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A. NEED FOR PROJECT

(i) Magnitude of the need for the services to be provided

A substantial body of research has established that access to high-quality early childhood education (ECE) and strong parent engagement are central to school readiness, and school readiness can significantly impact everything from reading at grade level to graduating high school to being career ready later in life.¹ This is especially true for children in low-income families. Consider the following facts, as documented in the literature:

- At least half of the educational achievement gaps between poor and non-poor children already exist at kindergarten entry;²
- Children from low-income families are more likely to start school with limited language skills, health problems, and social and emotional problems that interfere with learning. The larger the gap at school entry, the harder it is to close;³
- By age 4, low-income children have 30 million fewer words than children from less disadvantaged families and have vocabularies that are half as extensive;⁴ ,
- Students in poverty who can't read on grade level by 3rd grade have only a 10% chance of graduating on time⁵.

Few Native Hawaiian children attend preschool. Local data on the school readiness of Native Hawaiian children, particularly those residing in high-poverty communities, support the national findings above. Children from the target schools face considerable challenges. Compared to other schools in Hawai'i, the target schools have twice as many Native Hawaiian students, more students receiving special education services, and a considerably higher-than-average proportion of low-income students (*see Table 1 on page 3*). While the Hawai'i Department of Education no longer tracks the proportion of students who attended preschool prior to enrolling in kindergarten, the most recent data demonstrate that *students in these schools enter kindergarten with lower rates of attending preschool. Less than 5 out of 10 children enter kindergarten with ECE compared to nearly 6 out of 10 students statewide.*

Hawai'i is one of the few states that offer very limited state funding for preschool. Thus, finding affordable preschool for children is a significant challenge for Hawai'i families.⁶ Given that the average annual price tag of center-based child care for a 4-year old is \$11,232—which is the ***highest in the nation*** as a percentage of median income for married couples—most low-income Native Hawaiian families can't afford to send their children to preschool.⁷ As a result, more than half enter school without any ECE. In addition, because a child must be 5 years old by July 31 of the school year in order to register for public kindergarten in Hawai'i, late-born children are particularly affected.

Many Native Hawaiian children are not ready for Kindergarten. In part as a result of the needs above, findings from the most recent Hawai'i State School Readiness Assessment (HSSRA) demonstrate that ***86% of kindergarten classes in the target schools are not ready for school.***⁸ The HSSRA assesses children on six dimensions: approaches to learning, literacy concepts, math concepts, school behaviors, social-emotional behaviors and physical well-being. When compared to their peers, kindergarteners in the target schools (in which Native Hawaiian students comprise a higher than average proportion) scored lower on every dimension, particularly in literacy. For example, only half of kindergarten classrooms in the target schools displayed adequate literacy concepts, compared to more than half but less than three-quarters of kindergarten classrooms statewide.⁹ In addition, the most recent data from the Hawai'i Department of Education indicate that ***70% of entering kindergarten students had at least one social, developmental, or economic risk factor***, and that nearly 20% had more than one risk factor.¹⁰

The majority of Native Hawaiian children achieve lower rates of reading and math proficiency in 3rd grade. A pivotal study shows that 89% of students in poverty who read on

grade level by 3rd grade graduate on time. In contrast, poor students who can't read on grade level by 3rd grade only have a 10% chance of graduating on time.¹¹ ***Among 3rd grade students in the target schools, 70% are not proficient in English/Language Arts and 60% are not proficient in Math, compared to nearly half of their peers statewide.*** Research shows that a student who can't read on grade level by 3rd grade is four times less likely to graduate by age 19 than a child who reads proficiently by that time. The literature also demonstrates that sufficient math skills are necessary to be competitive in today's technological world. ***A recent study showed that children who begin kindergarten proficient in math and experience a supportive home learning environment significantly decreased socioeconomic status (SES) achievement differences.***¹² Furthermore, there is evidence to suggest that young children with delays in literacy skill development are often delayed in early math skills as well.¹³

Table 1. School Readiness Challenges of Students in Target Schools

	Native Hawaiian	Free/Reduced Lunch	Attended Preschool	SPED	3 rd Gr. ELA (Not Proficient)	3 rd Gr. Math (Not Proficient)
State	25%	49%	57%	10%	48%	45%
Target Schools	(O'ahu Island)					
Barbers Point	25	60	na	11	73	56
Kapolei	31	42	na	9	42	29
Leihōkū	54	CEP	47	9	74	69
Mā'ili	53	CEP	35	10	77	59
Mākaha	59	CEP	55	13	83	76
Nānākuli	91	CEP	51	11	77	50
Wai'anae El	58	CEP	47	14	83	87
Wai'anae High	65	CEP	na	16	na	na
	(Hawai'i Island)					
Kapi'olani	31	CEP	48	12	66	62
Kea'au	34	CEP	na	8	55	52
Keaukaha	81	CEP	na	16	51	25
	(Kaua'i Island)					
Kekaha	44	CEP	na	8	75	65
(average)	52%	83% CEP	47%	11%	70%	57%
Difference (State/Target)	↑27%	↑34%	↓10%	↑1%	↑22%	↑12%

Source: Hawai'i Department of Education, Fall 2018; CEP= Community Eligible Provision, which means 100% of the student population participates in F/RL; na = Data not available

The early childhood workforce, particularly in low-income Native Hawaiian communities, is subject to non-living wage rates, staff turnover, stressful work conditions, and limited opportunities for high quality professional development. The early childhood field, despite its indisputable value to society, is characterized by low pay and benefits and a lack of public regard for the dedication and professionalism of early childhood educators.¹⁴ Nationally, almost half of childcare workers and one-third of preschool teachers earn so little that they must rely on financial benefit programs like food stamps.¹⁵ **Locally, half of all Family-Child Interaction Learning (FCIL) programs indicated that 50% of qualified job applicants turned down job offers based on wages and benefit packages, 50% of applicants didn't have the necessary educational qualifications, and nearly 70% of applicants didn't have the necessary classroom or professional experience.**¹⁶ Yet, the need for early childhood professionals in Hawai'i is expected to increase through 2026. Coupled with the need for high quality childcare, building a qualified early childhood workforce that earns a living wage in Hawai'i and that understands the cultural context in which Hawai'i's most vulnerable children live is a priority.

Table 2. Early Childhood Jobs in Hawai'i

	Total Employed	Median Annual Salary	Projected Increase *
Occupation			
Education Administrators (Preschool/Childcare)	110	\$58,270	10%
Special Education Teachers (Kinder/Elem)	1,770	\$54,000	7%
Kindergarten Teachers	na	\$36,170	7%
Childcare Workers	1,790	\$26,090	6%
Preschool Teachers	1,420	\$39,560	5%
(total/average)	6,840	\$45,353	8%

Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018 Occupational Employment Statistics, April 2019; * Projected increase through 2026; na = Data not available

(ii) Nature and magnitude of weaknesses to be addressed by project

Given that 85% of the brain is developed in the first five years of a child’s life, that there is great potential for enhancing emergent literacy and numeracy skills during this period, that there is both national and state emphasis on school readiness, and that there are significant repercussions of school failure particularly for low-income children, it is especially important that Native Hawaiian children from high-poverty communities have access to high-quality ECE prior to kindergarten competitive priorities. Additional details and a thorough description of the services to be provided. Table 3 below summarizes the nature and magnitude of the needs above and the extent to which the proposed project will address the is contained in *Section B. Project Design* and *Section C. Project Services*.

