



September 28, 2011

Brother Bernard J. Ploeger, S.M.  
President  
Chaminade University of Honolulu  
3140 Waialae Ave.  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96815

#### LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

Dear Brother Bernie:

With this letter I am sending you a Program Review for the Chaminade Montessori Laboratory Pre-School. Last spring you asked me to look into the options for keeping the pre-school open. Shortly after that, based on advice from the Education Division Advisory Board, a general meeting was held to discuss the options open to the pre-school. About 22 people attended that meeting and volunteered to work on one part of the report or another. In the Fall, the committee decided on a full Program Review. This Program Review, the first to use the format suggested at the Fall Faculty Retreat, is the result of the committee's work.

In developing the report, four themes have emerged.

1. The Montessori Pre-School's relevance to the Education Division has been dependent upon the interest and/or the administrative briefs of the Deans. There have been eight deans since 1998 which means that there has not been a clear or consistent management path for the pre-school.
2. The Pre-School has not consistently lost money nor has it remained unused by the Education Division. In fact, it has averaged about \$10,000 profit annually over the past nine years. And while it has not been used to its fullest potential, it has consistently served as a training site for Chaminade's student teachers.
3. Not only does the Pre-School have potential to earn more money for the University (see Pro Forma Income Statement in Appendix Six), as you read the report, you will discover that it can also become a more important training site for student and faculty work.
4. The number of people who have worked on this report and who have suggested ways in which their academic programs could be involved with the Pre-School has indicated a depth of support that we did not know existed when we started on this project. As the Education Advisory Board has said that support must now be turned into real results.

PLOEGER

Page 2.

Finally, you have expressed a wish that other fair offers for the Pre-School should be considered. Three contacts have been made:

1. Cole Academy has suggested that it could incorporate the school into its Tenth Avenue premises. The management would try it as a Montessori School and possibly operate two programs. Cole Academy will make a formal proposal if this Program Review is unsuccessful.
2. Likewise, one other for profit pre-school expressed some interest but said it would follow up when the results of this review are made.
3. Finally, the Hawaii Association of Independent Schools has expressed some interest in Chaminade managing a pre-school through sixth grade charter school. Whatever, the decision made about the Pre-School, this could be a future possibility.

In the meantime, however, those who have participated in the creation of this Program Review see the Chaminade Montessori Laboratory School as an important presence on campus and as an equally important part of the University's academic program. We believe that if you read the report with an open mind, you will agree.

I am willing to answer any questions you may have about the report. Questions about the content can best be fielded either by Ms. Francesca DeMattos, the Director, or Dean Joseph Peters, Dean of Education.

Yours truly,



Michael Fassiotto  
Assistant Provost  
Chaminade University

cc. Larry Osborne, Provost  
James Kraus, President, Faculty Senate  
Joseph Peters, Dean, Education Division  
Francesca DeMattos, Director, Montessori Laboratory Pre-School  
Dale Fryxell, Professor of Psychology

## ENDORSEMENT PAGE

Most of the members of the Chaminade Community listed below have participated in the preparation of this report and all endorse the content.

Dorothy Back

Jo-Anne Lewis

Jolene Cogbill

Art Mori

Francesca DeMattos

Bryan Moseley

Michael Dohm

Elizabeth Park

Michael Fassiotto

Joseph Peters

Dale Fryxell

Jerry Richmond

Stephanie Genz

Joan Riggs

David Grossman

Margaret Smith

Darren Iwamoto

Mary Smith

Richard Kido

Wayne Tanna

James Kraus

Eva Washburn-Repollo

MONTESSORI LABORATORY AND  
DEMONSTRATON SCHOOL  
PROGRAM REVIEW

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Letter of Transmittal .....	Page i
Endorsement Page .....	Page iii
Table of Contents.....	Page iv
I. Charge from President Ploeger .....	Page 27
II. Proclamation of the Faculty Senate .....	Page 31
III. Letters of Support from Parents.....	Page 33
IV. Letters of support from the Early Childhood Education Community ....	Page 63
V. Notes from the Education Advisory Board Meeting .....	Page 87
VI. Financial Information .....	Page 90
VII. Accreditation Reports .....	Page 102
VIII. Notes on Nursing School Plan.....	Page 122
IX. Letters of Support from Former Student Interns .....	Page 124
X. Short Bios of Faculty Resumes of Teachers.....	Page 142
XI. Dean’s Plan for Management Re-Structuring .....	Page 151
XII. Site visit Report Professor Joan Riggs .....	Page 154
XIII. Increasing the Attractiveness of Faculty Darren Iwamoto .....	Page 157
XIV. Dean Peter’s Model for Advisory Board.....	Page 164
XV. Web Search Survey.....	Page 166
XVI. Letters of Support from the Chaminade Community .....	Page 169
XVII. Discussion Points Dale Fryxell.....	Page 180

