done so much better as a school wide/community wide effort.

Unexpressed, but I can assure the reader, inherent in these comments is the expectation that all stakeholders who join together to serve the school and community will fairly represent the diversity of all in terms of gender, culture and age, and that each will have equal power. Yes, an idealist to the core is poor 'Sam' – and if this just makes one's teeth hurt, then the reader will not require another sweet before delving into my participants' case studies below. Start your engine – we are heading to the bright lights and big city!

City Slickers – two teacher-researchers at Site A: a Honolulu district high school. The participants identified here as 'Kit' and 'Mae' worked at the same high school in a suburban setting in the Honolulu District on Oʻahu. The student population is: 21% white; 21% Japanese; 17% Hawaiian or part-Hawaiian; 8% Chinese; 7% Korean; another 7% represent seven various minorities; and 17% qualify as "other" ethnicities, including those who can claim mixed race status (Accountability Resource Center Hawaiʻi, 2011). Kit learned about the PD course and this study from her long time friend, the principal investigator – *moi*, and then told Mae about the course after the start date of August, 2010. Mae and Kit had previously established a working relationship that included discussing strategies to help their students, especially those whom both teachers taught. Their individual case studies are given below.

'Kit' – do you think they're hiring at Walmart? Kit is a special education teacher of a core content area where students are taught in a resource setting. She has a bachelor's degree plus 15 credits above that. She teaches special education and is considered highly qualified to teach her subject according to the state licensing board and federal No Child Left Behind guidelines. She has 10 years teaching experience. She is the mother of one son who was in his graduating year of high school during her project participation. She is white and was 53 years old at the start of this study, but her students all swear she looks and acts much younger. Kit is a close personal friend of the principal investigator and has been since 1996 when we met while teaching in the same department at a large, rural high school on Oʻahu.

This participant's most noteworthy trait is her sense of humor. In fact, for years I have called her "a walking party" having witnessed this humor in action at, and outside of, the work place. Some proof includes the syllabi (submitted for Assignment #3.a) Kit sends home with students for guardian review at the start of the school year which states students "will not be thrown into the lion's den and expected to climb out on their own"

to achieve all the work that awaits them. Kit uses her humor intentionally, writing in Reflection #6:

> I use humor to get the kids involved in what we are doing in class. I also have to "sell" the skills ... and do so by infusing the lessons with humor. Humor gets us though all kinds of situations, including being good for our health!

When checking with the principal investigator on coursework requirements throughout this study, Kit often used the appellation "Attila" to address me in her emails. When describing her class environment, she wrote about a poster of Elvis Presley on the wall of a quiet study area which at times she directs misbehaving students to, to "Go talk to the King." Near the end of the 2010-11 school year, which was particularly trying for her, Kit contemplated leaving the teaching profession and queried in one PD Reflection "Do you think they're hiring at Wal-Mart?" (Reflection 24). I suppose not, as she remains in the same teaching position this school year.

Kit's pre- and post-survey data. Kit completed her pre-survey on August 20, 2010 and the post-survey on May 24, 2011. In Part B of the survey (see Appendix A) Kit wrote that she contacts 75% or more of her students' families at least once per year (Item #1), which was more than any other participant. She sends letters home, telephones them or contacts them by Internet or text messaging every week or every quarter term, as needed. These data were the same in both the pre- and post-surveys she completed. However, Item #2.d Kit answered differently, writing she "almost never" contacted student's family members face-to-face in the pre-survey, then writing in her post-survey her face-to-face contact "varies" due to IEP meeting contact.

In Item #3.a Kit's data show she contacted parents/legal guardians less by the end of the school year (every quarter term) than at the beginning (every month or week). In Item #3.c a change is noted in her reporting contact every quarter with extended family (aunts, uncles, grandparents) in the post-survey, rather than "n/a" in the pre-survey. This may indicate an improvement due to her collaboration efforts. Item #4.a shows a positive increase in the amount of contacts Kit believes she makes to alert families to commendable student behavior. Otherwise, Kit's pre- and post-surveys show her families are contacted at least every quarter regarding concerns such as poor behavior, grades or well-being. She is a model of diligence, is she not?

Regarding who benefits as a result of her contacts with family, Item #5.a shows Kit's perception of the effect on the student improved from "helpful half the time" to "usually helpful". However, 5.c-e show Kit perceived less benefit to the teacher, classmates and school as a result of her contacts home. In her pre-survey she wrote: "Facebook is great for communication with students." It must have proven too good, though, for she stopped using this social network for some time during the school year, as problems arose, including the need for more privacy and getting "TMI" – too much

information about her students. In her post-survey Kit reported her home contacts were "not helpful at all" for students' classmates nor for the school, a decided change from her "usually helpful" perception at the start of the school year.

In Item #6 Kit's belief that true collaboration was resulting from letters and telephone calls home, and face-to-face contact, improved (#6.a, #6.b and #6.d), or in the case of Internet or text messaging (#6.c) it stayed strong. She added in the post-survey that she set up email accounts for both parents and students to use. Hallelujah! On this note Kit also wrote in Items #7 and #8 that parents access to the Internet and Edline can really increase collaboration (she reiterated this several times verbally and in written reflections), while parents not having or wanting to use a computer can thwart it. Kit shared additional ideas in her responses to these items.

She identified telephone calls and "directly interacting with parents ... to let them know when their child does something <u>great</u> as ways to increase collaboration." It is noteworthy here that Kit admitted to making 26 calls to families in the first two weeks of school in August 2010. Even by trying to limit such calls with the salutation "Do you have five minutes," this effort represents more than two hours of working the phone lines to initiate collaboration.

Kit also noted several ways in which perceptions of students and family members present challenges to collaboration, including: parent distrust of teachers since they usually hear about misbehavior; students not wanting their teachers and parents to collaborate; and parents either thinking they "are more knowledgeable than the teacher or the opposite, feeling they are under-educated and therefore intimidated. As half of this is evident in the experts' literature reviewed in Chapter 2 (i.e. Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003; Liontos, 1992, in Christenson, 2002, and others), one must consider Kit's perceptions rather acute.

In Item #9.a-e Kit again confirmed that she wants to collaborate frequently with students' families, and this at a higher rate than most participants. Kit will get a gold star for this. However, her responses to the problematic and likely invalid Item #10 (noted above) – next to which she wrote "I don't understand this" – indicate she may not believe increasing collaboration can cause positive changes for any stakeholders. However, this item remains a strong candidate for omission from this study (see Analysis below).

Kit's written data. Kit completed most of the written components of her PD coursework, doing it in spurts in August, September and November of 2010 and May and July of 2011 (this last date was as a result of a request from the PD3E evaluators of the course who asked for additional work, after the course end date, before granting 3 credits to all participants). Kit's written assignments were done to varying degrees of completeness, at worst showing little thought and expressing frustration about the time-consuming task of writing about her efforts, yet other times showing deep reflection on

her practice and progress as a teacher and researcher. Nevertheless, at all times Kit used humor to express her thoughts, be they negative or positive, to entertain and doubtlessly to help her survive the challenges of her job and the tasks at hand. Go, Kit!

For Assignment #2, done early in the school year, Kit wrote positively about her school's website which offers daily announcements and a calendar for student and family use, as well as about Edline, an online system which gives daily access to student grades and assignments. However, she again noted families with no computer at home cannot use this valuable tool to monitor student progress. Kit also wrote in September that she knew nothing about her school's PCNC Facilitator or School Community Council (SCC). One wonders if she gets out of her classroom much.

For Assignment #3 Kit submitted every syllabus she gives out for each of the four courses she teaches, as well as descriptions of the kinds of contacts she makes with families, and a letter of gratitude from a parent whose child she helped greatly by working on his social skills and helping him make friends, something he lacked due to his disabilities. Kit stated she included the letter because it "shows what a difference this kind of effort makes to the student, beyond academic achievement, and to the family too." Praise for Kit's efforts in this letter were high indeed. I do not think she wrote it herself as she enjoys far better ways of duping me in our friendship!

Assignment #3.c was the pre-survey Kit gave to students and family members who attended her first intervention, a weekend event to see a university performance of a play related to class learning (bonus points were given to students attending). Kit's survey questions (Assignment #3.c) were:

1) What is the best part of going to the play?
2) What is the worst part of attending this play?
3) Would you want to attend another event such as this?
4) Are you happy to spend time with your child/parent in this type of setting?
5) What would you suggest we do next time, besides attending a play?

Inherent in these questions is her interest in getting student and family feedback about increasing family involvement, which clearly would pave the way for her to achieve actual collaboration with them.

The *'Ohana Gathering* Kit did for Assignment #4 was to join students and family members attending this Sunday play, after which she wrote it "went really well," adding the students told her it made them feel "grown up" and that one couple brought the students' siblings, as well. This family appreciated the "family gathering" opportunity and hoped she would do it again. Kit followed up this event by having students present a summary of the play in class, and upon being asked, even one parent submitted a written summary. Parent homework? Now that's getting involved! Kudos to parent and Kit!

Kit noticed, but was undaunted, that "some parents used this as a free babysitting event (they dropped the kid(s) off and picked them up later)"; this recalls a suspicion 'Abby' and I developed in regards to one intervention. Kit tried to repeat this activity later in the year, but no one attended. The reasons for lack of student and parent participation in March, she assumed, were due to the second play either being too similar to the first, or because the activity was schedule in the evening on a school night. Later, after giving students and families post-surveys (Assignment #5.b), she added: "The surveys demonstrated that while the student and parents were willing and wanting to do more outside the classroom, there just isn't enough time, money or energy ... It worked much better at the beginning of the year than at the end of the year." This fits with the theme of expectations below, and 'Sam's' findings above.

Kit also wrote about two other interventions (Assignment #4), one for which she wrote two hypotheses (Reflection #9). One idea was to meet students and parents at a popular book store to give her and them "a chance to develop relationships that invite future collaboration," something that had succeeded for Kit in the past, but she was not able to offer it this school year. The other was also an idea that was successful previously: to give students bonus points for attending school football games. Of this effort she wrote:

> ... one student started the year completely disengaged with not only my class but with school in general. She attended a football game for the extra credit I offered and discovered how much fun high school can be! She came with her mother and the mom and I sat together the entire game while her daughter flitted this was and that making new friends and enjoying a school activity. Her mother and I began a very satisfying relationship wherein we both felt extremely comfortable talking to each other about her daughter, assignments for my class as well as other classes. The daughter became very involved in school, not only did her grades improve across the board but she was voted onto the Homecoming Court this year!

Kit rocks!

Kit's last assignment was a presentation of her findings to two Educational Assistants (EAs) in her department, an audience she selected "because they work very closely with the special needs students and ... they would benefit from seeing the results and [being] able to ... incorporate this idea [of collaboration] into their every day practices." She culminates this assignment with the passage below (she either was truly convinced in the value of increased collaboration, or was angling for a higher grade from 'Attila' (me):

> I believe we are really on to something here that could change not only the climate in the classroom but also the entire school and perhaps the community at

large, who seem to think we teachers don't really DO anything. If we could develop a program to make 'ohana collaboration a school wide practice, I think we would see general improvement in student grades and behavior and we would see parents more willing to participate in their children's' education. It would help the student see the collaboration between parent and teacher, which would make them realize that they cannot pull any fast ones… "Mom and dad and my teacher are FRIENDS!!!!!" How un-cool for them and how great for us!!!! I think this is something that could be an agent for positive change within the school settings across the state… perhaps the entire union?????

Kit's data by telephone and observation. Kit met with me, for a four hour workshop on August 20, 2010 along with two other women who dropped the course almost immediately thereafter. Maybe it was Kit's fault. Regardless, Kit's comments that day are mirrored in her written Reflections #1 and #2 which she shared and elaborated on with the group. Her interest in the course she said was to broaden her skills with families and to earn more credits to increase her salary. Of the literature we reviewed she reacted strongly to the Standards for Parents (Hawai'i State Department of Education, 2005), which she mentioned often in subsequent reflections and telephone conversations. She had never seen or heard of them, found it "surprising that the DOE actually made these" and wanted to use them in IEP meetings "when the parent is attacking teachers" so that parents, not just teachers, can be held accountable." Her workshop input and written Reflection #2 both add to this topic: "I would like to know more about how to effectively use [these] standards to help parents help their children."

Telephone conversations with Kit were numerous due to the close relationship between her and myself. However, it may be surprising that as often as we spoke, we did not talk about the action research and PD course every week, or even every few weeks. Comments Kit made by telephone to me are mentioned where applicable in this case study. I observed Kit at one other workshop in October, which "Mae" also attended, and she did not make any other comments then that are not covered in this section. I did not observe Kit in her classroom at all during this study, nor did she submit a video of her and her students and/or their families engaging in anything related to the collaboration goals of her PD coursework, as was required. Bad girl!

Emergent themes in Kit's data – theme one: relationship building. Developing strong relationships with students and parents is a notion found often in Kit's data. In Reflection #3 Kit describes her class environment thusly: "In this atmosphere of mutual trust and respect we are able to complete our studies but have fun as we do it!"

Regarding the work she does to build relationships with parents, Kit wrote in Assignment 3.b:

I believe the effort I put out at the beginning of the year to contact each parent pays off in the end because they have a relationship with me and not just a phone call whenever their child does something wrong or bad at school. It is easier to communicate when you have established a relationship with the parents of your students.

In Assignment 3.a Kit expounds further: "I believe that if the parent and teacher are united as a team, then ... little Jonny realizes he is facing a formidable team! He either must join that team (yay!) or continue to battle (boo)." In May she also touched on this in Assignment #6.a, writing: "... parents responded positively to being contacted about their children's progress or lack of progress and how great they thought it was to meet."

Kit had a propensity for doing the same assignment more than once, and in her bonus version of Reflection #7 she wrote something that indicates both a rather high expectation of herself, and her desire to have long-lasting relationships with students:

The teaching practice which reflects my beliefs on education is being there for my students after they graduate. I feel learning is a life long activity and will support my students long after they have left my classroom. As long as they need me I will be there to help them. This also demonstrates my belief that teachers are teachers in and out of the classroom.

This echoes the thoughts in my case study which are supported by Talbert and Rodgers (2011) and integrated in the Solutions recommended in Chapter 5.

Emergent themes in Kit's data – theme two: expectations. Kit's written data relate the many frustrations she experiences with parents, due to her expectations. In Reflection #2 Kit wrote: "It is always the teachers having to address the standards in their classrooms which always feels like a set up. Parents use this against us all the time in SPED." In Reflection #8 Kit wrote:

Parents do not check to make sure homework or studying for tests are actually done by the students. I post test dates, study techniques and due dates on EDLINE. Parents do not follow through. Then it becomes my fault they are failing.

She adds:

[Parents] tell me they ask and are told 'I did it in class' or 'I finished already'. I tell parents to ask to see it or to describe the work they did in detail. If they cannot then I recommend they contact the teacher for follow up. Usually they don't. I have had the uncle of a student ask me to teach him to read!!!!

Despite her exasperation with students and parents, she also wrote in Reflection #11: "I think a lot of parents don't even read what is sent to them as they cannot read well themselves." In conversation about special education students, Kit has shared with me the sentiment "the apple doesn't fall far from the tree". Indeed, it appears to be common wisdom that many students with learning disabilities have inherited them from their parents. Such sentiments she does not deliver as criticism, but rather as further reasons for her frustrations. She is not without sympathy for parents either.

For Assignment #5.b Kit wrote: "[Given] recent economical woes, the parents simply did not have the time and money to continue the arrangements of attending plays outside of school hours. Everyone is overworked and now, underpaid!" As with my own case study data, Kit also made numerous references in telephone calls and her written data to the limited time teachers and parents alike have to work towards collaboration or even basic communication regarding their children's education.

Emergent themes in Kit's data – theme three: alienation. Kit experienced increasing alienation in her work during the 2010-11 school year, beginning with minor incidences and ending with a flourish of major ones. In August she said in our first workshop that her school only cares about their International Baccalaureate students and is therefore "exclusionary" to the special education students she teaches. In November she wrote in Reflection #3: "Before the powers that be came and painted my room an institutional greenish… my room was pretty ... [which] produces a much more casual and relaxed atmosphere."

Then Kit's negative experience with parents is alluded to in comments above regarding "attacks" by them, and in her Assignment #3.a statement:

> If I have the goodwill of the parent then I can get them to back me and not
> precious Jonny (who is a terror in disguise) then I will be able to teach the student
> much more than if the parent were hostile towards me because little Jonny has
> been telling tales!!

This theme of hostility between parents occurs frequently in Kit's writing and verbal comments, as it does in other participants' data, in particular 'Roz's'.

Kit observed alienation towards others in her district, as well. She wrote about her school's special education population in Reflection #5, stating freshmen and parents are often "shell shocked" when transferring from a particular feeder school that offers inadequate support compared to her high school. She wrote that her department has found these parents arrive "contentious and ready to take all the sped teachers on and even to court. They are big with threats." Then in Assignment #6.a Kit's writing shows she feels strongly about the way Educational Assistants are treated:

EAs, at my school, are traditionally excluded. For example, our department meetings are for teachers only, no EAs are invited. I think that is WRONG! They should be at the meetings and they should be counted as the professional they are and given credit for the jobs they do.

It should be pointed out that Kit has an exceptional relationship with her EA, who is actually a fully licensed special education teacher who prefers not to teach special education due to the excessive workload and stress.

The height of the alienation Kit experienced during our action research is shown in her Reflection #4 where she wrote: "A Napoleonic micro manager runs administration. There is a distinct class system of 'have' and 'have not' teachers … and I am in the 'have not' group." Serendipitously, several months after Phase II of this study ended, I happened to meet a former DOE teacher who told me that she left the profession entirely because of Kit's principal, something I feel is worth mentioning here to lend credence to Kit's perceptions. Kit further bemoans this principal's actions, stating:

Our Napoleon has taken our school from 'good to great' by introducing AVID, IB and MYP ... None of these programs benefits the special education student ... or even the every day Joe Schmo student... I really hate what has happened to my school. I wish it were good again. Great sucks.

Also noteworthy here, is that Kit's principal is male, and her female department head behaves, Kits has asserted, "as if she is admin." not a colleague and an equal. In speaking with me, Kit shared her suspicion that her principal's and department head's common Japanese heritage may have caused this and resulted in a perceived imbalance of power being in their favor, as those of Japanese heritage who are disproportionally represented in DOE administration statewide (Hawai'i DOE, 2012) may still be overly influenced by the male dominated culture that marks Japanese culture past, and present. Should the reader suspect Kit is somehow prejudiced, or ill informed about this possibility, I can only offer that she was married to a local man of Japanese ancestry for 25 years, and adores their mixed race son.

Emergent themes in Kit's data – theme four: diversity and power. While Kit is aware of the need to be culturally responsive, it does not appear that diversity – cultural, economic or any other kind – figures prominently in her assessment of who has power in her work world. Regarding the roles of teachers, students and family members, Kit wrote in Reflection #6: "So my belief is that it really does take all of us working together to make a positive effect on our students." This echoes the beliefs in my own case study above and that of many researchers discussed in Chapter 2.

Reflection #5 allowed Kit to write about the diversity of her school. She observed her students and their families are either quite affluent, suburban and white collar, or

come from a more agricultural, native Hawaiian and blue collar area, yet she believes they "mix well together." Kit further asserts: "Being culturally sensitive is of the utmost importance. One has to be aware of and understand the different complexities of the host of cultures each student represents."

Kit's last assignments were the year end self-evaluations (she did two, one in May and one in July 2011). These are her final words looking back over the PD course and school year:

> The people who have power and control at my school have banded together and create a hostile working environment for the rest of us to labor under. This has not improved but gotten much worse. My initial perceptions have been proven correct. I have fought the good fight for so long and am very, very tired. I feel powerless.

> This year has been my hardest year and not because of this [PD] class. I am burned out on sped and don't think I can teach any longer. Even though this class made me realize how much I accomplish by communicating with the parents it cannot take away the brunt of work that overwhelms me daily. And the worst part is not the kids, not the parents but the administration, my department members, my *colleagues* and all the political games that are played out for power control and image. I am truly here for the kids but my job is made into a minefield by those previously mentioned. I get no support, respect or recognition, even though I do my very best each and every day.

This is a sobering sayonara, and I believe attests not only to the unreasonable workload placed on Hawaiʻi's special education teachers mentioned in Chapter 2, but also comments strongly on the imbalance of power to which many public school teachers have become inured. Kit's perceived lack of power must effect her change efforts, undermining them because such powerlessness demoralizes her as much as the demands for unrewarded work do. This reality is an important one, supported by the research of Tollefson (2008), and is fully addressed in Chapter 5.

Is the reader near to tears yet? Take heart! Kit did not leave the profession – at least not yet, and her colleague is next up to bat. Save the tissues for a third case study and your weary eyes, oh steadfast one!

'Mae' – I'm taking next year off! Mae is a general education and honors/ International Baccalaureate teacher who taught four elective courses during this study. Some of her students were in special education in an inclusion setting at Site A. She has a Bachelor's degree and is a new teacher with two years experience. She is white and was 23 years old at the start of this study, but her students swear she also looks much

younger. She did not know the principal investigator before taking part in this project. She is probably sorry now that she does.

This participant's most noteworthy traits are her strong work ethic and low "BMW" approach to it: she does not "bitch, moan and whine." Despite being the mother of a toddler and commuting the furthest distance possible across the island of Oʻahu every day to work, Mae pursued both the challenges of her job, teaching two subjects for the first time, and the goals of this project, with unflagging effort. In fact, she long kept it a secret that for the entire second semester she was pregnant with her second child and experienced significant morning sickness and other symptoms which eventually forced her to take a short leave from work. No worries – the baby is fine and, she asserts, "super cute." Not unlike Kit and Sam, Mae also preferred to stay positive and look for humor in life where she could find it. Mae deserves the 'working mom' award in this study, for sure.

Mae's pre- and post-survey data. Mae's surveys start with apparently negative data because in Item #1 there seems to be a decrease in the percentage of families she contacted at least once per year, down from 25-50% to 10-25%. Also, in Item #2.a-d there is no change shown in her pre- and post-surveys regarding how and how often she contacted students' family members. Likewise, Item #3.a-d shows no change or a decrease in the specific family members she contacted. How then can she claim to have increased her contacts with families when their children did something commendable (in Item #4.a) from every quarter to every month? In fact, in Item #4.b-d she wrote she contacted families every week, and in Item #4.e she also claimed to contact them every quarter. The answer to this apparent discrepancy is found in Mae's Assignment data, where she reveals that her copious use of YouTube to share her students' work via the Internet allowed and inspired her students' families to see their work frequently, the quality of which improved because of this publicity, over the course of the year. Clever Mae!

I will return to this success soon, but meanwhile other successes are evident in Mae's surveys. In Item #5.a-e Mae reported every stakeholder identified (the student, families, the teacher, classmates and the school) benefitted because of her communication with families. Indeed, her measure of how much they benefitted increased exponentially as she went down the list, culminating in a change from a pre-survey "not helpful at all" for the school to a post-survey "almost always" helpful to the school. That is success!

In Item #6.a-d there is greater variation in Mae's perceptions from the start to the end of the action research period. She felt her communications resulted in true collaboration 'more often than not', up from 'sometimes', when she used the Internet or text messages to make contact. However, telephone calls and face-to-face meetings seemed to decrease in their collaborative value by the end of the school year, while there was no change in the collaboration she perceived from letters sent home. These she

deemed 'sometimes' had the desired effect, like telephone calls, whereas Internet and in person meetings resulted in collaboration 'more often than not'.

Mae clarifies her beliefs in answering Item #7. In October, when she officially joined the PD class, she initially felt meeting parents and getting them involved in the class would increase collaboration, and in her post-survey she wrote:

> I think that email communication is successful for quick communication because it can be documented for future use. Sometimes parents will claim one thing or another, and email is verification of that. It also helps me, as a teacher, keep track of when and how often I'm contacting parents, so it can be a real eye-opener. As far as collaboration on a larger scale, I think face-to-face communication is best because it helps the teachers and parents make a real connection with regards to their children. I liked when I got to actually meet parents because it helped me see ... the student and his/her family values, and made it less "awkward" when I would have to send something home because I knew what the person on the other end looked like.

For Item #8 in the pre-survey Mae confirmed what Kit and Sam found, that finding time to meet was a major challenge to collaborating with families. In her post-survey she elaborated:

> The biggest challenge I encounter is parents taking time out of their evenings to come to events. Many of the parents in [this community] work long hours at high-stress jobs, and they are very successful in what they do. However, they aren't going to want to spend their evenings going to school events if they don't feel that it's necessary. Many of the parents I communicated with frequently were either troublemakers' parents or parents who were somewhat overbearing. The middle-ground parents have to have a good reason to attend, so I have to do better at creating that "good reason."

These comments speak to several of the main themes, and the reader is asked to place them in short-term memory for imminent access. In Item #9.a-e Mae's perceptions did not change much over the school year: she desired to contact families once a week to report on students' achievements (up from once per month), and preferred to invite families to a school activity less (once per quarter instead of once per week – much more realistic, Mae!). Otherwise she maintained the belief that weekly contact was appropriate regarding students' poor behavior, poor grades or concern for their well-being. This is a very high rate of communication sought compared to most of the other action researchers, although Kit's perceptions were similar. Perhaps I should not have let those two work together – they just make the rest of us look bad!

Moving at last to the difficult Item #10, Mae did not complain (did I not say this was her best trait?) about this question on the surveys, and so perhaps for her this item is not invalid. However, her responses show little change in her thinking, except where (in the post-survey) she felt collaboration with a given students' family would not have much influence on his or her classmates or the school. Otherwise, Mae's outlook remained positive about the overall effects of collaboration on all stakeholders. She could just be shining me on, but I do not take her to be a dissembler, and at least it does not appear that I turned this fresh new teacher into dead wood! Chalk one point up for both of us, I say.

Mae's written data. Mae's comments for Assignment #2 echo Kit's enough to make me wonder who copied the others' work. Suffice it to say Mae also found Edline to be a valuable tool for students, parents and herself, and that she sensed it was being used more to monitor student grades than the previous year. In Assignment #3.A and B Mae reiterates her frequent use of the Internet to communicate with families and she wrote:

> As for emails, I keep a folder with all of my parent emails so that I can go back and see if progress is occurring. I think it helps to contact students individually because it helps the parents see that I care about their child individually because I took the time to email them about a problem.

Although this statement indicates Mae makes contacts about negative situations, it is also clear she communicates with families early in the year and establishes positive connections as soon as she can. Her Reflections confirm this several times. This is the same strategy Kit uses and believes is successful. Assignment #3.C Mae swears she did by using student and parent surveys as documentation for a state grant-funded learning program "so these can help me evaluate my progress" and provide evidence that she met the grant criteria of "collaboration with parents and community" (Reflection 1). However, she ignored my requests to show me the survey. For the follow-up post-survey of students and families (Assignment #5.A) Mae decided to give me a few tantalizing hints, writing:

> I had students and parents complete a survey for the [target] class. It asked things like "did you feel involved in your child's education?" (parent survey) and "do you feel you've grown because of this program?" (student survey). Those were all completed in April.

Clearly, she was toying with me, although her evaluation of the survey results for Assignment #5.A further hints at what was asked on the surveys:

> The survey results were very positive. At the beginning of the year, the students felt that they learned, and many of the parents felt that way too. They felt involved with having the YouTube channel and with the Awards Night coming up (they were taken before the actual event). A few parents said that they still

wanted to be more involved in the program. However, I felt confident about the students' and parents' happiness with the course because most of them said they would encourage their children to take it again and that they felt like their kids learned something valuable, which is good.

Lucky Mae, like Kit, was required by DOE evaluators to do an extra summary of her professional development as a result of this project, in order to obtain three credits towards reclassification. In her July summary she expounded further on her surveys: "At the end of the year, nearly all of the students said that they learned valuable information and that they enjoyed the class." She repeats that all but one parent found her class valuable and they would encourage their child to take it again.

Mae's *'Ohana Gathering* (Assignment #4.A) was a traditional style evening meeting for parents of students in her target class, which was not successful. She wrote:

> I thought it would help the program and encourage the students to get their projects in on time, but it didn't do all that much, I think because not many parents showed up. Th[is school's] parents are very fast-paced, busy people, so I think email still works the best for them.

Once more, Mae's observations are in line with Kit's, and as the literature described in Chapter 2 suggests (Leitch & Tangri, 1988; Mendoza & Cegelka, cited by Chrispeels, 1987; Swap, 1993, in Christenson, 2002), her use of the traditional mode of parent-teacher interaction did not lead to as much collaboration as she hoped. Despite this, at the end of the school year Mae wrote: "I would also have more 'parent nights,' and maybe try to get more parents in to speak about [the course subject], since some of them do that for a career." Mae's other two interventions were successful, however – the first very much so.

For Assignment #4.C Mae's use of YouTube to share student video work was pure genius. In May she reported getting almost 1,100 views on the channel she set up and used over the course of the school year, receiving "tons of responses" from parents who "loved the channel" and liked "that they can see what the students are working on." She further found this strategy "decreases 'fights' with grades, because the parents can actually watch what their child is making vs. another child, and they can see why they got the grades that they did." To culminate the year Mae hosted an Award's Night to showcase her target class' work which was successful (Assignment #4.D).

Mae's data by telephone and observation. Mae never completed Assignment #4.B which would have allowed me to see her in action, and for this she permanently lost status as teacher's pet. She is not entirely to blame, though. In Reflections 16 and 19 she wrote:

Honestly, I haven't received too many strategies from the instructor. That's probably because I've been unavailable to attend any of the meetings/conference calls. It's also been my fault for not doing as well as I should have been throughout this entire process.

I wish I had [interacted with other PD participants more], because I think the bouncing of ideas would have given me more motivation and helped encourage me during really difficult times in the school year. I have talked a bit with [Kit] about everything, but it's different with her because she teaches special education and there are more required parent contact situations than I have as a general education, elective teacher.

Mae refers again to interaction between her and Kit in Reflection 22:

I have discussed my findings with [Kit] numerous times, and she agrees with me and my results. She has many students in my classes who have enjoyed them and have been very proud of their work and accomplishments. She also knows that I am one teacher on campus who consistently tries to contact parents when there is a situation that needs to be addressed, or when there is praise to be given.

It was not until after the school year ended that I spoke with Mae again. Instead, our communication was via numerous emails, and vicariously I spoke occasionally to Kit about their interactions, getting some sense of what Mae is like as a teacher and a researcher. Like Mae, I would preferred much more direct and frequent contact, but sense (and hope!) the breadth and depth of her written data do much to make up for this deficit in observational qualitative data.

Emergent themes in Mae's data – theme one: relationship building. Mae's focus was definitely on her relationships with students, their relationships with each other, and her own and her students' relationships with their parents. In her preparation to join the PD course she honed in on the reading that most related to this. She wrote in Reflection 2, referring to Shriver's and Weissburg's research (2005):

I like the "Social and Emotional Learning" article. I think that it's important that we understand that emotional and social learning is just as important as academic. For example, I have a student right now who is really bright, but he struggles working with other students in the class. His dad actually called the counselor saying that my class was not challenging enough for his son and that he wanted to pull him out and put him in a more difficult class. While the actual academic content might be easy ... his son has really struggled working with his project groups. I think that my class is more of a good learning opportunity in that sense than the academic, so I advised that his dad keep him in the class.

66

By the end of the school year she wrote:

> I think, as the year progressed, I became more involved with my students and their families. Although I still feel that I could have done more to improve my relationships with them, my connection with most of my students and their lives was very strong. That's been something that I feel has helped me be a better teacher. If I had done better at making sure the parents were more involved, I think that would have helped also, but I did what I could with what I had and with the resources I was given. (Reflection 17)

Another year end Reflection (23) shows at once that her sense of not having done enough to involve parents is likely inaccurate, and that Mae consistently believes in and works towards strong teacher-family relationships:

> ... many teachers at my school make little to no contact with parents, even when it's as simple as posting grades to Edline or responding to an email. I know this because, when talking to parents, I've heard many parents complain about the lack of communication from the teachers. I know we're all busy, but something as simple as a quick email can help build a relationship between two people that can benefit the student to no end.

This comment lends credence to my prediction in Chapter 1 that the current educational climate is eroding teacher morale, and with it teacher efforts.

> ***Emergent themes in Mae's data – theme two: expectations.*** As with Sam and Kit above, the issue of the time teachers and families are expected to dedicate to communicating and collaborating to help students' is oft mentioned. Despite this Mae does not seem to find fault with this situation, or blame others for the challenge. She wrote these comments in November (Reflections 6 and 8) and May (Reflection 12):

> My belief is that a solid classroom and course is made with collaboration between teachers, students, and parents. To give a student the full educational experience, they have to understand that parents and teachers are working together to teach them. The more teachers communicate with the students' families, the more they understand that idea. (Reflection 6)

> This class, with previous teachers, was seen as a "joke" class where the students don't really have to do much. I'm trying to change that idea by collaborating with the parents more. (Reflection 8)

> I've had many parents tell me that my class is their child's' favorite class, and they feel that they have more involvement than they did with the old teacher. (Reflection 12)

Yet, we see in the following end of the year passages (Reflection 13 Alternate and Assignment #6.A, done twice!) what a toll this took on Mae:

> I know that everything in my life stalled for a good part of the school year. I discovered that I was pregnant in late November, and that flipped everything upside down. I had incredibly bad morning sickness for a while, and have just been tired since. It doesn't help that I have two classrooms on opposite sides of the school that I have to walk back and forth between. Then, I had preterm labor scares at only 23 weeks, and that made it hard to do anything at all. I want to be more involved and do more to help my collaboration, but it's been so difficult just getting to work that I don't even have the energy to do more than the bare minimum. I just need something to push me through to the end of the year.

> This year was absolutely crazy for me on so many levels, and it was difficult for me to handle it all sometimes. I have to admit, many times, the last thing on my mind was "are my parents happy with the program right now?"

Just a twinge of bad attitude is apparent here – naughty Mae! – but who can blame her? True to form, Mae still had equal sympathy for her parents and the expectations put on them:

> I tried to get some industry parents in to speak to the class, but they were too busy and I didn't want to push. I think I'll have to be better with that in the future to make sure they come in and help the students learn! (Assignment #6.A, first try).