Table 3. Nature and Magnitude of Weaknesses to be Addressed by Project

Weakness	How Addressed by Project
(1) Relatively few low-income Native Hawaiian children attend preschool <i>(Baseline: less than 50% of children at the target schools enter school with ECE experience)</i>	The applicant will recruit 600 Native Hawaiian children (0-5) and their families and 30 ECE staff from 12 low-income communities to participate in <i>Keiki Steps</i> —a free, high-quality, culturally grounded, family-child interaction learning program. The program will have a triple focus: promote child-wellbeing and school readiness, increase parent education and strengthen families, and build capacity of the ECE workforce in Native Hawaiian communities. <i>(Addresses AP 1a&1b and CPP 1&2)</i>
(2) Many Native Hawaiian children are not ready for Kindergarten <i>(Baseline: 86% of kindergarten classrooms at target schools are not ready for school)</i>	A comprehensive and culturally grounded preschool curriculum lays the foundation for future school-related skills and knowledge. ¹⁷ KS will adapt the <i>Creative Curriculum for Preschool</i> —a research-based early childhood curriculum designed to foster the development of the whole child through teacher-led small and large group activities—and incorporate Native Hawaiian culture and developmentally appropriate literacy, numeracy and science activities. The curriculum will address child development, working with families, and organizing the classroom around 11 interest areas and will be effective in promoting oral language, print knowledge, phonological processing, and math. <i>(Addresses AP 1a and CPP 1)</i>

<p>(3) The majority of Native Hawaiian children are not proficient in reading or math in 3rd grade</p> <p><i>(Baseline: Among 3rd grade students in the target schools, 70% are not proficient in English/Language Arts and 60% are not proficient in Math.)</i></p>	<p>A literacy-focused approach will be particularly emphasized. KS will ensure that every child has reading materials in the home and a myriad of reading opportunities within and outside of the classroom. It will incorporate “<i>talking story</i>”— a culturally compatible feature that is also a common Hawaiian speech event characterized by a cooperative style of speaking—literacy sessions, such as reading by the children or being read to, that allow the children to cooperate with one another in small groups using overlapping speech to explain points and respond to teacher questions.¹⁸</p> <p>Literacy activities will address expanding vocabulary, alphabetic principles, and phonological awareness. In addition, it will emphasize mathematics-specific language, such as concepts of numbers, shapes, measurement and spatial relations. Lastly, there will be a STEM exploration center at each site that will have developmentally appropriate (0-5) hands-on activities that will encourage curiosity and address task persistence, early scientific and quantitative thinking, and information about the world and how it works. <i>(Addresses AP 1a; and CPP 1)</i></p>
<p>(4) The early childhood workforce is subject to non-living wage rates, staff turnover, stressful work conditions, and limited opportunities for high quality professional development.</p> <p><i>(Baseline: In Hawai`i, 50% of FCIL staff applicants don't have the necessary educational qualifications and nearly 70% don't have the necessary professional experience)</i></p>	<p>The project will contribute to the early childhood workforce development needs in Native Hawaiian communities by recruiting, hiring, and training people who are residents of the communities they serve and who come with the necessary cultural and community intelligence to serve the target children and families. Teaching staff will have a minimum of a Child Development Associate credential, and all staff will be required to pursue an associate or baccalaureate degree—depending on the academic credentials they have at the time of hire—in education while employed. In addition, staff will be offered a competitive salary and benefit package, and participate in one of four PPLCs (Professional Peer Learning Communities): school readiness, math, science, and Hawaiian culture. Lastly, Keiki Steps sites will serve as internship/work-based learning sites for high school students, college students, and staff from other FCIL programs interested in learning more about early childhood education and specifically about model FCILs in indigenous communities. All interns will be required to pass a background check and be trained in FERPA-relevant policies. <i>(Addresses CPP 2)</i></p>

B. PROJECT DESIGN

(i) Appropriate to the needs of the target population.

As evident in the preceding table, Keiki Steps (KS) is clearly designed to address both the absolute priorities (AP) and the competitive preference priorities (CPPs) established for

this funding competition. While all the priorities are woven throughout the narrative, they are highlighted in Table 3 above and in Table 4 below and in more detail in subsequent sections.

Table 4. Absolute Priorities Addressed by Project

<i>Priority (a): Beginning Reading and Literacy</i>
Children who participate in high quality preschool activities have better outcomes in most indicators of achievement. Literacy activities will address expanding vocabulary, alphabetic principles, phonological awareness, concepts of numbers, shapes, measurement and spatial relations, task persistence, early scientific thinking, and information about the world and how it works. The <i>PPVT-IV</i> will be used to measure a child’s receptive vocabulary for Standard English and his/her verbal ability. In addition, the <i>HSSRA</i> will be used to evaluate improvement in pre-literacy and pre-numeracy skills upon entry to kindergarten.
<i>Priority (b): Needs of At-risk Children and Youth</i>
Native Hawaiian children have multiple risk factors that result in their having the lowest in academic achievement of all major groups in the state. On average, more than 8 out of 10 students in the target schools participate in the FRL program. In addition, there is a shortage of affordable preschool opportunities in these areas, which results in lack of readiness for school entry. INPEACE is particularly poised to provide this program. Its offices are all on or near Hawaiian Homeland communities and 71% percent of its employees are Native Hawaiian, as are 77% of the members of its Board of Directors.
<i>Priority (c): Native Hawaiian Underemployment</i>
Hawaii currently faces a shortage of qualified teachers for existing early childhood programs, particularly in high-poverty Native Hawaiian communities. INPEACE has a track record of contributing to the early childhood workforce development needs in Native Hawaiian communities by hiring and training people who are residents of the communities they serve and who come with the necessary cultural and community intelligence to reach the target families. KS will hire from within the target communities and ensure that teaching staff will have a minimum of a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential. It will require all staff to pursue a postsecondary degree in education while employed—depending on the academic credentials staff have when they are hired—and will offer a competitive salary with benefits.
<i>Priority (d): Hawaiian Language Instruction</i>
Hawaiian language will be used throughout each of the sites. It will be used in cultural protocol (<i>oli</i> or chant), during staff meetings, and at every site. Songs (<i>mele</i>), blessings (<i>pule</i>), monthly themes, learning activities, and simple commands/statements will be in the Hawaiian language. Family activities will involve cultural practitioners, visits to cultural sites in the community, and interaction with the native plant outdoor classrooms. Lastly, staff and families will be encouraged to take a basic Hawaiian class to increase their fluency with the Hawaiian language.

The overall goal, objectives, anticipated outcomes and needs addressed are highlighted in Table 5 on page 8.