# **MONTESSORI LABORATORY AND DEMONSTRATION SCHOOL PROGRAM REVIEW**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This Program Review is filed for the Montessori Laboratory and Demonstration School. It is a response to the University President to discuss the viability of the pre-school (Appendix One), and this report makes the case for why it is an important though often neglected part of the University community. It is a pre-school axiom that many hands make little work and in this case, many hands of twenty-two faculty, staff, and administrative members have participated in the development of this first Program Review at Chaminade to use the WASC format (see Signature Page). Sixty-seven people have written letters of support. The report discusses the Montessori Pre-school's past and, in the conclusion, the future.

In a sense, the Montessori School's history has mirrored that of the University as a whole. It has balanced between great success and neglect, and has reached a point, where the critical eye turned on it has been a positive experience. We thank the University for giving us the chance to prepare this review. We trust that its conclusions will be viewed with an open mind. We also thank the faculty of Chaminade University for its unanimous proclamation of support for the pre-school (Appendix Two).

## **MISSION AND GOALS**

### **Chaminade University Mission Statement**

Chaminade University offers its students an education in a collaborative learning environment that prepares them for life, service and successful careers. Guided by its Catholic, Marianist and liberal arts educational traditions, Chaminade encourages the development of moral character, personal competencies, and a commitment to build a just and peaceful society. The University offers both the civic and church communities of the Pacific region its academic and intellectual resources in the pursuit of common aims.

## **L. Robert Allen Montessori Center Mission Statement**

Chaminade's Montessori Lab School is a living memorial to Father Chaminade's vision of lifelong education.

It offers young children a quality Marianist and Montessori-based education that focuses on nurturing the whole child.

As an integral part of Chaminade's Education Program, the school serves as a laboratory to provide intern experiences for the Montessori Teacher Education Program and observation and practicum experiences for students of the Education and Behavioral Sciences Divisions and as a laboratory for other academic programs.

Finally, the school serves as a safe, nurturing and educational space for the children of faculty, staff and students as well as children from the neighboring community.

### **Marianist's Values and the Value of the Lab School**

The Montessori Lab School collaborates with and supports the educational mission of Chaminade University by providing a Catholic Marianist educational environment for the student learner—both children and adult. This unique Montessori learning center serves the needs of young children and their families, student teachers, faculty and the growing community of student learners from other programs.

Father Chaminade and the Marianists both express the belief in creating learning institutions that are genuine communities in which members share their gifts with each other and the world. Members work together and support each other in their pursuit of academic excellence. In the State of Hawaii, Chaminade University is the only institution that provides specialized training in Montessori Education. The University also operates its own laboratory school, with highly trained Montessori certified teachers that are graduates of Chaminade's Montessori Program. The school is unique and provides specialized training that no other university in the state provides. Montessori Education is its trademark and it is recognized and renowned for providing the community with this unique educational training.

The Montessori program is expanding and offering courses online and there is the possibility of starting a satellite program in China. In today's society, the school is fulfilling both Father Chaminade's and the Marianist ideals as it shares its unique gifts of Montessori Education, educating student learners from around the globe. As Father Robert Mackey said when blessing the opening of the school, the presence of the Montessori pre-school fulfills the Marianist vision of educating from the cradle to the grave.

The education offered by Chaminade University demonstrates the characteristics of Marianist charism. These characteristics also align with the mission of the Montessori Lab School.

**Education for Formation in Faith:** The Lab School provides a setting in which faith and respect are at the core of all interactions with children and their families.

**An Integral Quality Education:** The Lab School provides a quality educational setting for the whole child. The teachers are highly trained professionals that believe all children can learn and reach their highest potential. Teachers respect all children, their culture, faith and individuality.

As a lab school, it also provides critical training for the Education Department Program at Chaminade University. Education students are mentored by certified Montessori teachers within an early childhood setting. They have the opportunity to put into practice the skills and techniques they have learned in their course work at Chaminade.

**Educate in the Family Spirit:** The Lab School provides an open, family oriented setting in which children feel safe, nurtured and happy. Parents are confident in sending their children to the center and know that they will be in an environment that resembles their own family environment. The Lab School cultivates relationships with families that foster openness, honesty, respect, trust and friendship. (Appendix Three contains letters of support from parents.)