Ultimately, Mae's experiences over the course of 2010-11 led her to reconsider the expectations she places on herself and her time commitment to her work, concluding:

> I have had to make some major changes in life-priorities. I am taking the entire year off next year because I need to focus on my family and my new baby. My students are really upset about this, but I need the time off to change priorities and de-stress my life. However, for the years I do come back to teaching, I know I'm going to be better about having more parent meetings and events where the family is invited. I am also not going to take a line as ridiculous as mine this year. It was nearly impossible to do everything that I wanted to do with the line that I was given, being pregnant, and having a two-year-old at home, which is an hour+ one-way commute for me. (Reflection 24)

A related theme that emerged in Mae's data that relates to this one, but is not as clearly defined in the other participants' data (although it appears in Abby's data) is that of motivation and pride in work. This is significant as it links to a discussion of intrinsic motivation provided in Chapter 5. For this case study, it is simply included as it speaks

further to Mae's efforts and success in striving towards the goal of teacher-family collaboration. She wrote copiously on this topic, and her comments are edited below in an effort to keep the reader from losing all life signs. In her August Summary Mae wrote:

> When I compare my own teaching practices and attitudes before doing this coursework to what I do and think now, I know I have improved because I have more of an understanding of what contact with the parents and families can do to improve student motivation and pride in work. Showcasing the students' work ... was a great idea to help the students, and I will definitely continue to do this ... Before, I would have just thought that it would be too much work to showcase work and to contact parents on a regular basis (because it did take a long time), but the investment of time paid off with my life being easier in the classroom ...the students ... were self-motivated and took real pride in their work.
>
> Because the students ... knew that anyone in the internet world could come across their videos ... they produced better videos. I know that the students were more motivated because, at the beginning of the year, many of the students ... didn't study for tests and they didn't use ... class time efficiently. After I started posting their videos to YouTube, and after I emailed all of their parents ... the students started getting better grades ... working better during class... [and becoming more accountable] for not coming to class and ... not neglect[ing] their group... I also had very little tardies and absences ... I was constantly emailing the parents of these students, praising them for their children's' motivation and work.

Emergent themes in Mae's data – theme three: alienation. I discerned very few instances of Mae sensing alienation in her work – her own or others, yet those few are noteworthy. The reader will recall in Mae's survey (Item #8) she referred to "troublemakers' parents or parents who were somewhat overbearing." In my conversations with Kit, she mentioned she and Mae both experienced and/or were aware of other teachers' adversarial incidents with students' parents or guardians. This is supported somewhat in Mae's Reflection 25, where she considers her principal's behavior at her school. She writes:

> Many teachers have little to no say as to what goes on in their classroom, and he usually takes what any parents complain about and makes it benefit him and the school. I've had students and parents with problems about the school and administration go to him, and they usually change their minds after that.

These comments back up Kit's suppositions, and imply that teachers and parents alike are alienated and coerced by the Site A principal.

Emergent themes in Mae's data – theme four: diversity and power. Mae did not suggest any problems arose in her work due to diversity, and her only comment regarding

it was in Reflection 5 when she describes her students as "pretty diverse in their cultures, disabilities, and strengths ... [and] from pretty affluent families." Power, however, was worth more ink to Mae. The next two excerpts from her data show how she explored her own power as researcher, especially after studying an additional reading (see the Appendices) I provided the PD participants with (Trochim, 2006):

> After reading the handout on inductive analysis, I guess I can say that that is the way I usually look at my classroom and produce theories as to why something is working/not working. I usually look at my classroom situation, figure out a reason as to why it is the way it is, and try to make changes to adjust the situation. I am fairly confident (if I am understanding it all correctly) that I had been doing that all along throughout this process... (Reflection 20)

She further adds in her PD Course Summary:

> Doing this PD course also made me think about myself as a researcher when I try new strategies to help students. I am an inherently analytical person, so I always consider myself to be researching and experimenting ... Sometimes I get a big idea to experiment with and I lose the motivation to see it to the end. This course helped me see what my own motivation to finish the thought and research can do to improve my teaching.

It is not clear if Mae fully perceives the power she might acquire and wield if she continues to see herself as a researcher and further her talents in this area, but her comments attest to the usefulness of PD courses like this one in cultivating that in teachers.

Lastly, Mae wrote cogently about the power imbalance that she, like Kit, believes exists at their school, and what she would prefer to see instead (Reflection 25, emphasis in the original):

> I strongly believe that, in [our school's] community, the principal ... holds most of the power. What he says, goes ... I think the way it should be is that the parents and teacher share the power because the parents should want what is best for their children and the teachers should want what's best for the students. One shouldn't be more powerful than the other because once "power" is involved, it can become a struggle. There needs to be a balance and a *collaboration* between the two parties to increase student achievement and accomplishment.

She anticipates the findings of this study well here as will be seen in Chapter 5.

So, how is Mae doing now, the reader may wonder? She wisely took a year off after the challenge of 2010-11 and states: "Not working is the best thing I've ever

done! :P" She is debating returning to the teaching profession, but may pursue another career altogether. The possible loss of Mae's positive influence on 10,000 plus future students should shame our public school system, not to mention her principal.

Kit, Mae and Sam in action. I very much sensed that we three acted like a relay team in this project, with Kit in the middle passing the baton back and forth. The evidence shows that Mae, like me, preferred emails which got to the heart of the matter succinctly. Nevertheless, we both interacted with Kit in her favorite mode: talking! Conversations I had with Kit would be echoed in Mae's written data later; similarly, Kit's writing refers to her talks with Mae, and sometimes she shared with Mae talks that Kit had with me. Perhaps it was more of a game of 'rocks, paper, scissors'! Well, at least we weren't stealing the red-headed kid's lunch money (it is okay for me to say this, since I have red hair).

Did we discuss the same issues, attempt the same strategies, come to the same conclusions? We all contacted at least 75% of our students' families during the project and shared which methods were successful for us, agreeing that the effort to collaborate was beneficial most of the time to most of the stakeholders. The best methods to do so depended on our personal preferences: Kit was more in favor of letters and calls home than Mae or I, but we all agreed use of the Internet and face-to-face meetings worked well. In particular, we concurred that establishing contact with families as soon as the school year starts, especially to convey positive messages, is vital to developing strong and authentic relationships that lead to true collaboration with students' family members. Since we were not in the same room at the time we wrote these thoughts in our post-survey and final reflections, one can only assume we either developed telepathy, or came to similar conclusions because of the success of our shared, albeit remote, efforts. Cool!

Well, congratulations are in order for you, trusty reader. You have survived three case studies and are officially half way home. You may celebrate with a fluffy beverage from the local 'java joint' and then ... Wagon ho! It's off to the country roads to meet our other participants!

Country bumpkins – three teacher-researchers at Site B: a rural outer island school. This section offers three case studies of participating teachers who worked on the same campus at Site B (described above in the introduction to 'Sam's' case study), then these three participants are considered along with the principal investigator as a team. The three women did not have a close relationship with me or each other prior to the action research taking place. However, 'Abby' works in the same subject area as I so attended the same department meetings. She soon began to socialize with me and others outside of work and we became quick friends, transcending the level of closeness I felt with the other participants at this site. Nevertheless, 'Roz' and 'Ida' appeared comfortable talking with me about our action research, and their divulgences of comments they wanted to be kept anonymous confirmed they trusted me, and our

interactions were not constrained in a way that might present serious limitations to this study. Honest!

'Roz' – Maybe we don't have the same work ethic? Roz worked full time teaching six elective high school classes at the Site B school, where special education students were taught in inclusion in her classes. Roz took this PD course, in part, for the three credits and to address her professional development 'Pep-T' requirements for the DOE (something every teacher must do upon being employed and every five years thereafter – naturally, this fit my Pep-T requirements also). Roz has a Master's degree in her subject area and is a white female. She has four adult children who do not live with her (I am sure she is relieved about this.) She was 61 at the beginning of this study, and her participation in this project along with keeping to the high standards she sets for herself did not make her any younger! She was in her eleventh year teaching at this school during this project, and has been a teacher for three decades. Almost scary, is it not?

Roz's most distinguishing traits are an astonishing work ethic and commitment in her own learning as well as that of her students. She was the only participant who regularly expressed a consistently believable interest in the research methods of this project, as she predicted she would when we met for the first workshop in August 2010. At that time, and at the end of the year when she transferred to another school, she contemplated pursuing a doctoral degree or possibly enrolling in some other program which would advance her own studies. She would likely do well, in my opinion, as she impressed me with her diligence in both her effort to teach her students and her pursuit of the goals of the PD course. I must also add – and have Roz's permission to do so – that the immense and endless work she did, described below, was achieved despite her having to endure chemotherapy during much of the action research period. It is hard to imagine the strength this must have taken.

Roz's pre- and post-survey data. Roz completed her pre-survey on August 24th and her post-survey on May 19th. Her first survey question (Item #1) shows a dramatic change in the amount of families she contacted at least once per year in August compared to May when she completed her post-survey: there was an increase from 'less than 10%' to 'more than 75%'! Excellent – this makes her 'teacher's pet' for sure!

Items #2.a and 2.d show Roz increased the letters she sent home and her face-to-face contact up to every semester, but that her calls home and use of Internet or text messages remained very low at 'almost never'. Meanwhile, Roz's parent/guardian contact increased dramatically from 'almost never' to 'every month' over this school year, but this increase did not extend to any other extended family members (Items #3.a-d). In all of Roz's Item #4a-e indicators she reported that she increased student family contacting from 'almost never' to 'every semester' – be those reasons either to praise a student or for concerns about negative progress. There was little change in Roz's

estimation of who benefits as a result of her communication with families, however (Item #5. a-e). She felt in August and in May that all stakeholders listed in the survey usually or sometimes benefitted. She is clearly a woman who holds firm opinions!

Item #6 asked Roz to gauge how often 'true collaboration' was achieved by her communications with families, and her perceptions either decreased slightly (for letters sent home and face-to-face contacts) or stayed the same (for calls and electronic messages). All these responses were estimated in the moderate range of impact, moving only slightly higher or lower from 'sometimes' over the course of the school year. In her pre-survey Roz listed the most successful ways to increase collaboration as "face-to-face interactions that don't involve shortcomings ... of the student"; in her post-survey she added such meetings need to have a purpose "that the student and parent find important enough" to attend (Item #7). This is similar to Mae's conclusion that families need a "good reason" to meet with her.

The challenges Roz identified to collaboration with family members are: in her pre-survey, the lack of time "even with a small number of students to do everything"; parents working two or three jobs, including on weekends and evenings; and in her post-survey, "finding the time, energy and motivation to meet." The frequency and reasons Roz would like to meet and collaborate with families, if she could: rose to 'every month' for students' doing something commendable (Item #9.a); stayed very low for negative reporting (Items #9.b-d); and rose to 'every month' indicating her desire to invite families to class related activities (Item #9.e). Roz shows no lack of common sense in these responses, does she?

Roz's perception of who might benefit from increased teacher-family collaboration decreased somewhat by the end of this project. In her pre-survey she felt all students could, but in her post-survey she amended that to only the student in question (Item #10, which for this participant also may not be valid, as she wrote on her pre-survey "the columns didn't really fit my interactions with parents"). Nevertheless, in her post-survey, Roz's perception of the potentially positive effects such collaboration could have on her, on families and on the community gelled, and where she had simply skipped the question in the pre-survey by writing "n/a", she perceived in the post-survey that respect for others' efforts and challenges, plus more desire to be involved, could be outcomes of increased collaboration. Hurray! Another victory for both of us – Roz remained inspired!

Roz's written data. Roz's written data were submitted regularly in the fall of Phase II, then after a lull in the beginning of 2011, she resumed writing about her PD participation in April and May. For Assignment #2 Roz noted, as did Sam, that the school's PCNC facilitator has helped her with translation services for English Language Learner (ELL) families, and she stated she is aware of the SCC but does "not go to the meetings or involve myself in any way." She then described several formal programs she

was aware the Site B school offers students and families related to literacy, drug abuse and mental health. For Roz the most important connections with the school-community were those she made with almost 20 agencies and individuals who participated with her students in four annual fairs related to the subjects she teaches. My own students participated in these activities and I can attest to the high level of achievement Roz helped them attain. In fact, many of her students earned both state and national recognition for their efforts.

Unlike other participating teacher-researchers, Roz submitted all the print materials requested for Assignment #3. Forms for students and those sent home to families at the start of the school year were numerous, clear and detailed – 14 documents explained the course procedures, timelines, expectations and grading criteria (Assignment #3.A). Given Kit's concern regarding the literacy level of students' families, especially those with children in special education, these handouts may have been overwhelming to some families; however, Roz did not write about this, nor mention that she thought this may be true.

Roz also shared her careful record of contacts to families made or attempted, which numbered 16 total efforts completed within the first seven weeks of school for her six target students (Assignment #3.B). The last part of this documentation was her own pre-survey for students and families (Assignment #3.C), in which she asked a single question: "Do you believe that collaboration between a student's family members and teachers can increase the student's achievement? Well-Being? Behavior?" Roz's surveys were completed at a dinner event held on campus for students and the adults they invited, and the data she gathered she entered on a spreadsheet. The results are most interesting.

Roz's pre-survey data showed: two students did not think teacher-family collaboration would help their achievement, one student thought it might, and three students felt it could. Student comments (including writing errors found in the original) included the following:

No because it is the students responsibility to do better.

Yes .... I believe this because if the family or teachers can see what [we] learned ... the students will be happy to show more.

I think it can because when your relatives are around, you tend to act respectful. I also think that it can't because you are what you are.

No, because it's really up to me to choose if I want to increase my student achievement, well-being, and behavior.

The reader is asked to keep these comments in mind in Chapter 5, when research and recommendations regarding students' own roles and responsibilities for their learning are examined in the section on Solutions (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003). Adult family members who answered Roz's survey included four mothers, two fathers, two guardians (one male and one female), one grandmother and 11 'others'; all agreed increased collaboration could help students. Noteworthy adult comments were:

> Yes, when parents are involved with their students it shows that they care about the child's education and that the parent values education. It also creates a positive relationship among all interested parties. It allows the student to see the parents and teachers as a team and is (sic) going to work together and the student cannot pose the parents and teachers on opposite sides.

> Yes, collaboration between teacher's and parents is a key to student's well-being and behavior. When teachers and parents work together they can address issues and work as a team. The overall effort always effects well-being.

> Yes, when surrounded by all levels of support a student can see that many faces care about the student's achievement. The key is to make sure all members are operating on the same page.

> ... Being positive is very important.

Roz's evaluation of the effectiveness of all Assignment #3 efforts is not found in a separate write up; rather, her written Reflections and comments made in workshops show how valuable she found this work. These are given below. Assignment #5.A was the follow-up survey, which Roz gave to her seven target class and 19 others (unidentified) in April; 23 of the respondents agreed collaboration could help students. Roz noted of those who disagreed, the "three participants who said it wouldn't were students."

Assignment #4.A-D and the Bonus Intervention were all completed by Roz. (Yes, she did every assignment. We should clone her!) Her *Ohana Gathering* was the student prepared dinner already mentioned which I also attended (but I did not respond to her survey, of course – too busy eating!). This she deemed a success, stating all parents "seemed to be comfortable" and "seemed to be very impressed with the students' performance." I agreed, as it was clearly an enjoyable event for all attendees. The event allowed her to begin building relationships with families of students (when she had time to talk, since, like her students, she did not sit down to dinner). Also, because she had a seating plan which put other staff and families together, we agreed this event helped school-family relationship building overall. Roz later wrote "I think that I might have needed to do something else in December/January to keep the momentum going" (Assignment #5.A), but she was not certain of this.

Roz held another dinner for target students' families and invited guests (i.e. staff, hanai family and other adults) as her first intervention, and for her second intervention she held a third dinner for immediate family and administration only. In planning for this activity, Roz specifically hoped to better serve students whose achievement was low due to their not having "the skills needed" or having "given up hope of achievement." She wrote in Reflection 9, "this group of students needs to be provided with more opportunities to demonstrate their success to those important to them." This dinner, held in April, she later deemed a success, writing: "... each student had at least two family members present. This was 100% participation. Just getting the family in can be a challenge." Roz also noticed "the momentum from this event carried over in the classroom for quite some time" and she believed she should increase the frequency of this activity to once per quarter term.

Always the achiever, Roz completed an additional Bonus Intervention late in April "to inform the parents of the demands of [a student] competition and construct a plan for practicing." Of this she wrote: "In my opinion, this meeting was the most collaborative event of this project. It was a true discussion [with] input from all parties." Unfortunately, it was at this point when "students started their culminating project and worked on it" that she saw "a disparity" in their achievement, with two target students responding "really well" to the encouragement they were given, but the others not completing their projects . She sums her perceptions in this passage:

> This project did not seem to increase student achievement. It did make the interaction between parent, student, and teacher 'easier.' Parents seemed to treat me with more respect as we tried to work with the student to get them to meet standards.

She also stated: "Even though they did not have the success I had hoped for, does not mean that the process has not been a success for them. They are going to pass the class for the year. They are satisfied with their grade." Again, the importance of what students want and the effect of their role in their own learning is seen in these comments.

Roz's data by telephone and observation. Roz and I did not need to speak on the phone as we often saw each other on campus and our classrooms were close to one another, but we did meet once formally, one-on-one, and briefly spoke several times in passing during the project. Of these encounters, Roz wrote they were "casual, but professional" that my "prompt responses ... were congenial and relevant" (Reflection 19). I blush!

The formal meeting in mid-October allowed us to consider the well-being of a student whose achievement was lower than his peers in the target class and who we suspected was influenced somewhat by drugs and/or alcohol use outside of school hours. Roz and I both agreed that he was an intelligent student capable of much higher

achievement. Roz expressed concern about how best to collaborate with his mother to help without "singling him out." I suggested a couple 'sneak attacks' (i.e. surreptitiously planned encounters), but Roz later became less concerned about this student as his grade improved, and as noted above, he and his family were not unhappy with his moderate success.

Roz and I also spoke at this time and later in the year in conversations and emails about her progress as a teacher-researcher, and what that role means. I clarified and paraphrased the pertinent literature in Chapters 2 and 3 to increase her understanding. What a wonder my responses did not sway her in the least in her interest in research!

The evidence of themes in Roz's qualitative data below has been gleaned primarily from her written work, which was often completed more thoroughly than her colleagues in this study. For example, Reflection 2 asked participants to identify which reading shared at the first workshop in August resonated most with them; Roz responded to all six readings (see Appendices). One has to love her zeal! Roz also was the participant later in the year who asked for literature to better understand inductive analysis. No wonder she is 'teacher's pet' – she deserves some recognition!

Emergent themes in Roz's data – theme one: relationship building. Perhaps because of her greater 'buy in' to being an action researcher, Roz was the only participant who contemplated her relationship with the co-researchers and principal investigator in this study, writing:

> I tended to complete the assignments in bunches and this was not conducive to a lot of sharing. It seemed to be difficult to find time to get together. I have a tendency to work independently, the king of my kingdom, and do not seek out others and their opinions like I perhaps should." (Reflection 19)

The loss of the opportunity she perceives in this reflection is astute, and lamented by me, as well. This comment also echoes Mae's wish that she could have worked more closely with colleagues in her action research. I could take the blame, or let these participants own it as they state, but even sharing blame is not what appreciative inquiry would guide us to do (Shriver & Weissburg, 2005). Rather, these perceptions point to the need, addressed in Recommendations in Chapter 5, to form teams of individuals so that the sharing we desire and believe would benefit us all can take place.

Roz gave much consideration to her relationships with her students, responding strongly to the relevant reading shared at the August workshop (Response to Shriver & Weissburg, 2005):

> I so agree with this article. It is important that one establishes a social/emotional connection with the student. One must be able to 'connect' with the student.   The

student must see that you are invested in them, their needs, their success, that is, they must see that you are addressing the whole person that they are.

To help establish this kind of connection with her students, Roz set a certain atmosphere in her classroom (Reflection 3):

> ...resource books, pictures of former students, mandatory postings, inspirational posters [are found ... and there] is a certain amount of humor in posters with the one in center of bulletin board stating "Mrs. [Roz] Rocks!" ... There is an air freshener at the front door that has a "food" smell, usually spice like cinnamon or vanilla. Many comments about how good it smells in here. It makes for a welcoming tone ... Overall atmosphere is one of comfort and welcome.

Later in the year Roz considered the relationships she has with students, their motivation to succeed, and how her relationships with their families could help. For Assignment #5.A she wrote:

> The student often connects their academic success with whether the teacher likes them. Pushing them to succeed may reinforce this thinking. It is important to find a balance. Some parents want their child to earn an "A" or "B." Others want them to "pass." Establishing relationships between parent, student and teacher may help all parties, especially the teacher, to identify just what the needs of the family are and be able to help the family to meet them.

My own thinking aligned with this and is seen in my recommended welcome letter to families described in Chapter 5 (see also Appendices), which asks families to identify what is an acceptable grade for their children.

Roz objectively evaluated the effect of her relationship building efforts, stating in Reflection 20:

> Through the execution of the [final student] project, relationships were established between students, parents and teacher. When it came to the time that problems had to be dealt with, there were no harsh words or raised voices. Parents remained calm in dealing with whatever the issue was. Whether this would have happened without the interventions cannot be determined. Whether it was a result of developed relationships cannot be proven.

This reflection recalls Kit's and Mae's comments regarding negative interactions with families. Also hinted at here are the themes of expectations and alienation discussed below, evidence for which were voluminous in Roz's case study data. Hold on to your hats!

Emergent themes in Roz's data – theme two: expectations. In the second semester of this school year I distinctly recall a workshop in which Roz admitted that her work ethic was very much that which was described in Chapter 2 by Schlesinger (1991, as cited by Chapman, Davison & Panet, 2002) as stemming from the "white Anglo-Saxon Protestant tradition" and that she had always accepted this as a good thing and the "right" way to think and behave (although she is not a Protestant). My perception, and perhaps Roz's too now, is that this presents a disconnect for some students and families. This can be seen in her data below. Also below, the issue of expectations of all stakeholders having sufficient time to collaborate more arises often. As well, and as it is with the case studies above, there is significant overlap in the thematic data which extends evidence of all four of the principal themes identified.

In her first Reflection Roz wrote about expectations and time:

I start out the year with trying to connect, but do not sustain. I would attribute this in part to the negative relationships with parents whose children are not doing well. There is also not enough time in a day to do all that one needs to do for/with students to then add doing things with parents.

To this she soon added (Reflection 9):

I am uncomfortable with manufacturing activities to involve parents with the school. I have talked to the students and parents and their time is valuable and committed. It is hard to find a time or event that all will come. I have found that parents respond better when one respect's their time.

Roz's time commitment is described below, too, as is further indication of her work ethic (Reflection 10):

I want every student to exceed the standard. To that end, I bend over backward to give students chances to be successful. For example, students recently had the opportunity to [enter a] competition ... They didn't bring back permission slips. They did not show up to practice. I allowed them to make excuses. I gave several ultimatums but continued to 'give them chances' to come, learn, and compete ... The students that have been the focus of this project seem to be their own worst enemy. They do not follow directions. They seem to deliberately set themselves up to fail. The reason they do this is not necessarily clear.

Roz questions her efforts, but not her sanity, later in the year (Assignment #5.A):

Did I set the bar too high? Does my need for the student to earn an "A" or "B" in the class actually cause a problem? If the student is happy with 'just passing,' should I be pushing them to do better? ... In my opinion, it is my job to push. I

want students to reach their potential so that they will have as many options as possible for their future. I do need to figure out when to 'let go.'

More of her perception of different concepts of acceptable achievement is also found in her Reflection 20, along with some of the alienation to be discussed in the next theme:

> I am a teacher. I am a professional. I want students to learn. I want students to do well. As a professional, I can usually identify what the student needs to do to be successful. The student often does not agree. The parent often backs up the student. This leads to conflict between teacher, student and parent. It is very frustrating when parents support their children in their desire to NOT do what they need to do to learn. This situation often leads to harsh words, raised voices and even threats. This conflict is what I like least about teaching. It is the reason I took this Family Collaboration Class. It was an attempt to learn strategies that would help me avoid conflict.

Also clear here is the strong influence students have as mediators between teachers and their guardians.

> In her end of year Course Self-Evaluation Roz summarized:

> What is needed is more time. Planning for the school day and interacting with students takes a lot of energy. In the current situation, we are required to do more and more "off-clock" work and given less and less time to do it. On my prioritized list of job tasks, planning opportunities to collaborate with families falls way down on the list ... I am pressed into the position of dealing with just the parents of "problem" students. Since this can often be a negative encounter, it makes me put interacting with parents even further down my list. This is a downward spiral and the major reason I took this class.

Despite her frequent references to negative interactions with families, Roz reported in the last quarter term (Reflection 17):

> During the course of the year I was able to maintain a congenial relationship with parents even when the student was not succeeding academically. There was absolutely no yelling or screaming or blaming coming from the parents. It is unclear whether this was because of the collaborative events [or] the nature of the parents involved.

In the same vein Reflection 18 reiterates her expectations and work ethic, but also shows her awareness of mismatched expectations, and how her sensitivity to families evolved as she tries to understand and deal with what each party wants for the students she teaches :

The parents' and students' idea of academic success appeared to be different. Both parents and students seemed to be happy with 'just' passing. Students did not appear to feel the need to do anything more than what was needed to pass ... I am very much more 'goal-oriented.' I strive for excellence. When I see a student NOT striving for excellence, I feel the need to intervene and push them – in an ever so politically correct way. One could say that I am imposing my standards on them and that that is not right.

This last sentence is not an issue Roz resolved easily or fully in this year of action research.

Emergent themes in Roz's data – theme three: alienation. As is no doubt already evident to the reader, in her long career Roz has felt alienated by negative interactions with students and family members often enough. In her response to excerpts from my dissertation proposal, and DOE standards and policies on parent involvement readings which were shared at the first workshop (see Appendices), Roz reflected on the last decade of her career experiences:

The first semester I was at [the Site B school], I was challenged often. I was perceived as an outsider who did not understand the ways of this community. This changed rather quickly. I had been in Hawai'i for eight years ... I knew many people in the community already ... as a member of [a church here]. Everything that I was trying to achieve in my classes was supported by the administration. I was able to integrate into the community and it has literally been years since I had any really difficult parents. The random incidents that I have had have been with parents that either knew nothing about me or had difficulty with multiple teachers.

At the same workshop Roz responded to the reading about Appreciative Inquiry (Ludema & Whitney, 2003), providing these data:

Even though I know better, in the daily grind of working with students, I tend to focus on what needs to improve ... This inevitably leads to the downward spiral the article addresses. I am not happy. My students are not happy. It leads to grumbling and discontent ... I agree that focusing on what ... student[s] or I do well, and improving on that, can lead to a more satisfying experience.

Yet a little later on that first semester Roz perceived (Reflection 6):

Students are sometimes raised to resent authority. This often comes from the parent. Attitudes of both the student and parent have to be changed for there to be progress. They sometimes have to learn to not see the teacher as 'the enemy.'

The topic of spiraling negativity Roz identified above, and worked to avoid, continued to arise in her reflections, once in December and twice in May. It is not clear if this was as a result of, or despite, her expectations:

> I hope that parents and students will see teachers as 'more human.' That by having personal interaction with the teacher that is not connected with negative behavior or progress, they will not be so defensive in reacting when there is cause to discuss the student's negative behavior or lack of progress. (Reflection 8)

> When I call some parents, there seems to be no or little response. This is frustrating and makes me not want to have continued contact with the parent ... Some parents seem to want to avoid hearing about their student. I think they are so used to negative reports that they actively avoid contact with the teacher.... I think that some students are so afraid that they will fail so set themselves up to fail. (Reflection 13 Alternate)

> ...students who are not successful ... do not bring supplies to school. They do not meet deadlines for assignment. They seem detached. They seem resentful and angry at times. Their parents do not always respond when I try to contact them. (Reflection 15)

It is clear from the last comment above that all factions must suffer from some sense of alienation in their home-school interactions. It is not clear when Roz is writing about the students she taught during her action research, or those she encountered in her long career previously, however. Again, in her defense, I remind the reader that as the year proceeded Roz's health and medical treatment exacted more and more of a toll on her, likely making it easier to feel stress and dwell on the negative. I think she did admirably well, under the circumstances, and her students' overall success attests to this.

__Emergent themes in Roz's data – theme four: diversity and power.__ Roz's data provide evidence that she considered of the diversity and power of all stakeholders, and these insights are offered below in this order: school administrators; students and families; and herself.

In Reflection 4 Roz described how four-fifths "of the persons in authority at our school" (two administrators, the registrar and a counselor) left their positions for various reasons at the start of the 2010-11 school year, leaving the principal "in a more powerful position than ever". She added:

> I do not have personal knowledge of the School Community Council (SCC) but have heard that the members rely heavily on [the principal]. There are several other organizations in the community that give money to programs at the school, but again, they rely heavily on [his] input.

Also in Reflection 4, Roz considered how the majority ethnic population of the community responds to school administrators:

> It has been remarked to me that the [Filipino] people have what is referred to as "a plantation mentality" which means they are more accepting/responsive to/of authority and more accepting of being led by the school authorities.

By the end of the year (Reflection 25) her opinion on this had not changed. She further stated: "I have heard conversation that even though we have a leadership team, [the principal] makes a lot of the decisions about how money is spent and the direction the school will go." She noted that "as he comes to train and trust his new administrators [he may] turn more of the day to day responsibility to them, but that does not mean that he will give over any real power to them." Roz lamented the loss on one of the administrators who was her 'go-to' person for support. However, none of her input at meetings or in writing indicated that this shift in power at our school effected her efforts to collaborate with students' families adversely.

In Reflection 5 Roz's perceptions of her students' diversity is limited to her identifying those who were active in her church, and those who were from "nuclear families ... a single parent family ... [living with a] grandmother ... [and] under the guardianship of [an] aunt and uncle." This last student she hoped would be helped by his using "an invitation ... to invite ... parents to our 11th Annual Parent Dinner ... [as] an opportunity to discuss the event [with them] ... It will give some power to the student." In contrast to this, below Roz considers some ways in which students can exert negative power.

In Reflection 21 Roz described at length a string of interactions between her, a target student at risk of school failure, and his parents (one whom lives off island). The student was not completing work, but telling the parents he was; the parents believed him every time, but also believed Roz when she told them otherwise many times, and Roz felt they supported her unflagging efforts to help him achieve an "A or B" and "have the experience of being successful." Roz believed the student "was not invested. He never took responsibility" and the reasons for this may have been "the young man did not respect women and/or their authority over him. It was a very passive/aggressive thing." Consideration of power and gender will be discussed again at the end of this section where the Site B team dialogue is presented. Suffice it to add here, that this seems to be the same kind of power perceived in my own case study where it appeared parents deliberately chose non-involvement with the teacher when the opposite was hoped for.

About this student Roz ultimately surmised (Reflection 21):

> I think that the parents' expectations for the student were very low. They wanted him to graduate, but seemed willing to accept the minimum in academic

achievement. At first glance, I would say that I was not successful, but maybe I am wrong. Was I projecting too much of me in the process? The collaboration process did work. I was able to work with the parents without anyone getting upset or angry. We, both I and the parents, persisted in the process. Both the parents and the student seemed content with the student's grade. Looking just at the process, I think that one would deem it a success.

Then, late in the year, Roz wrote of her evolution in thinking (Reflection 18):

While it is my responsibility to facilitate the students' learning, I see that I need to be aware of how I may be trying to impose my standards on them. I need to make sure that I respect our differences.

Regarding her own power, Roz made only a couple comments. In Reflection 16 she "realized [she] needed to have learned a lot more about different theories on family collaboration," a nod I think to the challenge at hand and her limited power to address it, as well as my limited time to help her more. *Mea culpa!* She also contributed this statement in May, regarding her students and their families (Reflection 24):

I have only a small window of time to have an impact on them. The reasons they have for interacting or failing to interact with me go way beyond 'me' and there will be times that I will not be able to counter them.

I believe this speaks to Roz's powerlessness, which is shared by all teachers and what is at the heart of the issue of lack of collaboration. This will be discussed fully in last chapter.

To complete this case study, I feel the following excerpt from Roz's data provides a more positive note, and shows she is aware of the power she does have:

What I think I proved: I could not change the student's attitude toward academic achievement. I could not make them care more about learning or the grade they earned or being more successful. I could and did help affect a change in the relationship between myself, the student and the parent. I believe that in establishing a positive relationship with the family, when problems arose, the ability to interact positively carried over into that conflict and problems were able to be solved in a more positive manner. (Reflection 20)

One small step for Roz, one giant victory for all teacher-kind? We can only hope so.

Now as to the reader's needs ... good time for a jog? It does wonders for the brain, increasing the blood flow and making one much more efficient at tasks like, say, reading! A stationary bicycle will even allow the reader to do both jobs at once – think

about it! Two more case studies follow. (Alternate forms of stimulation are also encouraged!)

'Abby' – So students don't want their parents and teachers to talk? Like Mae, Abby joined the PD course later than other participants, in mid-September, and had to play catch up all year, while also pursuing an additional nine credits in another professional development program. Abby has a Bachelor's degree and six years of teaching experience, intermingled over the last dozen years with other more lucrative jobs which she cannot explain leaving. She teaches three subjects (all new to her during the 2010-11 school year) in a core, general education line where special education students are taught in inclusion. She was the only middle school level teacher to participate. Abby moved here from out of state and this was her first year at the Site B school. Abby is white and is the mother of a child who was four years old during this study, while Abby herself was 40 years old when the school year began. This means she is younger than I and therefore probably not to be trusted.

Abby's distinguishing traits are her intuitive ability and her quick grasp of new learning, both skills which served her very well as she settled into her new life at our school as a 'fresh-off-the-boat' resident in Hawai'i. It is worthy of mention here that numerous and well documented are the mainland teachers who come to 'paradise' to teach, only to leave a year later, or at their first holiday break, or their first week on the job, or even their first day! This is not an attempt at humor – it is a well-known fact in Hawai'i. Abby never once considered such a reaction to the challenges hurled at her. I vote her 'most stalwart' of the PD participants!

Abby's pre- and post-survey data. Abby completed her pre-survey on September 15th and her post-survey on May 21st. In Item #2 she estimated she contacts 51-75% of her students' families at least once per year, and indicated almost no change in that or the ways she chose to contact them in her post-survey. In fact, her effort to contact them by letter sent home decreased from every semester to 'almost never', the same as her efforts by Internet or text message, while her calls home did not vary from an estimate of every semester. However, her face-to-face interactions increased from every semester to every quarter term. My observations and conversations with Abby confirmed these data, suggesting she thoroughly enjoyed the extra opportunities to converse with families in person.

Like all other participants, Abby focused on contact with parents or guardians over other family members and she believed she contacted them more in the 2010-11 school year, increasing contacts from every semester to every quarter term. Also like most of the other teacher-researchers, she did not increase her contacts with siblings, extended family or hanai family and friends, and these remained low at 'almost never' in both pre- and post-surveys (Item #3). Abby's stated reasons for contacting students' families were completely unchanged from September to May, indicating that her

communications 'every semester' were in regards to both positive and negative student progress and activities (Item #4).

In Item #6 it is clear that Abby started "drinking my Kool-Ade" as she not only perceived fairly strong benefit to all stakeholders as a result of increased teacher-family collaboration in the pre-survey, but this perception was strengthened in four out of five instances by May (Item #5.b-e). In particular, she believed the benefit to herself and family members increased from 'sometimes' to 'usually'. However, belief in the benefits of collaboration did not align with how often Abby actually experienced 'true collaboration' with family members. Her responses to Item #6 show: letters and calls home seemed to her even less likely to result in collaboration than she initially thought; electronic messages 'sometimes' did (she did not respond to Item #6.c in the pre-survey), and; even face-to-face communication became less of a guarantee of collaboration for Abby by May. While this was still fairly high, perceived as 'more often than not' it may be that Abby's expectations and/or understanding of what constitutes 'true collaboration' changed over the course of her action research. In fact, she stated in Reflection 24: "Though my beliefs about life or education have not necessarily changed since last semester, it may be that my beliefs are more defined."