Table 5. Keiki Steps Goal, Objectives, Expected Outcomes and Needs Addressed

Overall Goal: To meet the school readiness needs of at least 600 at-risk NH young children and their families through increasing their participation in a high-quality early education program that is culturally grounded, standards-based, and literacy-and numeracy-focused.	
Objective 1	Annual Expected Outcomes
Enroll at least 600 children and 420 families, and hire and train 30 early childhood educators from 12 low-income NH communities on 3 islands.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children: At least 500 (Yr 1), 550 (Yr 2), and 600 (Yr 3) • Families: At least 350 (Yr 1), 385 (Yr 2), and 420 (Yr 3) • Teachers: At least 25 (Yr 1), 28 (Yr 2), and 30 (Yr 3) • Sites: A total of 12 sites will be established in low-income communities on three islands: O`ahu, Hawai`i, and Kaua`i.
<i>Need(s) Addressed by Obj 1:</i> Relatively few low-income Native Hawaiian children attend preschool.	
Objective 2	Annual Expected Outcomes
Improve the <u>literacy</u> skills of participating children.	70% (Yr 1), 80% (Yr 2), 90% (Yr 3) of children served in the program will meet or exceed age-appropriate oral language skills, as measured by the <i>Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-IV</i> .
<i>Need(s) Addressed by Obj 2:</i> Many Native Hawaiian children are not ready for Kindergarten.	
Objective 3	Annual Expected Outcomes
Improve the <u>school readiness</u> skills of participating children entering Kindergarten.	70% (Yr 1), 80% (Yr 2), 90% (Yr 3) of children preparing for Kindergarten will meet the majority (60% or higher) of benchmarks for school readiness, as measured by the <i>Hawaii State School Readiness Assessment</i> .
<i>Need(s) Addressed by Obj 3:</i> Many Native Hawaiian children are not ready for Kindergarten and the majority of Native Hawaiian children are not proficient in reading or math in 3 rd grade.	
Objective 4	Annual Expected Outcomes
Increase knowledge of <u>child development & positive parenting</u> practices in participating parents.	70% (Yr 1), 80% (Yr 2), 90% (Yr 3) of parents who actively participate in the program will demonstrate strong knowledge, confidence, skills and behaviors related to parenting, as measured by the <i>University of Idaho's Survey of Parenting Practice</i> .
<i>Need(s) Addressed by Obj 4:</i> Substantial research demonstrates that strong family involvement leads to positive results for young children and their school readiness ¹⁹ .	
Objective 5	Annual Expected Outcomes
Increase the <u>capacity and competency</u> of early childhood educators.	70% (Yr 1), 80% (Yr 2), 90% (Yr 3) of ECE staff will demonstrate quality interactions with children that promote emotional support, classroom organization, and instructional support, as assessed by the <i>Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)</i> .
<i>Need(s) Addressed by Obj 5:</i> The early childhood workforce is subject to non-living wage rates, staff turnover, stressful work conditions, and limited opportunities for high quality professional development.	
Objective 6	Annual Expected Outcomes
Strengthen the understanding of the <u>Hawaiian language, culture,</u>	60% (Yr 1), 70% (Yr 2), 80% (Yr 3) of children, parents and staff will increase their understanding of the Hawaiian language,

and cultural practices in participating children, parents, and early childhood educators	culture, and cultural practices, as assessed by the <i>Keiki Steps Family Survey</i> and the <i>Keiki Steps Staff Survey</i> .
<i>Need(s) Addressed by Obj 6:</i> Research suggests that children who engage in culturally responsive educational experiences have higher self-confidence and skills; increase their awareness, appreciation, and inclusion of diverse beliefs and cultures; and positively influence their academic achievement and educational success ²⁰ .	

(ii) The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a rationale.

The “ready child equation,” or theory of change as documented in the literature is as follows: *Ready Families + Ready Communities + Ready Services + Ready Schools = Children Ready for School*.²¹ Given that all four elements of the equation are necessary for children to be ready for school, KS will focus on providing services that address these elements. It will adhere to rigorous early childhood program standards, as advocated by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). If funded, KS will incorporate all 10 standards to promote school readiness (see Table 6 below).²²

Table 6. KS Activities Addressing NAEYC Standards

NAEYC Standard	Keiki Steps Activities
(1) Positive child/adult <i>relationships</i> & (7) Collaborative relationships with participating <i>families</i>	Through participation in the FCIL, parents and children will participate with other children and parents and staff in the program. In addition, <i>Mind in the Making</i> curriculum will be used to increase family knowledge of child development and parenting skills.
(2) Age-appropriate and research-based <i>curricula</i>	Developmental skills/concepts in all 6 developmental domains will be taught within a cultural context, adapting the research-based <i>Creative Curriculum</i> to be more culturally responsive within indigenous contexts.
(3) Culturally relevant and effective <i>teaching</i> approaches	Staff will be trained to incorporate Hawaiian values and language throughout all activities planned for children and families.
(4) Ongoing <i>assessment</i> of children’s learning & development	Assessment of developmental and learning outcomes will be ongoing and measured by standardized instruments such as the ASQ, PPVT, and School Readiness Assessment.
(5) Nutrition and <i>health</i> of children	Nutrition and health education will also be incorporated through the provision of healthy snacks and education and cultivating native fruits and vegetables in the outdoor gardens.
(6) Specialized professional preparation of <i>teachers</i>	Staff will receive individualized academic advising to pursue a degree in education and participate in professional development

	activities.
(8) <i>Community (school) relationships and resources</i>	Collaboration with Principals and Kindergarten teachers will be fostered. A dedicated family advocate will network with representatives of target schools and community agencies and invite them to program events to meet with families. Additionally, the program will refer families to resources in the community to ensure their basic needs are met.
(9) Safe and healthy <i>physical environments</i>	Well-maintained indoor classrooms, outdoor play areas and school gardens in target elementary schools will provide a stronger connection to the home school and community.
(10) Effective <i>leadership and management</i> practices	Program managers will participate in a professional development program related to improving their leadership and managing skills.

Figure 1 on page 12 illustrates the KS program logic model. The design is informed by the needs of the target population, previous experience in implementing the program, and the following compelling research findings, the incorporation of which is likely to lead to the proposed outcomes:

- Family relationships that are nurturing and responsive and daily experiences that support children’s natural curiosity lay the foundation for life-long physical, intellectual, and emotional health. As such, family-child interaction learning (FCIL) programs strengthen families and promote child well-being, particularly those that are culturally congruent with the child’s/family’s community.
- Research demonstrates that strong family involvement in early childhood results in positive outcomes for young children and their school readiness.²³ Without family involvement, intervention is likely to be unsuccessful, and what few effects are achieved are likely to disappear once the intervention is discontinued.²⁴
- Research suggests that children who engage in culturally responsive educational experiences have higher self-confidence and skills, increase their awareness, appreciation, and inclusion of diverse beliefs and cultures, and positively influence their academic achievement and educational success.²⁵
- The literature also demonstrates that sufficient literacy and math skills are necessary to be competitive in today’s technological world and that children who begin kindergarten proficient in literacy and math and experience a supportive home learning environment significantly decreased socioeconomic status (SES) achievement differences.²⁶

- The implementation of a rigorous evaluation will inform the early childhood field about the potential effectiveness of the FCIL approach for positive child and family outcomes in Native Hawaiian communities.²⁷

C. PROJECT SERVICES

(i) Strategies for ensuring equal access and treatment for eligible project participants who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability

KS plans to satisfy the requirement of this provision through the following 5 strategies:

1. Provision of transportation services to all scheduled field trips for participants.
2. Targeted outreach to Native Hawaiian families with young children 0-5 residing in the target communities who are not participants in other early education programs, and who could potentially benefit from project services.
3. Targeted outreach to Native Hawaiian families residing in the target communities with older school-age children attending the target schools who are seeking access to a free, high-quality, culturally grounded family child interaction learning (FCIL) program.
4. Native Hawaiian adults interested in pursuing a career in early childhood education who reside in the communities in which KS is established and who are intimately familiar with the strengths and challenges of Native Hawaiian families of young children in the communities will be encouraged to apply for open positions.
5. Vulnerable children who may be in foster care or have special needs, and families who may be low-income, immigrant, or homeless will be encouraged to participate in KS. The program will assist families with their social, economic, health, and educational needs by referring them to the appropriate agency and providing follow-up as needed.

(ii) Services reflect up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice

The design of KS will incorporate the seven elements documented in the literature on what constitutes high-quality preschools.²⁸ These are described below.