Student teachers in the education program are part of the school *ohana*. They are important members in the school community as they grow and develop into teachers under the care, direction and guidance of their mentor teachers. Parents welcome student interns into the

*ohana* and encourage their growth. They look forward to the student teachers' enthusiasm and innovative ideas knowing that they will be a benefit for the school and their children.

**Educate for Service, Justice and Peace:** The Lab School provides service and care of young children of various economic backgrounds. The curriculum focuses on respect, care and peace. The children are taught peaceful forms of conflict resolution and problem solving from a very young age. Respect for others, the environment and community are an integral part of the Montessori curriculum.

Student learners from Chaminade University practice the Montessori philosophy in their everyday actions with children. They serve the children and families with newly found respect for human nature and their role in fostering the love of learning in the children.

**Educate for Adaptation and Change:** The Lab School finds itself always adapting to meet the needs of the children that it serves. As the community evolves and faces difficult/transitional times, parents are affected and so are their children. Pressure from the "outside" world impacts even the very young and they have no way of making sense of what is happening around them. They look to the adults in the environment. It is the school's responsibility to provide these children a stable and caring educational setting in which they feel safe to develop and grow as individuals who are respected for who they are and who they are becoming.

Children are accepted to the Montessori Pre-School for who they are right now. Students in Education and Counseling also need to adapt to changing environments within the academic and school settings. For many of them, this is their first experience working with children. During their internship they begin to merge their first-hand interactions with children and their classroom knowledge, making it a powerful experience in their development as teachers. Every day is a new learning opportunity.

In summary, the Montessori Lab School is a viable and important facet of Chaminade University's learning community. It provides learning opportunities to college student learners and also a much needed service to the community. The Lab School is not a profit making

endeavor but rather an integral part of the University Mission which is to provide a faith-based, family setting in which children and adults receive quality education that will enable them to learn. This early educational setting will be a foundation for both the child and the adult learner as they develop into future contributing members of our community.

## **HISTORY**

The Montessori Laboratory Pre-School was started in 1982 by Sister Christina M. Trudeau, Ed.D., SND, a faculty member in the education program at that time, with a gift of \$20,000 from L. Robert Allen, a local developer. Other money for the school was given by Sister's family so that the pre-school started without cost to the University. Its primary goal was to support the undergraduate Early Childhood Education and Elementary Education programs, both of which were Montessori-based at that time.

The pre-school was never really envisioned as a revenue stream. Originally the plan was that any profit would go toward financing a Montessori Education Building behind Hale Lokelani. Because the school was profitable, however, the University began to expand its pre-school system. In the mid-80's, it added Haiku Hale O Keiki, in Kaneohe, the premises of which were the result of a donation of several ground floor apartments in a cooperative apartment in Kaneohe. In 1989, the University opened a third pre-school, Bamboo Shoots, in Kukui Plaza in downtown Honolulu.

As the University itself began to face hard times, the pre-schools began to disappear. Bamboo Shoots closed in 1992 due to a major rent increase. (The property was quickly occupied and still is by Hawaii Pacific University, which had complained about Chaminade presence in the downtown area since the inception of the school.) Hale O' Keiki closed shortly afterwards, but because of its status as a co-op, the property was not liquidated until the early 2000's. Whatever was in the trust fund—at least \$60,000 according to former faculty members—was spent early in the 1990s to keep the University alive.

Again, because of this administrative neglect and uncertainty, the Lab School has been called a hidden gem of “Chaminade and the Kaimuki community.” (Appendix Four contains letters of community support.) Enrollment has usually been generated by word of mouth, not advertising.

It could be argued that no educational program at Chaminade should be closed without a program review. This document serves as the opening part of that review.

## **FINANCIALS**

It was the financial problems of the Pre-School which prompted the discussion about closing the school and which prompted this Program Review. In reviewing the financial performance of the school several factors should be always considered.

The Pre-School has never been considered a revenue generating program. Primarily it has been seen as a adjunct to academic programs to provide service to the surrounding community and primarily to the Education Program. In a sense, this report has opened that University audience to a broader array of programs—Education, Counseling Psychology, Business, Communications, Interior Design, and Nursing to name the most prominent.

Second, by its very nature, a Montessori Pre-School is expensive. The materials and classrooms are expensive to stock and maintain. The teachers are highly trained—for example at Chaminade’s Montessori Pre-School, all of the teachers have masters degrees.

