Introduction

We have four principles of practice; be intentional, be collaborative, be personally relative, be reflective. This curriculum is designed to allow us to be intentional. We wanted a curriculum that represented the child in three dimensions and also represented our unique UHMCC culture. This meant that we needed to not just allow for different approaches, but encourage their use. Finally, we wanted to recognize that skills, concepts and values cross subjects. We therefore organized our curriculum into strands that could be easily recognized and overlapping or “braided” to highlight the fact that strands are created to help frame discussions and balance needs while keeping focus on the underlying skills, concepts and values.

We are a project-based program, so we get to highlight the depth of a project by showing how many strands are addressed within a given project. We are a place-based program, so we highlight our sense of place by using strands that focus on Local Culture (Hawaiiana), Local Environment (ahupua‘a), and Wellness (broader than physical health and safety). We are play-based, meaning that we understand the importance of children having time and space to develop and control their own activities. We therefore defined the Child-Directed Activities to show that these activities need support beyond just providing playground time. We are also relationship-based. The Child-Directed Activities strand reflects the teacher-child relationship, as well as supporting our principle of being personally relevant, The Community strand reflects child-child relationships as well as child-neighbor relationship. The Family strand reflects the child-family relationship as well as the teacher-family relationship. The Global Cultures strand helps define the child-world citizen relationship. The Child, Family, Community and Global Cultures strands also encourage our principle of being collaborative.

This curriculum was informed by Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP) and NAEYC benchmarks, Hawaii Preschool Content Standards, Hawaii Early Learning and Development Standards (HELDS), and universal teaching practices as defined by the Center for Research on Education, Diversity and Excellence (CREDE). It accurately defines all our aspects of our program and provides a meaningful but not onerous framework for the development of a balanced and relevant experience for everyone involved in our program.
We live in Hawaii at a time of significant cultural revitalization. Portions of newscasts can be seen in Hawaiian. It is hard to live in Hawai‘i without finding something referenced in Hawaiian culture. We therefore feel it important to help children develop experiences that will help them learn from these cultural references with respect and understanding. This strand includes some common Hawaiian vocabulary, songs, dances, arts and crafts, and food. We feel this will be an advantage to our English Language Learners because it will define words and phrases they are already exposed to, but in a natural component of our overall structure.

* Values
  - tolerance,
  - ancestry
  - justice

* Academic Areas
  - art,
  - music,
  - astronomy,
  - history
  - social studies.

* Center
  - Dramatic Play (spring)
  - Playground: Polynesian Village (summer)
  - Specific center (fall)

* Activities
  - ‘Ukulele
  - Music
  - Hula
  - Chanting
  - Lei making
  - Lau hala
  - Kapa
  - Poi Making
  - Gardening
In traditional Hawaiian culture, an ahupua’a is a method of dividing land and other natural resources among groups of people. It is usually centered around fresh water streams and therefore runs from the mountains to the shore. By agreement, it also includes fishing rights to reefs or other geographic markers. Coordination of resources were tied to phases of the moon so upland groups could prepare goods for barter and trade with lower land and fishing groups. This strand highlights the connection between people and nature.

* Values
  • sustainability,
  • environmental responsibility,
  • interdependency

* Academic Areas
  • Earth science,
  • astronomy,
  • math.

* Center
  • Playground

* Activities
  • Water table
  • River building
  • Sandbox
  • Irrigation gardening
  • Catchment system
  • Fruit and Vegetable gardens
  • Wood carving
  • Erosion
  • Fluid dynamics
  • Simple machines
  • Water cycle
  • Fishpond – aquaculture
  • Recycling
This strand focuses on activities that support healthy lifestyle skills. It seeks to help children identify life areas that need balancing to create a successful life, including mind, body and spirit. In other words, we take the ahupua’a concept and apply it to the individual.

* Values
  • Self-worth
  • Self-assessment
  • Sustainability
  • Interdependencies

* Academic Areas
  • Nutrition
  • Physical Education

* Center Suggestions
  • Playground
  • Specific Center
  • Kitchen

* Activities
  • Cooking
  • Nutrition
  • Hygiene
  • Grooming
  • Running Games
  • Yoga
  • Emotional Awareness
  • Disease Prevention
  • Growth Charts
  • Journals and Diaries
  • Climbing games
  • Trike and Bike games
  • Obstacle course
  • Aiming games
  • Catching games
  • Balancing games
  • Push, pull, carrying games
  • Independent swinging
This is a developmentally appropriate mechanism to document a pre-writing child’s interests, knowledge and emotion. It can connect the child to communities and cultures. It is a vehicle for conversation and reflection. It is a sensorial experience that can help develop emotional and behavioral control.