Element 1: Teaching staff. Teacher training and experience are two of the most important aspects associated with quality preschool education.²⁹ Rigorous research has linked child outcomes with skilled teachers.³⁰ Teachers are the key to high-quality early learning experiences in the classroom and in teacher-child relationships.³¹ Hawai‘i currently faces a shortage of qualified teachers for existing early childhood programs, particularly in high-

Figure 1. Keiki Steps Logic Model

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Short Term Outcomes	Intermediate Outcomes	Long Term Outcomes
<p>Resources:</p> <p>12 Native Hawaiian communities on 3 islands</p> <p>600 at-risk children</p> <p>420 at-risk families</p> <p>Evidence-based ECE design and evaluation plan</p> <p>Applicant expertise in implementing ECE programs and building capacity in target communities</p> <p>Collaborative relationships with target schools/ community orgs</p> <p>Cost-effective budget plan</p> <p>Established database system</p> <p>Rigorous program evaluation (formative & summative)</p>	<p>Planned core activities:</p> <p><u>Daily ECE program</u> that incorporates age-appropriate and research-based curricula, culturally relevant and effective teaching approaches, and positive child/adult relationships for families with children ages 0-5.</p> <p>Ongoing assessment of children's <u>learning and development</u>, including children with special needs</p> <p>Emphasis on culturally responsive <u>family engagement</u> activities that promote knowledge of child development and positive parenting practices in participating families</p> <p>Sustained, <u>job-embedded professional development</u> for staff that incorporates college coursework, instructional coaching, and collaborative learning teams (ongoing)</p> <p>Developmentally appropriate early <u>literacy, numeracy, and scientific reasoning</u> activities for children 0-5</p> <p>Internship/work-based learning <u>experiences</u> for parents, high school and college students interested in learning more about a model FCIL in indigenous communities</p>	<p>Evidence of services delivered:</p> <p>At least <u>12 sites</u> in low-income Native Hawaiian communities are established</p> <p>At least <u>600 children</u> aged 0-5 are served</p> <p>At least <u>420 families</u> participate</p> <p>At least <u>30 ECE staff</u> are hired and trained</p> <p>All participating eligible children are assessed on <u>literacy, developmental, and school readiness outcomes</u></p> <p>All participating parents are assessed on <u>knowledge of child development and positive parenting practices</u></p> <p>All ECE staff are assessed on their <u>interactions with children that promote emotional support, classroom organization, and instructional support</u></p> <p>All ECE staff <u>pursue an academic degree</u> (CDA, BA/BEd, MA/MEd) while employed</p> <p>All staff and families are assessed on their understanding of the <u>Hawaiian language, culture and cultural practices</u></p> <p>At least 10 students per year complete an <u>internship/work-based learning experience</u> at a Keiki Steps site.</p>	<p>At the end of 1 year:</p> <p><u>70% of children</u> achieve age-appropriate literacy skills, as measured by the PPVT-IV</p> <p><u>70% of children</u> entering Kinder meet the majority of benchmarks for school readiness, as assessed by the HSSRA</p> <p><u>70% of parents</u> improve their knowledge of child development and parenting skills, as measured by the SPP</p> <p><u>70% of ECE staff</u> increase their capacity and competency, as assessed by CLASS</p> <p><u>60% of staff and families</u> increase their knowledge of Hawaiian language/ culture</p>	<p>At the end of 3 years:</p> <p><u>90% of children</u> achieve age-appropriate literacy skills, as measured by the PPVT-IV</p> <p><u>90% of children</u> entering Kinder meet the majority of benchmarks for school readiness, as assessed by the HSSRA</p> <p><u>90% of parents</u> improve their knowledge of child development and parenting skills, as measured by the SPP</p> <p><u>90% of ECE staff</u> increase their capacity and competency, as assessed by CLASS</p> <p><u>80% of staff and families</u> increase their knowledge of Hawaiian language/ culture</p>	<p>After 3 years:</p> <p>Increased rates of entering Kindergarteners in target schools with ECE</p> <p>Increased rates of reading and math proficiency in 3rd graders at target schools</p> <p>Increased family engagement in target communities</p> <p>Increased community capacity-building efforts and early professional training in ECE</p> <p>Keiki Steps FCIL model adopted in other Native Hawaiian communities and schools</p>

poverty Native Hawaiian communities. KS will hire from within the communities it serves, ensure that teaching staff have a minimum of a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential, require all staff to pursue an associate, baccalaureate, or graduate degree in early childhood education while employed—depending on the academic credentials staff have when they are hired—and offer a competitive salary with benefits.

Element 2: Research-based, literacy-focused curriculum. A comprehensive, well-planned preschool curriculum lays the foundation for future school-related skills and knowledge.³² KS will adapt and implement the *Creative Curriculum for Preschool*, which is a research-based early childhood curriculum designed to foster the development of the whole child that has been found to be effective in promoting oral language, print knowledge, phonological processing, and math.³³ A literacy-focused approach will be particularly emphasized. Research shows that a focus on dialogue between teachers and children fosters higher-level reasoning and thinking skills, and that reading to children at the earliest ages has shown a relationship to children's literacy.³⁴ KS will incorporate “*talking story*”—a culturally compatible feature that is also a common Hawaiian speech event characterized by a cooperative style of speaking—literacy sessions such as reading by the children, that allow the children to cooperate with one another in small groups using overlapping speech to explain points and respond to teacher questions.³⁵ Literacy activities will address expanding vocabulary, alphabetic principles, and phonological awareness. They will also emphasize mathematics-specific language, such as concepts of numbers, shapes, measurement and spatial relations. Lastly, each site will have a STEM exploration center with developmentally appropriate hands-on activities that will encourage curiosity and address task persistence, early scientific/quantitative thinking, and information about the world and how it works.

Element 3: Culturally responsive, high-quality instruction. Closing the literacy achievement gap can be done through culturally responsive teaching, which considers the role of the home language, instructional materials and methods, classroom management and interaction with students, relationships with the community, and assessment.³⁶ The key is to apply the child and family’s cultural background to their construction—and resulting ownership—of knowledge and learning. In this approach, children’s cultural identity is reinforced through a thorough grounding in their own culture, which in this case is provided through culturally responsive curriculum in a preschool setting. KS will integrate Native Hawaiian core values and provide a combination of teacher-and child-initiated activities to nurture social/cultural, developmental and academic growth. It will focus on learning through play and adult interactions that emphasize thinking and reasoning skills, language growth, self-regulation, and social skills. Lastly, it will integrate whole-group, small-group, and one-on-one interactions and experiential cultural activities. See Table 7 below.

Table 7. Keiki Steps Program Daily Schedule

Time	Description
7:30-8:00	Set-Up: Staff, assisted by parent volunteers, set up 10 different learning centers that emphasize parent and child engagement, STEM, school readiness, and literacy.
8:00-8:15	<u>First Circle</u> : Staff lead an interactive session, opening up with a cultural protocol (e.g., ‘oli or chant) followed by mele (songs) and announcements. Before keiki choose a learning center, they choose a book from the Library Center and either have their parent read it to them or themselves can read the story.
8:15-9:45	<u>Learning Centers</u> : There are 10 centers that address different learning domains and concepts, such as math, science, library, thinking games/puzzles, etc. Activities are developmentally appropriate for children 0-5, incorporate Hawaiian language, values, and practices, and address a monthly theme, which differs each month.
9:45-9:50	<u>Clean Up</u> : Keiki, parents, and staff clean up the learning centers by putting away materials. After materials are put away, they wash their hands in preparation for snack.
10:00-10:20	<u>Second Circle/Snack/Story Time</u> : A healthy snack is provided for children and adults. Staff review the day’s activities, followed by sharing by keiki of the work that they did that day.

10:25– 10:55	<u>Outdoor Play</u> : Keiki engage in a variety of gross motor activities, such as riding bikes, playing at the water tables, with basketball hoops or balls, parachute tunnels, obstacle courses, taking care of the plants in the outdoor classroom, etc.
10:55– 11:00	<u>Closing Song</u> : Staff, keiki and parents sing “A Hui Hou” (<i>Until we meet again</i>) to close the program. Everyone says “Aloha” (<i>good-bye</i>) to each other.
11:00– 11:30	<u>Site Clean Up</u> : Staff sanitize all materials and break down the learning centers.

