

The Kailua High School philoSURFERS

A Project of philosophy for children (p4c) Hawai'i

Chad Miller, PhD & Amber Makaiau, PhD
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

What is p4c Hawai'i?

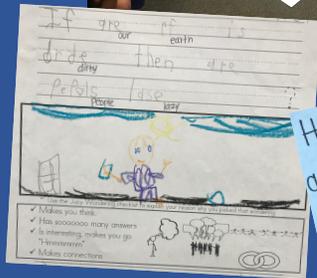
The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa's Uehiro Academy for Philosophy and Ethics in Education is the home of philosophy for children Hawai'i (p4c Hawai'i), which is an innovative approach to education that transforms the schooling experience by engaging people in the activity of philosophy. The p4c Hawai'i approach aids students and teachers in converting traditional classrooms into intellectually safe communities of inquiry. Together, they develop their ability to think for themselves in responsible ways by exploring "big questions" that arise from their interests, experiences, and learning contexts.

Why the Kailua Complex?

Years ago, Kailua High School made a commitment to creating a more mindful and philosophical schooling experience. As a result, p4c Hawai'i has become a widely used teaching practice across campus. Recently, an increasing number of k-12 teachers in the Kailua Complex have become interested in bringing p4c Hawai'i into their classrooms. However, the rapid increase in interest created several challenges, namely, how to support the growing number of teachers who want to make p4c Hawai'i a "living and reliable educational option" (Lipman, 1988). This challenge gave birth to the philoSURFERS.



"I believe the philoSURFERS gave me confidence in implementing p4c in my classroom through the confidence they exuded in facilitating p4c instruction with my students. They showed me where the ceiling is in p4c pedagogy in the classroom by how serious they took their work when they were in here and by how engaged, motivated, and effective my students were in regards to the inquiries, philosophy, and questioning."



How do we save the earth
and still get the things we
want?

What are the Project's Aims for the Kailua Complex?

1. Teachers and students develop increased knowledge and understanding of p4c Hawai'i.
2. Teachers utilize p4c Hawai'i as an instructional approach/pedagogy to promote inquiry.
3. Students apply the strategies and tools of p4c Hawai'i to engage in inquiry in various contexts.
4. p4c/philosophical inquiry is assimilated into each school's culture and community
5. Develop and nurture "in house experts" to serve as p4c mentors and leaders at each school.

Who are the philoSURFERS?

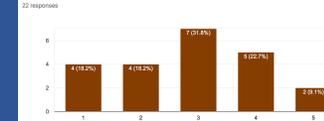
The *philoSURFER Internship Project* enlists the talents of high school students who have internalized the practices of p4c Hawai'i as a result of their own schooling experiences. These "seasoned" philosophers enroll in a for-credit internship course that places them in kindergarten through ninth grade classrooms four times a week. (Kailua High School's mascot is the Surfrider and they are affectionately known as the Surfiers, hence the philoSURFERS). Like the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa faculty Philosophers in Residence they intern with, their primary duty is to aid teachers in engaging students in meaningful philosophical activity through the p4c Hawai'i approach to education. Thus, the philoSURFERS participate alongside students and teachers as they explore the questions that matter most to the children. These teenagers then collaborate with teachers in planning and designing activities in order to help make philosophy, specifically p4c Hawai'i, a meaningful and integral aspect of the k-12 schooling experience.



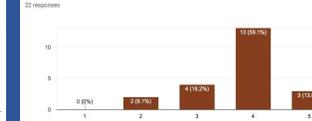
What is Happening?

- Each semester 13 philoSURFERS support roughly 40 teachers and nearly 1,000 students at Ka'elepulu Elementary School, Maunawili Elementary School, Enchanted Lake Elementary School, Waimānalo Elementary and Intermediate School, Kailua Intermediate School, and Kailua High School, all of which are located in the ahupua'a of Kailua and Waimānalo on the Windward side of O'ahu.
- Based on initial evaluations from participating teachers, the *philoSURFER Internship Project* is meeting all of its stated objectives.

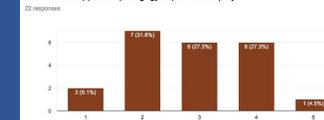
Last school year (2015-16), what was the depth of your knowledge and understanding of p4c Hawai'i?



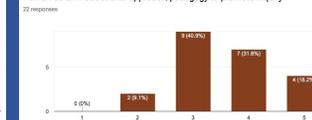
Now, at the end of the 2016-17 school year, what is the depth of your knowledge and understanding of p4c Hawai'i?



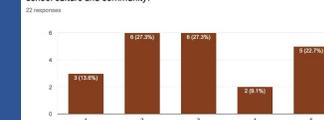
Last school year (2015-16), how often did you use p4c Hawai'i as an instructional approach/pedagogy to promote inquiry?



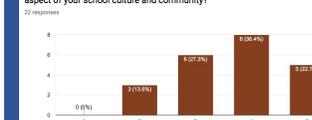
Now, at the end of the 2016-17 school year, how often did you use p4c Hawai'i as an instructional approach/pedagogy to promote inquiry?



Last school year (2015-16), how much was p4c Hawai'i an aspect of your school culture and community?



Now, at the end of the 2016-17 school year, how much is p4c Hawai'i an aspect of your school culture and community?



Using philosophy to explore the Mālama Honua Worldwide Voyage

In the spring of 2017, the philoSURFERS collaborated with educators from the Kailua Complex and University of Hawai'i at Mānoa to facilitate philosophical inquiries concerning the Mālama Honua Worldwide Voyage. Beginning in 2013, the Hōkūle'a, a traditional Polynesian voyaging canoe, sailed around the Hawaiian archipelago, then began its voyage circumnavigating Earth's oceans to join and grow the global movement toward a more sustainable world. The Mālama Honua Worldwide Voyage ended in June 2017 after the canoe and crew members completed their global mission of spreading the message of Mālama Honua—"to care for our Island Earth."

The following is a summary of the process they used to engage K-12 HIDOE students in the inquiries:

1. **Intellectual Safety.** Teachers and the philoSURFERS established and maintained an intellectually safe learning environment in each classroom.
2. **Sparking Inquiry.** Teachers created curricular units and lesson plans concerning the Mālama Honua Worldwide Voyage, which provided students with necessary background knowledge on the Voyage and its message. Students also viewed a short overview video summarizing the Voyage's purpose to spark their wonderment.
3. **Questions.** Each student created a "philosophical" question (referred to as a "juicy wondering" in lower elementary classrooms) that was inspired by the lessons and video and then shared their questions with one another out loud.
4. **Vote.** After hearing all of their peers' questions, the students voted on the question they most wanted to explore in their community of inquiry.
5. **Inquiry.** The student whose question received the most votes began the inquiry by sharing why they asked the question. The students, teacher, and philoSURFERS, in addition to some crew members of the Hōkūle'a used a "community ball" to mediate turn-taking during the discussion-based inquiry, where they shared their ideas, actively listened to one another, and deepened their thinking by exploring multiple perspectives together.
6. **Reflect.** At the end of the inquiry students reflected on how they worked as a *community* and on the quality of their *inquiry*. They also considered the ways in which the message of Mālama Honua will continue to shape their communities, future thinking, and calls to action.

INTELLECTUAL SAFETY =
ALL PARTICIPANTS IN THE
COMMUNITY FEEL FREE TO ASK
VIRTUALLY ANY QUESTION OR STATE
ANY VIEW SO LONG AS RESPECT
FOR ALL PEERS IS HONORED.

To see the philoSURFERS in action, please visit: <http://bit.ly/philoSURFERS>