The Pre-School is, in fact, a school not day care. In day care, the primary function is to see that children are safe and cared-for. Children in a Montessori school are not only safe and cared for but also guided through a time-tested curriculum, which studies have shown has proven success.

According to the Education Division’s Advisory Board (Appendix Five), last year was generally a shock to many Pre-schools and particularly to many small schools. Because of the economic downturn, these establishments have had to re-think their marketing and their management. (As word of this report has circulated in the community, representatives of several schools

have called to ask if the Business Department would be willing to take on their schools as project for management or marketing studies.)

While the Pre-School did lose money last year, it has not consistently lost money. In fact, over a nine-year period the Pre-School has averaged about \$10,000 per year in revenue for the University (Appendix Six).

This does not mean that the Pre-School should not return revenue to the general fund. In fact, given the expense of the program, it is everyone's desire that this particular tub is securely on its own bottom, to use a financing term of Harvard University.

Several ideas have been suggested to indicate how this could happen. These include among the following lengthening the school day and year, ensuring competitive pricing, increasing the space for the school, seeking tuition grants, and becoming a feeder school. These will all be discussed as part of Strategy Six at the end of this report. The numbers do suggest (Appendix Six) that keeping number of students as close to the maximum (36) as possible and keeping the school open for most of the summer, should create a comfortable revenue for the school.

## **CURRICULUM**

The Montessori Method of education, developed by Dr. Maria Montessori, is a child-centered educational approach based on scientific observations of children from birth to adulthood. Dr. Montessori's Method has been time tested, with over 100 years of success in diverse cultures throughout the world.

The method begins with a view of the child as one who is naturally eager for knowledge and capable of initiating learning in a supportive, thoughtfully prepared learning environment. It is an approach that values the human spirit and the development of the whole child—physical, social, emotional, cognitive.

Components necessary for a program to be considered authentically Montessori include multiage groupings that foster peer learning,

uninterrupted blocks of work time, and guided choice of work activity. In addition, a full complement of specially designed Montessori learning materials are meticulously arranged and available for use in an aesthetically pleasing environment.

The teacher, child, and environment create a learning triangle. The classroom is prepared by the teacher to encourage independence, freedom within limits, and a sense of order. Children, through individual choice, make use of what the environment offers to develop themselves, interacting with the teacher when support and/or guidance is needed.

According to the American Montessori Society, the curriculum is designed to achieve within the child the following characteristics.

- Learning through discovery
- An enjoyment of learning
- An enjoyment of quiet
- A love of order
- The ability to choose
- The desire and ability to cooperate with others
- A sense of independence
- A sense of self-direction
- A sense of responsibility
- A sense of self-discipline
- A sense of self-acceptance
- A sense of self-confidence
- Demonstrated sensitivity to others and the environment
- Effective communication skills<sup>1</sup>

The child is carefully monitored by the teachers so that they know at what level an individual child is. The success of the curriculum as presented at the Montessori Lab School is demonstrated by recent accreditation of the school by the American Montessori Society (AMS) and re-accreditation through the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). (See Appendix Seven for both reports.)

---

1

The information in this section of the report has been adapted from material provided by the American Montessori Society.

Furthermore the Montessori Lab School is a model school in the state and provides a necessary service to those in the community. That it is exemplary and meets the highest standards of excellence is evidenced by the numbers of letters of support from community members, early childhood educators, and parents.

The Montessori School also provides laboratory experiences for Chaminade students from various disciplines. These include most recently the following:

- Early Childhood Education
- Montessori Education
- Elementary Education
- Counseling Psychology
- Psychology
- Behavioral Sciences

Laboratory experiences include:

- Observations of children
- Practicum experiences for ECE and Montessori Students
- Child/student interactions and testing
- Observations of master teachers
- Interactions and discussions with master teachers in the classroom

### **Recent Internship Practicum**

Fall 2011

- 1** Early Childhood Student Intern
- 2** Master of Science in Counseling Psychology Interns

Fall 2010

- 1** Early Childhood Student Intern

Spring 2010

- 2** Early Childhood Student Interns

Fall 2009

- 1** Early Childhood Student Intern

Summer 2009

- 1** Early Childhood Student Intern

Fall 2008-Spring 2009

- 1** Montessori Intern
- 1** Early Childhood Student Intern

Fall 2007-Spring 2008  
2 Montessori Interns

### **Recent Observation and Practicum Assignments**

Fall 2011—as of 9/11/2011 (Total = **16** students)  
Education (Reading) = 8  
Education (Math Methods) = 8