Element 4: Ongoing assessment. Assessment is a critical component of high-quality, early childhood education.³⁷ Assessment is effective when it is used to observe and measure child progress to guide teaching and learning, to inform parents about children’s learning and development, to identify unique learning needs of individual children, and when it is used to support continuous improvement efforts and provide program evaluation information. Specific quantitative and qualitative assessment measures that will be used to determine project outcomes are described in *Section F. Project Evaluation*.

Element 5: Research-based professional development. Program characteristics associated with lasting benefits for children include ongoing professional development that focuses on improving teaching as a means to improve student learning, that incorporates time to study and reflect with others; that includes theory, demonstration, practice and feedback; and that includes time to evaluate the effect of the efforts and make needed adjustments.³⁸ KS will utilize a strong professional development component by offering sustained, job-embedded professional development that incorporates three strategies that research studies have found to be effective: college coursework, instructional coaching, and professional learning communities (PLCs).³⁹ Depending on the academic credentials staff have upon hire, all staff will be required to complete their CDA in their first year, and/or pursue an undergraduate or graduate degree in ECE over the course of the project. Coursework for ECE

degrees will be modified to align with the unique learning needs of the staff, the majority of whom may be non-traditional college students with families of their own.

In terms of instructional coaching, KS will adopt the Dynamic Coaching Framework.⁴⁰ This model fosters a teacher-coach relationship that mirrors the teacher-child relationship where the coach's role is to scaffold learning in ways that facilitate high-level learning.⁴¹ A highly trained ECE professional will serve as Mentor Coach (MC) to the 12 site teams and provide optimal support in classroom organization and instruction. The MC will assess site team's instructional practices and interactions with children and families according to the CLASS model using video recording at the beginning and end of each program year. In between video assessments, the MC will debrief with the site team monthly and provide feedback to staff regarding their instructional practices.⁴² In addition, MC will model early childhood instructional strategies, help staff with lesson plans, observe KS sessions and discuss, debrief and provide feedback to staff. Support will be geared toward reinforcing content learned in coursework to daily implementation at KS sites, ensuring high-quality ECE services in line with up-to-date, best practices in the field.

Staff will also be required to participate in monthly professional development activities related to specialized training in ECE, leadership development, and program focus areas including school readiness, culture, numeracy/early math skills, and early science skills. An internal cadre of practicing early childhood educators—or a Professional Learning Community (PLC)—will fulfill two primary purposes: facilitate the training of additional peer mentors/teachers, and provide a forum for inquiry-based research and discussion that deepens staff understanding of college coursework and their ability to implement best practices in KS.

Element 6: Collaboration with parents and families. Substantial research demonstrates

that strong family involvement leads to positive results for young children and their school readiness.⁴³ Without family involvement, intervention is likely to be unsuccessful, and what few effects are achieved are likely to disappear once the intervention is discontinued.⁴⁴ Involving parents and families is central to FCIL programs: children and family members (usually a parent or other caregiver) attend sessions together and participate in the program jointly. KS will emphasize research-based family involvement processes: it will include families as partners in all aspects of the program; improve parental educational and/or parenting skills; have opportunities for parents to share their own culture and contribute to the program and policies; and provide parents with information on promoting early childhood learning experiences and resources within their communities (health insurance, housing, WIC, etc.). In addition, it will emphasize the shared responsibility for children's learning outcomes and will encourage parents to read to their children at home, engage in parent-child conversations, and involve their children in other family learning activities.

As a part of the KS monthly parent training program, the program will incorporate *Mind in the Making: Seven Essential Life Skills* into its family engagement curriculum.⁴⁵ KS is one of the few programs in Hawaii to offer this national, evidence-based curriculum which is designed for educators and parents to connect the latest research on how young children learn best to their own development as a professional and as a parent, their experiences in the classroom and raising their children, and their specific cultural context. The objective of taking this approach with KS parents is in part to provide them with access to the knowledge and skills that will increase their ability to be actively involved in their children's education.

Element 7: Including children with special needs. KS will ensure accessibility for all children, including those with special needs, so that all children participating in the program

can interact with materials, activities, teachers, and peers to the fullest extent possible.

Inclusive environments will be designed at each site such that they provide an educational setting in which all children can be involved and independent as possible.⁴⁶ In addition, staff will be trained to teach parents to administer the ASQ and to review ASQ scores with parents. If the child falls below in any particular area, staff will refer the family for additional services needed due to developmental delays or other special needs.

(ii) The likely impact of the services to be provided on the intended recipients of those services

Former and current impacts. For the last 15 years, INPEACE has received federal and philanthropic funding to implement *Keiki Steps* at multiple sites throughout Hawai'i. To date, the program has provided ECE to nearly 10,000 children (0-5 years) and their parent or daily caregiver. Based on previous annual evaluations, there is ample evidence to conclude that *Keiki Steps* is a highly effective program. In addition, preliminary findings from a quasi-experimental research design (QED) study currently being conducted by the Brazelton Touchpoints Center (founded by Dr. T. Berry Brazelton and based in Boston) has yielded valuable information that will be potentially useful in other settings. The study, along with previous evaluation findings, validate that participating families, staff, and target schools universally perceive *Keiki Steps* as a valuable program that has made a dramatic difference in the social, emotional, and cognitive development of Native Hawaiian children. Consider the following remarkable outcomes to date:

- Since its inception, *Keiki Steps* has positively influenced participating children's growth in vocabulary over time. Children experiencing poverty had lower vocabulary when they entered *Keiki Steps*, but ***showed similar growth in vocabulary as children not living in poverty.***
- Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT) scores attest that the program had a mean notable positive effect on participating children's oral language skills: the gains in scores went beyond normative expectation, and differences were ***statistically significant.*** In terms of equivalent percentiles, ***children gained on average of 18***

percentile points. Given that significant gains are defined as an increase of 4 or more points between pre-and post-test, this is indeed impressive.

- Additionally, nearly 90% of Keiki Steps children entering kindergarten in the last 10 years **met or exceeded 60% of school readiness benchmarks in all 6 developmental domains** as measured by the HSSRA. This is in direct contrast to the State average in nearly 90% of kindergarten classrooms did not meet the majority of benchmarks. Keiki Steps children showed a robust familiarity with pre-literacy and pre-numeracy skills, a positive attitude towards reading, and a strong sense of responsibility and self-confidence.
- As a result of participating in the program, parents formed stronger bonds with their children and had more confidence as parents. They **increased their knowledge of child development and age-appropriate child behavior, and their confidence and ability in parenting their child**, as measured by the University of Idaho’s Survey of Parenting Practice. Moreover, paired t test results indicated a significant ($p < 0.001$) increase in post-test results from pre-test results.
- Lastly, **100% of ECE staff demonstrated quality interactions with children** that promoted emotional support, classroom organization, and instructional support, as assessed by the CLASS instrument.

The evaluation findings above show that the school readiness preschool model as developed by INPEACE “works” for Native Hawaiian children in high-need communities. However, there continues to be a need to ensure children, their families, the schools in which they will enter, and the communities in which they reside are ready for academic and social success as each year a new cohort of children are born. This iteration of Keiki Steps will maximize what INPEACE has learned from implementing previous cycles of the program and from leveraging INPEACE’s existing capacity in implementing a high quality FCIL program in high-need communities. However, it will have three new innovations:

- 1) Offer the program at three new sites: (1) *Waianae High School*, serving Native Hawaiian families in Waianae, Oahu who attend school or work at Waianae High School, one of the largest high schools in the State of Hawai`i (2) *Queen Lili`uokalani Children’s Center* serving Native Hawaiian families in Hilo, Hawai`i Island and (3) *Honouli`uli*, serving Native Hawaiian families, particularly those living on Department of Hawaiian Home Lands in Kapolei, O`ahu;

- 2) Incorporate a cutting-edge parent education curriculum based on Ellen Galinsky's *Mind in the Making*;⁴⁷ and,
- 3) Place a more intentional emphasis on early numeracy/mathematical skills and scientific reasoning skills in the ECE curriculum.