Abby identified the need for teachers to have increased interactions and time in order to get to know family members, and build rapport and trust, as successful ways to increase collaboration in her pre-survey (Item #7). She moved beyond this in the post-survey to state how this could best be achieved: by creating casual situations to start, and by having a variety of large and small group situations that family members are invited to in order to see the teacher and students interact. This brings to mind what Roz stated about the value of families seeing students being successful in ways related to desired learning outcomes.

Item #8 asked Abby to identify the challenges she perceives to collaboration, and she responded in the pre-survey that, being a newcomer to the community, building initial relationships could be difficult. She wrote: "How do I breach through the barriers to start building that trust?" By May she philosophized that "true collaboration comes when everyone feels comfortable sharing their ideas [about] ... what is truly happening that will help the student succeed." This suggests another deeper or more authentic level of interaction is sought, beyond what can be achieved through traditional, or perhaps even new but 'top-down' mandated, contacts with families. In Chapter 5 this is discussed more.

Abby ended the school year wanting to collaborate with families every month for all the reasons listed in Item #9.a-e. This was similar to her perceptions in September, with only a slightly increased desire to collaborate regarding inappropriate behavior and a slightly decreased desire to collaborate regarding well-being. Item #10.a-f did not appear to confuse Abby in the pre- or post-survey, so may be valid. Overall her responses

indicate she perceived increased collaboration could effect less change than she originally thought for all but the student in question: classmates and school may see better behavior and well-being but no increase in grades, as Abby had indicated in September; the students' family may respect others' efforts and have more desire to be involved, but not respect their challenges; the teacher may respect others' efforts, but not their challenges, and may not want more involvement; and the community may want more to be more involved, but experience no change in its respect for the efforts and challenges others face when addressing students' needs. These variations in pre- and post-survey answers may also show the survey item is unreliable.

Abby felt strongly enough in the pre-survey to add this comment to Item #10.e: a benefit she perceives for herself if collaboration increased would be "motivation/ inspiration to expand experiences." She elaborated on this in the comment section, Item #11, writing her contact with families "may not be regular" if the "responses, support and feedback" she gets, and the environment she is teaching in, is lacking. This speaks to the power of the group and reciprocity that will be discussed below in Chapter 5.

Abby's written data. Abby submitted one item of written data each in September, October and December, completed Reflections 3-7 in April, and finally typed up a storm to finish her PD coursework in late May. She did not complete Assignment 2 or 3 fully, in part due to her late start in the PD course. Likewise, Assignment 5 she virtually ignored at the end of the school year, suggesting I should have sat her down in Dennis the Menace's corner chair when I had the chance. Nevertheless, she did the required interventions and succeeded in convincing me she consistently considered and pursued collaboration with her students' families, even when her documentation of this was not complete.

In her December record of ten family contacts she made to six homes (two students' families she communicated with several times), she wrote (Assignment 3.B):

> I started documenting meetings and telephone calls with students and 'ohana, but did not continue documenting them. Most meetings were extremely casual interactions "conducted" while shopping at the market or seeing someone in town. Though informal, I believe this informality is what is going to be most effective in building relationships in order to be able to collaborate further with students and 'ohana.

This reminds us of Kit's strategy of meeting parents informally at school sports events. Both participants' instincts here are also supported by research (Tollefson, 2008) and lead to recommendations in Chapter 5.

Abby's efforts to connect with families elicited this evaluation of her *'Ohana Gathering* (Assignment 4):

Parents were eager to drop their students off, but no parents or 'ohana participated in the first gathering ...[which] brought out a total of five students to volunteer. ... on the surface I would say it was a failure for the simple reason that no 'ohana stayed to participate. However ... I DID get, and take, the opportunity to introduce myself to each parent and at least attempt to "open the door" to communication and hopefully possible future collaboration.

As the goal of this assignment was simply to 'open the door' Abby's evaluation of her activity as a failure seems harsh, although her hope to involve greater numbers likely colored her perception. Abby repeated this same Sunday afternoon intervention four more times in the second semester of the school year, both to increase the level of student volunteering in the community in an activity related to the subject she teaches them, and to try increase collaboration with their families. For Assignment 4.B, I joined her to observe and chaperone 15 of her students to the various task sites they visited. She evaluated this in Assignment 4.C (writing errors are in the original):

Though still no parents or 'ohana, there were still fifteen students who showed up to volunteer and work. The enthusiasm from the first event apparently rolled over into this event and has had an incredibly positive effect ... Parents and 'ohana did not stay to volunteer, but each parent I spoke with while dropping off students was anxious that their student was doing better or that they could be doing better. The grades of the students who volunteered ... did increase. It is difficult to determine whether this is simply because of their time spent working alongside their peers and their teacher and they therefore found a bit of extra incentive to ... improving their grade.

When Abby repeated this intervention late in the school year, it is clear the usefulness of the monthly activity was working both for students and parents. Her evaluation for Assignment 4.D reads:

As word about the volunteering ... circulated through my ... classes it also gained circulation through the 'ohana of students. Parents encouraged their students to take part and sought out more information and alternative ways for their students to get help outside of class... Students continue to show excitement about participating, and those who have as yet to attend seem anxious to want to join us. This time I took a different approach with 'ohana and because I was driving their students, I also dropped off their students. This time I stopped and sought out a parent. The acceptance to my being there seems to be getting more comfortable. Parents thanked me for dropping off their student, and two even took the time to engage me in an active conversation about how their student was doing and what they/we could do to encourage and improve the performance and outlook of the student. Yeah! It's starting to work.

In Reflection 14, Abby also commented:

> 'ohana that have been involved this year are grateful for the extra interest shown
> in their student and encouraged by the increased interest shown by said
> students. ... As for the students, well, they are middle school students, and as such
> are weary to show enthusiasm to any degree. That being said, students who have
> been a part of this process do show a sense of pride in the increase [of] their
> performance and work.

This attention to student motivation to succeed and pride in their work was also important
to Mae and Roz. Abby considered why the students who were responding to her
interventions did so, and wrote:

> Some students' participation will be affected more by their peers, a few by the
> request or persuasion of their parents, some because their grades will
> improve ...those who want to impress their teacher, and even those students who
> participate simply because it is something to do.

Research also bears out Abby's thinking here, reminding us of the many factors that
influence students' roles in their own learning and acceptance of their responsibilities and
levels of achievement (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003; Pang, 1990).

   Abby's data by telephone and observation. Because I developed a friendship
with Abby outside of work during Phase II of this study, we conversed often about the PD
course activities in which we engaged, but not usually at length since her intuitive sense
bordered on telepathy – no kidding! Most of what we discussed is also found in her
written data above and below. For example, at the Site B workshop in January and a
couple other times when we met informally Abby discussed one student who was a
behavior problem and was seen as a leader by her peers. This student was vehemently
against having any teacher-family interaction, and Abby laughed in agreement that the
student's action were, as 'Ida' (the last case study, below) put it in January, "against
middle school student nature." Abby's power struggle with this student is also referred to
below in discussion of the theme of alienation. Additional data I gathered from
observation of Abby came at this same workshop as well as another meeting in early
May. This input is examined in the section below where all four Site B teacher-
researchers are considered as a team.

   Emergent themes in Abby's data – theme one: relationship building. Abby first
and foremost attended to the relationships she developed with her students. In October
she wrote (Reflection 3):

> The first few weeks of school I greet every student at the door having them
> introduce themselves with a handshake. I have found this to be effective in

setting the tone for the year ... I have a chance to talk to every student each day ... it does set the tone for the remainder of the school year. Overall students feel safe and welcome entering my classroom.

She later wrote in May about the outcome of her efforts with students, and once more the students' mediating role between home and school is evident (Reflection 12):

As the school year progressed, students who were initially resistant to help by me, and really did not like the fact their parents were in regular communication with their teacher, did have notably improved attention in class, return of homework, and increase in quiz/exam/quarterly grades.

At the same time Abby considered building relationships with staff and parents and how this benefits students; as well, the subject of student pride in work arises again (Reflection 13):

I would like to continue building this sense of camaraderie between students and teachers. I would like to see it extend up and down throughout the grade levels, with the goal in mind to keep parents involved or at least more openly communicating with both teachers and their students.

... [our] coaches demanded students turn in regular grade checks this year ... [and they] were much more diligent than in previous years. Every one of my students who played ball showed a vast improvement in their grades, at least in my class. The students went from dreading grade checks to actually anticipating them because they were so anxious to see how much they'd grown! Nothing like watching a student be proud of themselves for a job well deserved and well done.

Reflections 10 and 11 required participants to create a research question and examine the terms used in the question. Abby's question was: "What is the current 'ohana - teacher - student relationship at the middle school level and can these be improved?" She defined "improved" as:

... more than casual hello and smile in town; transitioning the casual smile and hello to an even more positive, open communication between 'ohana - teacher - student (such as regular phone calls, visits or gatherings that are NOT dreaded! but happily anticipated)

In Reflection 15 Abby identified a barrier, already alluded to a few times above, that students present to the collaboration she seeks:

Primarily, students do not want to socialize or interact with their 'ohana at this age. However, students greatly enjoy having a reason to get out of the house and socialize—especially when food is involved.

Although the 'tweens' Abby teaches do their best to thwart connections amongst those adults who serve as their guides and guardians, their susceptibility to bribery with food actually works just as well with families and teachers – locals in Hawai'i love to eat! They can be duped into attending no end of activities which would otherwise not interest them if the 'grinds' are plentiful and tasty enough. Though amusing, I believe the bureaucratic decision-makers at schools have ignored this simple recommendation to their own detriment too often.

Abby also noticed a change in her own behavior by the end of the school year in regards to relationship building with families. In Reflection 17 she wrote:

I am definitely more aware of 'ohana who are involved and show interest in their students. Situations which avail themselves to meet 'ohana, especially outside of school, I tend to take much more advantage of by means of consciously establishing at the very least an introduction.

Abby summarized her thoughts about collaborating with students' families in her end of year course evaluation:

Even on a small scale, the collaboration efforts made this year showed a definite measurable improvement in the effort and grades of those students with whom supporting relationships and support were established. The simple relationships I have begun to establish will be easier to build into collaborative relationships, not only with those I already know, but their friends and 'ohana as well. With any amount of attention paid to establishing, building and collaborating relationships with family and friends of students more students will have a greater chance to feel supported and ultimately successful. With this in mind, I anticipate an even more successful school year in the upcoming year.

This assessment provides fairly firm evidence some researchers believe cannot be said to exist yet – that collaboration with families is directly linked to higher student achievement (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003).

Emergent themes in Abby's data – theme two: expectations. Like all other participants in this study the issue of excessive demands on time arose in Abby's data, along with other expectations. Abby felt she had little time to achieve all she wanted to, and in her course evaluation in May listed her move to the island, "studying to complete exams to be highly qualified to teach [my subject], taking on a 5-year [school-related]

grant, and numerous personal issues" (such as child custody and worries over loved ones' physical and mental health) as reasons why she "had a lot on [her] plate this year."

Her empathy with parents' limited time can be inferred from her Reflection 14:

One key is to figure out how to keep parents involved from elementary through middle and high school without burning them out. Overall in our society I think there is a feeling of "my child is finished with elementary school therefore my volunteering days are over"– exceptions being those parents who are involved in ... PTA.

Like Roz, Abby identified this hindrance – parents' lack of time to collaborate more and build stronger relationships with their children's educators – early in our action research.

In describing the expectations she has of her students, Abby found fault with the education system in general, and in these three comments (two in Reflections 12 and one in Reflection 7) she considered the ramifications of the many expectations various stakeholders have on students:

My expectations of my students are high. I expect my students to put forth the effort to get the job done correctly and apply what skills they have learned to other areas of their life...

Both success' and failures help us to learn. I believe students need to be allowed to struggle and fail and be given time to figure out potential solutions. This belief takes time, and none of us likes to "fail." Currently in education, we as educators do not have the luxury of time to allow our students to take the time to struggle with several wrong answers or attempts. Schools, administrators, parents, boards, all want answers—and they want their school/student(s) to have the right/correct answers—now! This pressure of having the correct answer is stressful to everyone (students, teachers, parents, administrators …

By allowing myself the time to give to students the opportunity to discover, fail, and succeed, students in the long run potentially have so much more to gain than just the lesson in front of them, but also to build confidence that they can find a solution. Solutions/answers in life are often not neat and tidy and easily identified. Teaching in such a manner only sets our students up to lack confidence and potentially feel they are failures.

These reflections also hint at sources of alienation in the interactions of various players in education, discussed next.

Emergent themes in Abby's data – theme three: alienation. Abby seeks to reduce anticipated alienation in her very first Reflection 1:

> There are those who believe the professional relationship between teacher and student demands distance in order for there to be respect. I am not one of those individuals. I hope to gain a desire, from my students, to want to achieve more because they will have more people they know believe in them.

She also reflected in writing on the reasons she might be treated as an outsider in her new job and town, and how far she came, by the end of the year (Reflection 12):

> The 'ohana I have worked with were overall hesitant at first with me as a newcomer. Some of the resistance stemmed from being new, some from whether or not I would stay on-island ... or would I be temporary, and some resistance came from not being "local," or having the same cultural background. There were 'ohana who, because I was the teacher, simply viewed me as knowledgeable and therefore capable. Other 'ohana just need to be reassured I was qualified and approachable, though there are still the remaining 'ohana who are still resistant.

Of these resistant families, more will be offered based on observational data of all Site B teacher-researchers after the last case study below. For now, another of Abby's end of year reflections shows her conclusions about her action research year and the theme of alienation (Reflection 16):

> Working with students and their 'ohana can be viewed as a game of strategy, and there are times personalities do not always blend well. ['Sam'] was most valuable in supporting me through a situation with a very headstrong 'ohana and student.

This student, referred to above in Abby's observational data, presented an ongoing and distracting challenge to her throughout the school year, and could as well be discussed under the theme of power as she seemed to engage with Abby in a power struggle, which Abby surmised, was due entirely to her taking the place of the previous teacher as instructor of her subject, even though the previous teacher was still on campus. Communications with the students' family did not help initially, and led ultimately to Abby feeling alienated as the parent sided with the child. The wisdom of Abby and Ida regarding the nature of middle school children and their ability to interfere in teacher-family relations seems to have merit. Nevertheless, the 2011-12 school year finds this student exhibiting no animosity towards Abby whatsoever. Vexing young things, are they not?

Speaking to both the themes of alienation and diversity and power, is Abby's Reflection 19, where she ponders the other PD participants at Site B and her reaction to our workshop conversations:

> At course meetings there were instances where stereotypes would come into play from fellow course participants regarding parental response, or anticipated community response ... the anticipation was always that it "wasn't going to happen." My thoughts are that this is correct, parental/'ohana/community involvement is NOT going to happen when the belief by the person orchestrating (their) beliefs is that they won't. There were instances at each course meeting where these conversations would arise and initially I would engage, but then ultimately I would find myself drifting away completely from the entire conversation because I found it to be so contrary to what we were and are trying to accomplish here. Ultimately though, it did confirm my belief that the attitude we bring is the most powerful component and can be powerful enough to elicit action from our students, their peers, and their 'ohana.

This power of stakeholders Abby refers to is fully explored at the end of her case study below.

Emergent themes in Abby's data – theme four: diversity and power. Abby referred to students, families, administration, the community and, of course, herself, in considerations of the diversity of stakeholders at our school and who has power. Of the students she wrote in her first reflection in September (Reflection 1):

> Whether a student comes from a family with money, or without, has nothing to do with whether they get support from home. We as teachers are constantly striving to improve our lessons and our classroom management, but there are other factors to the success of our students.

When Abby described her students' diversity (Reflection 5) and how best to approach their families with sensitivity, she wrote that "This ... has held me back the most, at least in my head." Her follow up comments on student diversity, though, are limited to students' home lives, like Roz, and their varying attitudes in school, rather than their ethnicity:

> The students who are most at-risk and need the most support ... tend to be the students who live in sensitive situations, such as split homes, homeless, raised by a single parent, etc. ... it has taken me a few months to get to know which students are "good" students and which students struggle, which students want to learn and which students could care less, are just plain lazy, or want to learn but don't want to look uncool to their peers.

In this, coupled with varying degrees of family support, she saw "a potential for incredible success, or potential for definite unease" with students' families.

Abby did describe the Site B community as "very diverse and rich in its cultural influences" and stated: "Overall, these diversities are viewed as positive, though there are times when such differences create misunderstandings (Reflection 4). One such example of the cultural differences Abby encountered which causes the unease she wrote about, and also suggests who may have or want power in the school-community, is found in her Reflection 12, where parent's culture was understood to be linked to gender (to be discussed below where the Site B teachers are considered as a group) further :

> There were definite instances of male dominance exhibited by some fathers where it was apparent I may be the teacher, but they weren't going to waste their time listening to what I had to say about their student.

Despite overt and underlying struggles such as this, Abby maintained a sense of her own power at her new school. She stated "I know the results I have acquired are directly, or indirectly, caused by some factor related to this [PD] course" (Reflection 21). Moreover, when asked if her findings were triangulated, Abby penned in Reflection 22:

> The 'ohana I have met with again since the start of the school year and the beginning of this project are in agreement with me in my beliefs that student performance has increased with the encouragement and joint effort of both me as the teacher and them as family...

In the reflection questions which directly asked participants to consider who has power in their school communities, Abby initially wrote in April (Reflection 4): "The principal here has, obviously, final say about campus decisions, though it seems there are times he hands that power over out of habit or convenience." Yet by early May she wrote in Reflection 12:

> My perception of who has power has changed. We all have power. We could have more power by finding who has power at each level, and how to utilize that power to help us achieve the most for our students. For example, being a new teacher this year at the middle school I had very little power, but I realize now that lack of power was mostly due to lack of knowledge. The names of the principal, vice principal and head of your department are not enough. It's finding out who in the staff meetings speaks out the most versus who is most respected. Who do people roll their eyes at when they speak and who does the principal speak to in confidence. Likewise in the classroom, who do student's listen to, laugh at, look up to, and want to be like. Every relationship is a potential key to gaining an edge.

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Cogent thoughts, indeed, and very much in line with the problems of public school power structure to be identified in Chapter 5 by Tollefson (2008).

Surely, tenacious reader, about now you are wishing you had a more glamorous job where reading was optional – say a caviar connoisseur, or even a ditch digger. Hang in there – just one more case study to go, and it is the shortest one!

'Ida' – This year is great! Next year, who knows? Ida is the only elementary teacher to participate in this study. She has a Bachelor's degree, is working towards her Master's degree and National Board Certification, and has 35 additional credits towards Hawai'i DOE reclassification. Ida has taught for six years at the lower elementary level. Her students are in general education and those in special education are taught in an inclusion setting in her class. Her classroom is on the same campus as the other Site B teachers. Ida is white, female, and has two grown children. She was 60 years old at the start of this study, but is fit and trim and no doubt fools people all the time about her age.

Ida's most noteworthy trait is that she is a seeker of fun – it is the what, why and how of her teaching and this is made clear in the written data she submitted in the first semester. Ida did not complete the rest of her written PD course requirements in Semester II and dropped from the class in mid-May, citing she was was taking two other courses and was feeling overwhelmed. However, Ida did enough work and attended meetings all year to make her data sufficient for inclusion as a case study, albeit a more slender one. All of her written data was completed in August, September, October and December, except the post-survey presented next. While her interest in increasing collaboration persisted throughout the school year, Ida's zeal for writing about it clearly did not. Let's blame her English teachers!

Ida's pre- and post-survey data. Ida completed her pre-survey on August 29, 2010 and her post-survey on July 22, 2011. Item #1 asked her to estimate the number of families she contacted at least once per year and there was a dramatic change in her results within the year of this study, moving from 10-25% up to more than 75%. The methods of contact (Item #2) Ida preferred were letters sent home every week, Internet or text messages every semester (these remained unchanged from August to May), and face-to-face contact which increased from every semester to every quarter term. Ida almost never contacted families by telephone before or during her action research year.

Equally promising were Ida's responses regarding which family members she had contact with, and how often. Her contact with siblings and hanai family increased from almost never to every semester, and her contact with extended family members remained steady at every semester. Her contact with parents/legal guardians increased from every semester to every quarter term. It is not clear in the data if all the above perceptions improved as a direct result of her increased attention and efforts to collaborate, or if it was purely a result of chance. Ida mentioned in speaking with me that every year her

class varies widely in terms of the level of engagement she enjoys with students' families; the implication was that this is not something she has a great deal of control over.

Ida's Item #4 responses show only one indicator fell – her frequency of contact in regards to students being in danger of failing – while the other indicators held fairly steady (inappropriate behavior and student well-being both merited a low frequency of contact at 'every semester' or 'almost never'). Ida noted she contacted families every week to invite them to a school activity this school year, compared to every month in previous years. Item #5.a-e assesses the value of these contacts to Ida, and her responses show variation in all five indicators at the end of the school year compared to the beginning: she felt contacting families was 'always helpful', up from 'usually'; she felt it helps the students' classmates 'half the time', up from 'not helpful at all'; she felt it helps her always, both in the pre- and post-surveys; that it helps the school only 'half the time' compared to 'usually' in the pre-survey; and she felt it helps the families only 'usually' compared to 'always' in her August data. It is encouraging that Ida perceived some value in communicating with students' families for all stakeholders throughout the year.

Ida's estimations of how often her contacts with families resulted in true collaboration did not vary much between August and July the next year. In Item #6 she indicated letters sent home and face-to-face contact almost always result in true collaboration (a slight increase for face-to-face contact), while calls and electronic messages usually do not have this result (this is a slight increase for Internet or text messages).

Ida confirmed over her year of action research that weekly letters to families were a successful way to increase collaboration with students' families, as indicated in her pre-survey (Item #7). This suggests that her contacting families each week was not an increase this year, contradicting her answer to Item #1. In her post-survey she added sending invitations to parents to attend evening science or math activities that are exciting to students and where students are given points for attendance were also successful. Challenges to collaboration Ida found, in both the pre-survey and post-survey (Item #8), had to do with parents' lack of concern or care about their children's education. This may support the literature in Chapter 2 which describes how teachers' perceptions of parents – be they accurate or not – can negatively influence collaboration between home and school (Leitch & Tangri, 1988; Mendoza & Cegelka, cited by Chrispeels, 1987; Swap, 1993, in Christenson, 2002).

For Item #9 Ida expressed a desire to collaborate with families every semester regarding their child's commendable behavior, and this remained the same in both surveys. Regarding her desire to collaborate with families over negative concerns and to invite families to school activities, Ida efficiently wrote 'when needed' on all her pre-survey Items #9.b-e. However, in her post-survey, her answers included estimations alongside the comment 'when needed': for the negative concerns she wanted to

collaborate infrequently (every quarter term for inappropriate behavior, every month for well-being concerns, almost never for danger of failure); for invitations to school activities she desired weekly collaboration. Ida clearly has no shortage of common sense.

The awkward Item #10 (identified above as possibly being invalid) elicited these responses from Ida in her pre-survey: she believed increased collaboration with families could benefit the student, classmates and the school by improving grades, well-being and behavior for all. These answers remained unchanged by the end of the school year. She also indicated benefits for adult stakeholders in her pre-survey as follows: teachers, families and the community may have more desire to be involved. In her post-survey Ida's estimation of benefits increased for all three of these stakeholders, showing she believed each could also respect the challenges and efforts of others more as a result of increased collaboration.

The final survey Item #11 allowed Ida to write these comments in her post-survey:

I've tried collaboration and it takes extra after school time and money to support. I feel this has to be something that the administration has to 100% support with compensation.

This contribution of Ida's is found in the recommendations in Chapter 5. Thanks Ida!

Ida's written data. In Assignment #2 Ida assessed what the Site B school does to collaborate with families and she stated:

I am on the SCC and our funds have been cut from $400 to $200. The biggest event SCC plans is Community Meetings about the Financial/Academic Plan. This meeting is well planned and advertised ... last year only two parents came???

While this is obviously a lost opportunity (confirmed by the other Site B teachers above), Ida noted a local church provides after school tutoring that is successful. She wrote "The after school homework help is the one thing that helps student achievement. It's helping the students finish their homework."

Regarding her own efforts to collaborate with families, Ida wrote for Assignment #3.A:

I know all my students and parents appreciate the two nights I've had for them. They really like the informative one where I went over all of the standards and all the new technologies we are incorporating in my class. We are using Accelerated Math when we don't have too (sic), and the same for Achieve 3000. I want to

bring all of this into my classroom and I need the parents to buy into it to be successful.

This is the only written data regarding Ida's *'Ohana Gathering* and interventions. She hosted a science night with the help of a high school science teacher in September that she felt was a big success as most students' families attended and appreciated it. She also hosted a Winter Program in December that was well attended by families.

Ida's data by telephone and observation. We did not converse by telephone, but Ida and I met once to clarify expectations for PD course assignments, and had difficulty getting our schedules together to meet more often for this reason. I suspect if we had she may have been able to complete the written work on time and might not have dropped the course. However, Ida attended all the group meetings and gave valuable input, which I am saving for the Site B team data below, just to keep the reader in suspense!

Emergent themes in Ida's data – theme one: relationship building. In August Ida completed her Reflection 2 and responded, like Roz, strongly to the reading on Appreciative Inquiry (Ludema & Whitney, 2003). She wrote:

> We never think about telling people what great talents they have and how that could affect their self-esteem. Telling people ... where in life they excel will make them feel good about themselves. So if I want to find solutions I focus ... [on] what is working not what isn't working.

This comment aligns with her stated philosophy for teaching which she penned in Reflection 7 (errors are in original text):

> My mandated, firm, obsolete belief about education is it should be fun, enjoyable exciting, motivating, passionate, and absolutely SAFE. In my class we are always singing, dancing, laughing and totally engaged. I rarely pick out a child to answer a question I usually do groups where I roam around and ask private questions. My questions are usually done in a non-threatening way. If they are wrong in their answer I make sure I honor their answer I don't say "NO", "WRONG" I'll repeat what they say and I'll say "hmm lets look at that and see how it work's" When they look at it and I give them hints they usually come up with the right answer and they don't even remember they answered wrong in the first place. This is very empowering to them, they did it, they answered correctly and they feel good about talking to me.

I infer from these comments Ida seeks to establish strong, trusting relationships with her students, just as Kit and Abby did, and this thinking is supported in the literature review (NWREL, 2005b). She also considered how to do the same with their parents in her Reflection 5:

To get 'ohana to collaborate you need to meet them on their level of education and society. Become their friend first. When you first talk have something nice to say about their student. Make you're (sic) room open to them and welcoming so they feel good about coming in. Have specific ideas on how they can collaborate. The Filipino culture reveres teachers and that is a hard hurdle to get over. They think whatever you do is good so keep on doing it. You need to convince them that they are included in their child's learning and have the right to be part of it Having food always gets all family members in.

Ida reiterated these thoughts in our January meeting at Site B, stating: "Filipinos think the teacher is 'the boss' so they don't think it is necessary to participate in class activities." The comments above are interesting as they indicate how cultural perceptions effect collaboration efforts, and how teachers desire to share their power and responsibility with parents in the education of their children. Also, the reader may note a trend in the Site B teachers' recommendations to lure families in the door with food. Clearly, country living makes them a hungry lot!

Ida elaborated more on her thoughts regarding relationship building and trust with her students' families in an extra Reflection 5 she submitted:

The best way I've found to get Ohana to collaborate is to gain their trust. You do that by talking with them at school and making them feel welcomed in the class. Then I've found first asking them to be present at an activity that the students are presenting to the class *(sic)*. This gets them familiar with being in the class. It seems almost everyone is brought back to their school days when the reenter a class. Most of the memories that flood back to them are not very positive so they want to distance themselves from the class. When you ask them in just to observe they feel safe and comfortable. That's when you grab them to do more things for the class and their child...

For example the students just did a research report on volcanoes. They wanted to do a volcano model, so I sent home flyers explaining what I was doing. I said the parents could help build the volcano that it wasn't being graded but the research report and presentation of the report would be graded. I got a tremendous amount of participation, about 12 parents came in that day to watch the presentation. Everyone loved it because it was non-threatening, not graded and the parents just had to sit and watch, but they knew they helped. Next time it'll be a lot easier to get cooperation from the parents...

Having the parent help in the volcano project meant that the students ...were ... differentiated to the point they could do as much as they wanted and not alone so they felt supported. Two girls whose parents do nothing with their students and

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didn't present anything at the time, I took them home on sat. and helped them write their report and we built a volcano to present that Monday.

These comments show how Ida worked simultaneously to establish and cement relationships with students and family members by being sensitive to their social emotional needs. Also, they attest to her dedication to making learning fun for everyone. Ida confided that, like me, she would rather not have spent a Saturday, and her own money, helping students in this way, but felt she needed to for the sake of those two students. She further mentioned in our January meeting with other Site B teacher-researchers that she felt two of her non-involved parents had "too many jobs" and another was a "young mom." She sympathized with their reasons for not collaborating more. This leads us to consider the expectations schools have of parents.

Emergent themes in Ida's data – theme two: expectations. In Reflection 4 Ida explained what she expected to gain from taking the PD course, as well as where her expectations of parents fall short:

We have a very small community with parents that generally don't get involved with their students...

My expectations of this course is ... find a new better way of getting my parents to participate with me in a learning community for the students' sake. My role as a teacher is to bring the parents in and help them understand what their child is doing so they can help at home. I believe that if the family is invested in education the student will be too.

The belief in this last sentence is well supported in the literature reviewed in Chapter 2 (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003).

Emergent themes in Ida's data – theme three: alienation. In a January Site B meeting Ida described an incident when a family member came in "to attack me, not about my teaching, but about my personal behavior." This happened off campus at a different activity Ida offers to children in the community. Her adversary was a grandmother who did not like Ida's sarcasm. Ida said she felt "neutered" by instances such as these, but as she was not at work she "felt good to say you're not welcome" to the woman. Ida summarized: "Parents don't defend us at teachers." These comments clearly show a sense of alienation.

Two excerpts from Ida's written Reflections 1 and 5 (extra) also imply alienation she has felt, and that which she perceives her students' parents feel. She wrote:

I have made several attempts with teacher/family collaboration and it hasn't been successful so I am hoping to learn how to improve my methods ... I hope to gain the parents' understanding, respect and cooperation with the students' learning.

As far as culture, in the Philippines culture they have teachers on a pedestal with Dr.'s. Knowing this I know they won't feel comfortable asking me questions or even talking with me. So my main focus is getting the parents to be comfortable around me. I start this by using a lot of humor in my class so the students really enjoy themselves. The students go home and tell their parents how much fun they are having, in turn the parents start to feel good about me and that I am approachable. Getting them to know I am fun and open is my main goal. Then as I said above I ask them in for things that I just want them to observe, a very non-threatening situation where there is no expectation of them to do anything. Once they've done that a couple of times then I present opportunities for them to help with projects in class.

Once again, Ida offers a very social-emotional solution to hindrances she perceives – if parents are intimidated by a teachers' status or authority, humor and invitations may be better avenues to success, just as Kit found, than beginning with expectations parents may feel are not fun, a good use of their time, or beyond their capacity, as I and other participants found, at times. Also noteworthy in this last reflection are Ida's thoughts regarding the diversity of her students' families, which is discussed next.

Emergent themes in Ida's data – theme four: diversity and power. Reflection 4 asked Ida to consider the diversity of the school-community at Site B and she wrote:

Socio-economic level is very low, in fact the school qualifies for Title 1 meaning a lot of students have free/reduced lunch because of income of the parents. Because of this low income there also comes with it the mentality from uneducated people, drinking, drugs, etc. This causes problems for educators trying to get in touch with the parents...

While it may be disconcerting to see Ida link lack of education with risky behaviors in her students' families, the Site B school community does include a majority of families with no more than high school education, and like all communities, substance abuse can be found. In the same reflection Ida contemplates who in the community has power:

We have many strong community members who advocate for our community. The people with the power are the ones that know the laws and deal with our politicians on a regular basis. This is usually the chairs of committees or non-profit agencies. The programs important to our school are School Community Council which is very impotent but it does bring together community and faculty and inform them.

Ida did not provide any more written data related to the theme of diversity and power in the community. However, she did write an extra Reflection 6 in which her own sense of power, as well as the potential of others to help or hinder her students, is made clear (as before, text is copied exactly as in the original):

> Teachers Make All Other Professions Possible, we are the foundation of what our society will become in the future. We have their little minds in our hands to care for nurture and give excitement about learning. I am here to find the most innovative, insightful, creative, fantastically fun way so the students not only learn but want to learn with passion. In order to make this a complete picture the need to include everyone that touches the students is mandatory since their influence makes or breaks the child's' education. If you can't get everyone within the sphere of influence of the student to buy into the importance of their education then you've failed in a big way. If parents don't care at all or even sabotage your efforts your influence on this child has dramatically been reduced.

It is unfortunate that Ida had cause in the last sentence to refer to the same kind of alienation and anti-involvement evident in other participants' case studies above. Nevertheless, it is positive that Ida clearly agrees with powerful researchers influencing education today. One would think Ida had read the literature reviewed in Chapter 2, in fact, and perhaps she has, as Dewey and Vygotsky and their ideas regarding the many spheres of influence on students are staples of teacher training programs in America (Dewey, 1938, 1929; Vygotsky, 1978, 1998).

Roz, Abby, Ida and Sam in action. At last, we come to the end of our case studies, and the promised interactions amongst the Site B teacher-researchers when they met as a group. These are presented below under the same Emergent Theme sub-headings as each case study, where applicable. At the August 29th meeting of Site B teachers Abby was not present as she had not yet enrolled, while two other participants who dropped the course and submitted almost no written data, were present. Observations which relate to the main themes are included for this meeting and all subsequent ones in October, January and May. Then a couple of paragraphs of input gleaned from these meetings which do not fit the main themes are given, to finally put a lid on the presentation of case study data. The reader is permitted a sigh of relief here.

Emergent themes in Site B interactions – theme one: relationship building. While this theme arose in discussions throughout the year, the salient comments overlap with other themes related to alienation, culture and power; hence, they are found below. It was only in our May meeting that my observation notes show the theme of relationship building stood alone, in regards to teachers' relationship building with each other, and parent volunteers.

I asked the Site B participants if small groups of teachers, either by subject area or other common interest, could "... harness the 'good grades' and nurture them to reach out to the other grades whose families are less likely to collaborate with school staff." Ida stated she collaborated successfully with another teacher on staff for two years doing 'Math Nights', but the success was dependent on parent involvement, which they could not rely on. She also said she asked our principal for funds to host a monthly game night for our next school year. Abby said the same activity was very successful at a mainland school she taught at where parents were given answer sheets with explanations to help their volunteer efforts. The success of this makes sense, as building parents capacity to help their students may lead to the empowerment measures recommended in Chapter 5.