* Values
  - self-expression
  - self-assessment
  - acceptance
  - fine motor control

* Academic Areas
  - Art

* Center
  - Art Studio
  - Music Center
  - Dramatic Play

* Activities
  - Painting
  - Sculpting
  - Printing
  - Drawing
  - Woodworking
  - Puppetry
  - Dollhouse
  - Weaving
  - Collage
  - Tie-Dye
  - Elements of music
  - Elements of art
  - Singing
  - Dancing
  - Role playing
  - Cutting
  - Sewing and lacing
  - Braiding and knotting
This establishes the joy and importance of written expression as a means of recording history, facts and fantasy. It provides a mechanism for expanding critical thinking skills and functional vocabulary while honing self-expression skills. It empowers the child to declare his contribution to the world.

* Values
  - self-expression,
  - self-worth,
  - acceptance

* Academic Area
  - Language Arts,
  - art
  - music.

* Center
  - Writing Center
  - Listening Center
  - Library

* Activities
  - Word books
  - Moveable letters
  - Sandpaper letters
  - Learning Calendar
  - Templates and Inserts
  - Library
  - Books on Tape
  - Object boxes
  - Bulletin boards
  - Documentation books materials
  - Letter sounds game
  - Word wall
This establishes consistent protocols for exploring new things and ideas for effective and continuous life-long learning. It helps children develop skills for observation, experimentation, investigation, and reflection through documentation techniques. It is where science, engineering, math, art and literacy combine.

* Values
  - Life-long learning
  - Diligence
  - Perseverance

* Academic Areas
  - science,
  - math
  - art
  - language arts

* Center
  - Inquiry Center
  - Block Studio
  - Playground
    - Observation table
    - Demonstration table

* Activity
  - Mystery Boxes
  - Observation Table
  - Demonstration Table
  - Block Studio
  - Collection boxes
  - Documentation Books
  - Concept Mapping
  - Bulletin board
  - Sensory table
  - Class pet
  - Terrarium
  - Computer Research
  - Patterning game
  - Sequencing game
  - Sorting and classifying
  - Measuring
  - Daily and monthly calendar
  - Spatial reasoning
The child is always at the core of the program. We are always considering the individual’s needs, interests, goals and contribution. This strand reminds us that hardcore play has a purpose and a place. Children can be strong, independent people capable of creating their own interests and innate skills to build new skills and understandings. It empowers the child to take responsibility for her own education by allowing them time and space to develop their own understanding of the world.

* Values
  • Independence
  • Leadership
  • Responsibility
  • Creativity

* Academic Areas
  • Language Arts
  • Math
  • Science
  • Social Studies
  • Art
  • Physical Education

* Center
  • Playground
  • Specific Center

* Activities
  • Games
  • Construction manipulatives
  • Puzzles
  • Mystery Boxes
  • Museum Walls – display areas.
  • Individual portfolios – journals
  • Collections
  • Self reflection
  • Self identity
We recognize our families as partners in the education of their children and the continuous improvement of our program. We take advantage of spontaneous activities or planned events to expand this partnership of mutual support. We look at how the child can contribute to the functioning of the family through home chores, and discuss family traditions.

* Values
  - acceptance,
  - loyalty,
  - responsibility,
  - ancestry.

* Academic Areas
  - social studies
  - language arts.

* Center
  - Family Information Center
  - Glass wall
  - Specific Center

* Activities
  - Newsletter
  - Potluck
  - Seminars
  - Parent-Teacher Conferences
  - Family Yard Day
  - Family Project Night
  - Polu-Moana Campout
  - Class chore
  - Parent Volunteers
We recognize the community as a stakeholder and resource base in the education of our young children. We create activities that invite community members into the program, as well as moving out into the community, so children can expand their perspective and gain a sense of interdependence and responsibility for the place they live. This is also where we focus on the classroom community using social skills, conflict mediation and transparent functions.

* Values
  • Justice
  • Manners
  • Responsibility
  • Interdependence
  • Environmental Responsibility

* Academic Areas
  • Social Studies
  • Safety

* Centered
  • Block Studio
  • Dramatic Play
  • Specific Center

* Activities
  • Class Rules
  • Class Jobs
  • Lunch Set-up and Table Manners
  • Conflict Mediation
  • Conversation Skills
  • Field Trips and Walking Tours
  • Occupation Dramatic Play
  • Mapping
  • Collaborative work
  • Class counselor
  • Traffic rules
  • Fire safety
We consistently have a large number of children from other countries, as well as children who have never left O’ahu. In sharing our cultures we understand how we impact and are impacted by events and people from even the most remote places on earth. We see that global biomes (environmental climates affecting plants and animals) determine resources that affect the way people live and what they find important. We find similarities in our differences and celebrate diversity.

* Values
  - tolerance,
  - justice,
  - adaptability

* Academic Areas
  - art,
  - music,
  - social studies,
  - history
  - environmental science.

* Center
  - Geography

* Activities
  - Biome manipulatives
  - Continent puzzles
  - Botany puzzles
  - Zoology puzzles
  - Culture artifacts and collections
  - Mythology and stories
  - Travel books

Sharing family tradition