Spring 2010-Fall 2010 (Total = **15** students)  
Behavioral Sciences and Psychology  
Early Childhood Education  
Montessori Education  
Elementary Education

Spring 2009-Fall 2009 (Total = **17** students)  
Behavioral Sciences and Psychology  
Early Childhood Education  
Montessori Education  
Elementary Education

Fall 2008 (Total = **22** students)  
Behavioral Sciences and Psychology  
Early Childhood Education  
Montessori Education  
Elementary Education  
ED 419 Math Curriculum and Methods  
ED 415 Teaching Reading in the Elementary School

During the Fall Semester of 2011, the Lab School will be used as a practicum site for the first time by two MSCP students. Also students in several education classes have also scheduled the school as an O & P site. And students from Interior Design will use the school as a practice site, and those in Communication are using it for service learning. The Nursing School has also suggested a plan to use the Pre-School as a lab for its students. (See Appendix Eight for Nursing Plan.)

The success of the Lab School as a learning site may be viewed qualitatively by the letters of support submitted by former interns. (See Appendix Nine for letters of support from former student interns.)

The Lab School originated as a vehicle for educational exploration, growth and research while, at the same time, providing quality care for the children it serves. There are many ways in which the Lab School can continue to function in this capacity. As Chaminade has expanded so can the use of the Lab School. It not only serves the Education Division, but also Psychology, Behavioral Science, and could serve Nursing, Business, Communications, Interior Design, Counseling Psychology, and Special Education.

As strong as its history has been there is still room for change. The Lab School is an ideal environment for the creation, experimentation, and advancement of new educational technologies.

### **Curriculum development and implementation**

Maria Montessori's curriculum and methodology continues to be an important educational philosophy. Montessori's model emphasizes respect, personal responsibility and self-determination all of which are hallmarks of current initiatives in peace studies as well as the new forgiveness movement. It would be fascinating to conduct cross-cultural research on the impact of the Montessori model on child behavior both in the classroom as well as in the home.

### **Child development**

Children at the Lab School stay in the program for 2-3 years. It would be exciting to conduct case studies which include; observation, documentation and progress of the child's development over this 2-3 year time period, looking at physical growth, intellectual growth, and social development. Since many of our students go on to private schools it would also be valuable to research which programmatic components are most responsible for student success. It would also be exciting to explore the role of family in school activities and impact of the Montessori program in the home setting.

### **Special Education**

Over the last few years there have been more cases of young children with special learning needs attending the School. Teachers have had to find new strategies to help these children in the educational environment to meet their special needs. The Lab School would be an

ideal setting to “test” new teaching methods for children with special learning needs. Interestingly, Maria Montessori developed her model in the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century Italy working with children who had been rejected by mainstream schools. Many parents whose special need children have attend Montessori schools have reported profound improvements in student performance both in school and at home. This data could be valuable not only to our school and our education program, but also to the State in general, which continues to grapple with this growing problem.

## **TEACHERS**

There are three teachers. (See Appendix Ten for resumés and short biographies.) All have at least a Master’s degree in early childhood education. The Director/Head Teacher has been with the School since 1992. She supervises the two other teachers and one assistant teacher. By law there must be three teachers for each 12 students. That regulation is met by the three teachers.

Speaking of the teaching at the school, the American Montessori Society Visiting Team said the following:

All of the teaching staff at LRAC consistently facilitate the children’s self-directed paths of learning by guiding and encouraging each child to explore the activities within the environment. The staff models acceptable behavior and patiently re-directs the child when necessary. The teaching teams exemplify that positive behavior in their interactions with one another, efficiently dividing and sharing the tasks of observation, instructions and maintenance.

The AMS visiting team commends the school for supporting the teacher as a/an:

1. authority;
2. observer;
3. resource/consultant;
4. model;
5. respectful guide for the learner;
6. facilitator between learner and knowledge;
7. environmental designer/organizer/preparer.

## **GOVERNANCE**

There have been varying degrees of Education Division involvement with the pre-school. Some years there has been more direct management either centered in the Division or at the supervisory level with monthly meetings between the Director and the Dean. At other times, the relationship has been loose and, though collaborative, *ad hoc*. Still other times there has been little interaction and/or collaboration. Much of any interaction has been dependent upon the Education Dean and the brief under which the Dean has operated. A plethora of Deans and various briefs has meant that pre-school has been often forgotten and sometimes threatened in the mix. More importantly, this unevenness has left the Director unable to determine what her role will be from year to year.