I also stated I felt it was important for "teachers to socialize and enjoy non-official fun events" as it makes staff collaborating easier. Roz stated this used to happen at our school but then stopped, perhaps because "getting together is 'still working'." No further dialogue on the theme of relationship building occurred at our meetings.

Emergent themes in Site B interactions – themes two and three: expectations and alienation. Roz began the August meeting by identifying her target class, and wondered aloud about why her students were reluctant to invite their parents to her dinner activities, stating she was "unsure if they don't want parents to come, or think parents don't want to come." This supports literature on the mediating roles students play between home and school (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003). Roz linked this to a problem with expectations schools have of parents and the lack of time and money available to make collaboration happen. The group all agreed with her comments. Ida noted she spent $25-50 for each evening science event she held the previous school year and lamented only the same four parents showed up each time. Ida hoped her PD coursework would help her to increase family involvement and collaboration every year, regardless of the predispositions of parents to get involved or not. There is no data indicating this happened, unfortunately.

At a meeting at the end of the year in early May, Abby stated she believed, after elementary school, "parents feel teachers should take over and no time is needed from them." This too is supported in the literature by Desforges and Abouchaar (2003). Roz responded by saying that in middle school either the students are "independent enough or the opposite and so parents are fed up." She added the students are "okay with team work but not working alone" and Roz attributed this especially to Filipino students. I asked if this indicated a cultural mismatch between home and school. I think now it does, and that this expectation is especially alienating to cultures like that of Filipinos who hold collectivist values, as discussed in Chapter 2 (Black, Mrasek & Ballinger, 2003). Roz felt it did not, that it simply showed some students are either lazy or fearful of failure, an opinion corroborated in her written data.

This led our discussion, once more, to considerations of the Protestant work ethic and how, as Roz put it, "today's kids are not all raised to meet this challenge." She added of one student she was thinking about, "the pressure shuts him down." My own input at this point was to leap to one of my favorite soapboxes, and I asked the group to consider the point of view of The Idler, found online (Hodgkinson, 2011), which may be considered an antidote to 'work-aholism' and traces the history of ever increasing demands on citizens' time to the dawn of the industrial revolution. It remains my belief that demanding increased quantity of work from students and teachers alike will inevitably lead to decreased quality of work. I urge the reader to check out Hodgkinson's website before it's too late!

In the May meeting Abby also made an interesting comment about student expectations being set as early as Grade 2, when they begin to hear phrases from both adults and other children such as 'I hate math'. This "sets kids up to hate it and fail it," Abby asserted. Researchers would likely agree, as the literature review in Chapter 2 links parent attitudes and expectations to student achievement (Lee & Bowen, 2006).

Emergent themes in Site B interactions – theme four: diversity and power. Discussion of special education amongst participants led to revelations about parental power. In Site B's January meeting Abby mentioned many special education children are mis-identified as such in Hawai'i. This thread was revisited in our May meeting when a discussion of disabilities arose. Roz mentioned she tried to refer one of her students for services and the parents would not accept the child might meet 504 or special education criteria. Ida felt the parents perceived these as negative labels. I asked if more disability awareness and acceptance was needed as a solution and Ida agreed strongly. She felt each child *needs* testing, but that IEP jargon is a problem and leads to professionals not looking at children as "real people." This may support the literature of Lee and Bowen (2006). She reiterated her belief that teachers need to tell parents they are in control, and she stated: "Parents need to be given more power." However, this is not true of all parents, and she cited one parent to whom "admin caves to always." I shared that in my experience "admin always fears bad media and loud parents."

The issue of culture and race came up much more in Site B meetings than in each participant's own written data. At the January meeting, I mentioned I thought haole (white) families were more likely to complain than other cultures. Roz felt Filipinos were more likely to be racist, but that she had more problems with Hawaiian families who did not want to be told what to do, how to do it, or that they had to do anything. Ida added that one of her Hawaiian families whom she felt was "defiant," she believed, actually taught aggression to their children. It was at this point that the link between diversity and power arose.

I asked the team what the best approach for us, as haole teachers, should be. Roz responded: "I see myself as having more power. I am from the majority white culture

and *can* effect change. I am culturally not submissive." Ida contributed the idea then, that today men are portrayed as being more impotent than women, and Abby seemed to agree by citing the differences in the portrayals of television characters played by Bill Cosby versus the father on *Leave It To Beaver* decades earlier. Ida responded: "So we're empowered at a cost to men." I then asked: "So as white females, do male parents avoid us?" The dialogue continued with Abby's referring to the nurturing traits of women, and Ida referring to Tony Robbins (Wikipedia, 2011) whom she believes posits women's energy is more masculine nowadays. Roz described how she had to "be everything to her kids after she divorced," and Ida responded: "Men want to do the nurturing and women won't let them." We explored power and gender issues further.

Next I asked the group what the values of our male and female students are, if their parents have the same or different responses to men and women, and how they respond to us as assertive, white, female teachers. Abby stated males used to be pushed to achieve and go to college despite daughters who did better in Asian, Hawaiian and Filipino cultures. She added local girls are not pampered and work hard, but her perception was that this is not true for the boys. Roz's insight to this led us in another direction: she opined that our students all see visitors to Hawai'i who come to play, and they do not see the hard work they must do to get here for their vacations, "so our students don't see the reality."

The power aspects of this conversation are reminiscent of one the Site B group had in August when Ida and Gay (who soon dropped the PD course) both mentioned they served on the SCC and agreed they did not see much effect. At another meeting in January, Roz and Abby discussed how some teachers have the power to "dictate" or "have a say" in decisions and some do not (corroborating their written data above); Roz identified these teachers as either "bullies" or "smooth talkers." Ida agreed with Roz that this was frustrating and commented: "The leadership team is a facade; the principal gets what he wants." My own 'two cents' to this dialogue was to note there did not seem to be a clear process for decision-making at our school.

A last note on power, or more accurately powerlessness, can be gleaned from Site B and Site A workshops in August, when the opportunity arose for me to pontificate about how ideas that work and are research-based cycle in and out of education because of politics, funding and public opinion. I revisited this rant every so often, and in January Roz's comment that she'd been trained in place-based methods in her teacher education in the 1960s inspired me to draw the link to Dewey's similar philosophies in the 1930s, and to offer a diatribe on the effects *A Nation at Risk*, cited in Chapter 1, has had on education since the 1980s (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983): namely, school reform and accountability obsessions have stalled more valuable changes in public schooling.

Site B interactions – additional data. One positive outcome of the first Site B workshop and their discussion of Appreciative Inquiry (Ludema & Whitney, 2003) was that the team identified a problem with the school's report card comment options being almost entirely negative. This was brought to the attention of the registrar and ameliorated immediately with faculty input. Another positive outcome of a Site B meeting was in January, when the idea of giving families a clear reason to attend school activities was discussed and it was agreed that having adults learn skills from students and/or create a product would be valuable. These ideas are included in the recommendations in Chapter 5. Once more, the idea of including food at events was supported by all. Perhaps this preoccupation with eating is my fault, as our first meeting included high tea.

So honestly, reader – how does reading all this compare to, say, childbirth? No so bad? Much easier to nap, and just as much excuse for profanity, right? Well, go ahead, doze, curse, or both, but do return. This longest of chapters is about to end, and one needs to focus here, or the big finale will make no sense.

Data Analysis

In this section of Chapter 4, as promised, the compiled data is analyzed, followed by a cross-case examination of common themes which emerged from all six teacher-researchers' experiences. Quality and triangulation of data are described after this, segueing neatly to a discussion of limitations, bias and alternate explanations. Lastly, statements regarding researcher bias and the credibility, reliability and validity of the study, are given below at which point the readers may well find themselves dancing in the streets. I give firm assurance I will be doing the same.

Teacher-researchers' compiled data analyzed. In the interest of providing rich qualitative data much has already been said about each participant's pre-and post-surveys, teacher-researcher surveys given to students and family members, participants coursework and my own observations and field notes. Thus, this section of the chapter aims only to draw the reader's attention to important similarities and differences amongst the data, and to analyze these with particular attention to the emergent themes and insights which can be drawn from them.

Pre- and post-survey analysis – Part A teacher gender. Part A of the survey instrument gathered basic demographic data of the participants, and the quality this adds to this study is addressed below. The noteworthy fact that all participants who completed the course are female and White, however, can be discussed here.

Recall in Chapter 3 ten participants originally enrolled in the PD course, and 80% were women. In such a small sample size, the difference between the number of women teachers in Hawai'i, known to be 75% (NEA Research, 2010) and the 80% who enrolled

is negligible. Although, it must be remembered that the PD course specifically attempted to attract secondary teachers, 60% of whom are women in Hawai'i. While no proof positive that men are less interested in family collaboration can be drawn from the fact that a greater number of men did not enroll in the PD course, and no men completed it, questions linger in this researcher's mind.

The two men who initially enrolled confessed to having little interest in family collaboration; they simply wanted three credits towards classification that would not be too arduous to obtain. Is this lesser interest in collaborating with families indicative of a difference between how men and women teachers do their jobs? Are women actually more aware of the benefits of collaboration, or more willing to put in extra time to achieve it than men? Or are we fooling ourselves? Do men believe, or have they found, that collaboration does not lead to greater student achievement? Can teacher gender be tied to the volumes of research debating the nurturing instincts of women versus men and how this effects students? Is it merely my feminine bias that raises these questions? I can only ask the readers to judge for themselves, as it is beyond the scope of this study to further examine gender issues in education. Perhaps the ethnicities of participants can be more easily considered.

Pre- and post-survey analysis – Part A teacher ethnicity. According to Kana'iaupuni, Ledward and Jensen (2010, p.6): "Ethnicity varies considerably with a quarter of DOE teachers reporting Hawaiian ancestry, a third reporting Japanese ancestry and the largest group (46 percent) reporting Caucasian ancestry." They add across all schools 45% of teachers report other ethnicities which would include mixed race, and thus account for the overlap. If almost half of all DOE teachers are part or fully White, and 70% of the original enrollees in the PD course of this study are fully White, can the 20% difference be significant? If so, in what ways? Are White teachers more likely to seek collaboration with families, and view that as a successful strategy? Are they more likely to want to push their culture, and the dominant culture of public schools, onto non-White students and families as a way to help students achieve in a system that some researchers feel is culturally biased against them and designed for their failure? Are White teachers more likely to identify a culturally related need to collaborate with their majority non-White students and their families?

Kana'iaupuni, Ledward and Jensen (2010) are concerned with culture-based education and its successful delivery to Hawaiian students. Yet, others are concerned with racial intolerance in Hawai'i. Keller (2009) reports fairly widespread and serious attacks against White students by non-Whites in Hawai'i schools which stem, ultimately, from "ancestral memory" of the theft of Hawaiian land and culture. Keller quotes Matsuoka, a University of Hawai'i dean and social work expert (2009, p.1):

> Racial violence directed at whites in Hawai'i, while deplorable, is minor
> compared to the larger issues underlying it ... The Hawaiian spirit of aloha "is

pervasive, but you have to earn aloha. You don't necessarily trust outsiders, because outsiders [historically] come and have taken what you have.

Kit, Abby, and Ida all specifically referred to the need to build such trust in relationships with families, and Abby and I, being new-comers to the Site B school, both felt time and evidence of our commitment was necessary for us to be accepted in the community. This research also raises more questions about White teachers in Hawai'i's schools. If White students are despised in some schools, then how must the majority non-White students feel about the nearly half of their teachers who are White? If this intolerance is also common in the public sphere, and some students are learning resentment and aggression towards Whites in their homes, then how must this effect White teachers who attempt to collaborate with those families?

The participants in this study reported some racially related antagonism in their careers. Roz and Ida characterized Hawaiians as sometimes defiant and aggressive, and Roz stated she believed Filipinos to be racist. They, along with Kit and Mae, made many references to "attacks" upon them by parents, and while none were identified as racially related, one wonders if cultural differences and intolerance did indeed influence the families and the teachers. I do not suggest any of the participants in this study is intentionally prejudiced – in fact I feel I know them well enough to assure the reader they are not – but none of us can escape the culture into which we are born, and what seems "normal" to us. Roz's comment that her dominant White culture empowers her and allows her to be not submissive supports this, as does the research cited in Chapter 2 (Lee & Bowen, 2006; Lee, 2003; Darder et al, 2003; Schlesinger, 1991 in Chapman, Davison & Panet, 2002).

Ultimately, the scope of this study does not allow for conclusions about the ethnicity of teachers who are interested in or believe in the value of collaboration with students' families. Five to ten teachers are not a sufficient sample population, and the 20% difference in my participants' ethnicity and the state average percentage of White teachers can easily be dismissed as chance. Nevertheless, the questions raised about how culture and race, consciously and subconsciously effect home-school relationships and collaboration, are valid ones, and beg further study. More research – our careers are secure!

Pre- and post-survey analysis and limitations – Part B questionnaire. The survey instrument cannot be discussed without first addressing its limitations. The piloting of the survey, discussed in Chapter 3, was minimal and did not lead to identification of weaknesses in the format or nature of the questions. Another serious concern regarding the surveys is the haste with which the teachers may have done them. I witnessed most participants as they completed their pre-surveys, and some definitely answered all items quickly enough to suggest either firm answers, or no deep consideration of what was being asked. I did not observe any participants as they

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completed the post-survey, but as this was done by most at the end of the school year, when teachers notoriously have lost their zeal to be conscientious, I fear these were also done, by some, hastily and without careful thought where it was needed, or perhaps some answers showed teacher confidence in their perceptions. Ultimately, I have included the data of this instrument in the study, rather than tossing it all away, because of its value in supporting or disconfirming the other data the teacher-researchers provided to me via observation, conversation and written coursework.

Item #1 of the survey asked what percent of families teachers contacted at least once per year and 50% of the participants reported an increase, with 30% of this increase being quite high. One participant showed no change in their perception of this item between their pre- and post-surveys, and another, Mae, showed a decrease. However, Mae's other data show she may have had more contact with families than her estimate of 10%-25% at the end of her action research, as her responses to the YouTube posting of students' work were substantial and deemed very positive by the majority of parents, most of whom she surveyed. Overall, all teachers appeared to have increased their contact efforts with families during the year of this study, as their other written data show.

Item #2 was designed to reveal what kind of communications (i.e. letters, calls, electronic messages or meeting in person) teachers used to contact families in order to see if that changed after their year of action research. While some teachers wrote answers to this question to clarify their thoughts (such as "as needed" and "it varies"), they also checked the answers given in the survey and each appeared to favor certain modes of communication over others. Letters (Item #2.a) were used by the elementary teacher on a weekly basis, and this was no change from her contact methods prior to participating in this study; in contrast, the middle and high school teachers did not use letters nearly as much and their frequency of doing so did not vary greatly by May. Telephone call frequency (Item #2.b) also did not change much for all participants, with minor increases recorded only for myself. Yet the amount of calls home teachers make is quite pronounced even within this small group: Kit and Mae make calls home every week, Roz and Ida almost never, and Abby and myself once or twice per semester. No reasons why those who call less or never do so were given, although having the time to do so is the reason I give for my own limited efforts to call. As time is an issue for all participants, it is not unreasonable to assume this is one reason for fewer calls home by two-thirds of these teacher-researchers.

Item #2.c also shows emails and text messages were sent to families in greatly varying amounts, from almost never by Abby and Roz, to every semester by Ida and me, and every month by Kit and Mae. This is a decrease for Kit and an increase for me. Item #2.d indicates the greatest increase in home contacts was is face-to-face meetings. Abby, Roz and Ida all increased this type of contact to every quarter or semester (Roz), and Mae and I maintained our previous semesterly contact. Kit's in person contacts she noted were tied to IEP meetings which required her and guardian attendance. Overall, those

uppity Site A teachers appeared to have made more contacts with families at least once per year than the Site B teachers, but the Site B teachers showed them with evidence of greater increases in contacts from August to May (approximately 13% increase in all four methods of contact was perceived by Site B teachers). Corroborating data from case studies above support the claim that all teachers perceived they increased their contacts with families during this project. Onward to victory!

Item #3 asked which family members teachers communicated with (i.e. parents/ guardians, siblings, extended family and hanai) and again the Site B teachers showed more increase overall – show offs. All teacher-researchers felt they contacted some parents or guardians at least every quarter term, and the Site A teachers did so every week or month before and during this study. However, Kit appears to have lost steam, as she reported the only decrease in parent communications, down to every quarter term, in her post-survey. Only a third of the teacher-researchers increased communications with siblings, extended family and hanai, and other written data show I was the only one to seriously consider the benefits of doing so.

Item #4 asked respondents what the reasons for their communication to families were, and results for Item #4.a support the claims of those teachers who found contacting families regarding their children doing something commendable was worthwhile. All but one teacher increased their communication with families to send such positive messages, and the Site B teachers all agreed this happened every semester, at a minimum. The Site A teachers outdid them, as their data show agreement that every month or quarter such positive communication was shared. Is this "one-upmanship" going to be a pattern with these teachers? Will I have to knock some heads together?

Items #4.b-d show virtually no change in the participants' communications with families regarding negative student concerns (i.e. poor behavior, well-being and possible failure). The exception is Roz, who increased her communications for all three of these reasons to every semester, compared to almost never in the pre-survey. It is not clear if this was due to her increased effort to collaborate or simply because she had more to say to families this school year regarding these types of concerns. The last item, #4.e, gauges teacher communications that invite families to school activities. Roz increased her invitations to every semester, up from almost never, and Ida increased hers from monthly to weekly. Ida clearly wins! Other teachers' responses of invitations communicated to families every quarter or semester are supported by the participants' intervention data earlier in this chapter.

Perceived benefits of communications home for students, their families, the teacher, student's classmates, and the school (Items #5.a-e) increased in for all teachers, except Roz whose perceptions of benefits remained virtually unchanged over the year. Mae, in particular, indicated an increased perception of benefit for all stakeholders, and in most notably her perception of the benefit to the school changed completely: in October

she felt communication with families was not beneficial at all for the school compared to May when she felt it was always helpful. This dramatic change in perception could be tied to her unique YouTube intervention, which potentially was viewed by students' peers and staff; however, she her other data give no indication of this, nor do they provide any explanation for this change in thinking.

Abby's responses to Item #5 were as positive at Mae's, except for the student, whom she felt communication usually helped in both her pre- and post-surveys. Ida perceived an increase in benefit for the student and classmates, while I recorded an increased benefit for the student only. Kit's data for student benefit is the same as mine, however, she reported a decrease in perceived benefit for the teacher, the student's classmates, and the school in her post-survey. Overall, participants perceptions show more increase (43%) than decrease (20%) in the benefits of communicating with families.

Item #6 was designed to directly access the perceptions of collaboration this study hoped to influence by asking which modes of contact resulted in true collaboration with families. The methods of communication (letter, calls, electronic messages or face-to-face contact) seemed to depend on personal preferences of teachers, primarily, and families secondarily, and so do not lend much meaningful insight to this analysis. However, the perception of true collaboration reported by participants in this item are interesting. At Site A Kit appears to have experienced more true collaboration with families than any other participant: she reported increases in collaboration resulting from her letters and phone calls, and especially from her face-to-face contacts; her use of the Internet and/or text messaging she felt resulted in true collaboration more often than not in both August and May; and she wrote on the survey that helping families and students set up email accounts also contributed to collaboration. The levels of true collaboration she felt she achieved ranged from sometimes (for letters and in person contact in the pre-survey) to more often than not (for post-survey letters) to almost always (for calls, electronic messages and face-to-face contacts in the post-survey). To corroborate these data, Kit said in conversations with me she was believed she had a lot of parent support because she communicated with them often and sought to truly collaborate, and that she is proud of this. I concur this gives her bragging rights!

For the other participants true collaboration was not perceived quite this much, but all reported some increases over the action research year. My data, which uniformly shows I felt true collaboration almost never resulted from contacts with families prior to August, show by May I perceived it occurred more often than not for all types of contacts except letters sent home. Abby ended the year agreeing with this perception of the collaborative value of letters, while most other participants felt letters sent home only sometimes resulted in collaboration. The exception, as noted above, is Ida, for whom weekly letters to families are essentially and highly effective.

Like Kit, I learned that calls home could result in more collaboration than I initially thought, but Abby and Mae ended the year feeling less strongly that calls home could do so. Roz felt calls sometimes result in true collaboration and Ida wrote calls usually did not; neither of these teachers' opinions changed by May. Item #6.c shows two-thirds of the participants increased their perception of the collaborative potential of emails and/or text messages, with half of us feeling collaboration was achieved more often than not via this mode of communication, one third feeling it occurred sometimes, and only one participant reporting that it usually did not result in true collaboration.

Finally, Item #6.d data show half of the teachers in this study perceived an increase in true collaboration as a result of face-to-face contacts with families. While the other half perceived a decrease compared to their pre-survey perceptions, all participants felt personal contact resulted in true collaboration more often than not or almost always. Only Roz ended the year with the perception that face-to-face contacts with families only sometimes resulted in true collaboration.

Overall, possible differences in teacher's perceptions of what constitutes "true collaboration" likely have as much to do with these findings, as do their personal preferences for certain methods of communication. It is not stretch of the imagination to deduce if a teacher prefers not to make calls home, then those calls are less likely to result in true collaboration, and the same would hold true for letters, emails and face-to-face contacts.

Item #7 allowed respondents to write their answers regarding what the most successful ways to increase collaboration with families are. These thoughts are given in each case study, and recommendations which are derived from this survey and the other data are found in Chapter 5. The compiled data show teacher-researchers believed the following can lead to increased collaboration: beginning the year with positive contacts before negative student concerns arise; regularly inviting families to non-threatening, purposeful and/or fun school-related activities; giving families the opportunity to see students and teachers interact, especially where student skills and work they are proud of can be demonstrated or shared; building rapport and trust with families over time in casual interactions, especially in small groups or one-on-one before interacting in large groups; using Edline more and assisting families and students to use the Internet; and sending weekly letters home, especially at the elementary level.

Neither these strategies nor the hindrances to collaboration given next were voiced unanimously by every participant, and the opportunities to agree or disagree with each perception were lean, particularly for Site A teachers. However, participants were all given the chance to respond to the compiled data and analysis given here in January, and their input is integrated in this section of the chapter.

Item #8 participant data provides the challenges they felt thwart increased collaboration with families. Teachers cited: a lack of trust and lack of authentic relationships with families; families only hearing from teachers when there are negative concerns; families having no access to the Internet; both families and teachers having no time and/or energy to meet; cultural and language barriers which may include teacher perceptions that some parents don't care about their children's education; plus the fact that students themselves do not want teachers and families to collaborate, and some families also do not want to do so. Recommendations to address these concerns are given in Chapter 5, as well.

Item #9 was designed to find out how often teachers want to collaborate with students' families, and if their desire to do so changed over the school year. Teachers desire to report something commendable students do to their families (Item #9.a) was high in August (two-thirds wanted to do so every month, and the others wanted to do so every semester); by may two teachers wanted to increase this to every week, and one wanted to increase it to every month. Two of the other teachers did not change their opinion of how often they wanted to contact families to commend students, and one teacher's data show she felt doing so every quarter term rather than every month would suit her better. Case studies above indicate this data is accurate.

Items #9.b-d relate to teachers' desire to collaborate with families regarding negative situations, namely students behaving inappropriately, that their well-being is a concern, or that they are in danger of failure. These items are likely problematic, as very few of us relish telling others bad news, and the effects of communicating with families only to share negative reports are well documented in the literature in Chapter 2 and in the case studies above. As well, the participants' responses to these items offer only limited useful information. Two participants responded "outside the box" on their surveys writing "when needed" and/or circling more than one answer regarding frequency. Two other participants indicated they almost never wanted to collaborate with families about negative situations in both their pre- and post-surveys. Kit, the special education resource teacher, desired to collaborate for the stated reasons every week in her post-survey (an increase from every month or quarter or when needed), and the last participant's responses on her pre-survey varied from every quarter to every week to every month, while in her post-surveys she simply responded collaboration for these reasons should occur every month. I repeat – Items #9.b-d are good candidates for the Limitations section of this analysis.

Item #9.e shows teachers' desire to collaborate with families by inviting them to school-related activities. Three teachers ended the year wanting to do this every month, two wanted to do this every week, and one felt once a quarter term would suffice. These responses for half the teachers were an increase, for one third of them there was no change between August and May, and for a single participant this was a decrease in desire to collaborate through family invitation to a school activity from every week to every

quarter. Overall, teacher interest in collaborating through school activities with families was generally high throughout the year, and increased 50%.

Lastly, Item #10 on the survey asked respondents to evaluate the changes increased collaboration could bring about for stakeholders (students, their peers, the school, students' families, teachers, and the community). This item was the most problematic one on the survey, evidenced by written and spoken comments about it as well as sections left blank or marked "n/a." The case studies above suggest for some participants this item may be valid, while for others it is not. This being the case, it makes sense to omit the data generated. However, this survey really only serves as a qualitative tool, not a quantitative one in most instances. Therefore, in the interest in being thorough, I will include the partial data it seems fair to retrieve here.

Item #10.a in the pre-survey was answered by all participants in the same way: they believed students' behavior, grades and well-being could all be positively effected by increased teacher-family collaboration. By May, only one participant changed this perception, noting only the students' well-being could be effected. The effect on students' classmates (Item #10.b) elicited similar responses on the pre-survey except from me (I deemed their grades could not be positively effected). But in the post-survey only one teacher did not change her opinion. My opinion improved regarding the effect on classmate's grades, but two-thirds of the teachers saw less positive effects on classmates, with two feeling there is no effect on them, and the other two agreeing only classmate behavior is effected and one of these thinking their well-being is also effected.

Item #10.c was left blank in two pre-surveys, but these teachers responded in the post-surveys that the effect of increased collaboration on the school is almost nothing (Kit) and can positively effect behavior, grades and well-being (Ida). Roz and Mae initially believed what Ida stated in her post-survey, but Roz changed her answer in the post-surveys to match Kit's. Mae's perception of the effect of increased collaboration on the school did not change over the course of the school year. Like Roz, Abby's assessment of positive school effects diminished: she felt only school behavior and well-being could be effected by collaboration. I alone recorded an improved perception of the effect of increased collaboration on the school, from better well-being and behavior in the pre-survey to better grades as well in the post-survey.

Items #10.d-f sought to uncover if teachers believed respect for others' efforts and challenges or a desire to be more involved could result because of increased collaboration between home and school. Kit wrote beside Item #10.d on the post-survey "I don't understand this" and in hindsight I must agree the format of the question is particularly poor. Shockingly, even I did not answer this item or the next two items in the pre- or post-surveys! I can only conclude the pressures of doctoral studies short-circuited my neurons at this stage. Nevertheless, the other participants tried to answer these questions.

Families' respect for others' efforts and challenges was a perceived outcome for four participants on the pre-survey, and five felt families desire to be involved would result. In the post-survey, the respondent who did not initially agree families would respect others' efforts and challenges changed her mind. However, one of the others did, too, perceiving only families' respect for others' challenges results from increased collaboration. Roz's opinion of changes in families' attitudes did not change from August to May and were all positive. However, Mae checked the boxes for "other" outcomes for families, as well as teachers and the community in Items # 10.d-f, but cryptically did not write comments about what she meant.

Other participants' responses to changes they felt teachers and the community would experience as a result of increased collaboration were equally mercurial and lead to no clear findings. In general, Roz and Ida's responses show increased perceptions of the benefits to teachers and community, while Abby's show a slight decrease in the positive effects she feels teachers and the community can enjoy as a result of increased collaboration between home and school.

Pre- and post-survey analysis – Part B summarized. Well reader, if that last section was as beastly to read as it was to write, then I feel a summary is truly in order. Yes, I could have said so before allowing you to plow through all that data, but then you probably got the gist and skimmed it all anyway, I bet! Let us see if I can encapsulate the analysis of the survey questionnaire in a single paragraph.

This study appears to have caused participants' contacts with their students' families to increase, with weekly letters being very effective at the elementary level and calls home working well for the Site A teachers, while electronic messages only worked for some teachers and families. There is no reason to assume these strategies would not work well for others. Face-to-face contacts not only increased for all participants, but they felt this usually led to true collaboration, especially with parents/guardians. Contacts with other ʻohana did not increase nor appear significant. Participants perceived some benefits to all stakeholders as a result of family collaboration. Communicating to commend students and invite families to school activities, especially at the start of the year, were seen as valuable strategies for the teacher-researchers which they believed led to better understanding later in the year when student's well-being, grades or behavior were a concern. Participants' desire to commend students and invite families to school activities increased, but data on their desire to collaborate regarding negative concerns is unclear. Likewise, which of the various stakeholders attitudes towards one another can change as a result of collaboration, and how, is anyone's guess!

Ta da – just one paragraph, as promised! Would that the preceding paragraph could have stood alone in this section of the analysis of data, but this is not the nature of academia. At least we can move next to an analysis of the emergent themes before

putting Chapter 4 out of its misery with an analysis of the quality, limitations and validity of this study. No wonder only one percent of the population earn doctoral degrees!

Cross-case analysis – emergent themes. Understanding, as I do, the reader may have difficulty seeing how each of the four main themes which emerged in the case studies above managed to coalesce in the principal investigator's mind, and to a lesser extent become obvious to all the teacher-researchers, I once more (for the last time, I swear!) offer a look at each theme – this time with cross-case analysis.

Theme one: relationship building. Students, their peers, their families ... their teachers and administrators ... their community's members – all interact in that nexus of place, people and cultures where the relationships they either do or do not develop deeply effect each students' achievement, well-being and lifelong learning (Ball & Lai, 2006; Epstein, 1995, 2001, 2009; Gruenewald, 2003; Lave & Wenger, 1990; Sobel, 2004; Vygotsky, 1993). All these relationships were commented upon by the participants in this study, and were of endless concern and interest throughout the action research year.

How should these relationships be approached by teachers? All of the teacher-researchers agreed the start of the school year is a vital time to greet students and families with positive messages: a welcoming class environment, a sense of fun, a handshake, a brief call home to let them know the teacher is available to help. As the school year proceeds weekly letters at the elementary level about class activities and/or regular emails at the secondary level to keep families up to date and help them access student grades via programs like Edline were recommended by half the participants. An important discovery shared amongst many participants was the role students play in mediating relationships between teachers and their families; middle and high schoolers expressed the desire to reduce these adults' interactions and strategies are needed to address this.

Participants generally accepted the wisdom of social-emotional learning theory and appreciative inquiry as guides to collaboration (Shriver & Weissburg, 2005; Ludema & Whitney, 2003). Half the participants felt families and students alike need options to be involved which build their esteem, increase their motivation, and are non-threatening. My data show, when possible, allowing family members to take active roles in learning and teaching may also be part of, or result from, relationship building. Above all, several participants discovered the expectation that families will desire to quickly develop collaborative relationships with teachers is unrealistic in most cases. Authentic relationships leading to true collaboration must be built up over time, all believe. Families need to see teachers' commitment to students, to the school, and to their communities over many months, if not years, to develop sufficient trust.

Data show teachers would like relationships with colleagues to be developed. Principals' western-oriented, authoritarian style of administration was seen by most of the teachers as a hindrance to better home-school relationships, as is the lack of articulation

amongst teachers between grades (at Site B) and schools (at Site A). Most pertinent to the recommendations and solutions in Chapter 5 is evidence of the participants' desire to find the time to engage with others in small groups focused on increasing collaboration. Relationship building was not achieved to the extent hoped for between participating teacher-researchers in this study. If small groups could meet, teachers believe more learning could occur, additional strategies may be found and relationships could deepen, ultimately resulting in much more collaboration and student achievement. Only I perceived the need for, and pursued, a school-community place-based project which may lead to the long term, stronger relationships amongst various stakeholders sought.

Theme two: expectations. Are teachers' expectations too high? Participants debated this question in relation to their expectations of themselves, their students, families and the education system itself. The demands on people's time repeatedly arose in all case studies, as well as demands for teachers' and families' money, some participants found. All participants wanted to do more to collaborate with families and each other in the PD course, but they lacked the time. The middle and high school teachers each taught no less than four different courses; three were taking additional professional development courses at the same time as this one or doing exams; three worked on grants related to their classes; and four suffered long term illness and/or stress related to their personal lives or their work. Despite this, they kept their expectations high. Why?

Roz and I linked the western-oriented work ethic introduced in Chapter 2 to teachers' motivation to strive. Unspoken, but perhaps true, since all of the action researchers had high expectations of their students and families, would it not seem reasonable to them to match and model high expectations of themselves? Whether true or not, teachers' high expectations may have led to better student achievement, as Mae, Abby, and Roz indicated, but their high expectations of some students and families often led to frustration. Kit began to use the Standards for Parents (Hawai'i State Department of Education, 2005), given to all participants in August, with families and stated how vexing it was for her when parents did not follow through on homework checks or when they sided with students in disagreements over unmet expectations. Abby had a similar experience dealing with a headstrong student and parent, as did Roz whose frustrations led her to question whether she expected too much of students and families who did not feel it necessary to achieve the highest standards possible, despite students' capabilities.

Mae and Abby also appeared to expect families to collaborate more with teachers and, Abby felt, families should consistently work with teachers through all the grades in public school. Mae also wanted parents with career expertise related to her classes to find time to speak to students. Ultimately Abby placed the blame on our education system, which has high expectations of students which she agrees with, but does not give students enough time to learn all the standards by trial and error, and thereby robs them of a deeper sense of pride in their learning she labors to help them attain. Perhaps this 'stop-

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watch' mentality which fails to give students sufficient time to learn, and which is ubiquitous in our public schools, contributes to the disengagement most of the participating teachers witnessed in our target students.

Theme three: alienation. The alienation PD teachers felt, and that which they sensed in others, results in disempowerment for many, but it also bettered participants' understanding of some of the elements at work, and this led to some tentative solutions. I and Abby were aware of our status as new-comers as being somewhat alienating, and Roz's reflections on her early years at the Site B school were similar. These teachers and Ida noted cultural differences between them and the majority cultures in their community probably created some hurdles to collaboration: acceptance in the community, again, they realized would take time, and Ida stated living up to Filipino reverence of teachers made collaboration and shared understanding of teacher and parent roles in their children's education more difficult.

Hostility towards teachers was discussed by four out of the six teacher-researchers, and Roz felt some students are raised to resent authority, while Ida noted one instance of defiance towards schooling in a Hawaiian family in her career. Inherent in these observations is the reality that students and parents must be defensive for a reason – they too, feel alienated. This may lead to students being angry, detached, and setting themselves up to fail, which Roz noted. I felt alienated by families, especially those with students in special education I thought, who ignored my attempts to contact them; I also felt their non-involvement indicated a norm for some local families. Roz commented some families and students simply do not respond to her as well, and Abby, too, found some to be resistant to her efforts. Abby seeks to avoid the professional distance some feel is necessary between teacher and student, as that is alienating to them. Kit expressed alienation she felt due to her department head's and principal's shared Japanese ancestry, which may favor men's authority over women.

