

# **“Hawaii’s Progress Maps: A Tool for Helping Struggling Learners”**

by

Linda Holt, Valerie Kurizaki, Maxine Nagamine, Ph.D., Paul Ban, Ph.D.

## **What is the purpose of the Hawaii Progress Maps?**

Progress Maps:

- Describe what it means to proficiently meet the Hawaii Content and Performance Standards III (HCPS III) K-8 grade-level benchmarks in English Language Arts and Mathematics.
- Describe typical developmental paths of students as they move from the foundational, to approaching, to being proficient at their grade-level benchmark or above.
- Support teachers’ conversations about curricular, instructional, and assessment decisions as they move ALL students toward grade-level proficiency.

“Like the ancient Hawaiian navigators or wayfinders, the classroom teacher navigates her classroom through mental constructs that use many points of information. The journey begins first in the heart and then in the head. The heart believes in the child - believes that he or she can move toward proficiency in the standards. The head has a clear understanding of the destination. The Hawaii Progress Maps attempt to clarify the destination while providing descriptors of typical movement toward proficiency. What we have seen throughout this project is the classroom teachers’ earnest efforts to take responsibility for everybody in the canoe - to make sure no little ones have been left adrift, bobbing aimlessly at sea.” *Linda Holt, Reading Resource Teacher and “Teacher Developer,” Pomaika’i Elementary (Maui), June 2008, National Conference on Student Assessment, Orlando, FL.*

## **Why is it a useful tool for teachers?**

Progress Maps:

- Make it easier to consistently interpret the grade-level benchmarks within and across grade levels, K-8.
- Clarify learning goals, answering such questions as, “What would it look like if my students were to proficiently meet grade-level benchmarks or cluster of benchmarks?”
- Support teachers in collaboratively using the “6-Step HCPS III Implementation Process,” a backward map, and standards-based planning tool as they work within a grade level or course, or across grade levels or courses.
- Provide information about grade-level content concepts and foundational skills as landmarks to guide instruction and monitor student learning.

“Before we looked at the Hawaii Progress Map in Mathematics, we didn’t have a clear picture of what meeting proficiency looked like. The Maps helped us to plan out our instruction because we could place our students on the map and see the path they might take to become proficient.” *Liane Tanigawa and Tisha Yukihiro, Grade 6 Teachers and “Field Teachers,” Pearl Ridge Elementary (Oahu), September 2008.*

An analysis of the ratings of the students' work collected from the field-test teachers shows that use of the Hawaii Progress Maps has helped students move closer toward grade-level proficiency, as evidenced by the students' performances on the classroom assessments.

## **What are the Research Implications for Implementing Standards-based Instruction and Learning?**

Teacher action research strategies and collaborative problem solving are important parts of using progress maps to support standards-based curricular, instructional and assessment decisions. Teachers develop a deeper understanding of the teaching and learning process than normally occurs within the fast pace of today’s classrooms; when given the opportunity to collect meaningful evidence of student learning and collaboratively reflect on the effectiveness of the instructional practices and resources used for struggling learners. By collaborating with peers, teachers (especially those new to the profession), find support for solving some of the most challenging problems facing teachers today.

## **Who Participated in the Development?**

We gratefully thank the many “Teacher-Developers” and “Field-test Teachers” who gave countless hours and weekends to develop, field test and validate this instructional support tool for helping struggling learners. Common student assessments were developed, tested, reworked and used by the field-test teachers to collect a body of student work, which, in turn, were used to validate the descriptors in the Hawaii Progress Maps.

The Hawaii Progress Maps project, which commenced in school year 2007-2008, was partially funded through a United States Department of Education, Enhanced Assessment Grant, with additional support through the Office of Curriculum, Instruction and Student Support, Student Support Services Branch; Instructional Services Branch; Teleschool Branch; Advanced Technology Research Branch; and the Systems Accountability Office, Student Assessment Section.