This year, in August, the Education Division voted that the center of the governance should be centered within the Education Division with the Director of the pre-school reporting directly to the Dean. A preliminary structure has been developed by the Dean. (Appendix Eleven.) It is the belief of the faculty that this closer relationship will improve management of the pre-school.

Moreover, the MBA's capstone course in management will use the Montessori Pre-School as a project to examine management structures and governance at the pre-school. As a generated interest in the community to the extent that Chaminade has been asked if it could schedule other pre-schools as future projects.

## **STUDENT PROFILE**

The school accepts children from three to five years of age, though it does accept two-year olds if they are toilet trained. Currently there are 27 children enrolled in the school. Five are children of Chaminade students and three are children of Chaminade Faculty and Staff.

The majority of the children are from surrounding neighborhoods: Kapahulu (14), Manoa (4), Kapiolani/Waikiki (4). Five students are from the Aina Hina/Hawaii Kai area and 1 is from Kailua.

Traditionally, unless a pre-school is a feeder to a larger school or the school is known for a particular strength, its student population will generally be drawn from the surrounding area. The pre-school will incorporate this insight into any enrollment management plan it develops from the program review process.

The ethnicities of the children reflect the ethnicities of the larger population.

White/Caucasian	7
Part Hawaiian	6
Latino/Portuguese	3
Japanese	2
Korean	2
South East Asian	2
Samoan	1
Mixed	4

The school attracts families from a variety of ethnicities. In fact, the percentage of Hawaiian/Part Hawaiian children (22%) is higher than that of the University as a whole. In seeking funding for minority children, the school also knows that such funding will not necessarily increase minority enrollments, but could attract students overall. The school's marketing, however, could emphasize the relationship between the Montessori Method and traditional Hawaii practice, for example, or Montessori's language friendly classroom.

Finally, the age breakdown of the children follows an expected pattern.

Three year olds	15
Four year olds	9
Five year olds	4

This is a reflection of when the children leave to enter other private elementary schools or public kindergartens. One way to change that mix would be to develop feeder agreements with other private schools in the area and in the city. This would increase the number of five-year olds.

## **TECHNOLOGY**

Technology has not played an important role in the pre-school, either in terms of daily records or in terms of curriculum. This is not surprising for such is the case with most preschools. However, in recent years, Education Division faculty have shown increased interest in using technology in the pre-school for both learning—for children and Chaminade Education students—and research.

Technology offers the opportunity to increase the Lab School's importance to Chaminade's Education Program particularly those working adults in the evening programs. Reasonably priced systems are available that will allow students to view classes live from their home computers or to view recorded classroom sessions again from their computers at home. (See <http://www.irisconnect.com/>)

Moreover, iPads equipped with Montessori-based applications are affordable and sturdy enough to be handled by children in the classroom. This will give faculty the opportunity to study the relationship between technology and learning in very young children. This will be discussed further in the "Plans for the Future" section.

## **FACILITIES**

The Pre-School is located on the ground floor of Hale Lokelani Dorm on the Chaminade Campus. There is a large classroom room (approx. 23' x 53', 1261 sq. ft.) equipped with Montessori materials. The classroom opens onto a covered lanai (396 sq. ft.) where wet and messy activities—materials for pouring, painting, and washing, for example. The lanai in turn opens onto the playground (3354 sq. ft.) containing climbing equipment. Most people who go to the Pre-School are struck by the beautiful and expansive view over Honolulu.

Parents and accreditors have found the school well designed and well maintained. They like the open areas and the well-established learning areas. Most people also appreciate that the shelving (newly built by the Director and her husband) is specially designed to meet the needs of the children and teachers. Finally, parents particularly like the security system and that ensures their children are in a safe environment.

Aside from the shelving, the school was last remodeled over five years ago, including carpeting, tiling, and painting. The playground area was redone about ten years ago and needs to be renovated. (For a detailed analysis of the facilities, see Appendix Twelve.)

Because much of the school has been in a “hold” mode for several years, most of the up-keep and renovation has been done in an *ad-hoc* manner. Major repairs have been handled by the Director herself during pre-school down times. There is a relationship between the attractiveness of a school and student learning. (See Appendix Thirteen for ideas expressed by one parent.) Likewise increasing “curb appeal” as the realtors say will increase the likelihood that visitors will enroll their children in the school.

The Interior Design program has suggested that retaining and maintaining data regarding renovation and enrollment, student comfort, and learning outcomes, staff comforts and retention, for example, would be a great and doable case study for Evidence-Based Design. Three students in Commercial Design will take the Pre-School on as a project this fall. Their project is due in early November. The Universal Design class will take on a portion of the project at the semesters end.