Future impacts. INPEACE will partner with the Hawai'i Department of Education, the Lili'uokalani Trust, and Island Pacific Academy to leverage resources (e.g., classroom space). Given the scope of the project (state-wide), its objectives (measurable, ambitious yet attainable) and its potential significance (improving learning outcomes for at-risk children before they enter school), the costs proposed are reasonable (see Attachments A1-7 for Letters of Support). The potential impact of KS is impressive: it has the opportunity to raise the bar in developing a holistic, quality ECE program that meets NAEYC standards for Native Hawaiian children in high-poverty communities and share its findings across the country, thereby positively impacting indigenous and other impoverished communities of color. It represents a unique opportunity to work with multiple public and private agencies to develop, implement, and evaluate an innovative ECE program for Native Hawaiian children in areas where they are most needed. Based on prior volunteer hours, the estimated volunteer hours of parents in the program are projected at 64,818 hours for the program year. Therefore, the in-kind resources for the project using the current allowed Federal hourly volunteer rate for Hawai'i (\$25.43) totals \$1,648,321.74.

The annual cost of the project will average \$4,008.25 per child served in comparison to an estimated \$13,748 per pupil expended by the Hawai'i Department of Education.⁴⁸ Project expenditures per child are less than 1/4 of what the State of Hawai'i annually spends per student, and given the expected results this is very cost effective. For example, the potential return of investment far outweighs the cost of implementation. Recent research

documents that early education investments, compared to other kinds of state investments, yield a return that far exceeds the return on most public projects that are considered economic development⁴⁹. In general, high quality ECE programs can yield a return on investment of 16%, with 80% of the benefits going to the general public. In sum, high quality ECE programs can yield more than \$8 for every \$1 invested.

D. PROJECT PERSONNEL

(i) Strategies for encouraging applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented

Building local capacity is part of INPEACE’s mission, and it has a track record of contributing to the early childhood workforce development needs in Native Hawaiian communities. It does this by hiring and training people who are residents of the communities they serve and who come with the necessary cultural and community intelligence to reach the target families. Applicants for open positions will be recruited and selected in accordance with INPEACE personnel policies, which adhere to strict compliance with the state and federal Equal Employment Opportunity guidelines. The applicant commits to hiring staff that are current or former residents of the target areas, and/or have experience working in the target schools or communities. Adults with backgrounds similar to the population served in the project will be particularly encouraged to apply. To that end, the population to be served will be described in all personnel advertisements, with the statement that qualified applicants with a similar background will be given preference in hiring. *(Please see Table 8 below).*

Table 8. Plan for Staff Recruitment and Hiring

Step	Description
Establish committee	A current or former parent will participate as part of established hiring committee. The committee will also be balanced in terms of ethnicity and gender.

Advertise positions	The advertising of position vacancies includes on-line recruitment sites, social media affiliations, partner agency electronic distributions and print publications. In addition, position announcements will be sent to community newspapers, community organizations serving NH residents in the target areas, and other social media links. Efforts to encourage applicants with disabilities to apply will include officially requesting recruitment assistance from state and community agencies with expertise in serving persons with special needs.
Compile and screen applications	Hiring procedures will include open, competitive recruitment, compilation of the applications, and a review of applicants for minimum qualifications. “Familiarity with the community, interest in the ECE profession, and knowledge of the Native Hawaiian culture”, are listed on the screening matrix as preferred qualifications with point values.
Conduct interviews	Standard and fair interview questions will probe the applicant’s work history, familiarity with the target community, interest in ECE, or career/personal goals. Pointed and legal interview questions will assist in employing personnel who have circumstances similar to those of the target area population.
Committee selection	The committee will review interview responses from eligible applicants and determine ratings of all those interviewed. They will select the three highest scoring applicants.
Offer and acceptance	The final selection for the key positions will be made by the CEO of INPEACE.

(ii) Qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel

There will be a total of 40 personnel funded by the project. The following are the project’s Key Personnel (see Attachment B1-2 for Program and Organizational Chart):

- [REDACTED] will lead the project as Principal Investigator and contribute 25% of her time. She is INPEACE’s CEO and was born and raised on the Wai`anae Coast. With over 30 years of experience in diverse areas of social service management and program design, she has stellar academic qualifications and extensive professional expertise and strong community relationships that enable her to successfully lead KS. (see Attachment C1a-b for Resume)
- [REDACTED] will serve as the Program Director. An accomplished ECE education and management professional with 15 years of experience, [REDACTED] is a fluent Hawaiian language speaker, with experience in curriculum development, assessment, language immersion strategies, place-based learning, and people management. [REDACTED] holds a Bachelor of Arts in Humanities with an emphasis in Hawaiian Pacific Studies. (see Attachment C2a-b for Resume)
- [REDACTED] will be the program Associate Program Director. She is a skilled ECE educator and management professional with nearly 20 years of experience. [REDACTED] is the consummate ECE professional, working across the ECE spectrum as a teacher’s aide, teacher, playgroup and program coordinator, and has advanced knowledge in multiple

ECE assessment systems. [REDACTED] holds a Bachelor of Arts in Child Development with a minor in Family Life Skills from Concordia University. (see Attachment C3a-b for Resume)

- [REDACTED] will serve as the Hawaii Island Coordinator and Mentor Coach. She is a highly skilled, and has 16 years of experience in ECE. [REDACTED] has served as an educator, teacher trainer, preschool site manager, and mentor coach. She also has a strong academic background as well, holding a Master of Arts in Education with as Specialization in Curriculum and Instruction, and, a Bachelor of Arts in Early Childhood Education Administration from Ashford University. (see Attachment C4a-b for Resume)
- [REDACTED] will serve as the program’s Oahu Island Coordinator. An experienced ECE educator, she has worked at INPEACE since 2015 as a Lead-Kindergarten Teacher and preschool Site Coordinator prior to her appointment as Oahu Island Coordinator in 2018. [REDACTED] holds a Bachelor of Science, Family and Consumer Sciences: Family Resources and Early Childhood Development from the University of Hawaii at Manoa. (see Attachment C5a-c for Resume)

Table 9. Qualifications of key program personnel

Position	Qualifications
Program Director (1.0 FTE)	Bachelor’s Degree in Education or related field. Training and work experience will encompass: 3 years administering an early childhood education program; 3 years working with Native Hawaiian children and families; knowledge of laws and regulations that govern working with children; hiring, training, supervising, and evaluating full-time staff; and developing detailed annual budget, reporting, and record keeping procedures.
Associate Program Director (1.0 FTE)	Bachelor’s Degree in Early Childhood or related field and 2 years’ experience in a similar capacity or a Child Development Accreditation and 4 years of experience working with children ages 0-5. Other qualifications include knowledge and experience with working in Native Hawaiian communities and of early childhood and family community resources and the ability to analyze problems, develop effective solutions and resolve problems within Hawaiian cultural context.
Island Coordinators (1.5 FTE)	Bachelor’s Degree in Early Childhood or related field and 3 years of classroom teaching experience, some of which is in an FCIL setting; experience with program development, project management, and program evaluation; and knowledge and sensitivity to the interests and needs of families in Native Hawaiian and/or poverty communities.
Mentor Coach (0.5 FTE)	Master’s Degree in Early Childhood or related field and 2 years of experience in a similar capacity working with children ages 0-5. Other qualifications include experience in working with Native Hawaiian communities and knowledge of early childhood and family community resources, program development, project management, and program evaluation.