Abby felt the Site B teachers stereotyped others – looking at the data above it would appear she is right. This alienated her to our group meetings, at times, but it also heightened her learning that "attitude is everything" and essentially predicts the outcomes we see. Kit felt alienation from colleagues in her department and in particular from her principal, which Mae, the other Site A teacher, also identified as alienating. DOE school policy creates a system that is exclusionary to the Educational Assistants who work with special education students and teachers, Kit believed. The Site A principal creates a school that is exclusionary to special education students, and he causes dissension amongst "have and have not" teachers, some of whom he favors, Kit felt. Roz and Abby noted similar, though perhaps less severe, imbalances at the Site B school where "bully" teachers get what the want, and others are ignored. Roz referred to a downward spiral of negativity which occurs in her work at times, and hoped Appreciative Inquiry could ameliorate this. Many teachers espoused humor, fun and easing into relationships with students and families in positive ways could address the alienating circumstances felt by

all. I, however, feel we need to revamp the entire system! This will be elucidated in Chapter 5.

  Theme four: diversity and power. It is clear from all our data that each of us wants to share authority and power with families in the education of their children, yet participants in this study rarely feel they can. Who does appear to have power? Much dialogue centered on the power of the principals at both school sites, which in both cases was not shared equally with their department heads, teachers or School Community Councils. For Kit and Mae the alienating actions of their principal and, for Kit, her department head, as well as the inequities in his power and dominance, have led to their feeling disempowered and even demoralized. At Site B the situation does not seem quite as dire, yet all four teacher-researchers felt the principal has too much power, that certain "smooth talker" teachers are able to sway him more, and that the SCC is "impotent." Yet, I noted, and Ida agreed, that administrators themselves are sometimes dominated by aggressive families.

  Families also were believed by the participants to exert their power in passive-aggressive ways, by avoiding collaboration with teachers, and as noted above, simply ignoring their efforts to communicate. Culture and gender were perceived to influence this to some extent, although no conclusions can be drawn from the observations. One teacher suggested male family members want to play a more nurturing role, but feel impotent today by women like the PD participants who may be seen as preventing men from taking part in this way. Several participants wondered if local, non-White cultural groups respected all authorities, or only male authorities. They also wondered if their being White and educated – thus, hailing from a traditionally empowered race and working within a profession which gives teachers some authority – also effected who is perceived as having power when teachers interact with families and students, and how this effects the ways they react to one another.

  Two teachers worried about imposing their power and being too pushy or aggressive with students and families. Still they, like all participants, concluded the increased collaboration they were trying to 'push' would ironically do much to solve this problem. All participants felt empowered to some extent, in their profession and as teacher-researchers. I stated I want diverse stakeholders to feel empowered and share authority and decision-making responsibilities in public education, and three participants overtly concurred. Several teachers saw that the students themselves, as has been mentioned, exert negative power as mediators of communications between home and school, but few other references to student empowerment were made beyond this and the fact pride in their own achievement has a positive effect on them.

  While all stakeholders were perceived to have some power, two participants saliently identified that teachers cannot control all the variables which effect student outcomes – power and authority higher up in the educational system as well as influences

outside of school by peers, families, the community and media dictate variables beyond teacher control. This, too, is addressed in Chapter 5. Are the readers on the edge of their seats with anticipation?

Summary of the case studies. In summary, the four emergent themes and survey data analysis above allow us to see how the six teacher-researchers in this study were challenged to reframe their beliefs and practices, and re-examined their role as teachers. As a participant I was able to realize the research questions I asked could not be fully answered without considering the bigger picture and all the other influences at the meso- and macro-levels which negatively impact teachers, students and families. Yet, I am empowered by the tantalizing solutions I imagine and my ever-evolving role as an educator. Kit, too, realized the source of her difficulties lay with those "above her," those in her school who have, or claim to have, authority over her. While Kit was empowered by her success with many students and families, she was overwhelmingly disempowered by teachers in her department and her principal. She has told me she is likely to transfer to another school now, if she can, to escape the extremely low morale she feels, and apparently shares with many teachers at her school. She is also considering defecting to a position working for the Hawai'i State Teachers' Union.

The other four participants suffered less severe stress related to their co-workers and the micro-system operations of their school. Mae, who worked at Kit's school, was very empowered by her unique intervention outcomes and success with students and families. As well, she perceived herself as a competent teacher-researcher, and looked seriously to her future teaching career in that role. Of course, she also debates leaving the profession this year, once more leading us to question the wisdom, and the covert intentions, of the macro-level decision-makers in public education. Recall, Mae is the youngest participant, and a new teacher who has yet to make it past that five year hurdle by which point half of all new teachers leave the profession.

Ida completed half the written data the other PD teachers did, so her progress towards reframed beliefs and practices as well as her role in education, is difficult to assess. It may be, because she did not complete the course, she missed the opportunities presented by the assignments to not only reflect more deeply on her perceptions and actions, but also to experience the intended scaffolding effect of coursework which was designed to allow each participants' learning to build upon itself and enable them to evolve as action researchers. Nevertheless, she did increase her collaborative efforts, and maintained and possibly increased her belief in the positive effects of collaborating with families, and this was empowering to her to some extent.

Roz confirmed her lifelong practice of working fervently, and along the way showed strong evidence she is continuously reframing her beliefs about how best to serve her students and chivvy them to achieve whilst developing more positive and collaborative relationships with their families. Roz, now teaching at another school,

remains committed to her role as a conscientious educator who, though aware of the meso- and micro-system influences on her efforts to educate, is not disempowered by them. She reports she continues to build on her action research learning in family collaboration. Lastly, Abby too remains committed to her ever-evolving role as educator and it would appear her participation in this study crystallized her beliefs, giving her a clearer vision of what collaboration can look like and how to achieve it. Her data show she believes all teachers, students and families have the power to positively effect education, and that collaboration can only increase that power. What more could a humble doctoral student ask for?!

Principal investigator's self-analysis of influence on participant data. As principal investigator I had a significant influence on the flow of all data generated, as well as the final analysis of it and the recommendations that stem from this. Appendix J provides a timeline and model of a "lens" I turned on my interactions with the participating teachers at the culmination of this study. This should be helpful to any researchers hoping to replicate this study, and yet another advance on limitations can be gleaned here. Yes, I admit spreading the limitations out in this fashion may cause the section actually dubbed Limitations to appear smaller, and therefore present this study more favorably. However, it should be noted this section was added after defense of the dissertation was successfully completed, and committee feedback could be responded to prior to publication.

From the start to the end of Phase II of the study I began keeping notes in a journal on my observations of participants in workshops and in one-on-one meetings, and of our telephone conversations as noted in the case studies above. This was done immediately after each encounter and I referred back to these notes and reflected on them as I interacted with the participants and reviewed their written data. I did not include transcriptions of my notes in my own case study or that of the other teacher-researchers, as I felt it would be redundant: all salient thoughts are included throughout this analysis section, and I have left it up to the reader to infer my thoughts stem from my journal notes and memory.

As stated in Chapter 3, while it was desirable to have all participants work closely together to analyze all data, and for each participant to analyze her own data, this was not quite as essential as the principal investigator doing so. This is lucky, as the participating teachers did not, the reader now knows, work closely as a single team to analyze all of the data, and some did not even analyze their own data as thoroughly as I hoped they would.

The relationships between myself and the Site A and B teachers are shown in the model in Appendix J, which positions me ('Sam') at the hub of a wheel, with all five teacher participants operating as spokes in their direct interactions with me. Bold lines indicate I felt strong and continuous discussion and analyses about the data occurred in

dialogues between myself and Kit as well as Abby. My journal corroborates this as there are more notes reflecting on a greater number of interactions with these two teachers, and my recollection is that additional communications with Kit and Abby occurred without my recording field notes. Lines not in bold for Mae, Roz and Ida show interactions with them were not as frequent and/or as strong, and discussion and analysis of the data as it was generated was not as rich between myself and each of them individually. However, dotted lines indicate strong and continuous discussion and analyses between the Site A teachers (already noted in the section entitled "Kit, Mae and Sam in Action" above), and less cohesive and frequent discussions and analyses among the Site B teachers, as a group (see "Roz, Abby, Ida and Sam in Action").

The timeline given in Appendix J reveals how I interjected my influence into the processes of data gathering and analysis with participants. Phase II is separated into four overlapping time frames (these parallel the data collection dates given in Appendix I), and my influence before Phase II began, and after it, is also shown. Even before the PD course began, my influence is clear from my preparation (see also my case study 'Sam' above). While I researched participatory action research methods and the topic of family collaboration extensively, I had very limited experience with both. As a veteran classroom teacher I had not previously focused more effort on collaboration and families than what I consider to be average for secondary teachers. As a grant and curricula writer, I had developed and field tested projects and materials with teachers and other stakeholders, and worked at a variety of traditional and non-traditional school settings to refine our products and outcomes. Much of this work was compatible with, and prepared me for, action research on teacher-family collaboration – but it could not replace actual experience in the field on this discrete topic alone.

Nevertheless, I positioned myself as expert, and began Phase II of the study (see August to October) by guiding the participants to peruse just six pre-selected readings and listen to one Powerpoint presentation at the first PD workshop introducing them to action research. That workshop did include an Internet "safari" which encouraged some investigation of information and research on PAR and family collaboration, but again this was limited, their time to conduct their own investigations was limited, and I guided them to more of the literature I presented in Chapter 2. A clear limitation here is that the teachers could have gained much, as could I, by doing far more open exploration of relevant literature, rather than sticking with that which I uncovered and found noteworthy. This could have been done throughout the PD course, something I realized only when writing the recommendations for researchers in Appendix K.

From September to December I also influenced the participants and data quite a lot, as by that time it was clear the two sites were functioning independently and would only gain access to each others data when I shared it. This I did in two ways: I either presented data I believed was linked to teachers' interests when it arose in our meetings or their written work, or; I presented data I found to be of interest at meetings in order to

elicit more participant responses. In both case, my own "screening" of data was pronounced, and certainly resulted in bias. Also in the middle of Phase II (see November to February) I stopped reminding participants to complete the assignments by the due dates because, as a group, they did not send their written work to me anywhere close to the expected date of receipt or at all on the same schedule as each other. However, we did negotiate themes in the written and verbal data throughout this period.

It was at this time in Phase II that I realized the participants were not deepening their roles as action researchers, as I had hoped. To try ameliorate this I stopped sending them one or two reflection topics at a time (see January to May) and allowed them to see and respond to all the reflection topics, including an alternate one, from number 13 to 25 (see Appendix B: Reflection Topics). My hope was they could get a better sense of their trajectory as novice action researchers by seeing how the topics build on each other. This may have happened to some extent, particularly with Roz and Mae whose written data show evidence of them seriously considering their researcher roles. Also, a positive outcome of this was that one participant requested clarification of inductive analysis and I was able to respond with an additional reading which all were given. During this same semester it became clear the participants were mostly letting their PD coursework pile up and completing it in spurts. In some cases this may have helped them do deeper analysis, but it is just as likely they rushed their efforts to complete all requirements before the end of the course in May 2011.

Lastly, the timeline in Appendix J reveals the dark truth of how the emergent themes were finalized by me, and me alone! I attribute this to a design flaw in the original proposal, as in hindsight it is fairly predictable that participant effort to take part in further analysis and recommendations would wain after the PD course was over and the three credits towards reclassification and higher pay had been earned. This is not intended to denounce the participating teachers; rather, it confirms their common sense and my lack of it. I did ask all participants to carefully review their case studies (including emergent themes) during Phase III (see June 2011 to February 2012) so they could corroborate the findings and I could include their final input (changes, additions and/or edits) in the final draft. However, as noted elsewhere, the recommendations coming up next in Chapter 5, I believe, are indeed influenced by my own "lens" as much as they are derived from the data gathered from and on the participants. No participants suggested any changes to the recommendations, but I believe the majority did not read them, although I discussed them often with Kit and Abby during Phase III and was able to incorporate their thinking in this way, and to allow their perceptions to influence me. I know all the ideas the participants gave voice to have been incorporated into Chapter 5.

To summarize this section, it is fair to say that the original design of the methods of this study could have been more rigorous, and thus, predictably, so too could the data collection have been better documented and understood by this fledgling author. Next time, I shall advise myself to: (a) more closely examine self-study methods to increase

my awareness of my own impact on my research, and; (b) ferret out a time travel device or neighborhood seer who can let me know in advance where I am most likely to err.

Quality, Limitations and Bias

      Quality of data. Quality of data was ensured by the following: 1) copious written qualitative data were gathered on six action-researchers; 2) these participants' multiple cases provided six unique perspectives, and; 3) multiple "rich" semi-structured interviews with teacher participants were observed (i.e. small group meetings, and, to a lesser extent, one-on-one meetings and telephone calls) and documented in field notes. These notes were perused to identify all categories or themes, then coded. The properties and concepts of each theme were scrutinized by the principal investigator and shared through discussions with the participants (Conrad, 1993). This led to all teacher-researchers hypothesizing links between the themes and properties, simultaneously with data collection and incipient analysis (Merriam, 1998; Conrad 1993). In some cases the participants formulated their own hypotheses for their action research interventions, to further explore the themes they found most compelling. Once coding of themes was completed and data deemed extraneous were omitted from the study, additional data collection and analysis on the focused themes was sought and compared to establish validity. The principal investigator and teachers negotiated outcomes as the data collection and analysis proceeded. Some limitations to this are offered in the section above.

      As noted in Chapter 3, all qualitative data collected by participants was interactive and recursive. While participants did not share with one another as much as I hoped they would, the two sub-groups at both school sites did share, mostly through conversation, what they were doing and their perceptions of their actions and those of their students, their families, and other stakeholders in their milieu. I feel this allowed me to obtain the depth and breadth of qualitative data from myself and my participating teachers to conduct a comprehensive analysis (Merriam, 199).

      Additionally, heuristic inquiry was used to analyze my own experience as part of the data (Merriam, 1998), and participating teacher-researchers were asked to apply the same methods to their own experiences. However, most were not comfortable enough with their understanding of heuristics to provide feedback to me with confidence. Nonetheless, I perceived that each teacher's data show they all appeared to engage on a very personal level in sufficient self-search, self-dialogue, and self-discovery, for their efforts to be considered heuristic. Such efforts, however, should not be confused with self-study, which the teachers did not engage in, although some of the same techniques were employed, as described in Chapter 3.

      Regarding the unique participant perspectives, while the participant demographics did not show strength in gender or cultural diversity, and only one participant was not

clustered in the middle-aged bracket, their other descriptors do lend strength to this study. All three levels of schooling were represented: elementary, middle and secondary. Teachers' content areas, experience and education background were likewise varied. Participants taught core, elective, special education, general education and International Baccalaureate classes in the year of this study. They had as little as two years of classroom experience, and as much as thirty. Two had Bachelor's degrees only but were working on further credits, two more already had substantial credits above their Bachelor's degrees, and one had a Master's degree plus additional credits, while I, of course, was all but a dissertation away from a Doctoral degree during the Phase II of this study.

This breadth of teacher background may be considered to add to the quality of the project and findings, as 74 combined years in the field, in a veritable buffet of teaching lines, allows one to view these teachers' experiences and opinions as credible and to some extent, even representative of that of their peers elsewhere in public schooling. This lends some face generalizability to the findings. Similarly, the diversity of these teachers' students and families is a strength in this study, as they were quite representative of what is the norm for Hawai'i; moreover, this diversity is useful for the direction American school-community population is headed this century.

Regarding the quality of the multiple "rich" interviews, the principal investigator's numerous meetings with Site B teachers as well as telephone conversations and emails exchanged with the Site A teachers show ample opportunities were given and taken advantage of, so that I was able to develop a clear sense of the lives of each participant described in the case studies above. While none of these interactions were electronically recorded, as originally hoped, in almost all cases field notes were generated. Also, all participants were given two opportunities to respond: first, to their own case studies, and; second, to the principal investigator's case study as well as the compiled cross-case analysis. Participants' responses, either agreeing or disagreeing with these portions of this paper, were sought in December and January in Phase III of the study. Their input, which was minimal – and, I was assured, indicated they found no fault with the presentation of their data – has been included in this report. Lastly, all participants will be encouraged to review all of the chapters, especially the findings given in Chapter 5, but I will certainly forgive them if they are neither interested in nor up to the task of reading this entire dissertation.

Triangulation of methods, sources, analysis and perspectives. Triangulation of methods was not achieved in this study as only two of the three different planned methods of data collection were conducted: observation and print were gathered, but no data was electronically recorded. These were analyzed and consistent findings across each case study were sought, as described above. Triangulation of sources was ensured as, in all case studies, the same methods were used to determine if findings were consistent when data sources were different. Also, I cross-compared and analyzed the

following, wherever possible: observations vs. interviews; written vs. verbal data; private vs. public statements; change in participants' statements over time; and different participants' perspectives. Triangulation in analysis was attempted by inviting the researcher's dissertation committee and the participating teachers to review data and examine the findings with me. Initially, it was hoped students and/or family members who become involved in teacher driven activities could also review data and/or findings, and that their feedback could be incorporated into the study, but this was not possible.

As principal investigator I explored any inconsistencies that arose and cross-checked with follow-up interviews with participants. Triangulation of perspectives was also be attempted through the teacher-researchers' examination of different perspectives of all stakeholders – i.e. parents, teachers, students, ourselves and each other, where possible.

Limitations, researcher-participant relationship and bias. If the readers have been paying attention, then they will recall the discussion of limitations of the survey instrument is found several pages back in this chapter, as is comments regarding principal investigator-participant influence, and neither need not to be repeated here, lest the principal investigator become unduly embarrassed. Suffice it say the survey instrument at least partially did what it was designed to do – to measure perceptions – but perceptions, as we know, are not to be confused with factual reality. Thus, this data, along with all the other qualitative data generated by the action researchers in this study, could simply be dismissed as the highly subjective ramblings of a handful of over-extended teachers, especially me. Indeed, the subjectivity of me and my participants did limit our perceptions and the findings.

However, if the reader holds this opinion, I direct his or her attention back to the end of Chapters 2 and to Chapter 3 where the qualitative methods used, in particular heuristics, are substantiated and the justification of methods employed is also defended. There, one will see researcher biases were inherent in the methods chosen. Interpretations of data were most assuredly colored by each teacher-researcher's experiences and her own cultural biases. Yet, consideration of student, family and other stakeholder biases and world views was also encouraged, and the possible effects this could have on the research and findings. To be sure, not all biases relevant to the study were identified.

More specific limitations of this study exist, but I do not consider them to be sufficiently worrisome that they undermine the overall endeavor, nor the findings. These limitations include: the staggered start times of two of the participants who enrolled in the PD course several weeks after others began; the lack of communication between the Site A and Site B participants; the intermittent nature of communication with the principal investigator for all participants throughout the study; the inability of the principal investigator to "wrangle the cats" and insist that all participating teachers work on the

same assignments at the same time; the kindly intentions of each polite, friendly participant to the principal investigator which likely prevented or reduced their criticisms of my efforts and/or the completed study, and; the further sway two participants may have felt against finding fault with the principal investigator, since I encouraged them not to pay the $125 course fee if it presented a hardship to them, which it did, and they did not – pay that is. While I did attempt to mitigate this reflexivity (i.e. participant reactivity to the researcher) by assuring all of my openness to contrasting opinions, ideas to improve the study and our interactions, and criticisms offered in the absence of better ideas, I have no doubt the participants refrained from sharing their darkest thoughts with me. They are all just too nice!

Additional limitations which are perhaps more worrisome are found in: the limited extent to which the participants explored and adopted their roles as action researchers, and/or reflected deeply on this in their writing; the lack of participant input to the analyzing and finalizing of the four emergent themes and development of the recommendations; and the lack of other educational stakeholder voices and the cultural appropriateness of the teacher-researchers to do this study in order to help students and families whose cultural affiliations differed in almost all cases from their own. One hopes to avoid the Margaret Meade problem of being an "outsider" who cannot comprehend what she sees, or worse yet, is deliberately duped by those she studies. As described in the beginning of Chapter 3, this study was designed to also help teachers, and in this regard all six of us were "insiders" to the system, and so were appropriate participants.

However, especially troubling is the fact that the "outsiders" whom we ultimately hoped to better serve, our students and their families, have almost no voice in this study and the findings. This can be attributed to a flaw in the design of the project, and it is not one I take lightly. The nearly non-existent voice of students and family members – especially because they are culturally different from the six White teacher-researchers who took center stage in this study – pushes this dissertation and our findings to that massive section in the academic library where far too many culturally dominant researchers have offered, and continue to offer, what can only be considered a rather one-sided view of the realities of public education (not to mention almost every other topic known to the scholarly world).

This is a situation which needs to change, and the only defense I can give for not addressing this limitation better, is that for various reasons (many largely unknown to me), I and my co-researchers were unable to more successfully include students and family members in more meaningful ways in this study. I do know our time was limited. I know, as teachers, we are not used to seeking stronger voices from our students and families. I know none of us was particularly experienced in action research. I even knew, albeit too late, that as one participant wrote in May:

As far as portraying them fairly and documenting their participation, I never shared with any parents or ʻohana my involvement in this collaboration project.

Yikes! Similarly, for unknown reasons, the PD course around which this study was conducted did not attract a more diverse group of participants, and the reasons for this will remain a mystery for all time. Suffice it to say the states other 12,000 plus teachers probably never heard about the course, nor noticed it amidst the smorgasbord of PD offerings available to them in 2010-11. Ultimately, these limitations must be addressed in future research – by myself and others whom I hope will be both "insiders" and "outsiders," who can work together to achieve the power I maintain diversity offers, and change the culture of research for the advantage of us all.

Replication. The last page of Appendix K summarizes key limitations and findings with recommendations to other researchers who are interested in replicating this study. I believe it would be beneficial and possible to do so. However, to tread precisely in my footsteps would ensure similar mistakes could be repeated – far better to make a few adjustments to the PD course design in order to obtain better results.

Credibility. Researcher credibility is supported by my experience in education which includes: over 10 years classroom teaching experience in general and special education in Hawaiʻi, California, Belize and Canada; and over five years studying and working in research related to curriculum and instruction in culturally responsive secondary science, as well as working with others to write grants and academic papers for a variety of disability related purposes. I also have some expertise in research, but this is mostly limited to my Master's degree in special education and ongoing doctoral studies.

Reliability and validity. The gathering of "rich" detailed qualitative data ensures the analysis conducted led to reliable findings (Janesick, 1998). Member checks done throughout the study both document responder validation efforts (i.e. interview follow-ups, participant involvement in identification of emerging themes and theory) and support the credibility of findings (Maxwell, 2005; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). Corroboration was sought to determine whether or not the teacher participants agreed with the findings. Finally, other studies which are similar to this one were sought to compare and strengthen any findings, where appropriate. These efforts were intended to increase the internal validity of the study.

While external validity is not usually a concern of case studies, it is hoped that generalizable findings prevalent amongst all teacher participant cases lead to "face generalizability" and thereby are useful to others, as there is no reason to assume these cases may not be considered typical of similar settings and participants in Hawaiʻi and possibly even other diverse public school settings in the United States where transference of any family collaboration strategies developed in this study could be useful (Maxwell, 2005; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009).

Chapter 5

Implications and Recommendations

Discussion

The research questions answered. This study asked the question "In what ways do Hawaiʻi public school teachers' perceptions of, and behaviors toward, family collaboration change given participation in a for-credit professional development (PD) course on family collaboration? Teachers' perceptions of family collaboration were strengthened, and in some cases became more clearly defined, as shown in Chapter 4. Teachers' behaviors toward achieving family collaboration increased approximately 75 percent, at least partially due to their participation in the PD course.

The first sub-question in this study was: a) Do demographic characteristics of the PD teachers and their students influence any changes in the teachers' perceptions and behaviors? While it may be true that each teacher, individually was, or was not, influenced by each of the factors (socio-economic status, culture, gender, etc.) widely believed to change how they and others in public schools think and act, it is impossible to conclusively answer this question based on the data gathered in this study and its limited scope. Stereotyping of and by teachers arose as a concern, yet teachers' interest in and efforts to diminish the negative effects and incidences of stereotyping also were evident.

The second sub-question was: b) Do specific PD teacher driven strategies result in changes in the teachers' perceptions of, and behaviors toward, family collaboration? The answer to this question is yes. Each teacher attempted several strategies which resulted in their perceiving each strategy as either: useful and worthy of repeating or even improving; not useful and not worthy of attempting again, or: possibly useful and needing further adjustment and exploration. All participants in this study remained committed to increasing family collaboration in the future as a way to better serve students' and their families.

The project goals achieved – or not! The goals of this study were achieved to varying degrees. The first stated goal given in Chapter 1 was to explore teachers' perceptions and behaviors related to increasing family collaboration as a potential way to improve outcomes for students at risk of school failure. The reader can have no doubt at this stage that the principal investigator and participants did indeed try to improve their students' outcomes, and they explored their perceptions and behaviors regarding collaboration as they did so. The group did not, and could not, prove a link between student outcomes and collaboration, but that was beyond the scope of this study. However, their faith that collaboration can improve student outcomes is universally strong amongst the teacher-researchers, and one teacher's directly attributing her

students' better achievement to her collaboration efforts with their families supports this belief.

The second goal identified in Chapter 1 was to empower teachers and families through acquisition of knowledge and increased collaboration. As the analysis in Chapter 4 shows, while the participating teacher-researchers perceived themselves as empowered in some ways, and they did acquire new knowledge and increase their efforts to collaborate, they did not dramatically increase their capacities or abilities to the extent that was hoped. The families with whom they interacted experienced little to no acquisition of knowledge and, while a few did experience more collaboration with participating teachers, this, too, was minimal and did not effect their sense of empowerment in any measurable way.

The last goal of this study was to effect social change in the classroom and possibly beyond to the whole school, the community and/or other school communities with similar populations where change in practice could benefit similar students. Social change occurs in the classroom daily, and as the case studies in Chapter 4 show, it occurred in small ways for each participant and their students. That being said, the most this study can claim is that each teacher involved has deepened her commitment to exploring and increasing collaboration with families, and for some of the participants, this is resulting in social change in their classrooms. Because the participating teachers worked at two school sites, and three of the Site B teachers continue to work on the same campus, any social change that began in their individual classrooms can potentially continue and, again potentially, effect greater social change in their schools. This is unlikely at Site A, where only two teachers worked occasionally together, and do not do so now; however, at Site B, this is more likely, as 'Abby' and 'Sam' teach in the same department at the middle and high school levels, and remain keen to increase articulation on the topics of collaboration and their content area with teachers like 'Ida' at the elementary level.

Regarding the social change hoped for at the community level and/or at other school communities with similar populations, achievement of this goal now lies entirely in the hands of the principal investigator. In my own case study above I refer to my interest in pursuing activities, and in particular grants, which can provide support and funds to help build relationships and collaboration among members of the school, students' families and the community – this is not a goal I am likely to give up on easily or in the foreseeable future. To that end, I anticipate I will continue many explorations and much sharing of knowledge with other stakeholders – be they interested or not, poor things – to achieve whatever measures of success I humanly can in my lifetime. These efforts will surely include: publication of this dissertation, and thankfully a much briefer version of it for wider publication; sharing collaboration strategies in future professional development courses I plan to offer in Hawai'i; and constantly prodding all the 'lower

tier' stakeholders I can to consider and take action in the change agent teams I propose as the direction we need to push education in today.

So what? Do the findings of this study add anything new to the field of education and the topic of collaboration? This chapter will next recommend simple strategies for school level stakeholders, some which may even be new – it is rather hard to tell nowadays, since the invention of that wondrous animal called "Google!" More importantly, further recommendations are made below to address the bigger issue this study revealed to the principal researcher, and to some extent to her participants, which truly impedes family collaboration – the hindering nature of the social and educational systems we live and work in. The collaboration which naturally would happen between nurturing adults who share a common interest in educating the youth they see and care for every day flounders in the educational bureaucracy that purports to help them. Re-conceiving the roles of education's stakeholders – particularly the minions – will be proposed as a solution.

Recommendations

School level strategies to increase teacher-family collaboration. While research already abounds with recommendations to overhaul public schools so students and their families are included in the decision-making that effects them, the recommendations made in this section focus only on the findings of the six teacher-researchers whose case studies are given in Chapter 4. These and additional recommendations are also given in Appendix K, linked to the findings of this study, and presented to the stakeholders this study was designed to serve: teachers, teacher leaders (administrators and union leaders), families and community members, and educational researchers. Specific strategies, explicated fully, for classroom teachers are:

1. Make a positive start. Teachers should contact families within the first month of school by letter and/or brief calls home to convey positive messages. Such messages can include: (1) their sincere interest in helping and collaboration; (2) giving families choices about how often they want to communicate with teachers, and in which ways (i.e. email, calls, face-to-face or letters like the one in Appendix A) and; (3) inviting family members to purposeful school related activities. These must be (4) non-threatening to begin with, such as the Star Gazing event proposed by one participant, and events should be (5) fun; food and/or music, especially when provided by students, can be shared in a casual atmosphere that leads to natural, authentic relationship building.

2. Build on the positives. The activities above can scaffold to sequenced, intentional efforts that allow families to see teachers and their children interacting positively, and are designed to serve students' needs over time, by, for example: (1) meeting family members at school football games where students are encouraged to attend for bonus points and parents can see their social skill needs are being addressed; (2) meeting students and

families at a play or movie related to classroom learning where informal conversation before or after the entertainment is encouraged by the teacher; (3) meeting students and families at a book store to casually peruse offerings related to topics studied in class; (4) show-casing student skills and/or completed work to families where their pride in achievement can be seen (especially on YouTube.com), and; (5) inviting families in to see students presentations of projects which families helped students complete for homework. These latter ideas could include (6) scientific models, math games, or student-made videos, and family members could, when comfortable, be given (6) mentoring or tutoring roles and materials to engage with students and teachers in reciprocal teaching and learning. Such activities could be seen as more valuable if (7) a product is created by those involved, such as food, or (8) if a worthy cause is addressed, such as volunteering at the local animal rescue center. The timing of such efforts is important: events that are (9) regularly scheduled, but do not happen too often (i.e. each month or quarter term) are recommended, and (10) Sunday afternoon was found to be amenable to half the participants in this study.

3. Ease into purposeful teacher-family collaboration. Once families are engaged, and (1) no negative pressure has been attempted to force this so they feel their time, energy and budgets are respected, teachers may be able to encourage family members to (2) strengthen their voice in the education of their children. Teachers can help parents ask for: (3) technical assistance to access programs like Edline for regular updates on students' progress (or another parent request system can be established); (4) help setting up and using email accounts to communicate with teachers; (5) an area within the school where a staff member, especially the PCNC facilitator, can assist them at any time, if possible, or at least at specific times when family members can come to the school to get or offer help, or express their concerns to receptive school staff; (6) ask for translation services for themselves and/or their ELL students, and; (7) either join established committees and groups such as the SCC and PTA who ensure parents' voices are heard, or (8) teachers can help families establish their own grassroots groups to demand their voices be heard and their concerns addressed. These recommendations can be viewed as singular options families can consider and engage in with (9) parent/family partners, small groups and/or large groups, or the recommendations above can be viewed as (10) a sequence of increasing collaboration efforts families can explore with teacher assistance.

4. Articulate and self-evaluate teachers' own roles. Some participants in this study identified needs related to their own roles and actions as teacher-researchers. Recommendations to address these needs, gathered from participants and the principal investigator include: (1) seek teachers in other grades and community feeder schools to facilitate articulation and provide better opportunities for students and families to move through Kindergarten to graduation, building on all their strengths in ways that serve teachers and families both; (2) seek to increase positive interactions via fun, informal social activities which invite all school staff to get together regularly and thereby diminish the isolating effects the current school system has on us; (3) identify and

evaluate which families are not engaging with teachers and whether or not this is due to their marginalization by the system or by an empowered choice, and seek ways and/or expert advice to address this; (4) regularly analyze one's own practices related to teaching and collaboration, and study or seek training in self-study methodology in order to scientifically improve practice, increase pride, empowerment and motivation, and to decrease frustration and low morale, and; (5) ask administrators, the SCC, the PTA and other community stakeholders in education for funding and time to support promising projects, (6) write mini-grants to build a skill set to achieve these same ends, and/or (7) seek training in writing grants to acquire funding and build a volunteer base.

5. *Ease into Teacher Advocacy and Activism.* Most participants in this study did not consider extending the scope of their actions to the level the principal investigator did, although the participant 'Abby', with whom I continue to work most closely, is beginning to consider broader actions she and others can take. I recommend teachers: (1) seek to raise their own and other teachers' consciousness about larger issues which negatively influence education such as gender equity and social justice, and (2) seek or envision strategies to effect change that addresses the issues perceived; seek a position on the School Community Council to increase teachers' voice and authority to effect change in the school system, and; (3) if joining established groups does not result in the change desired, then teachers should form their own grassroots groups to achieve results.

The last set of recommendations lets us segue to a discussion of the bigger issues promised in the preceding chapters of this dissertation. Is the readers' pulse quickening? It should be – this is the grande finale and warrants a holiday for any who have actually read this entire tome.

Strategies suggested by critical theory to address issues underlying collaboration. Consider the words of Marian Dogherty, a Boston teacher (PBS, 2001, p. 1):

> I became aware that a teacher was subservient to a higher authority. I became increasingly aware of this subservience to an ever growing number of authorities with each succeeding year, until there is danger today of becoming aware of little else.

'Today' for Dogherty was 1899, but she may as well be speaking these words now, when federal and state mandates, sanctions, and scrutiny of public schools and teachers is once more interfering in the ultimate purpose of our schools – in teachers' abilities to simply focus on teaching! Teacher frustrations more than a century ago stemmed from, among other things, City Boards of Education which where "increasingly made up of business and professional men" (PBS, 2001, p.1). Like some of the present century's counterparts, these predominantly male non-educators who made most of the decisions for the female dominated teaching profession, had goals which (PBS, 2001, p.1):

... were laudable: to root out corruption, to raise the practice and status of teaching, to ensure real student achievement. But they rarely had any first-hand knowledge of what teaching actually was like. They worked according to a business model, with clear hierarchies and chains of command – which left teachers at the bottom.

Teachers' reaction to this led to great and much needed change in education, and may be seen to have culminated in John Dewey's Progressive Education movement in the 1920s and '30s. Dewey believed democracy must be taught to every generation, and he "challenged the rigidity that characterized many American classrooms ... arguing ... teachers and children needed to be free ... to devise the best forms of learning for each child" (Dewey, 1929, 1938; PBS, 2001, p.1). Then and now these "assumptions turned the hierarchy of classrooms and schools upside down" (PBS, 2011, p.1). What a pity his schools did not survive as the norm for public schooling beyond the mid-century – this despite the fact that he remains perhaps the most-studied educational philosopher in America's history – for his instinct to invert the hierarchy of power that thwarts better student outcomes is precisely what critical theorists call for now, and is the basis for my recommendations to address the major hindrances to collaboration.