There has already been discussion with one funding source to renovate the pre-school. It will be discussed later in the “Plans for the Future” section of this report.

## **PLANS FOR THE FUTURE**

The “Plan for the Future” section of this report will serve as a draft for a strategic plan. Some of what is mentioned in this section has been brought up elsewhere (in the accreditation reports, for example) but because of the uncertainty of the governance of the pre-school, it has not been pushed forward for action.

The suggestions follow a particular order starting with the product, i.e., that which can be accomplished within the walls of the pre-school; this is followed by a section on marketing (“Increase the Visibility of the Pre-School”), and the report concludes with a section on ensuring the

financial viability of the school. While the final section is probably key for the purpose of this report, all sections must be prioritized by the pre-school Head Teacher and Dean of the Education Division, a timeline should be developed, persons in charge of each task must be identified and a budget should assigned to each goal. These steps should be accomplished as part of the Memorandum of Understanding between the pre-school and the University.

**GOAL: THE MONTESSORI LABORATORY PRE-SCHOOL WILL BE A MODEL 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY SCHOOL**

**STRATEGY:** The Montessori Laboratory Pre-School will use technology to enhance and monitor the learning of the children, and to make itself accessible to students for their classroom needs and to researchers who would like to study early childhood education in a Montessori setting.

**STRATEGY 1A:** The pre-school will install unobtrusive cameras which will broadcast live to a password secure website or record classroom activities for viewing later.

**Rationale:** There are three groups of people who are interested in what is happening within the pre-school during the day: parents, students, and faculty. Intelligent cameras with effective software would satisfy the needs of each of these groups.

Parents: With the video software, parents would be able to view the classroom at any time—this would give these parents to see what is happening in the classroom at any time. Given guidelines it could also become a marketing tool for future parents.

Students: Currently students in the University's teacher education program must schedule a meeting with a school and go there to observe a class for the O&P requirement. This is often an inconvenience for the day student and an employment conflict for working adults. Cameras that record the classroom would allow students to access the class anytime/anywhere. This will meet the needs of the not only on-campus students, but the approximately 130 evening adult students in the evening program, and, eventually, overseas students in our Montessori China program.

Faculty Researchers: The ability to record classroom activity will enable University researchers to witness behavior in real-time or

convenient, time and/or study events frame by frame. And since the Kindergarten and Children's Aid Society pre-school is considering similar equipment comparative analysis between the Montessori and non-Montessori environments would be available. (See [www.Irisconnect.com](http://www.Irisconnect.com))

**Cost:** Approximately \$15,000.

**STRATEGY 1B:** The pre-school will purchase iPads for the use in the classroom by children. These iPads will become an integral part of the Montessori Pre-School's curriculum and provide researchers with a chance to study the use of technology by small children.

**Rationale:** Parents and teachers are finding that even very young children are using iPhones, computers and other technology. Grandparents remark that even children as young as two and three can be kept occupied with a cell phone with the right applications. The days of single telephone in the house and that phone "sacred" for "important" calls has long passed and the division between work, entertainment and learning has more or less dissolved. By including computers and learning software into the classroom materials teachers will be able to encourage students in correct usage and monitor learning. (See <http://www.smartots.com/>)

Moreover, iPads now have Montessori software designed for them which teaches the concepts emphasized by Montessori. While children playing with the Red Rods App or the Pink Tower App might not achieve the same sense of balance and tactile understanding as playing with the "real" thing, they will visually understand the concept and simultaneously improve their hand/eye coordination. Since they will be using "virtual" materials with the real thing, researchers will be able to compare the children's learning in each mode.

**Cost:** About \$500 per iPad. Five to ten devices = \$2500 to \$5000 dollars. Software is extra.

**STRATEGY TWO:** The Montessori Laboratory Pre-School will seek to become known as a parent-friendly school adapting to the needs of 21<sup>st</sup> Century families.

**STRATEGY 2A:** The hours of operation of the pre-school will increase from 7:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. daily, and the number of days shall increase by at 35-50 days per year- to include the current summer shut down and possibly the two weeks prior to Christmas, and Spring Break.

**Rationale:** Currently, the pre-school operates on the day undergraduate program's schedule. While this might work for faculty and Chaminade students who have children in the pre-school, it is not an entirely successful model for all working adults. Among the current parents, lengthening the day by a half hour in the morning met with overwhelming approval. Keeping the school open during the summer and vacation periods thus increasing open time by about 45-50 days per year, was also met with approval, and for those who did not care about the summer months one can count those Chaminade students who have children enrolled in the school. In fact, the Director/Head Teacher has said that if enrollments were to go down during the summer, it would be a good time to welcome new children to the school.