Site Coordinators (11 @ 0.875 FTE and 1 @ 1 FTE)	Minimum Qualifications: High school diploma, 2 years of experience working with children ages 0-5, a Child Development Associate (CDA) certificate or the commitment to working toward one; training/work experience in preparing and implementing developmentally appropriate lesson plans while staying within compliance with state and local board of education requirements; recognizing learning problems in children and making appropriate referrals; and knowledge and experience in working in Native Hawaiian communities.
Teacher's Aide (11 @ 0.625 FTE and 1 @ 1 FTE)	Minimum Qualifications: High school diploma, 1 year of experience working with children ages 0-5, and be CDA certified or commit towards earning the credential; knowledge of early childhood and family community resources, excellent interpersonal skills, and knowledge and experience with working in Native Hawaiian communities.
'Ohana Advocate (6 @ 0.5 FTE)	Minimum Qualifications: High school diploma, supplemented by courses in early childhood education; knowledge of early childhood and family community resources; the ability to research resources and provide appropriate resources to parents; and knowledge and experience with working in Native Hawaiian communities.

E. MANAGEMENT PLAN

(i) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones

The timeline is presented in months over the course of three years and only five primary tasks for each of the objectives are identified. The management plan will be more thoroughly fleshed out with additional tasks, a more refined timeline, an expenditure plan, and specific responsibilities within the first month of funding. To determine the extent to which objectives are being met within budget, monthly audits of the account will be reconciled with the key tasks associated with each objective.

Please note for Table 10 below: *PI=Principal Investigator, PD=Program Director, APD= Associate Program Director, IC=Island Coordinator, MC=Mentor Coach, ST=Site Team, EE= External Evaluator*

Table 10: Management Plan

Selected Key Task	Responsibility	Timeline
Objective (1): Enroll at least 600 children and 420 families and hire and train 30 early childhood educators from 12 low-income NH communities on 3 islands.		
1.1 Secure space agreements for sites.	PI	Mos 1-2
1.2 Recruit/hire/orient Site Teams	PD, APD, IC	Mos 1-4
1.3 Develop/implement training/curriculum plans.	PD, APD, IC	Ongoing
1.4 Develop/implement recruiting plan.	PD, APD, IC	Mos 1-4

1.5 Identify/recruit/enroll children	IC, ST	Ongoing
Obj 1 Annual Milestones: Children: At least 500 (Yr 1), 550 (Yr 2), and 600 (Yr 3) ; Families: At least 350 (Yr 1), 385 (Yr 2), and 420 (Yr 3) ; Teachers: At least 25 (Yr 1), 28 (Yr 2), and 30 (Yr 3) ; Sites: A total of 12 sites will be established (Yr 1-3)		
Objective (2): Improve the literacy skills of participating children.		
2.1 Train staff in administering PPVT	IC, MC	Month 6
2.2 Administer pre/post PPVT as scheduled	ST	Aug, May
2.3 Compile and analyze completed PPVTs (pre/post)	EE	Dec, June
2.4 Identify children with below average PPVT scores	ST	Dec, June
2.5 Create an Individ. Literacy Plan for children with low PPVTs	MC, IC, ST	Ongoing
Obj 2 Annual Milestones: 70% (Yr 1), 80% (Yr 2), 90% (Yr 3) of children served in the program will meet or exceed age-appropriate oral language skills, as measured by the <i>Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-IV</i> .		
Objective (3): Improve the school readiness skills of participating children		
3.1 Train staff in admin. HSRA to children entering school ¹	IC, MC	Mar
3.2 Administer HSRA as scheduled	ST	May
3.3 Compile and analyze completed HSRAs	EE	Jun
3.4 Share HSRA outcomes with staff and target schools	PI/APD/IC	August
3.5 Use data to make changes (if any) to school readiness curric.	APD/IC	Ongoing
Obj 3 Annual Milestones: 70% (Yr 1), 80% (Yr 2), 90% (Yr 3) of children preparing for Kindergarten will meet the majority (60% or higher) of benchmarks for school readiness, as measured by the <i>Hawaii School Readiness Assessment (HSRA)</i>		
Objective (4): Increase knowledge of child development & positive parenting practices in participating parents.		
4.1 Compile parent assessment instruments	EE	August
4.2 Collect baseline information on the parents/families	ST	As they register
4.3 Connect families to community resources	ST	As needed
4.4 Offer family strengthening activities/ <i>Mind in the Making</i>	ST	Ongoing
4.5 Evaluate family learning outcomes	EE	Ongoing
Obj 4 Annual Milestones: 70% (Yr 1), 80% (Yr 2), 90% (Yr 3) of parents who actively participate in the program will demonstrate strong knowledge, confidence, skills and behaviors related to parenting, as measured by the <i>University of Idaho's Survey of Parenting Practice</i> .		
Objective (5): Increase the capacity and competency of early childhood educators.		
5.1 Compile staff assessment instruments	APD, MC	August
5.2 Collect baseline information on the staff	IC, MC	As they are hired

¹ Addresses GPR Measure 2: The percentage of Native Hawaiian children participating in early education programs who consistently demonstrate school readiness in literacy as measured by the Hawai'i School Readiness Assessment

5.3 Develop personalized staff professional development plan	PD, AD, IC	As they are hired
5.4 Coordinate staff PLCs on school readiness, STEM, and culture	PD, APD, IC	Monthly
5.5 Establish internships/work-based learning experiences for high school students and interested adults	PD, APD, IC	Ongoing
Obj 5 Annual Milestones		
70% (Yr 1), 80% (Yr 2), 90% (Yr 3) of ECE staff will demonstrate quality interactions with children that promote emotional support, classroom organization, and instructional support, as assessed by the <i>Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)</i> .		
Objective (6): Strengthen the understanding of the <u>Hawaiian language, culture, and cultural practices</u> in participating children, parents, and early childhood educators.		
6.1 Adapt the <i>Creative Curriculum</i> to include Native Hawaiian language, culture, and practices	IC, MC, ST	Mos 1-6
6.2 Embed Native Hawaiian culture in staff professional development and parent education activities	IC, MC, ST	Ongoing
6.3 Develop specific school readiness and STEM experiential cultural activities that are developmentally appropriate	APD, IC, ST	Mos 1-6
6.4 Connect families to cultural resources in the community	IC, ST	Monthly
6.5 Evaluate cultural learning outcomes	ST, EE	Aug, May
Obj 6 Annual Milestones		
60% (Yr 1), 70% (Yr 2), 80% (Yr 3) of children, parents and staff will increase their understanding of the Hawaiian language, culture, and cultural practices, as assessed by the <i>Keiki Steps Family Survey</i> and the <i>Keiki Steps Staff Survey</i> .		

(ii) The adequacy of mechanisms for ensuring high-quality products and services.