In Chapter 2 Pena's research is cited, summarizing the influences on parent involvement and concluding that "teachers did not recognize most of them" (2000, p.42). In our study, I believe I and the other teacher-researchers did indeed recognize most of the factors influencing family collaboration, but we found ourselves nearly powerless to address them. I asked: Who can and should address the factors influencing family collaboration, and why have they not been addressed? Tollefson, and numerous others, provide the answer, and have for as long as the human power struggle has endured. We – all the stakeholders – can and should address *all* the factors that prevent us from democratically reaching our loftiest goals for public education, but we have not. As Patrikakou (2008, p.4) states, "teachers do not see themselves as change agents" and it is not likely students and their families do either. Thus, we have yet to wrest the power to achieve the change we want from the elite who hold us, and the entire public education system, hostage.

The problem. In *Volatile Knowing: Parents, Teachers, and the Censored Story of Accountability in America's Public Schools,* Tollefson writes (2008, p.132 & 134):

The seemingly simple goal of connecting with other people in the [education] system will be an extraordinarily difficult thing to accomplish.

After all, if teachers, much less students and parents, had the time and support to engage regularly with each other in spirited, focused discussions about education, the very concept of school as we know it would be changed forever.

Tollefson conducted qualitative research on twelve teachers and parents who met to discuss the accountability movement in education and discovered both the power this small group felt being together and engaged in honest dialogue, and the oppression they felt by the educational system that prevents them from working closely towards common goals that better serve their students. Tollefson sees the accountability movement as a deliberate effort to divide and conquer teachers, students and families – to maintain the status quo that fails to serve the interests of all. She credits Michel Foucault's use of Jeremy Bentham's eighteenth century plan for a perfect prison, called a "panopticon," as the model to describe how positive change in public schools is intentionally hindered (Tollefson, 2008, p.129).

The panopticon is a pyramid, built of continuously individualizing parts, set upon smaller and smaller tiers as the model rises. In this model of educational hierarchy, the discrete parts are like the building blocks of a pyramid, but they represent the cell each stakeholder in public schooling occupies, alone. The lowest tiers belong to the students, teachers and families while the higher tiers house the administrators, policy-makers and politicians who have control over those below them. Movement and communication between the cells and tiers is difficult, and often impossible (Tollefson, 2008). Because of this power structure, Tollefson writes, those at the lowest tiers who are meant to be served by the system agree to be held accountable "with neither our consent nor our input" to some "invisible, unscrutinized, unaccountable force from above" and so we cannot imagine redefining education, achievement or success for ourselves (2008, p.130). This researcher, citing Michelle Fine (1994), adds: "this separation of teachers' and parents' interests effectively serves the interests of "the very bureaucracies that are underfunding and over-controlling public education" (Tollefson, 2008, p.128). How is this so, and why is it happening?

Tollefson turns to Chomsky to explain why those in the upper tiers of education, who are obviously a part of the ruling class in America, are threatened by the notion that those in the lower tiers might see themselves as a collective: "People must be atomized and separated if they are to be ruled by the responsible men, for their own good" (Chomsky, 2002, pp.18-19 in Tollefson, 2008, p.133). Tollefson maintains such "responsible men" do not want to give up the power they are privileged with, or the healthy incomes that come with it. They need to keep us and our children from participating in making decisions for ourselves so that we can continue to be the passive consumers we are groomed to be, rather than mindful participants who are very likely to upset the current imbalanced systems we are governed by.

Fege's comments appear to support this thinking. He states (Bouffard, 2008, p. 16):

> ... control issues are entrenched. Decades ago, school board members and
> superintendents began to resist any kind of federal mandate for family involvement

because the federal law began what was an "alternative" political system to the power of the superintendent.

Speaking as an expert on the same panel discussion at the 2007 National Parental Information and Resource Centers Conference, Moles agreed, adding: "What goes on in the classroom is something you can gauge and influence, but what parents do is something out of and beyond a school's control" (Bouffard, 2008, p.16).

So, if the real problem presenting barriers to all the positive changes teachers and families want in public schools – a problem which necessitates strong collaborative relationships to address – is the isolating power structure of the school system itself, which is perpetuated and protected by those who have control over the system rather than those they are supposed to be serving, what on earth is to be done?

The solution. Just as critical theorists explicate the problem, so too can they illuminate the way to a solution. Love writes (2011, pp.430-431, with emphasis in the original text):

> In general a *transformative education is one that exists at a nexus of human rights, sustainability, and imagination.* "Transformative education" can be used as an umbrella term that includes various pedagogies and theories that critically questions traditional approaches to teaching. These can include emerging, developing, and established pedagogies and theories ... [each serving] as a lens for analysis in viewing one's content area, developing and implementing units and lessons including the construction of authentic questions located in the relationships and tensions of one's community, establishing and co-creating supportive classroom climates (as well as school climates), understanding and creating supportive teacher-student relationships, and acting as a change agent within teams, departments, schools, districts, states and nationally.

I agree! I propose that change agent teams (let's call them CATs) made up of school-community members are the solution we seek, but that they must operate within the contexts of appreciative inquiry, of place-based theory, and as kauhale – an integration of key ideas described in Chapter 2. I do not here propose large scale strategic plans, as that is not the intent of this study, and such work is already being done quite successfully by Epstein and others (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003; Epstein, 2001; Epstein, 1995). However, I have derived seven recommendations (broken out for specific stakeholders in Appendix K and linked to the findings of this study) from various researchers which support the solution and the transformative social change I propose, particularly in terms of the roles 'lower tier' stakeholders can explore in their current capacity as employees and/or 'ohana members of our school-communities. Recall this is supported in the literature in Chapter 2 by Lave and Wenger (1990, p.1): learners can become involved in

a "community of practice" ... the "more active and engaged they become within the culture" they are believed to eventually "assume the role of an expert."

1. Teachers as school-community activists. Talbert and Rodgers (2011) see one bridge from research to practice can come from social education teachers who adopt a role as activists. They discuss how social education teachers all must either accept or reject their roles as both teacher and citizen in order to perform both their professional duty and their civic duty in their public and private lives. I suggest all teachers, regardless of the subject they teach, need to accept their professional and civic duty to actively participate in social change in education. While it would be helpful if beginner teacher training programs included this in core course offerings, along with the much needed – and mysteriously withheld – education in critical pedagogy, there is not much the average teacher in the classroom today can do to achieve this change in teacher education.

Therefore, I recommend teachers simply become aware of the choice they have already made, either to be an activist or, in most cases, not to be one, and evaluate that choice in terms of their values and job satisfaction. Needless to say, to do so teachers will need to hear this call, and their unions and even their administrators could help this happen. Since unions are made up of teachers and former teachers only, individuals who serve in these national and local groups as leaders in particular should begin to recruit teacher activists, not for specific causes of their choosing, but rather to promote the idea amongst educators that we are all models of social change (or of social acceptance, passivism and fatalism when we choose to do nothing), and as such should be aware of the opportunity this presents us and the vital role we can and should play in positive school change. Another dimension of teacher activism is found in our potential role as researchers. The Harvard Family Research Center believes one way to promote family involvement is to "sustain teacher action research" (Evaluation Exchange, 2008, p.35). This can be done by teachers themselves, engaging in self-study, and by groups of teachers who formally or informally unite to take action for causes about which they are passionate.

2. Administrators as change agent supporters. Silins, Mulford, and Zarins note that effective change agents are leaders who "protect those who take risks" (as cited in Marzano, Waters & McNulty, 2005, p.618). These researchers assure us, when administrators model this protection, a sense of trust amongst "other enactors of change" is communicated. Clearly, this allows the educational social change called for to occur without undue resistance. Another option for administrators to support teacher change agent teams is found in Waldorf School philosophy, and has been successfully integrated into a Hawaiian charter school, the Hawaiian Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Principal Steve Hirakami sees his role primarily as a public relations man who builds strong relationships with his students' families, 50 percent of whom Hirakami estimates are at risk (both students and adults) in the school and community (Hirakami, 2007).

While this school now considers itself Waldorf influenced, having abandoned some of the requisite approaches to keep the appellation, the leadership of the school by teachers and students is noteworthy. A teacher council meets every Friday to make decisions about curriculum and they are able to make changes quickly if results are poor. A student council is successful in dealing with discipline and positively modifying behavior of their peers, with the help of one teacher representative. Parents are also included in the decision-making process of the school, as is the community (Hirakami, 2010). In fact, so inspired was Hirakami by his school's success "pioneer[ing] a new beginning in education," he ran for lieutenant governor in 2010 specifically because "all [he] saw was a list of veteran senators and representatives" (Hirakami, 2010, p.1). This sounds very like those "responsible men" who are not educators or direct stakeholders in public schools identified as perpetuators of the problem presented above. Hirakami may be the kind of activist and change agent supporter Hawaiʻi's teachers, families and students need.

3. Parents/guardians as school governors. Another role change called for in research comes from the United Kingdom where key stakeholders have taken roles as school governors and have, at times, succeeded in positive school change such as increasing parent involvement (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003). Hailed as the largest volunteer force in the country with over a quarter million serving (Bournemouth Borough Council, 2010; U.K. Department of Education, 2011), school governors include parent governors who must make up at least one-third of the governing body of public schools along with staff, who may make up no more than one-third, and other community stakeholders who make up the balance of their committees. Successful implementation of school governor leadership is likely due to the support they received in the UK from an act of 1996 legislature which ensured employers of any school governors had to give them time off to serve; often, school governors are also compensated for travel or other costs such as care for their dependents (U.K. Department of Education, 2011). Their role in raising school performance includes giving input to its strategic direction, accountability and serving as a "critical friend," a term defined in critical pedagogy thusly (Costa & Kallick, 1993, p. 49):

> A critical friend can be defined as a trusted person who asks provocative questions, provides data to be examined through another lens, and offers critiques of a person's work as a friend. A critical friend takes the time to fully understand the context of the work presented and the outcomes that the person or group is working toward. The friend is an advocate for the success of that work.

In the US and Hawaiʻi this role could be supported for by the Parents for Public Schools (PPS), whose literature calls for "the constructive involvement of parents in the governance of schools as a bridge between the schools and community" (Parents for Public Schools Hawaiʻi Chapter, 2011, p.1). More emphatically, the PPS national website states: "PPS values parents as committed owners of, rather than passive

consumers in, public schools" (Parents for Public Schools, 2011, p.1). There can be little doubt this group would strongly embrace my recommendation that parents and guardians adopt roles in school leadership teams. However, this is not something every parent is able to do. The next recommendations call for family members to take other roles in social change in our school-communities.

4. Parents/guardians as school-community activists. Desforges and Abouchaar signal a vital parent need in this passage (2003, p.5):

> Differences between parents in their level of involvement are associated with social class, poverty, health, and also with parental perception of their role and their levels of confidence in fulfilling it.

School-community partners are already in existence nationwide which try to address the socio-economic factors effecting families negatively, and large scale strategic plans are best to ameliorate these problems, such as those presented by Epstein (2001; Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003). Again, my focus is on the individuals who interact at the local school level. Thus, I recommend parents and guardians be invited by teachers and other school change agent team members to engage in activities which are likely to increase their confidence and expand their perception of the roles they can adopt in their school-communities.

Family members are widely recognized by researchers and educators as students' first teachers and are believed capable of co-teaching their children at home and in school activities. However, a "lack of extended personal educational experience has ... rendered some parents lacking in relevant skills or appropriate conception of 'parents as co-educator' (Kohl, 2000, as cited in Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003, p.45). How to address this was discussed in Chapter 2, in particular by the GMC model (Bovin & Morohashi, 2002), Funds of Knowledge (González, et al., 1994; González, Moll & Amanti, 2005) and by Heath (1983), all whom researched the value of including cultural and community elders and others in school learning activities to share their home knowledge in the classroom where it can be linked to school knowledge and simultaneously honored by being overtly valued by teachers.

If this can be achieved, and parents and other family members can gain confidence from school acceptance and appreciation of them and what they can offer, then the next step in the path to evolved parent/guardian roles can conceivably take place. This may be particularly true if family members engage in school-community projects where roles in leadership teams are 'up for grabs', and where close working relationships with teachers who see themselves as activists in education are developed, leading to the natural sharing of responsibilities to nurture students and communities, for the benefit of all.

Havelock and Zlotolow (1995, as cited in Davis, 2011, p.32) offer a change model which has promise for the parent/guardian participation and activism I imagine. Their "CREATER" model has seven phases which cycle into one another to effect successful educational change. Phase '0' begins and ends with 'care' by which the researchers mean individuals who have a vested interest in a given topic – who genuinely care about it – form the change agent team and develop relationships in Phase '1'; as a team the caring individuals 'relate', then 'examine', 'acquire', 'try' and 'extend' solutions to a problem they have identified; this culminates in assessing once again who truly 'cares' about the outcomes and whether or not they choose to engage in Phase '6' to 'renew' commitment to pursuing improvements.

Other change models, and there are scores of them, are similar but do not always begin with the assumption that stakeholders who actually care about the issues are essential. Where this model, I my opinion, needs adjustment, is in the focus on problem solving. As explained in Chapter 2 in the section on Appreciative Inquiry (Ludema & Whitney, 2003), I feel it is equally essential to orient the caring team of change agent parents, teachers and other stakeholders to focus on what works and how to extend and expand that. The participant case studies in Chapter 4, in particular those of Roz, Ida and myself, further support this supposition.

5. *Students as school-community mediators and activists.* It seems rather ironic that the students themselves are the stakeholder usually left out of considerations by adults about how school change can come about to better serve them. Desforges and Abouchaar write (2003, p. 49): "Teacher/parent interactions are shaped and influenced by pupils who see themselves as playing a significant mediating role here. This role is rarely recognized. It could be enhanced." As these researchers uncovered the reality that some students, especially older students, deliberately take actions to reduce home-school communications (either to protect family interests or their own), the idea that students themselves should be made aware of their own roles in their education as well as their roles in their families, their schools and communities, has merit. "In the last analysis, it is the pupil who must do the learning and achieving" (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003).

Not only could students learn to be conscientious mediators of communications between home and school, but they can and some feel they should be educated to take action as soon as they are able as activists in their communities. Place-based education experts Gruenewald (2003) and Sobel (2004) lead me to believe the natural extension of place-based education is a redefinition of the roles of not only teachers, families, and community members but also of students. All of these stakeholders can become empowered if they engage in collaborative change efforts, and in the construction and sharing of knowledge, as equal participants. Moreover, student involvement in social change efforts may provide the bridge some of their parents need to gain confidence in their interactions with teachers and other school staff.

Desforges and Abouchaar (2003, p.51) remind us parents' major impact on student well-being and achievement is found in their "modeling of values and expectations, through encouragement and through interest in and respect for the child-as-learner." If children are taught to encourage parents and other family members to participate in – or even be made aware of – more school-community activities that are important to the child, and this participation or awareness leads to shared interest and enjoyment in student learning with teachers, then families may become more comfortable at school related activities. They may become more confident interacting with school staff. Ultimately, this could lead to increased teacher-family collaboration, and even to discussion of social change opportunities which may be of mutual interest to students, families, and teachers.

6. Teacher-researchers as school-community change instigators. Zaff and Butler (2008) explored what worked for the winners of America's Promise Alliance's 2005 *100 Best Communities for Young People* competition. One finding was: "Family involvement strategies often arise organically but depend on a knowledgeable leader for implementation" (Zaff & Butler, 2008, p.12). The Harvard Family Research Project (Evaluation Exchange, 2008) spoke to leaders in the field of family involvement in education about the need for stakeholders to join together and demand and foment change. "Many of the experts we interviewed expressed the belief that the family involvement field cannot be built from the top down but rather requires a co-constructed grass-roots component involving families, communities, and schools" (Evaluation Exchange, 2008, p.7).

The Harvard Family Research Project (Evaluation Exchange, 2008, p.6) states so far this has not happened on the scale of a self-sustained movement in support of family involvement "despite being supported by research, practice, and some federal and state policy ... because it is not one coordinated strategy; rather it encompasses many different strategies and has been part of many different social and political movements." Does this suggest we can leave the call to action up to other activists, such as the Occupy Wall Street protestors who took to the streets in the autumn of 2011 and incited nationwide demonstrations against the 'one percenters', those same top tier "responsible men" who have it all and want to keep it that way? Sure we could do that; but we could do more.

7. School sites as kauhale – school-community shared learning centers. One of the problems with school-home interactions is they usually happen at schools, which for most communities means meeting in an institutional setting in the comfort of aged furniture and budget-conscious decor. There is another option we can work towards that will, when it is achieved, be much more conducive to true collaboration and meaningful social change in education. Patrikakou (Evaluation Exchange, 2008, p.6) writes:

> ... the school-centric notion of family involvement, in which parents must come to the school building, still looms large – despite growing research showing that family involvement does and should more often take place in a variety of settings,

including the home, the workplace, and in the community, and that it might look different based on families' cultural beliefs, attitudes, and practices.

I recommend teachers, families, students and community members who are able to voice their opinions, either in change agent teams or in the roles they currently play in education, call loudly and often not just for a change of venue for our interactions, but for a change in what schools look like and who they are set up to serve. I draw the reader's attention back to Chapter 2 and the discussion of the Hawaiian concept of kauhale (Kahakalau, 2004). The traditional Hawaiian ideas that learning that is reciprocal (the concept of aʻo) for people of all ages, and can occur at a kauhale amongst any community members, at any time, places value on life long learning for youth and for the adults whom they model themselves after. It is the way humans evolved to learn, and honors everyone's position as equals in the education system. Desforges and Abouchaar believe: "Promoting parental involvement is a whole school/community issue" (2003, p.90). I agree, and believe it needs to happen in truly shared spaces and places which all stakeholders feel are theirs.

Next Steps and Concluding Remarks

Future research. While I confess I am loathe to suggest more research, as it seems awfully self-serving of academics to do so, I realize there may be a need based on the findings of this study. Apart from the obvious – conducting research on any of the recommendations above – the primary areas for further scrutiny appear to beg us to:

• Identify which teacher-family collaboration strategies are most likely to positively impact all stakeholders (differentiate these according to whether they are teacher initiated, family initiated, or initiated by administrators and other top-down powers)
• Identify which teacher-family collaboration strategies are least likely to achieve results regardless who initiates them so that such strategies can be phased out
• Continue to investigate the links between teacher and student demographics such as culture and gender in order to minimize any ill effects related to these
• Conduct further action research of student roles as mediators of communication between teachers and parents/guardians in order to empower students and improve teacher-family collaboration efforts
• Examine schools' demands that families dedicate more of their time to school-related activities in order to determine the positive and negative effects such demands have on collaboration and student outcomes
• Continue to investigate culture-based school strategies related to teacher-family collaboration to see which can be applied to the public school setting
• Continue action research through professional development courses, like the ʻOhana Collaboration course which formed the basis of this study, to determine their usefulness to stakeholders and researchers interested in teacher-family collaboration

- Conduct further action research on supporting and teaching students, family members and teachers to adopt activist roles in their own education, in school-community activities and/or in their professions, to gauge the effect on teacher-family collaboration
- Conduct longitudinal research on teacher-family collaboration efforts to better understand how authentic relationships are built and to what extent they are necessary to positively effect student outcomes
- Conduct research on school-community CATs which arise through established committees such as PTAs and SCCs compared to grassroots groups to determine which is most effective in influencing student outcomes

Concluding Remarks. It is hoped this research will have some transferability. In the introductory chapter the need for increased family involvement in public schools as part of a culturally responsive approach to education is presented, and this study has been designed to address that need, albeit in a small way. While cultural experts, many of them family members, abound in our society, schools nationwide continue to struggle with lower achievement for some students than what is wished for, and excessive yet misdirected demands continue to be placed on teachers and students alike. Perhaps this study will present an argument for including more of the human resources that are available in all communities and can help us meet the challenges of public school education today. Perhaps, this study may even be one of many, long overdue, steps which will bridge the culture and generational gaps that thwart our progress towards achieving a more cooperative society in which unity and diversity are valued by all.

Appendix A: Pre-/Post-Survey

Teacher Perceptions of Family Collaboration
Post-Survey

Please complete this survey to participate in a doctoral study given by a research student at the University of Hawai'i. The information you share will be kept confidential and anonymous and will not be shared with anyone without your permission (see separate consent form). Your completion of this form, or choice not to complete it, will not effect your grade in this professional development course. Please answer each question below honestly, to the best of your ability. There are 4 pages to complete.

Part A: Teacher Participant Information

Teacher Participant Name: _____ Date: __/__/__

School: _____

Home address: _____

Email: _____ Tel.: _____

Degree(s): ❑ Associates ❑ Bachelor ❑ Masters ❑ +15 credits ❑ Doctoral

Education major(s) & minor(s): _____

Classes/grades you currently teach: _____

Type: ❑ Special Education ❑ General Education ❑ Honors/AP/IB ❑ ESL/ELL

Age: ____ Gender: ❑ Male ❑ Female

Disability (if any): _____

Ethnicity (Nationality): *Please check **all** that apply.*

❑ African/African American   ❑ Samoan/Samoan American

❑ American Indian/Alaskan Native American   ❑ Japanese/Japanese

❑ Filipino/Filipino American   ❑ Chinese/Chinese American

❑ Hispanic/Latino (Mexican, Spanish, Cuban, etc.)   ❑ Korean/Korean American

❑ Native Hawaiian   ❑ Part Hawaiian

❑ Micronesian/Micronesian American   ❑ Vietnamese/Vietnamese American

❑ White (not of Hispanic origin)   ❑ Other: _____

Continue ...

Teacher Participant Name: _____   Date: ___/___/___

Part B: Survey

DIRECTIONS: The 4 questions below refer to your experiences and perceptions <u>over the past school year</u>. Questions 5-11 seek your opinions in general. Please <u>use pencil</u> to write your answers.

1. What percentage of the families of your students do you estimate you contacted at least once a year?

Circle your answer

a. less than 10%	b. 10-25%	c. 26-50%	d. 51-75%	e. more than 75%

2. In which ways, and how often, did you communicate with your students' family members?

Check all that apply	almost never	every semester	every qtr. term	every month	every week
a) Letters sent home					
a) Telephone calls					
a) Internet or text messages					
a) Face to face					

3. With whom in your students' families did you communicate, and how often?

Check all that apply	almost never	every semester	every qtr. term	every month	every week
a) Parents/Legal guardians					
a) Siblings (give ages: _____)					
a) Extended family members (give type*: _____)					
a) Close family friends/Hanai family**					
extended family = grandparents, uncles, aunts		** hanai = adopted family members			

4. For what reasons did you usually communicate with students' family members, and when?

Check all that apply	almost never	every semester	every qtr. term	every month	every week
a) Student has done something commendable					
a) Student is behaving inappropriately					
a) Student's well being is a concern					
a) Student is in danger of failing					
a) Family members are invited to school activity					
a) Other (write in): _____					

Continue...

5. Who benefits as a result of your communication with your students' families, and how helpful is it?

Check all that apply	not helpful at all	sometimes helpful	helpful half of the time	usually helpful	always helpful
a) The student					
a) The student's family					
a) The teacher (you)					
a) The student's classmates					
a) The school					

6. How often do you feel that your communications with students' family members results in true collaboration – i.e. teacher and family member(s) work as a team?

Check all that apply	almost never	usually not	some-times	more often than not	almost always
a) Letters sent home					
a) Telephone calls					
a) Internet or text messages					
a) Face to face					

7. What do you think are the most successful ways to increase collaboration with students' family members, and why?

8. What challenges do you think are involved in collaborating with your students' family members?

9. How often do you <u>want</u> to <u>collaborate</u> (not just communicate) with your students' family members for the reasons listed below?

Check all that apply	almost never	every semester	every qtr. term	every month	every week
a) Student has done something commendable					
a) Student is behaving inappropriately					
a) Student's well being is a concern					
a) Student is in danger of failing					
a) Family members are invited to school activity					
a) Other (write in): _____					

10. What changes do you think increasing collaboration with students' families can bring about, and for whom?

Check all that apply	almost no changes	better student behavior	better student grades	better student well-being	all 3 effects listed at left
a) The student					
a) The student's classmates					
a) The school					
	almost no changes	respect others' efforts more	respect others' challenges more	more desire to be involved	Other? (write below)
a) Students' families					
a) The teacher (you)					
a) The community					

11. Do you have additional thoughts, not covered in the questions above, regarding collaboration between teachers and family at high school? If so, please write them here.

Thank you for completing this survey!

Appendix B: Syllabus and Reflection Topics

Course Name: Event Number:	ʻOhana Collaboration for Student Success Event 152780
Course Contact:	Name: Lisa Galloway, Ed.D. Candidate Home Cell Phone Number: (808) 358-6751 Email: lisa.m.galloway@gmail.com
Instructor/ Qualifications:	Instructor obtained her B.A. and B.Ed (Secondary English & Fine Arts) and taught high school for 10 years in Hawaiʻi, California and Canada. She then obtained her M.Ed. in Special Education and began work at the University of Hawaiʻi at Mānoa as an educational researcher where she wrote curriculum and coordinated two US DOE grant projects serving Hawaiian students. She recently taught *Science in Hawaiʻi* credit courses (events 1667, 1935, 1939 & 1940) to DOE teachers and is now a candidate for an Educational Doctoral degree in Curriculum and Instruction Studies at UH-M. The instructor will participate in all course activities described below in her own DOE high school classes at the same time as participants in order to model the skills needed, including Appreciative Inquiry and humor!
Organization:	UH-Mānoa, College of Education
Purpose of the Course:	3 Credits towards teacher reclassification. High school teachers will learn to apply research in fun and easy ways – yes, it's possible! – in order to increase and improve ʻohana (extended family) collaboration and ultimately improve their students achievement, behavior and well-being. This course will be especially useful to teachers whose students face special challenges due to poverty, disability and/or cultural-linguistic diversity. Teachers interested in pursuing a masters or doctoral degree, and/or conducting teacher participatory action research will also find this course valuable. Others interested in secondary education are welcome to audit the course. This course will attempt to bridge the research-to-practice gap by drawing on the following: **Theory** – Literature on family collaboration and its effects on schools tells us: "Schools with well-structured, high quality parent and family involvement programs see better student grades, higher test scores, and higher graduation rates, as well as a decrease in drug and alcohol use and fewer instances of violent behavior" and that, in fact, "better family involvement is also linked to higher teacher and administrator morale and increased job satisfaction" (The Forum on Educational Accountability, 2007, p.11).

Purpose of the Course:	**Practice** - Masters (2000) gives four basic themes in all definitions of Participatory Action Research: "empowerment of participants; collaboration through participation; acquisition of knowledge; and social change" (p.2). Dick (2004) states action research is on the rise, now incorporates trends such as appreciative inquiry (capitalizing on what works, rather than focusing on identifying problems), and that there is "an increasing sense of community among action researchers" where the nature of participants as co-researchers is explored and expanded (p.425). **Student Outcomes –** It is anticipated in the literature above, and reflected in the Board of Education Policy #2403 on Parent/Family Involvement (HI BOE, 2003), that "Parents play an integral role in assisting student learning, including successful achievement of the Hawai'i Content and Performance Standards" and that "Community resources [may be] … available to strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning." This course is designed to enable a cadre of teachers to use the above theory to guide their practice and achieve measureable and observable improvements in students outcomes (see Assignments for target indicators).
Specific Objectives:	*observed & measured through participant assignments as indicated on Portfolio Checklist & Assignments given below* Objective #1 – to explore, in depth, two or more ways to increase teacher-'ohana collaboration in order to improve outcomes (i.e. attendance, well-being, achievement) for students, especially those at risk of school failure Objective #2 – to learn and practice participatory action research as members of a cadre of who recursively plan, take action, observe, reflect and evaluate the results of action (Master, 2000) in order to identify any links between 'ohana collaboration and student outcomes Objective #3 – to empower teachers and, if possible, 'ohana through acquisition of knowledge and increased collaboration Objective #4 – to try to effect social change in the classroom – and by sharing research findings possibly effect change beyond to the whole school, the community and/or other school communities with similar populations where change in practice may benefit similar students (Brofenbrenner, 1979; Johnson, 2005; Masters, 2000; Shank & Villella, 2005). Objective #5 – to create a Learning Results Portfolio (see Portfolio Checklist & Assignments below). Contents will include: exhibits of learning (surveys, school & teacher materials, assignments with evaluations); summary of student outcomes; Reflections; and Captions (required for all Portfolio contents).

Activities to Achieve Objectives:	*Dates may change due to furloughs & participants' needs
	Day 1: August 20, 2010, Fri., 8:30am-2:30pm, (Statehood Day)
	          related Specific Objectives above indicated in **bold
	          Also see Portfolio Checklist & Assignments below
	1st Hour – Introductions; participant Pre-Survey & Reflection #1; group reading activity (family collaboration research & Hawaii's BOE/ HSTA/DOE response) ***Obj.#1, #2,#3, #5***
	        (break – instructor will supply breakfast pastries)
	2nd Hour – Reflection #2 (due following Mon.); discuss participant & instructor expectations; Powerpoint presentation: overview of the "research to practice gap"; teachers as participatory action researchers ***Obj.#2,#3, #5***
	3rd Hour – Internet exploration: 'Ohana/parent, student & teacher roles & options (DOE Web sources, et al.) ***Obj #1, .#2,#3***
	    (break – instructor will contact participants for input re: lunch)
	4th Hour – Role play: 'Ohana Gathering (Assignment #1 prep) ***Obj.#1, #2,#3***
	5th Hour – Discussion: course goals, objectives, assignments and evaluation ***Obj.#2, #5***
	1st Follow-up Session: Oct.2, 2010, Sat., 8:30am-12:30pm.(1st day of Fall Intercession week)
	– Participants & instructor share progress (successes and difficulties) implementing their interventions and brainstorm solutions, extensions and adaptations ***Obj.#1 thru #5***
	– Guest speaker &/or field trip, to be agreed upon by participants & instructor ***Obj.#2,#3, #4, #5***
	2nd Follow-up Session: Jan.15, 2011, Sat., 8:30am-12:30pm (MLK Day)
	– Similar to above ***Obj.#1 thru #5***
	3rd Follow-up Session: Apr.22, 2011, Fri., 8:30am-12:30pm (Good Friday)
	– Participants complete the Post-Survey, share further progress, assist each other in evaluating outcomes of their efforts and creating polished, finished products (Presentation and Learning Portfolio) by due dates ***Obj.#1 thru #5***

Course Key Dates:	Start Date: August 20, 2010, Saturday, 8:30am Portfolio Due Date: May 2, 2011, Monday, midnight Course End Date: May 31, 2011, Tuesday, midnight

Course Schedule: (Dates/times/ location)	*Note: dates may change due to furloughs & participants' needs* All work done online except the following: – Day 1: Aug.20, 2010, Saturday, 8:30am to 2:30pm, UH-Manoa – Conference Call #1: Sept.2, 2010, Thursday, 4:30-5:30pm – Conference Call #2: Nov.10, 2010, Wed., 4:30-5:30pm – Day 2: (Nov.-Dec. date tba) Instructor observation or participant videotape (see Portfolio Assignments below) – Day 3: Jan.15, 2011, Sat., 8:30am to 12:30pm, UH-Manoa – Conference Call #3: Mar.24, 2011, Thursday, 4:30-5:30pm – Day 4: April 22, 2011, 8:30am-12:30pm, UH-Manoa
Requirements: (Prerequisite skills, text reading)	Ideal participants are high school teachers in Special Education &/or general education (where students at risk of school failure are included) who are highly qualified or seeking to become highly qualified in their field. Participants must be computer literate (i.e. able to use the Internet and a laptop computer) – those with emerging technology skills will be assisted. Participating teachers who have special needs are encouraged to contact the instructor to make this course accessible and completion of the requirements achievable to them. **Prior approval from teacher's principal or supervising administrator is needed to use this course for reclassification (Form 201a)**
Content of Learning Portfolio	See Portfolio Checklist & Assignments below
Cost of Course:	$125 dollars for 3 credits (not transferable to University of HI). Fee may be waived if it presents a hardship to participant (contact instructor).
Fee Payment to:	Lisa Galloway, Lana'i High School, PO Box 630630, Lana'i City, HI 96763
Payment Deadline:	Course start date, August 20, 2010
Other Instructions:	For required conference calls, participants will need a phone that functions well and a quiet place to converse – 'hands free' option on phone is recommended. Participants are also encouraged to bring a laptop computer on Day 1.

'Ohana Collaboration Course - Portfolio Checklist
related Specific Objectives above indicated in **bold italics

Assign-ment	Due Date	Course Surveys/ Reflections /Assignments/ Exhibits of Achievement	Points	☑
Asgt. #1	Day 1, 8/20	Teacher Pre-Survey: My Prior Knowledge & 'Ohana Collaboration Effort *Obj.#1, #5*	2	
Weekly Participa-tion	Mondays X 25	Online Reflections (25 @ 1 point each) DUE: most Mondays, 8/20 to 4/22, except DOE holidays *Obj.#1-5*	25	
	Wed or Thu. X 3	Conference Calls on: Sep.2 (Th), Nov.10 (Wed) & Mar.24 (Th), 4:30-5:30pm *Obj.#1-5*	3	
Asgt. #2	8/29	Activities Done By, For or With Your School *Obj.#1, #5*	5	
Asgt. #3A	9/6	'Ohana Collaboration (Print Materials) *Obj.#1, #2, #5*	2.5	
Asgt. #3B		'Ohana Collaboration (Personal Contacts) *Obj.#1, 2, 5*	2.5	
Asgt. #3C		Student & 'Ohana Pre-Surveys *Obj.#1-5*	4	
Asgt. #4A	9/26	'Ohana Gathering & Evaluation *Obj.#1-5*	6	
Asgt. #4B	tba	Observation/Video of Related Class Activity *Obj.#1-5*	4	
Asgt. #4C	10/31	1st Intervention & Evaluation *Obj.#1-5*	6	
Asgt. #4D	1/30	2nd Intervention & Evaluation *Obj.#1-5*	6	
	n/a	*Optional Additional Interventions & Evaluation Obj.1-5*	*bonus*	
Asgt. #5A	4/22	Student & 'Ohana Post-Surveys *Obj.#1, #2, #5*	4	
Asgt. #5B	5/2	Assessment of Effects of above *Obj.#1-5*	7	
Asgt. #6A	5/2	'Ohana Collaboration Presentation & Evaluation *Obj.#1, #2, #5*	6	
Asgt. #6B	5/2	Teacher Post-Survey *Obj.#1-5*	2	
Electronic Portfolio	8/20 to 5/2	Captions for all Assignments above *(a.k.a. Exhibits of Achievement) Obj.#5*	5	
	5/2	Portfolio Submission with all Assignments above submitted Online or Disk (not binder!) *Obj.#1-5*	5	
Evalua-tions	5/2	Portfolio: Overall Quality (done by course instructor) & My Self-Evaluation with this checklist & course syllabus (done by teacher-participants) *Obj.#5*	5	
	5/31	Course & Instructor Evaluation (done by participants)	n/a	
		Total	100	

DOE PD Requirement – CAPTIONS (to be done for all assignments as they are completed):
Each participant's learning results portfolio may contain a variety of documents but each document MUST have a caption. Captions transform documents into evidence and assist teachers in articulating their thoughts. A caption is a statement attached to each document in the portfolio that describes:
   ✴ What the document is
   ✴ Why it is evidence
   ✴ What it is evidence of

Assignments … written evidence should be typed &/or scanned (student/'ohana evidence must be anonymous or permission must be obtained in writing to share with others); audio-visual materials should be submitted electronically via compact disk or online; all materials must be handed in via e-mail or mailed in electronic format, including anything exhibited in the Learning Results Portfolio, such as Captions. Instructor will help participants with emerging technological skills to achieve this with minimum stress.

related Specific Objectives above indicated in **bold italics

DUE	ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTION
Day 1 8/20, Sat. *Obj.#1, #5*	*#1: What is My Prior Knowledge & 'Ohana Collaboration Effort?* Complete the **Teacher Pre-Survey** documenting any past efforts you made to initiate, increase or improve family member communication, collaboration &/or participation in your classes – describe what you did, how this effected student outcomes, and why you believe it was or was not successful.
8/29, Sun *Obj.#1, #5*	*#2: What Does My School Community Do for 'Ohana Collaboration?* Research all **Activities Done By, For or With Your School** recently as well as those planned for this school year, such as: PTA, PCNC, SCC, local civics clubs' activities, grant projects, et al.. Document evidence with flyers, announcements, notes, photos, etc.. Evaluate how, and how well – if at all – you believe these activities effect student outcomes such as: achievement (grades, test scores); behavior (absences, tardies, time on task, class conduct, detentions, referrals, suspensions); and well-being (mood, demeanor, attitude, social skills, peer relations, stated level of happiness, self-esteem self-image, self-efficacy). Give reasons for your opinions.

9/6, Mon *Obj.#1, #2, #5* *Obj.#1, #2, #5* *Obj.#1-5*	*#3: What I Have I Done So Far for 'Ohana Collaboration?* A) Document all **'Ohana Collaboration Print Materials** you have sent home this year to students 'ohana in one or more of your classes, including course syllabus, welcome letter, report card (examples), school newsletters, e-mails related to your courses, etc. Evaluate how, and how well – if at all – you believe these activities might effect student outcomes: achievement, behavior, well-being (as in Assignment #2 above). Give reasons for your opinions. B) Document all **'Ohana Collaboration Personal Contacts** such as meetings or telephone calls you have had this year with students' 'ohana members in one or more of your classes. Evaluate how, and how well – if at all – you believe these activities might effect student outcomes (as above). Give reasons for your opinions. C) Create your own **Student & 'Ohana Pre-Surveys** (or make one with colleagues in this course) then give them to any class(es) you want to involve in your work for this course. You will compare these to post-surveys later.
9/26, Sun *Obj.#1-5*	*#4: What Can I Do Now for 'Ohana Collaboration?* A) Design and conduct an **'Ohana Gathering** to invite students' extended family members to meet with you and discuss collaboration ideas that could positively effect student outcomes. Hold this meeting in a place with an atmosphere conducive to Appreciative Inquiry, such as a park or café – not at the school! – and make it enjoyable to all. Document evidence (write notes about what 'ohana and students said and did immediately after the gathering, and if possible take photos). Evaluate results of your 'Ohana Gathering, especially any that could positively effect student outcomes and identify which activities you believe directly caused the results. Use this information to reflect and carefully plan your next steps.

No later than 4/22 *Obj.#1-5*	#4: *What Can I Do Now for 'Ohana Collaboration?* B) Agree on a date between October-April with the instructor of this PD3E course for one **Instructor's Observation** in your classroom of an activity you engage in related to the 'ohana collaboration objective *(Obj.#1)*, or you may submit a videotape of same. Discuss the observed or videotaped activity with the instructor of this PD3E course in order to cross-check your perceptions of events with a colleague and triangulate these perceptions with others' perceptions (students, 'ohana members &/or school staff present at the activity) *(Obj.#2)*. Consider the value of this assignment in relation to: your participatory action research role; and any potential direct or indirect effect on student outcomes. Be sure to document your thoughts in one of Online Reflections due throughout the course.
10/31, Sun. *Obj.#1-5*	C) Design and conduct your **1st Intervention** with input from your students and their 'ohana, if possible, to increase or improve collaboration and improve student outcomes (achievement, behavior, well-being). Examples are: fundraiser for class; ho'ike (student presentation); guest speaker from 'ohana or their network or local community; field trip chaperone or participant. Document evidence of all your, students' and their 'ohana members' activities throughout (write notes immediately after activities, take photos &/or audio-visual recordings, gather 'primary sources' including copied emails, announcements, etc.). Evaluate results of your 1st Intervention and invite 'ohana and students to help you do this by interviewing them. Identify activities you believe directly caused the results you observe, especially any that could positively effect student outcomes. Use this information to reflect and carefully plan your next steps.
1/30, Sun *Obj.#1-5*	D) Design and conduct your **2nd Intervention** with input from your students and their 'ohana, if possible, to increase or improve collaboration. Document evidence, interview students and 'ohana when done, and evaluate results in the same manner as above, and use this information to reflect and carefully plan your next steps.
n/a *Obj.#1-5*	Bonus: Design and conduct **(Optional) Additional Interventions** that build on those above, documenting evidence of them, interviewing students and 'ohana and evaluating results in the same manner as above.
4/22, Fr. *Obj.#1-5*	#5: *Did Our 'Ohana Collaboration Efforts Effect Student Outcomes?* A) Give **Student & 'Ohana Post-Surveys** to any class(es) you involved in your work for this course and surveyed at the beginning of the year.

5/2, Mon. *Obj.#1-5*	*#5: Did Our 'Ohana Collaboration Efforts Effect Student Outcomes?* B) Analyze the Pre- and Post-Surveys above as well as other sources of information and write an **Assessment of Effects**, if any, your 'Ohana Gathering and Interventions had on students' achievement (grades, test scores); behavior (absences, tardies, time on task, class conduct, detentions, referrals, suspensions); and well-being (mood, demeanor, attitude, social skills, peer relations, stated level of happiness, self-esteem self-image, self-efficacy). Document any changes you observe from the beginning of the school year to the end. Give reasons for your opinions.

5/2, Mon.
Obj.#1, 2,
#5
 	
5/2, Mn.
 	
Obj.#1-#5
	#6: Can Our 'Ohana Collaboration Efforts Effect Others?
	     A) Complete the **Teacher-Participant Post-Survey** documenting your efforts to initiate, increase or improve family member communication, collaboration &/or participation this school year – describe what you did, how this effected student outcomes, and why you believe it was or was not successful. Also, document other outcomes you found valuable &/or noteworthy as a result of participation in this course.
	     B) Create and conduct an '**Ohana Collaboration Presentation** for your department, school faculty or other meeting of stakeholders interested in education in your community, or at a similar school community. Provide evidence of your presentation and the information and recommendations you share (i.e. Powerpoint, audio-visuals such as video and photos, meeting agenda &/or invitation or flyer). You are encouraged to present with your students and/or their 'ohana. Give evidence that you carefully considered your audience and how best to attract and interest them while respecting their diversity and ensuring your presentation is accessible to them (i.e. plan for any needs related to the language they speak and/or disability needs). Evaluate and cross-check results of your presentation by surveying your audience, interviewing others who presented with you afterwards, &/or taking notes on audience questions and reactions to the presentation. In particular, assess the degree to which you believe the presentation of your research might effect social change in your classroom, in other classes at your school, school-wide at your campus, in your community and/or other school communities with similar population demographics.

5/2, Mn. *Obj.#1-5*	**Portfolio Submission** Submit all Assignments above online or disk (not binder!) to instructor, plus Self-Evaluation (done by teacher-participants) and Course & Instructor Evaluation. COURSE ENDS May 31, 2011.

Reflection Topics (25 @ 1 point each) DUE: most Mondays, August 20 to Apr. 18, except DOE holidays…must be a minimum of a half page, typed, double spaced & handed in via e-mail plus exhibited in Learning Results ePortfolio with Caption(s). Subject to change as action research evolves.

1. Why are you taking this course? What do you hope to gain?
2. What literature reviewed in class on Day 1 resonated with you the most? Why? What action(s) do you anticipate taking in response to this literature? What other sources do you know of - &/or want more of - that relates to the literature reviewed so far?
3. Describe what your classroom environment and atmosphere are like. Give an outsider a sense of the lives of you and your students.
4. Describe your school and local community. Give an outsider a sense of who has power to make important decisions about education locally. Consider which policies or programs are important in your school community and how gender, economics, resources and the history of your school community might effect who has power.
5. What is the most appropriate way to invite 'ohana to collaborate with you? Describe the diversity of your students' 'ohana and ways your actions can be designed to be sensitive to their cultures, past school experiences, disabilities and/or strengths.
6. What do your expectations of this course say about your beliefs about education and the roles of teachers, students and 'ohana members?
7. Which of your teaching practices demonstrate your beliefs about education? What beliefs about life do you hold that effect your teaching in positive and/or negative ways?
8. What do you hope will happen as you try to improve or increase 'ohana collaboration or involvement in your class(es) this year? Identify a specific "problem" or goal related to this.
9. Develop a hypothesis and, if possible, revise with input from 'ohana and students as well as from the instructor & participants in this course *(Example Hypothesis: If we can make the nature of 'ohana-teacher relationships change for the better, then student outcomes will improve.)*
10. Develop a research question and, if possible, revise with input from 'ohana and students as well as from the instructor and participants in this course *(Example Research Question: What is the nature of the teacher-'ohana-student relationships at the high school level and how can these effect student outcomes?)*
11. How do you define the terms used in your hypothesis &/or research question? Consider what your values are compared to 'ohana members and students, as well as how you might use language differently. *Example: What does "improve' mean? How can it be measured?*
12. What reasoning and attitudes do you think or know underlie the actions you, your 'ohana members and students are exhibiting? What underlying assumptions might there be that influence these actions and interpretations? Consider your and others' world views (esp. about education, families,

community life) and biases (i.e. positive/negative predispositions towards other people and places).

13. Who else could you or should you involve in your actions/interventions and why? Other school staff? Other community members? What would the benefits be to them and/or you?

ALTERNATE: Do you feel that your efforts to try to increase 'ohana collaboration are slow or have stalled? If so, write about why you think this is happening. Consider influences from your personal life, your work life, and from people and/or circumstances outside of your control. If possible, reflect on what you might be able to change in order to move forward as a collaboration researcher.

14. *Are your findings triangulated? Do you, 'ohana members and students all agree on the results of your actions/interventions so far? (**Moved to #19 due to late responses from participants.**)*

15. What themes do you see emerging when you look at your actions and those of your 'ohana members and students? Can you develop categories for the concepts or properties you see in these themes, or describe links among them? Do your themes suggest your hypothesis may be correct or not?

16. What strategies has the instructor offered you that have been valuable? Did you act on any strategies you found not to be valuable? What effects has the instructor's interactions with you had on you, your students and their 'ohana?

17. In what ways is your role as a co-researcher developing or expanding? Do you feel you are involved in the heuristic process (on a personal level) with your 'ohana members and students?

18. What does your "spiral of action research" look like now? Has your hypothesis changed? Has your research question evolved?

19. What level of comfort have you had in course meetings, conference calls and in emails with the instructor and other participants in this course? Did cross-checking with others confirm your beliefs and interpretations or persuade to change your mind about what you were thinking? Give specific examples.

20. Apply inductive analysis to your data. How do you interpret your results? Are they unique or can you generalize findings from your observations to make a universal claim?

21. How do you justify your claims? Can your interpretation of your results be disconfirmed or explained in ways other than yours? Are your results truly, directly caused by the actions taken by you, 'ohana, students, and/or the input you've gotten from the instructor and other participants in this course?

22. Do a "member-check" with 'ohana with whom you collaborated. Do they confirm your beliefs and interpretations? Have you understood them and portrayed them fairly when documenting their participation? Do they endorse your plans to share results of your actions/interventions with other specific audiences?

23. Who would benefit by knowing what you've learned this year, and how would they benefit?

24. Have your beliefs about life or education changed since last semester? Have your teaching practices changed? In what ways? For how long do you think

these changes will continue to effect how you teach and interact with your students, 'ohana, and others?
25. Does your perception of who has power in your school community differ now compared to what you thought at the beginning of this course? Consider the power students, 'ohana and teachers have. State examples you have seen of these people having power and why, or if you perceive no change, reflect on why this is so.

Appendix C: Participant Consent Form

Participant Consent Form

Welcome to the 'Ohana Collaboration for Student Success Project!

WHO & WHAT IS THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR? *My name is Lisa Galloway & I am a teacher at Lana'i High School. I am also a graduate student at UH-Manoa in the College of Education. I am doing a doctoral study on* **family collaboration** *& this professional development course will help me do it! This makes me a "PI" – the person in charge of collecting & safe-keeping information on several Hawai'i public school teachers' perceptions & behaviors towards family collaboration.*

WHAT I BELIEVE – *Studies show students learn more from their families than their teachers, & they benefit from reciprocal learning & teaching between generations, extended & adopted family, neighbors & community members (novice & expert).*

The **Hawai'i Board of Education's Policy #2403** *encourages teachers & families to collaborate & national experts believe doing so will improve students' behavior, well-being & achievement – not to mention teachers' job satisfaction – but studies show it's not happening widely. So I think teachers need to work together on family collaboration.*

By doing this project, we can work as a **team of teacher-researchers** *& carefully analyze what we think & what we do to see if trying to increase family collaboration helps students. If it does, we can share that information with others – if not, we may understand more about why not & be able to make recommendations to others about the value of increasing family collaboration & alternate ways it might be done.*

HOW CAN YOU HELP? *Research cannot happen with participants. That could be you! To try to* **prove our project helps students** *we need to collect data. If you choose to join us you will do a survey at the start & end of the course. This pre-/post-survey, plus any & all of your course interactions & products (dialogue, reflections, emails, audio or videotape, ePortfolio, etc.) will become the data we use to analyze & report our findings.*

All data will be collected anonymously – *no teacher names or personal information will be shared (password protected codes will identify participants & only aggregate data will be published). All private data will be kept in my private home in a locked cabinet, then destroyed by January 2013. As a co-researcher, you will have the opportunity to review what is put in the final project report (dissertation & possible publications) & any changes you want will be done, including removal of all your data from the study if you choose.*

If you **sign the Consent to Release Information** *on the back of this sheet, you may help prove to others how our project can help Hawaii's students & their families. If you choose not to sign, your choice will be kept strictly confidential & you will still receive all the benefits of participating in the 'Ohana Collaboration of Student Success PD course. This information will have no effect on your grade & will be kept private.*

PLEASE SEE OVER!

Participant Consent Form

WHAT ARE THE RISKS & BENEFITS FOR YOU? *You may feel discomfort relating activities you engage in while taking this course &/or sharing your opinions. However, you may also gain skills & knowledge valuable to you as a professional teacher or researcher.*

WANT MORE INFO ABOUT THIS? *Please ask! If you have questions or concerns contact me or my dissertation committee chair at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa, College of Education, 1776 University Ave. UA 1-5, Honolulu, HI 96822, attention:*

- o   *Principal Investigator: Lisa Galloway, Ed.D. Candidate. Email: lisa.m.galloway@gmail.com or telephone: 358-6751 (cell), and;*
- o   *UH Committee Chair: Dr. Robert Stodden, PhD, Email: stodden@hawaii.edu or telephone: 956-9199*

If you cannot get satisfactory answers to your questions or have comments or complaints *about your treatment in this study, contact: Committee on Human Studies, University of Hawai'i, 1960 East-West Road, Room B-104, Honolulu, HI 96822. Phone: (808) 956-5007. Email: uhirb@hawaii.edu*

Consent to Release Information

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING:

I certify that I have read & understand the information presented. I have been given satisfactory answers to my questions. I am aware that I am free to withdraw my consent to release information at any time. I know if I withdraw my consent, there will be no adverse consequences. I consent to release the information noted above. The information will be obtained by my PD Course instructor, Lisa Galloway from the University of Hawai'i. The information will be given to her will be kept anonymous. I understand that such consent does not waive any of my legal rights. Consent does not release the Principal Investigator or the institution or any employee or agent thereof from liability for negligence.

Check YES if you consent to complete this survey & release the stated information on yourself.

[   ]   Yes, I consent

Check NO if you do not consent to participate.

[   ]   No, I DO NOT consent

_____   _____
PRINTED NAME OF PARTICIPANT   DATE

_____
SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

PLEASE KEEP 1 OF THE 2 COPIES OF THIS CONSENT FORM YOU RECEIVE FOR YOUR RECORDS

Appendix D: PD Readings

The following seven documents were given to PD participants during this study. The first six were shared in advance of the first workshop and then discussed when all participants were together for the first time. The last reading was given to participants during the second semester of the study.

1. Appreciative Inquiry (3 pages)
2. Board of Education Policy #2403 (8 pages)
3. Epstein's Framework for Parent Involvement (2 pages)
4. Family Collaboration in Special Education (2 pages)
5. No Emotion Left Behind (2 pages)
6. Standards for Parents (2 pages)
7. Inductive and Deductive Reasoning (2 pages)

Appreciative Inquiry

Introducing Appreciative Inquiry

Meet David Cooperrider, the founder of Appreciative Inquiry. When David Cooperrider was a doctoral candidate at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland Ohio, he was conducting research into organizational behavior with the Cleveland Clinic. David observed that when interviews focused on the problems at the clinic, his subjects' energy decreased and they felt demoralized. When the interviews focused on what was working, they exhibited increased energy and enthusiasm for their work. (See the video at website below.)

Cooperrider also noticed the same impact on those conducting the interviews. When the focus was on problems, the result of the inquiry was a vicious circle spiraling downward. When the focus was on what's working and what's valuable, the result was a virtuous circle spiraling upward. *When I do good I feel good; when I feel good, I do good.*

<u>Focusing on Strengths</u>

The *What Works* Conference examined new ways to increase student self-reliance and *accountability by emphasizing personal talents and strengths.* Lindsey and Matt describe how <u>Appreciative Inquiry</u> (AI) can be used by teachers and parents to create a school community environment that is rich with excitement and passion – passion that is driven by students' talents and strengths.

Quoting Thomas Edison, *If we did all the things we were capable of, we would literally astound ourselves*, Dr Godwin described AI as both an approach and philosophy for teachers and parents which had the potential for changing the social and academic environment for our schools. According to many participant comments, the AI presentations reinforced their own ideas as well as provoked new insights and possibilities for their teaching. Matt informed participants that Appreciative Inquiry was extremely powerful because it can be used by both a single person – teacher, student or parent - or an entire organization: classroom, school or district. In other words, AI has the possibility to transform our schools and classrooms to a place where teachers and students co-create a teaching and learning environment that values the social and academic skill and knowledge of students; a place where problems take a backseat to the great things that students bring to the classroom.

Participants were invited to practice reframing some of their own student, classroom or school topics from an appreciative perspective. The resulting interaction was exciting and wonderful to hear teachers and other stakeholders dialogue about the great things taking place in their school community.

<u>Focusing on What Works</u>

A recent <u>article in the LA Times</u> on student attitudes illustrates an important <u>Appreciative Inquiry principle</u>: *You find what you are looking for – If you are looking for bad stuff you find bad stuff and if you look for good stuff that's what you find.* The article, based on a recent survey of South Los Angeles high school students, suggests that many are frightened, deeply dissatisfied, and exhibit symptoms of clinical depression. Students reported that their school and teachers are failing them, racial tension and gang violence exists in their school community, and that their schools look more like prisons.

The survey was conducted in seven South L.A. public schools by a community youth organization, South Central Youth Empowered Thru Action (SCYEA), with technical guidance from the psychology department at Loyola Marymount University. While the intention of this group is notable (as with so many other public and private organizations), there is little evidence that simply identifying problems lead to improvement or change. Otherwise, we would surly not be facing the same problems, issues or concerns that have been voiced over the past 20 years.

In addition, by limiting our discussion to problems we are more likely to increase cynicism and pessimism. What the California Teachers Association Institute for Teaching (CTA IFT) has uncovered with other teachers, administrators, CTA leaders and staff, and school community

representatives is that by investigating only problems we merely become experts on the problems and not on solutions. On the other hand, when we focus on what works and works well, we find solutions, possibilities, and a new sense of hope.

Instead of surveying students, teachers, parents and other individuals about what's not working in our schools, the CTA IFT is more interested in observing and asking questions about programs, organizational structures, teacher and administrator decision-making models, school – family relationships, and teaching and learning strategies that work. Once this information is known, we can begin to identify and catalogue successful behaviors and practices that can be replicated in classrooms, schools, and school district communities.

More Resources: Online Videos

★ Lost Generation: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=42E2fAWM6rA

★ with Marcus Buckingham: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wuZBJQAFOfM

★ Heathside School: http://appreciativeinquiry.case.edu/practice/videoDetail.cfm?coid=5447

More Information:

★ the Appreciative Inquiry Commons website: http://appreciativeinquiry.case.edu

★ A.I. Creator: http://www.teacherdrivenchange.org/teacherdrivenchange/appreciative_inquiry/

Web video: http://www.teacherdrivenchange.org/teacherdrivenchange/appreciative_inquiry/

Board of Education State of Hawai'i, Department of Education PARENT/FAMILY INVOLVEMENT POLICY #2403 Approved: 05/03/01Revised: 09/18/03

The Board of Education recognizes that a child's education is a responsibility shared by the school and family during the entire period the child spends in school. To support the goal of the Department of Education (Department) to educate all students effectively, schools and parents must work as knowledgeable partners.

Although parents are diverse in culture, language, and needs, they share the schools' commitment in the educational success of their children. The Department and its schools, in collaboration with parents, shall establish programs and practices that enhance parent involvement and reflect the specific needs of students and their families.

To this end, the Board of Education supports the Department in the development, implementation, and regular evaluation of parent involvement programs in each school. The implementation will involve parents at all grade levels in a variety of roles, including input in decision-making processes and practices. The parent involvement program will be comprehensive and coordinated in nature. It will include, but not be limited to, the following components of successful parent involvement programs:

- Communication between home & school is regular, two-way & meaningful.
- Responsible parenting is promoted and supported.
- Parents play an integral role in assisting student learning, including successful achievement of the Hawaii Content and Performance Standards.
- Parents are welcome in the school & their support and assistance are sought.
- Parents are partners in the decisions that affect children and families.

- Community resources are made available to strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning.

The Department shall implement administrative guidelines that support professional development opportunities for staff members to enhance understanding of effective parent involvement strategies. The Department recognizes the importance of administrative leadership in setting expectations and creating a climate conducive to parental participation.

Engaging parents is essential to improved student achievement and to realize the Vision of a Public School Graduate.

	The CSSS School
	Personalized Classroom Climate - Differentiated Classroom Practices - Prevention - Early Intervention - Family Involvement - Supports for Transition - Community Outreach and Support - Specialized Assistance - Crisis and Emergency Support
	February 2009

http://doe.k12.hi.us/periodicals/csss/2009/csss0902.htm

Family Involvement and Student Achievement

Gordon Miyamoto, Educational Specialist, Family Support When parents and other caregivers become involved in their children's education in meaningful ways, student achievement increases. Parent and family involvement contributes to students':

- earning higher grades and test scores,
- enrolling in higher-level programs,
- earning credits and being promoted,

- adapting well to school and attending regularly,
- having better social skills and behavior,
- graduating, and
- going on to higher education.

Further, family involvement designed to improve student learning can have an even greater effect on student achievement. Schools can help parents contribute to their children's achievements by:

- helping parents know what their children are learning and doing in class,
- promoting high standards and expectations for student work,
- helping parents assist their children at home,
- promoting discussion with parents about improving student progress, and
- helping families see good teaching. Promising research shows students' reading and math scores (3-5th grades)

Children whose families are involved in their education at home and at school, do better in school, and their schools get better.

Promising research shows students' reading and math scores (3-5th grades) improve faster when teachers meet with families face-to-face, send materials on ways to help their child at home, and communicate routinely about their child's progress.

As one of six critical elements of the Comprehensive Student Support System (CSSS), Family Involvement includes families as full participants in the educational process for their children. Families can

participate as contributors, planners, leaders, teachers, learners, and colleagues to promote student learning. One of the goals of the CSSS is to involve families and the community as integral partners in education.

Board of Education Parent/ Family Involvement Policy #2403 (see page 4) is acknowledgement of the importance of meaningful and effective parent and family involvement. The policy encourages schools to fully engage families as partners to provide students with the best means of achieving academic success. The policy recognizes that although parents are diverse in culture, language, and needs, they share the schools' commitment in seeing their children succeed.

In the policy, the Department makes a commitment to establish programs and practices that enhance parent involvement and reflect the specific needs of students and their families. The policy establishes support for the development, implementation, and regular evaluation of comprehensive and coordinated parent involvement programs in each school.

> *"The partnership among members of the school community in implementing the Hawaii Board of Education Parent/Family Involvement Policy is critical to student success" — Pat Hamamoto, Superintendent of Schools*

Parent Community Networking Centers (PCNCs)

In order to facilitate meaningful and effective parent/ family involvement at the school level, most schools have Parent Community Networking Centers (PCNCs). These Centers, staffed by a PCNC Coordinator, focus on family support and work to engage parents to

participate in their children's education. Their mission is "to develop a sense of community and a caring, learning network to strengthen family, neighborhood, school, and classroom for every student's wellbeing and attainment of standards." PCNCs develop supportive partnerships among the home, school and community. They are school-based centers for families, volunteers, and community to identify their strengths, collaborate, make decisions, and create partnerships as a part of the CSSS.

The Bottom Line

Parent/family involvement is essential to the education of children. Parents are vital to identifying and addressing the unique educational strengths, challenges and needs of their children. It is important that schools engage families in meaningful and effective ways if they are to contribute fully to the achievement of their children. Hawaii's families face a variety of challenges. These may range from severe economic pressures to reluctance arising from cultural and/or language differences between families and schools to a lack of understanding on the part of families of how best to help their children. Schools can go a long way in supporting parents and families to support their children's educational efforts. In implementing the Hawaii Board of Education Parent/Family Involvement Policy, the Department expresses its commitment to partnering with families for the successful education of all children. Children succeed when schools, families and communities work together.

For more information, visit the HDOE Family Support Services website at http://familysupport.k12.hi.us.

Six Keys to Successful Parent/Family Involvement

Based on research done by the National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS), these components constitute essential elements that engage families with schools and contribute to the success of their children.

Key	Example
Communication Communication is the foundation of solid partnerships. When parents and educators communicate effectively, positive relationships develop, problems are more easily solved, and students make greater progress. Schools need to be proactive about building relationships with families as partners, rather than communicating only when required to inform or when problems arise. Effective communication between home and school should be regular, two-way, meaningful, and student focused rather than problem focused.	*Edline* *Mililani High School uses an online communication tool called Edline. This secure, web-based system allows teachers, students and parents to communicate important information such as homework assignments, grades for classes, school events, exam dates and schedule changes. It is used to post parent newsletters, meal menus, registration materials and forms. It allows parents to become partners and to get more involved in their children's education through access to more information.*

Volunteering	*Room Parents*
When parents volunteer, both families and schools reap benefits. In addition to contributing monetarily and in-kind toward students' school programs, families can contribute their talents, skills, expertise, experience and services toward their children's education. When parents are welcomed and their support and assistance sought, they can supplement schools' offerings with resources that would otherwise not be available. Students benefit directly as well, since assisting in school events and activities communicates to a child that, "I care about what you do here." In addition, volunteers express greater confidence in their schools when they have opportunities to participate regularly.	*Kaunakakai Elementary conducts a beginning of the year mandatory meeting for all parents. The Parent Community Networking Center Coordinator explains volunteering and room parenting procedures, and surveys parents as to their skills and interests. The parents are then assigned to duties in their child's classroom from tutoring to phone tree responsibilities. Each parent is able to participate and volunteer based upon their own strengths, interest and competency.*
Student Learning	*Standards-Based Showcase Night*
Families play an integral role in assisting student learning, including successful achievement of the Hawaii Content and Performance Standards (HCPS). While most parents desire to help their children, they often are unsure of how to provide effective and appropriate instructional support. Schools can support parents by helping them connect to their children's educational program. Schools can keep parents informed of children's educational progress, content and curriculum. They can provide workshops, hand outs, student folders and planners, and other resources families can use to assist their children in learning.	*At Ha'aheo Elementary School, the Standards Showcase is an evening event for students to share with their families various aspects of their work towards attaining state standards. All grades (K-6) participate; their samples and evidence include student progress portfolios, video clips to support classroom projects/routines, and other products from curriculum based activities.*

Shared Decision-Making	*School Community Council*
Parents, apart from students, are the most invested stakeholders in the educational system, because the decisions made will directly affect their children's lives. Parents play the important role of advocates for their children. Effective partnerships develop when schools welcome families to fully participate in the decision-making process, allowing them to voice concerns and be actively involved in setting educational and life goals for their children. Shared decision-making, such as that found on effective School Community Councils, fosters parental trust, public confidence, and mutual support of parent and educator efforts in helping children succeed. Involvement of families is crucial on issues from curriculum and course selection to discipline policies and school reform measures. In schools where families are involved, students have higher levels of achievement and greater public support.	*At Kahuku High and Intermediate School, parents, students, school personnel and members of the School Community Council give input on a monthly basis to discuss topics and help make decisions for their school. Some of the important items on the agenda have included Kahuku's Attendance Policy, Bell Schedules, Accreditation, Academic and Financial Plans, and the new 24 Credit Graduation Requirements*
Parenting	*Parent Academy*
Parents provide what their children need to survive: food, clothing, shelter and safety. They provide nurturing, socialization, boundaries and emotional support. The more parents are able to provide this support, the more children will be ready to respond positively to the instruction given at school. Parents can support their children's education by making sure that their children arrive at school on time, rested, fed, and ready to learn. They can make sure that assignments are done, set high expectations for achievement, and nurture self-esteem. Schools can support positive parenting by respecting and affirming the strengths and skills needed by parents to fulfill this role, and by providing resources to increase parents' capacity to parent effectively.	*Kalani Parent Academy holds workshops at different schools in the Kalani Complex to reach out and educate parents. Collaboration and networking offer the families a diverse range of workshops to meet the needs of many families. Topics focus on strengthening the family, technology, academic, and student support. They start off the school year with Family Dinner Night emphasizing the importance of regular family dinners to prevent youth substance abuse. Other topics include Drug Proofing Your Kids; 6th Grade/ Middle School Presentations, Mini Health & Safety Fair; Internet Safety; and a technology workshop.*

Community Collaboration	*Community Volunteers*
In addition to families, the community can serve schools as an important ally and partner. When schools and the community work together, both are strengthened and accomplish more than either can alone. When schools collaborate with the community, families can access community resources more easily, businesses connect education with the real world, seniors contribute wisdom and experiences and gain a sense of purpose, and, ultimately, students serve and learn beyond their isolated school involvement. Community partnerships can access resources to strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning.	*At Kapolei Middle School, parents, lead by Master Sergeant Reynold T. Hioki, in partnership with Lieutenant Colonel Barry J. Surrell and his team at the Hawaii Air National Guard, brought volunteers to help pack up a tremendous amount of library books, materials and technology equipment into boxes to help prepare the library for its recarpeting project.*

Parent/Family Involvement and School Improvement

Since parent/family involvement has been shown to have a positive impact on student outcomes, it follows that schools can benefit by systemically including parent/family involvement initiatives into school improvement efforts. Utilizing the six components of effective parent/family involvement, schools can develop activities to complement the strategic actions identified in their academic plans toward achieving school-wide goals.

Tools are available to assist school teams assess data regarding the effectiveness of their parent/family involvement efforts, and areas that can be strengthened. Teams then develop activities to be included in the school academic plan. This ensures that parent/family involvement.

National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement

Building upon the six types of parent involvement identified by Joyce L. Epstein, Ph.D., of the Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships at Johns Hopkins University, National PTA created program standards of excellence.

National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs	
Standard 1:	Communicating— Communication between home and school is regular, two-way, and meaningful.
Standard II:	Parenting—Parenting skills are promoted and supported.
Standard III:	Student Learning—Parents play an integral role in assisting student learning.
Standard IV:	Volunteering—Parents are welcome in the school, and their support and assistance are sought.
Standard V:	School Decision Making and Advocacy—Parents are full partners in the decisions that affect children and families
Standard VI:	Collaborating with Community— Community resources are used to strengthen schools, families, and student learning.

Epstein's Framework of Six Types of Involvement

PARENTING: Help all families establish home environments to support children as students.
o   Parent education and other courses or training for parents (e.g., GED, college credit, family literacy).
o   Family support programs to assist families with health, nutrition, and other services.
o   Home visits at transition points to pre-school, elementary, middle, and high school.

2. **COMMUNICATING**: Design effective forms of school-to-home and home-to-school communications about school programs and children's progress.
o   Conferences with every parent at least once a year.
o   Language translators to assist families as needed.

o   Regular schedule of useful notices, memos, phone calls, newsletters, and other communications.

3. **VOLUNTEERING**: Recruit and organize parent help and support.
o   School and classroom volunteer program to help teachers, administrators, students, and other parents.
o   Parent room or family center for volunteer work, meetings, and resources for families.
o   Annual postcard survey to identify all available talents, times, and locations of volunteers.

4. **LEARNING AT HOME**: Provide information and ideas to families about how to help students at home with homework and other curriculum-related activities, decisions, and planning.
o   Information for families on skills required for students in all subjects at each grade.
o   Information on homework policies and how to monitor and discuss schoolwork at home.
o   Family participation in setting student goals each year and in planning for college or work.

5. **DECISION MAKING**: Include parents in school decisions, developing parent leaders and representatives.
o   Active PTA/PTO or other parent organizations, advisory councils, or committees for parent leadership and participation.
o   Independent advocacy groups to lobby and work for school reform and improvements.
o   Networks to link all families with parent representatives.

6. **COLLABORATING WITH COMMUNITY**: Identify and integrate resources and services from the community to strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning and development.
o   Information for students and families on community health, cultural, recreational, social support, and other programs/services.
o   Information on community activities that link to learning skills and talents, including summer programs for students.

Compliance or Collaboration: Family Involvement in Special Education (excerpts from Lisa' dissertation proposal/comps)

✦ (Evaluation Exchange, 2008, p.39): From an abstract notion exemplified by limited school support activities like bake sales, parent involvement as a theory and practice has become a fundamental feature of American education … firmly institutionalized by law and even more clearly engraved in the attitudes and behavior of parents and educators.

✦ The Forum on Educational Accountability (2007) reminds us that in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act "parents are mentioned over 650 times in the law" clearly showing "parent involvement is a cornerstone of ESEA" (p.11). ... Federal policy seems to acknowledge the importance of family involvement, but provides insufficient funds to increase it, and school districts themselves "are focusing on compliance as opposed to a statement of belief that parent involvement is integral" and "extremely important" (Evaluation Exchange, 2008, p.16). Darden states a "culture change" needs to happen at all levels.