Three main mechanisms will ensure high-quality products and services: 1) a solid management plan that identifies key tasks, persons responsible, milestones, and the timeline for accomplishing (described in Table 10 above); 2) a well-thought out evaluation plan that is tied to the objectives and expected outcomes and that incorporates both formative and summative evaluation activities (described in *Section F: Project Evaluation*); and 3) solid community partnerships with the target schools and key community organizations. For example, KS will be part of a comprehensive effort to improve the educational outcomes of Native Hawaiian children throughout the State. In addition to the 12 target sites, the project will collaborate with five well-known organizations that serve Native Hawaiian children and the communities in which they reside. Collaboration with these organizations will ensure that

program services are not duplicated, that best practices in high-quality ECE services are shared, and that unique cultural, educational, and professional development resources are leveraged. These partnerships include:

- The 'Eleu Initiative, which is a consortium of representatives from Native Hawaiian non-profit organizations that operate similar FCIL programs in Native Hawaiian communities. These include the *Partners in Development Foundation*, *Keiki O Ka 'Āina*, *Aha Punana Leo*, and *Alu Like*
- The Hawaii Children's Action Network, which continues to advocate for a comprehensive early childhood system in Hawaii that includes equitable access to high-quality early education and childcare and the health and safety of Hawaii's youngest children
- *Kanaeokana* seeks to strengthen the lāhui and nurture the next generations of aloha 'āina leaders by collaboratively developing and growing a Native Hawaiian education system built on a strong 'ōlelo Hawai'i and 'ike Hawai'i foundation.
- The Queen Liliu'okalani Trust, a private operating foundation established to fulfill Queen Liliu'okalani's mission to care for and ensure the wellbeing of the most vulnerable Native Hawaiian children and their 'ohana. The Trust offers an array of programs and services to help children, to assist families, and to collaborate with a variety of community groups and organizations to establish a strong support system for youth; and
- The World Indigenous Peoples Higher Education Consortium (WINHEC), which accredited INPEACE as an indigenous institution in 2014. It acknowledged that INPEACE programs are framed by the philosophy of the native community it serves, that its programs are soundly conceived and intelligently devised, and that it integrates Indigenous culture, language, and worldviews into programming.

F. PROJECT EVALUATION

(i) The extent to which the methods of evaluation provide valid and reliable performance data on relevant outcomes

Evaluation methods will be thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the project goal, objectives and outcomes and will be both formative (process) and summative (outcome) in nature. A participatory approach to evaluation⁵⁰ will be used: the control of the evaluation will be shared by the evaluator, management, and staff and will involve an unusual depth of participation among staff and families. A mixed methods approach will capture quantitative information using research-based and psychometrically valid and reliable assessment

instruments and qualitative information (focus groups/ interviews) involving key stakeholders. Quantitative information on children, families, and staff will be collected twice a year: once in the beginning and once at the end of program. Formative assessment will encompass the following: 1) Children's pre-test scores, parent pre-survey responses, and staff pre-survey responses will be reviewed mid-year (each Dec) by staff and used to inform teacher instruction, curricular improvements, and family engagement and 2) weekly site planning meetings (involving site staff) and monthly development meetings (involving all staff) will address challenges and accomplishments as they arise. Specifically, topics at these meetings will address if sites are reaching their recruitment and attendance targets, if the services are being delivered as intended, and if short-term outcomes are promising.

Qualitative information will provide insight to the quality and substance of the project and will include annual individual/group meetings of families and staff. The evaluator will meet with staff and families each year to discuss level of participation in project, program strengths, and recommendations for improvement. Both types of information will be used to verify, and triangulate outcomes associated with each of the objectives. Data will be analyzed to identify changes in child and parent outcomes within and across program years using common statistical methods and tests of significance (e.g., t-tests).

██████████ will serve as the External Evaluator. With a bachelor's degree in child development and a doctorate in program evaluation, she has over 25 years of experience in evaluation. She will work closely with staff and families in designing and implementing the evaluation, regularly meet with stakeholders, and ensure the evaluation complies with the program evaluation standards established by the American Evaluation Association. The evaluation report deadlines will coincide a month before Federal reporting deadlines and will

be used to inform the APR, to provide formative guidance in project implementation, and to highlight summative findings related to project outcomes. Evaluation results will be routinely shared to meet the unique needs of the different audiences (e.g., participating families, target schools, community partners). The evaluation will yield valuable information that will be potentially useful in other settings. It will use research-based evaluation design and methods and psychometrically sound evaluation instruments, involve stakeholders throughout the process, and demonstrate the effects of a high-quality early education program in indigenous communities. Findings from the evaluations will be presented at regional and national conferences, and in INPEACE and other publications.

Table 11. Primary Instruments Used to Assess Program Outcomes

Outcome	Instrument	Description	Frequency
Child Development	Ages & Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) (0–5 years)	Completed by parents, the ASQ tracks a child’s development based on age, identifies developmental delays, and educates the parent on child development.	Every 2-6 months
Oral Language	Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT-IV) (2.5–5 years)	An instrument that measures a child’s receptive vocabulary/verbal ability for Standard English. It is the only nationally normed assessment that is a predictor of 3rd grade reading scores. A trained staff member will administer it to children upon enrollment and again after 6 months.	Twice (pre/post)
School Readiness	Hawai‘i State School Readiness Assessment (HSSRA) (4-5 years)	Children entering kinder will be assessed on 6 domains: approaches to learning, literacy concepts, math concepts, school behaviors, social-emotional behaviors and physical well-being. Trained staff will complete the observational assessment in the last month of program.	Once, upon entering Kinder
Parenting Skills	University of Idaho Survey of Parenting Practice (UISPP)	UISPP is a 12-item retrospective pre- and post-test for parents to report change in their parenting behavior during their participation in Keiki Steps. Items focus on knowledge, confidence, skills and behaviors related to parenting. Studies show the survey, used by the national Parents as Teachers Program, to be valid and reliable.	Twice (pre/post)

Teaching Practices	Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)	CLASS is a research-based tool that determines the extent to which staff provide emotional support, organize their classrooms, and improve their instructional skills and interactions with children. It is the only teacher assessment directly linked to student outcomes. The Mentor Coach will complete the observational assessment on staff twice a year.	Twice (per/post)
Hawaiian Culture & Language Practices	Family/Staff Surveys	Family and staff surveys will be administered twice a year. Family and staff interviews will be conducted annually by the Evaluator. In addition to assessing expectations, suggestions for improvement, and perceived benefits, the survey and interviews will assess family and staff knowledge, skills, and attitudes toward the Hawaiian language, culture, and cultural practices.	<u>Surveys</u> Twice (pre/post)
	Family/Staff Interviews		<u>Interviews</u> Once at end of program year

Table 12. Evaluation Management Plan.

Performance Measure	Data Instrument	Annual Target			Frequency
Objective (1): Enroll at least 600 children and 420 families and hire and train 30 early childhood educators from 12 low-income NH communities on 3 islands.					
Number of sites	Project Database; Management interviews	12	12	12	On-going
Number of staff		25	28	30	
Number of children		500	550	600	
Number of families		350	385	420	
Objective (2): Improve the literacy skills of participating children.					
Proportion of children who meet or exceed age-appropriate oral language skills.	PPVT-IV	70%	80%	90%	Twice/year
Objective (3): Improve the school readiness skills of participating children entering Kindergarten.					
Proportion of children preparing for Kindergarten who meet the majority of benchmarks for school readiness (<i>GPRA #2</i>)	HSSRA Staff Interviews	70%	80%	90%	Once: upon enter Kinder End of year
Objective (4): Increase knowledge of child development & positive parenting practices in participating parents.					
Proportion of parents who improve their knowledge, confidence, skills and behaviors related to parenting.	UISPP Parent Survey Parent Interviews	70%	80%	90%	Twice/year End of year
Objective (5): Increase the capacity and competency of early childhood educators.					
Proportion of staff who demonstrate quality interactions with children.	CLASS Staff Survey Staff Interviews	70%	80%	90%	Twice/year End of year
Objective (6): Strengthen the understanding of the Hawaiian language, culture, and cultural practices in participating children, parents, and early childhood educators.					

Proportion of children, parents & staff who increase their understanding of the Hawaiian language/culture/cultural practices.	Family/Staff Surveys and Interviews	60%	70%	80%	Twice/year End of year
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(see Attachment D for HI-DOE/LEA Comments)

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