✦ Welch (1998) writes: "The IEP has the intuitive appeal and potential to serve as an action plan developed through collaboration. Smith (1990), however, maintain[s] that the IEP has been nothing more than mechanistic and a procedure for compliance" (p. 128).

✦ the Forum on Educational Accountability (2007): "School professionals want more parent involvement but have few tools to accomplish this. Most parents would like to be more involved, but they are largely unaware of their rights and opportunities under the law" (p.11).

✦ Some researchers (Blue-Banning, Summers, Frankland, Lord Nelson & Beegle, 2004) have examined why the "development of collaborative partnerships between parents and professionals is too often unsuccessful" (p.167) and discovered communication barriers have much to do with this. Blue-Banning et al (2004) contend there is "a lack of empirical understanding of the components of interpersonal partnerships" on the part of professionals and parents, and learned the parents in their study felt "stress and exhaustion caused by the perceived necessity to fight for services, cope with humiliating or disrespectful regulations or provider attitudes" (p.182).

✦ Lee and Bowen (2006) explored family attitudes toward communication with schools and made what they described as several "disheartening" discoveries. First, many parents with children with mild disabilities perceived the written materials sent to them from schools were condescending, and even appeared to reveal the school's effort to control them. Second, the "advocacy-oriented approach" of some information the

school sent home may actually lead to parents develop "attitudes that are adversarial towards the school" (p.263). Third, families sometimes have negative expectations regarding school communications because they more often occur when there is a problem. Lee & Bowen concluded "having knowledge about special education and being provided with information about special education were negatively related to parents' attitudes toward communication with the schools" (p.193). However, while sending written information to parents left them feeling negatively about the school's efforts to communicate, interpersonal communication had the opposite effect. Specifically, telephone calls from school staff led to enhanced parent attitudes and even helped teachers begin to see parents as collaborators.

✦ According to Christenson (2002): Home support for learning – or what Walberg (1984) has labeled the curriculum of the home – "predicts academic learning twice as well as the socioeconomic status of families" (p. 400). Despite this very promising fact, both sides must surmount veritable mountains of stumbling blocks. For families, barriers include: "… feelings of inadequacy; previous bad experiences with schools; suspicion about treatment from institutions; limited knowledge about school policies, procedures, or how to assist with schoolwork; and economic (e.g., transportation, daycare) and emotional (e.g., daily survival) constraints" (Liontos, 1992, in Christenson, 2002, p.3).

✦ Teachers' barriers for building partnerships with parents include: "limited time for communication; frequency of ritualized contact (e.g., parent-teacher conferences, back-to-school nights); differences in parent-professional perceptions; lack of funding; and lack of clarity about parents and educators roles and responsibilities" (Leitch & Tangri, 1988; Mendoza & Cegelka, in Christenson, 2002, p.3).   Add to this a lack of training in collaboration and funding for it, plus various negative attitudes some educators have towards partnerships with families (i.e. stereotyping, lack of commitment) (Christenson, 2002).

✦ Eccles and Harold (1993) believe that "early adolescence may well be our last best chance to promote healthy development – a chance that can be realized only through parent-school collaboration" (p.568). They note teachers can play a critical role if they work with parents, but that "unfortunately, the collaborative relationship between parents and schools seems to decrease rather than increase as children move into their adolescent years, and into secondary schools" (p.568). Christenson concurs that "it is essential to think of how … activities can be implemented at each grade level" and also notes: "There is a dramatic decline in parent participation after fourth grade, despite evidence that successful parent participation at secondary levels occurs when schools reach out to parents" (Cross et al., 1982, in Christenson, 2002).

No Emotion Left Behind
By TIMOTHY P. SHRIVER and ROGER P. WEISSBERG

THE debate over education reform has tended to divide children's learning along two axes, the emotional and the academic. Either we can address children's academic performance, the conventional thinking holds, or we can address their emotional and social needs. Before No Child Left Behind comes up for reauthorization in 2007, we'd like to deliver some important news: The two kinds of learning are intimately connected. That means that promoting students' social and emotional skills plays a critical role in improving their academic performance.

Social and emotional learning is the process through which children learn to recognize and manage emotions. It allows them to understand and interact with others, to make good decisions and to behave ethically and responsibly. The best social and emotional learning programs engage not only children, but also their teachers, administrators and parents in providing children with the information and skills that help them make ethical and sensible decisions - to avoid bullying, for instance, or to resist pressures to engage in destructive or risky behavior, such as substance abuse. When they are well designed and executed, such programs have consistently achieved these goals, turning out students who are good citizens committed to serving their communities and cooperating with others.

Recent studies, however, have revealed something even more exciting about these programs. Along with Joseph Durlak, a Loyola University psychologist, one of us (Roger Weissberg) recently conducted the largest-ever quantitative analysis, encompassing more than 300 research studies on this subject. The results, which will be presented later this week for the first time, show that social and emotional learning programs significantly improve students' academic performance. The review shows, for example, that an average student enrolled in a social and emotional learning program ranks at least 10 percentile points higher on achievement tests than students who do not participate in such programs. Moreover, compared with their counterparts outside of these programs, social and emotional learning students have significantly better attendance records; their classroom behavior is more constructive and less often disruptive; they like school more; and they have better grade point averages. They are also less likely to be suspended or otherwise disciplined.

The numbers vindicate what has long been common sense among many teachers and parents: that children who are given clear behavioral

standards and social skills, allowing them to feel safe, valued, confident and challenged, will exhibit better school behavior and learn more to boot.

This simple observation is of monumental importance as we attempt to improve our country's public schools. We don't have to choose between academic achievement and the development of character. Rather, we should concentrate on both. No Child Left Behind has created greater accountability in American education, but it is inadequately financed, it fails to effectively address the needs of special education students, and its assessment standards for all children are far too narrow. A truly effective new law should include benchmarks for social and civic learning.

One state, Illinois, has blazed a path in this regard. There is a social and emotional learning component to the Illinois State Learning Standards, and the state's school districts now incorporate such programs into their curriculums. Federal legislation should follow that lead. The new law should also include provisions for conducting systematic classroom assessments of children's social and emotional growth.

What we now understand about the role of social and emotional learning in academic learning should lead us to dramatic action, but it builds on common wisdom. Good teachers know that they can't sacrifice one part of a child for another. Now they have the figures to prove it. The time has come for policy makers to help restore balance to our nation's classrooms and, in so doing, to help American children achieve their fullest potential.

Timothy P. Shriver is the chairman of the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning and of the Special Olympics. Roger P. Weissberg is a professor of psychology and education at the University of Illinois at Chicago and president of the collaborative.

The HTSB & DOE: Standards for Collaborating with Parents!

✦ The Hawaiʻi Teachers' Standards Board (HTSB, 2009) created this "Standard 10 Statement" and very reasonable performance criteria to ensure excellence in their teachers' "parent and school community relationships":   The effective teacher establishes and maintains strong working relationships with parents and members of the school community to support student learning … The extent to which the teacher:

> Collaborates with parents and school community members to support student learning.
>
> Consistently seeks opportunities to build strong partnerships with parents and community members.
>
> Supports activities and programs which encourage parents to participate actively in school-related organizations and activities.
>
> Establishes open and active lines of communication with parents.
>
> Utilizes community resources to enhance student learning. (p.1)

✦ "Standards for Parents as Partners in Learning" which were devised by the Parent Community Networking Center (Hawaiʻi State Department of Education, 2005) expect that the parent:

> **1.**Attends to the child's physical, emotional, social, and behavioral development
>
> **2.**Develops the family as the child's first teacher
>
> **3.**Prepares the child to achieve the Hawaiʻi Content and Performance Standards at school
>
> **4.**Provides home support for the child's meeting the Hawaiʻi Content and Performance Standards
>
> **5.**Supports the child's school and teachers
>
> **6.**Is a life-long learner and teacher

✦ Here are 25 tips The Parent Institute offers – and the Hawaiʻi DOE promotes – to help teachers achieve and sustain this (The Parent Institute, 2005):
1) understand the four A's of family involvement programs (acceptance, assessment, accommodation and alliance-building;
2) make parents feel welcome;
3) establish early contact before problems arise;
4) let parents know what to expect;
5) let parents feel their contributions are meaningful;

6) show parents they are appreciated;
7) begin with the basics (homework hotline, lending library, parent lounge);
8) remember you don't need a big budget;
9) know what parents prefer;
10) use the right recruiting methods (ask without pressuring, publicize benefits, tap into parents special … skills);
11) offer a variety of way for parents to be involved (change agent, communicator, tutor, coordinator, assistant, liaison);
12) appeal to a wide range of interests (evening or Saturday events, regular parent days to observe or participate);
13) break down the barriers to parent participation (physical, cultural or psychological distance and safety);
14) offer special help for non-English speaking parents;
15) don't overlook grandparents;
16) make written materials parent friendly;
17) send home a monthly calendar;
18) give parents ideas for summer activities;
19) give parents their own space at school (small lounge with resources, comfortable chairs and coffee);
20) give parents reasons to visit your school;
21) offer special invitations to dads;
22) take photos at school events;
23) stress two-way communication; and
25) evaluate your efforts. (pp.1-4)

Deduction & Induction
Deductive and Inductive Thinking

In logic, we often refer to the two broad methods of reasoning as the ***deductive*** and ***inductive*** approaches.
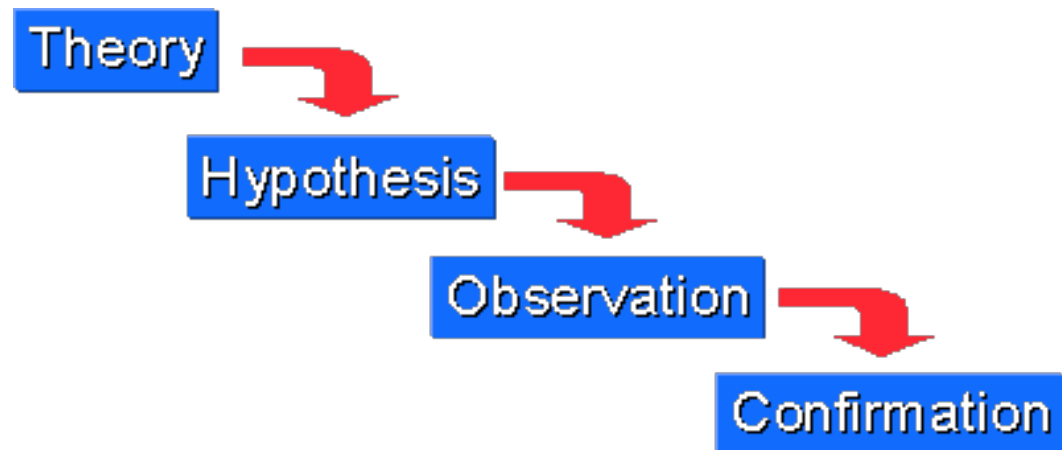
Deductive reasoning works from the more general to the more specific. Sometimes this is informally called a "top-down" approach. We might begin with thinking up a *theory* about our topic of interest. We then narrow that down into more specific *hypotheses* that we can test. We narrow down even further when we collect *observations* to address the hypotheses. This ultimately leads us to be able to test the hypotheses with specific data -- a *confirmation* (or not) of our original theories.

Inductive reasoning works the other way, moving from specific observations to broader generalizations and theories. Informally, we sometimes call this a "bottom up" approach (please note that it's "bottom up" and *not* "bottom**s** up" which is the kind of thing the bartender says to customers when he's trying to close for the night!). In inductive reasoning, we begin with specific observations and measures, begin to detect patterns and regularities, formulate some tentative hypotheses that we can explore, and finally end up developing some general conclusions or theories.

These two methods of reasoning have a very different "feel" to them when you're conducting research. Inductive reasoning, by its very nature, is more open-ended and exploratory, especially at the beginning. Deductive reasoning is more narrow in nature and is concerned with testing or confirming hypotheses. Even though a particular study may look like it's purely deductive (e.g., an experiment designed to test the hypothesized effects of some treatment on some outcome), most social research involves both inductive and deductive reasoning processes at some time in the project. In fact, it doesn't take a rocket scientist to see that we could assemble the two graphs above into a single circular one that continually cycles from theories down to observations and back up again to theories. Even in the most constrained experiment, the researchers may observe patterns in the data that lead them to develop new theories.

Appendix E: Sam's Welcome Letter

Aloha e Legal Guardians/Parents!

The experts say the more teachers and families work together to help students in high school, the better they do and the happier they are. So that I know the best time to contact you, and when not interrupt you, I am hoping you will please complete this sheet, detach it from the front page, and either give it to your teen or drop it off at the school (main office, my mailbox, or our classroom). Thanks in advance for your kokua!

Student Name: _____

Guardian/Parent Name(s): _____

_____

Relationship to student: _____

We/I want to be given **Science progress reports** (check any that apply):

___✓___ only 2 times per quarter (school will send report cards & interim reports)
_____ when my child does something commendable
_____ when there is a science class activity that I should see or can join
_____ when my child is not behaving well or gets a detention
_____ when my child's grade falls below (circle one): A B C D
_____ Other:

The best ways and times to **contact me/us** is by:

_____ telephone call at this number: _____

Best days/hours are: _____

_____ letter sent home with student   _____ letter mailed home thru post office

_____ email sent to:

I am also interested in any way members of your 'ohana would like to share what they know that is related to this science class and/or careers and college paths. Plus, if you would like to join us to learn, let me know! Just write a note to me on the back! ☺

Date: **Guardian/Parent Signature(s):**

_____   _____

_____   _____

Appendix F: Sam's Homework Survey

Science Homework Survey

Part A: Student Opinions (write your answers)

1. If Ms.G and someone in your 'ohana collaborated (talked & worked together) to help you, do you think it would improve your **achievement** (grades & test scores)? Explain.

2. If Ms.G and someone in your 'ohana collaborated to help you, do you think it would improve your **behavior** (absences, tardies, how much time you are on task, how well you behave in class, and whether or not you get detentions, referrals, suspensions)? Explain.

3. If Ms.G and someone in your 'ohana collaborated to help you, do you think it would improve your **well-being** (mood, demeanor, attitude, social skills, peer relations, level of happiness, self-esteem, self-image, self-efficacy)? Explain.

Part B: 'Ohana Opinions (ask family members & write their answers)
     1st 'Ohana Member Name: _____
     Relationship to you: _____

1. If you and your child's science teacher collaborated (talked & worked together) to help him/her, do you think it would improve his/her **achievement** (grades & test scores)? Explain.

2. If you and your child's science teacher collaborated (talked & worked together) to help him/her, do you think it would improve his/her **behavior** (absences, tardies, how much time you are on task, how well you behave in class, and whether or not you get detentions, referrals, suspensions)? Explain.

3. If you and your child's science teacher collaborated (talked & worked together) to help him/her, do you think it would improve his/her **well-being** (mood, demeanor, attitude, social skills, peer relations, level of happiness, self-esteem, self-image, self-efficacy)? Explain.

Part C: 'Ohana Opinions (cont'd)

We would like to know if it is possible for family members to join more in class-related activities. Please answer these questions about what kind of activities you are interested in and able to come to, and when.

A. **When we are available:** *(circle any times when you would attend)*

Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thu.	Fri.	Sat.	Sun.
am	am	am	am	am	am	am
aft.	aft.	aft.	aft.	aft.	aft.	aft.
eve.	eve.	eve.	eve.	eve.	eve.	eve.

B. **Planting Activities** *(check if interested)*

☐ Greenhouse Work Day

☐ Greenhouse Pa'ina & Seed/Cutting/Plant Exchange

☐ Greenhouse Tending

C. **Field Trips**

☐ on island

☐ **to Maui**

D. **Classroom Visits**

☐ watch student presentations

☐ to learn along side students

☐ to share knowledge with students (small group or whole class?)

E. **Movies**

☐ science related

☐ entertainment only

F. **Gathering**

☐ just talk story

☐ potluck

Mahalo for your time!

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Appendix G: Proposed Research Design

Principal investigator (PI) participated in & conducted action research with cadre of participants via workshop, telephone call & Internet communication over 11 months. Research questions are:
Question: In what ways do Hawaii public high school teachers' perceptions of, and behaviors toward, family collaboration change given participation in a for-credit professional development (PD) course focused on increasing family collaboration?
Sub-Questions:

   a) Do demographic characteristics of the PD teachers and their students influence any changes in the teachers' perceptions and behaviors?

   b) Do specific PD teacher driven strategies result in changes in the teachers' perceptions of, and behaviors toward, family collaboration?

Phase 1 – PILOT: Quantitative & Qualitative Data Gathering (Aug.-Nov. 2010)
- participating teachers observed students' achievement, behavior, well being for 3 weeks before PD course began August 20th
- principal investigator (PI) administered pre-survey: *Teacher Perceptions of Family Collaboration*
- PI & participating teachers did: survey of students & families; initial 'Ohana (Family) Gathering to initiate communication as a foundation for increased collaboration

Phase 2a – STUDY: Conduct Family Collaboration Interventions (Nov. 2010-May. 2011)
PI and participating teachers did recursively plan, take action, observe, reflect and evaluate the results of action with some input of the cadre, plus family members & students when possible, throughout these activities:
   ○ Oct.-Dec. – conducted 1st Intervention to increase family collaboration & evaluate results
   ○ Jan.-Mar. – conducted 2nd family collaboration Intervention building on 1st & evaluated results
   ○ Apr.-May – conducted some additional Interventions; assessed any effects on student outcomes, and; presented 'Ohana Collaboration information & recommendations to stakeholders

Phase 2b – STUDY: PI Gathers Data (Nov. 2010-May. 2011)
PI gathered participants' & own qualitative & quantitative data (written, visual, verbal) & identified & negotiated emerging themes & patterns with input from the cadre, plus family & students when possible, in order to cross-check & triangulate data. She:
   ○ Oct.-Dec. – observed teachers in family collaboration related activity (or video of same)
   ○ Apr.-May – administered post-survey: *Teacher Perceptions of Family Collaboration*

Phase 3 – CONCLUSION: Analyze Data & Share Findings (June 2011 to May 2012)
After the PD course was completed the PI:
- analyzed qualitative & quantitative data (written, visual, verbal) to compare pre-/post-evidence of participating teachers' perceptions & behaviors related to family collaboration & any indication of links to student outcomes (achievement, behavior, well being)
- analyzed & shared negotiated findings with all teacher participants (asking they do the same with their students & families), including potential impact for social change in education & possible 'generalizable' or 'face' transferability
- planned dissemination with all participants' permission & conducted in Hawaii, US & elsewhere

Appendix H: Research Hypothesis Model

READ FROM BOTTOM UP!　　Example Activities

6. Transforming Culture of Classroom, Research & Social Justice

5. Exploring New Research Roles & Social Action

4. Participatory Action Research (PAR)

3. Evolving Community of Learners (Kauhale)

2. Social-Cultural & Emotional Learning Interaction

Participants interact in "ZPD"

Place Based Classes

1. Culturally Responsive, Experiential Learning Setting

6. Disseminate findings & poss. links to broader social action opportunities
5. TRs, families & students present family collab. info & recommendations to school community
4. TRs internalize, adapt, extend &/or create new "Tools" & strategies for family collaboration & PAR
3. TRs, families, students co-construct 2nd intervention in ZPDs; roles emerge btw/ 'MKOs' & learners of any age
2. TRs conduct 1st collaboration intervention & possibly link family Funds of Knowledge to shared goals
1. Teacher-researchers (TRs) invite families to fun, informal "'Ohana Gathering" & discuss future collaboration ideas

MKO = More Knowledgeable Others　　　ZPD = Zone of Proximal Development　　　Tools = concepts

Appendix I - Participatory Action Research Model:
Summary of Data Collected & Emergent Themes

Over the 2010-11 school year the participatory action research teachers (including the principal investigator) engaged in a spiral of steps, planning, taking action, observing, reflecting and evaluating the results of action (Master, 2000) in order to increase collaboration with families of students in danger of school failure.

Data Collected	Field Study Results	

Data Collected

Aug.: participating teacher-researchers (TRs) pre-survey & demographics; TRs review of literature on family collaboration, written reflections, telephone calls & observations/field notes (qualitative data continued to July 2011)

Sept.-Dec.: TRs own: student & family surveys; print materials, personal contacts with family members & their participation; initial analysis; 'Ohana Gathering activity & analysis

Nov.-Feb.: TRs perceptions & goals, research questions &/or hypotheses, 1st Intervention evidence, reflections & evaluation of outcomes with continuing analysis

Oct-Apr: principal investigator's (PI) observation notes of TRs class activity related to family collaboration

Jan.-May.: TRs subsequent Interventions evidence; reflections on research roles, methods & results

April-May: TRs post-survey; assessment of any changes due to interventions; evidence of dissemination of findings plus course e-portfolio & captions

June-Jan'12.: TR's written & verbal reviews of PI's final dissertation; PI's oral defense of dissertation March 2012

Field Study Results

Phase I

August 2010: 4 Teacher-Researchers (TRs) meet @ Site A, 6 meet @ Site B; review past literature & experiences; plan 1st steps **Themes:** workplace negativity; neg. report card comments; need to develop 'true relationships' w/ families; gender & culture Qs; need for more collaboration ideas; lack of time; collaboration needs to be 'fun'

Sept-Dec: 6 TRs invite Students (Ss) & Family Members (Fs) to 'Ohana Gatherings to initiate face-to-face contact; TRs gather to reflect, evaluate, set goals & plan next steps **Themes:** exploring action researcher role; well-being of Ts & Ss; need for sensitivity for positive relationships

Phase II

Nov-Feb: 5 TRs do 1st Interventions w/ Ss, Fs; Site A, 3 gather & 4 at Site B to reflect, evaluate, set goals & plan next steps **Themes:** negativity in power/funding/favoritism; creating own ideas/strategies to collaborate; Ss thwart collaboration; Fs culture, age, marital status, job hrs effect negative/non-involvement; effect of gender, changing gender/power roles, how Fs view TRs

Jan-May 2011: 5 TRs do 2nd Intervention, 4 TRs do 3rd Intervention with Ss & Fs; 3 gather at Site A & 3 at site B to review literature, reflect, evaluate, plan **Themes:** Fs expect less involvement from upper elementary level on; some Fs fed up & Ss lazy or fearful of higher achievement; SPED issues; rural/urban issues; defining best strategies; need S for food, supplies

April-May: 2 TRs @ Site A share findings with school colleagues; Site B colleagues prepare same, but no colleagues attend **Themes:** importance of available time & timing of interventions; change of pre-conceptions of Ts & Fs over time; roles of Ts, Ss & Fs

June'11-Jan'12: TRs review & give input to final draft of study; Principal Investigator disseminates to all interested stakeholders & at dissertation defense in March 2012 **Findings:** TRs support increased collaboration w/ Fs, but need funding, time & new strategies; Ts, Ss & Fs roles in education are in flux; school-community change agent teams recommended to address top-down power hindrances

Phase III

Appendix J: Principal Investigator's "Lens" of Researcher-Participant Interactions

The timeline and model below show: how the Principal Investigator entered the study, as a teacher-researcher in Phase I; how PI interactions with the participating teachers during Phase I and II influenced the flow of data; and how data analysis in Phase III reflect PI influences.

Timeline

Pre-Phase I: before Aug. 2010	PI has researched PAR & Family Collaboration, but experience limited to ~ 20 years teaching & grant & curricula writing/dev't compatible with both
Phase I: Aug-Oct 2010	Sites A & B: 6 readings for 1st PD workshop & intro. to action research offer TRs pre-selected options; Internet "safari" encourages limited TRs' further investigation of info/research on PAR & Family Collaboration
Phase I: Sep.-Dec. 2010	PI & TRs work 1-on-1 on 1st Intervention & role as action researchers, but do not do conference calls > Sites A & B meet & talk independently with PI who shares info gleaned
Phase II: Nov.-Feb 2010-11	PI abandons Refl. & Intv. due dates as all work on own schedule; 2 Sites negotiate emerging themes in meetings & PI shares via emails; TRs PAR roles remain limited

Model

ROZ
KIT
Site A Site B
IDA
SAM
MAE
ABBY

Legend: solid line = direct dialogue between PI & TR (strong & frequent if bold; see Kit & Abby) dotted line = group dialogue at Site A or B (strong & frequent if bold; see Kit & Mae)

Phase II: Jan.-May 2011	PI gives Refl.13-25 to all TRs to work at own pace, in spurts; PI shares 7th reading encouraging TRs to deepen role as action researchers, but results are not extensive, limited to 2 TRs
Phase III: Jun-Jan. 2011-12	only PI finalizes emergent themes from own & TRs data; TRs review own case studies but corroboration & input to findings, recommendations are limited by reflexivity, time lapse

Abbreviations: PI = Principal Investigator (Sam); Intv. = Intervention(s); PAR = Participatory Action Research; Refl. = Reflection(s); TRs = Teacher-Researchers (names in model or identified by initials: K, M, R, I, A)

Appendix K: Summary of Findings and Recommendations

The following tables offer recommendations given in Chapter 5 in an alternate format that is designed to better assist different types of interested stakeholders: teachers, teacher leaders (union and administration), family and community members and education researchers and teacher trainers, as well as researchers interested in replicating this study. For this reason, some of the recommendations are repeated in other sections.

Findings	Recommendations for Teachers
Ohana Gatherings: 4 of the 6 teacher-researchers' initial efforts to connect with students and families were successful (attending a Sunday afternoon play or animal shelter volunteering; week night science night or student prepared dinner) and 2 were not (meet the teacher night; Sat. greenhouse volunteering)	*A. Make a positive start...* contact families (letter, email &/or call) within the first month with positive, sincere, purposeful, non-threatening messages; offer families choices and fun activities (esp. involving food); use casual encournters to build authentic relationships over time, not over night
Interventions: teacher-researchers felt most efforts to increase collaboration were successful (meeting at school football games or book store; showcasing student skills and work, esp. on YouTube; invite families to help students prepare projects for presentation) and need careful timing (do regularly but not too often)	*B. Build on the positives...* scaffold and sequence efforts that allow families to see teachers and their children interacting positively, serving students' needs over time and encouraging families to mentor/ tutor students and teachers in reciprocal teaching and learning
Hindrances: families perceive negative pressure and messages from schools and lack a strong voice in their children's education	*C. Ease into purposeful teacher-family collaboration...* overtly respect family's energy, time and budgets; help them get email accounts, access/ training to use Edline, and receptive times/places/ staff to go to for info or help (including translation services); encourage them to join PTA or SCC, or create own grassroots groups to voice their opinions with teacher support; use appreciative inquiry to build on what works rather than focusing on the negative

Findings	Recommendations for Teachers
Finding: students' roles as mediators of communications between home and school are not recognized, and they are not taught to be advocates/activists to serve themselves, their families or their school communities	***D. Nurture students as school-community mediators and activists...*** teach students to be equal partners in collaborative creating/sharing of knowledge; give them tasks to overtly bridge and increase teacher- family interactions, increase collaboration, and explore potential for collaborative social change
Hindrances: K-12 articulation is insufficient; teachers feel isolated in their work and frustrated; teacher morale is low	***E. Articulate and self-evaluate teachers' own roles...*** seek teachers in other grades and at community feeder schools to discuss/increase the capacity of family collaboration, esp. for those not engaging, and get experts' input to address; increase positive staff interactions via fun, informal social activities; learn and use self-study to improve practice, motivation and empowerment; seek grants and help writing them
Hindrances: many teachers feel powerless to change the school system and/or are passive or fatalistic about education and their role in it	***F. Teachers as school-community advocates and activists...*** teachers need to accept it is their civic and professional to participate in social change in the classroom, and work together to seek/envision strategies to address the larger issues thwarting them through more participatory action research, joining/ attending the SCC meetings and/or beginning their own grassroots group to voice their opinions as experts
Hindrances: many teachers lack awareness about larger issues which negatively influence education and teacher-family collaboration efforts	***G. Teacher-researchers as school-community change instigators...*** teachers can increase their understanding of larger issues by joining teacher groups, taking courses, and/or researching; as knowledgeable leaders they can foment grassroots change, linking this at times to other political/social movements which strive to increase social justice
Hindrances: many teachers lack awareness about possible solutions to many underlying issues in education which can not only increase teacher-family collaboration efforts, but improve schools in multiple ways	***H. Explore, envision and create school sites as kauhale – school-community shared learning centers...*** visit culture and place-based schools and other successful alternate education centers that allow learning to happen: in variety of places (home, work, community environs); at variable times; with intergenerational and diverse stakeholders engaged together in aʻo (reciprocal teaching/learning)

Findings	Recommendations for Teacher Leaders (Administrators &/or Union Leaders)
Hindrance: teachers do not see themselves as change agents and may not recognize their contribution to the downward spiral they perceive in their profession and public schools	*A. Unions as social change agent supporters...* union leaders could recruit model teacher change agents into leadership roles, and; share with their membership the negative consequences of passivist and fatalist teacher attitudes, while offering them frequent proven and research-based information to better inform and empower teachers, families and students
Hindrance: all participants perceived authoritarian leadership from their principals which did not welcome nor use teacher, family or student input to guide school leadership and decision making	*B. Administrators as change agent supporters ...* principals could: protect risk-takers who seek to increase family collaboration and improve school climate and outcomes; explore Waldorf-style teacher-student-family administrated schools; offer and/or support teacher-family-student retreats to increase listening and allow trusting, authentic relationships to develop over time
Finding: parents/guardians do not collaborate with teachers or other school staff sufficiently and do not attend School Community Council meetings in sufficient numbers to be representative of all students' families	*C. Support Parents/guardians as school governors...* explore/re-create UK-style parents as "critical friends" who critique and advocate school management; seek federal and state legislation to ensure family and community members are supported by employers to give their time, energy and money to take part in this way; encourage and listen to PTA, Parents for Public Schools and grassroots groups input to school management
Hindrances: families perceive negative pressure and messages from schools and lack a strong voice in their children's education	*D. Support purposeful teacher-family collaboration…* overtly respect family's energy, time and budgets; help them get email accounts, access/training to use Edline, and receptive times/places/staff to go to for info or help (including translation services); encourage them to join PTA or SCC, or create own grassroots groups to voice their opinions with teacher support; use appreciative inquiry to build on what works rather than focusing on the negative
Hindrance: many parents/guardians have no voice and/or power to effect school change, especially those with low socio-economic factors	*E. Support parents/guardians as school-community activists...* overtly recognize parents as "co-educators" and honor home learning honor, linking it to school learning; nuture family members as knowledgable and encourage parents taking roles in school-community leadership teams to continue their efforts and entice and support other family members to join them; further encourage family members to take leadership roles in school-community projects

Findings	Recommendations for Families & Community Stakeholders
Finding: students' roles as mediators of communications between home and school are not recognized, and they are not taught to be advocates/activists to serve themselves, their families or their school communities	*A. Nurture students as school-community mediators and activists...* teach and recognize students as equal partners in collaborative creating/sharing of knowledge; give them tasks to overtly bridge and increase teacher-family interactions, increase collaboration, and explore potential for collaborative social change
Hindrance: most current teacher training programs only prepare for traditional teacher-parent interviews	*B. Family members as trainers, mediators and advocates for teacher-family collaboration...* seek successful parent/ guardians with confidence in collaboration with school staff to work with teachers who are willing to explore collaboration benefits more fully (especially teachers new to the profession or school)
Hindrance: parents/guardians do not collaborate with teachers or other school staff sufficiently	*C. Parents/guardians as school governors...* explore/re-create UK-style parents as "critical friends" who critique and advocate school management; seek federal and state legislation to ensure family and community members are supported by employers to give their time, energy and money to take part in this way
Finding: family involvement field cannot be built from the top down but rather requires a co-constructed grass-roots component involving families, communities, and schools	*D. Family members and community stakeholders as advocates and activists...* identify and encourage family/community members who are already activists/ advocates to recruit and train others who are likely to succeed at increasing teacher-family collaboration and social change in schools

Findings	Recommendations for Educational Researchers & Teacher Trainers
Finding: specific personality types may be more drawn to teacher-family collaboration and/or believe in its value to education, as well as to school change and social justice efforts	***A. Acknowledge the need for new pre-service teacher screening...***which reflects that specific personality traits can be sought and encouraged which are more likely to lead to teacher-family collaboration effort
Hindrance: many teachers lack awareness about larger issues which negatively influence education and teacher-family collaboration efforts Finding: this is likely linked to high attrition	***B. Give pre-service teacher training in critical pedagogy...*** is needed at the Bachelor's level so new teachers are aware of and prepared to deal with the current challenges they face in the classroom to collaborate and effect change
Hindrance: most current teacher training programs only prepare for traditional teacher-parent interviews	***C. Pre-service teacher training in teacher-family collaboration...*** some programs require practicum or new teachers to learn from family and/or community members and to explore collaboration benefits more fully
Hindrance: teachers do not see themselves as change agents	***D. Give pre-service teacher training in Participatory Action Research and school-community activism...*** by enabling them to explore and take part in school community projects that are successful and include collaboration
Hindrance: many teachers lack funds and/or time to pursue funds to support collaboration activities and projects	***E. Give pre-service teacher training in grant writing...*** and share this knowledge with veteran teachers and other stakeholders

Findings & Limitations	Recommendations for Researchers Replicating this Study
Limitation: the voice of teacher-researchers' students and families is missing	***A. Require minimum student & family member involvement from participants...***the PI and all teacher-researchers can be required to bring at least 1 student with a family member to each workshop throughout the PAR phase(s)
Finding: students value as mediators in teacher-family collaboration/ communication is not recognized sufficiently or used to benefit all	***B. Require all participants to identify 1 or more student mediators to include...***the PI and teacher-researchers could do assignments to study the challenges/hindrances/nature of 1 or more students and their communication with family (consent from students & family members could be sought in advance)
Limitation: the teacher-researchers did not collaborate and work as a team well	***C. Require each participant to host a live or virtual collaboration meeting ...***the PI could conduct the 1st such meeting via the Internet or by conference call or in person, and all other participants could host further meetings; hosts' presentations by could expand research, scope ***Alternate: Conduct the study with an established teacher collaboration group***
Limitation: the teacher-researchers did not explore/ adopt roles as action researchers to the extent intended and desired	***D. Allow more time to conduct the study &/or let participants find and do more readings...*** the PI and teacher-researchers could find and share more research on topics linked to their interests and action research needs/ goals, plus the larger issues undermining collaboration
Limitation: the teacher-researchers did not complete assignments by due dates, usually working in spurts	***E. Review all 25 Reflections in Phase I and discuss in bi-weekly group communications...*** some flexibility is needed for all to complete written work, but assignments could be linked to other PAR or PD activities with non-negotiable due dates
Limitation: the teacher-researchers did not fully contribute to Phase III of the study (analysis, findings and recommendations)	***F. Extend participant requirements &/or length of study to ensure Phase III corroboration...*** additional assignments could ensure the final themes chosen, the findings and recommendations more fully reflect teacher-researcher, family and student input

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