**Cost:** Costs for the extension of the number of operating days will be discussed in Strategy Six.

**STRATEGY 2B:** The pre-school staff will host four nights annually of parenting classes that complement the four nights set aside already for parent meetings. Subjects for classes will be chosen by a parent committee and delivered by Chaminade faculty.

**Rationale:** Currently, the pre-school holds four nights a year for parent meetings. This strategy adds four more meetings to expressly focus on subjects in which parents might have interest (nutrition, vaccination and autism, making a home a learning environment, children's physical and mental health issues). They will be advertised and presented by Chaminade faculty members who have knowledge of these topics. This proposal simply includes the pre-school as a venue for the faculty member's service. This strategy also has great public relations potential.

**Cost:** Except for possible handouts and assuming faculty time is gratis, cost is minimal.

**STRATEGY 2C:** The pre-school will develop an advisory board which will consist of the Director, the Dean or a representative of the Dean, three parents, two faculty members and two community members. The Board will meet three times a year to review plans and suggest plans for improving the quality and the community's knowledge of the quality of the pre-school.

**Rationale:** It is important to remember that the pre-school has often been overlooked because its primary constituents are overlooked. This committee will function to serve as an advisor to the Pre-School staff and Education Program generally to keep the pre-school's mission and activities in front of the University and larger community. The Dean has suggested a model for the Advisory Board as has a member of the committee for this report. (See Appendices Twelve and Fourteen.)

**Cost:** Except for the refreshments, cost again is minimal.

**STRATEGY THREE: The Pre-School shall become a site of active research at Chaminade University. This research shall include for students: O&P, action research, and service-learning; for faculty, it should serve as an easily accessible site for research about children.**

**STRATEGY 3A:** The Education Dean will develop a plan to annually encourage Chaminade faculty and staff to look at the pre-school as an important research site. The three areas that need to be covered are program related research projects for students, service-learning projects, and faculty research.

**Rationale:** Currently, both student and faculty research at the pre-school is done on an *ad hoc* basis. As the Education program begins increasingly to encourage action research in its classes, the pre-school becomes a convenient, accessible site for study. Likewise, because of this report members of the Interior Design, Nursing, and Communication disciplines have expressed interest in service-learning projects with the school. Moreover, as Chaminade moves into becoming the most important early childhood education institution of higher education in the state, faculty at Chaminade and elsewhere will find the pre-school an important site for research, particularly because of the research release form that all parents sign, a congenial site to

study young children. While it would be important to include the pre-school teachers in this work, it would be best to find someone with the division to coordinate the overall plans.

**Cost:** Except for employee time, which will not be great, there is little cost to this item.

**STRATEGY 3B.** The Division will seek at least one grant a year to encourage the study of small children and/or early learning utilizing the pre-school as a base.

**Rationale:** The pre-school can become an important center of study and community outreach but there needs to be financial support to accomplish this. While funding has dried up for many educational activities, there is funding available for early childhood education and early childhood education outreach. Chaminade could move to the forefront of this sort of activity in Hawai'i.

**Cost:** Cost for this item again is minimal, depending upon the time spent on preparing the grant.

**STRATEGY FOUR: Develop a plan to increase the attractiveness of the pre-school.**

**STRATEGY 4A:** Form a "Hanai Group" to adopt the pre-school as a project. The Advisory Group in Strategy 2C might serve as this Hanai group or this group could be a broader group of several constituencies—teachers, parents, and Chaminade faculty. The group would be responsible for raising the money and carrying out the plan to refurbish the pre-school.

**Rationale:** A project such as the facilities enhancement should be the work of many hands. The more inclusive the membership, the broader the support for the pre-school. A group of people working toward a common project also develops a camaraderie that carries over into support for the pre-school.

**Cost:** Except for the refreshments, there is no cost in this.

**STRATEGY 4B:** Working with the faculty and students of the Interior Design Program develop a plan to refurbish the classroom and playground of the pre-school.

**Rationale:** Realtors have long said that attention to “curb” appeal increases the value and the appeal of a property. This has proven true of those selling houses in Hawai‘i, and, more closely to home, of those selling residential education in Hawai‘i. According to L.R. Roberts in the *Journal of Educational Administration*, well-maintained and modernized facilities not only beautify the campus, but also have been found to have a positive correlation with student learning outcomes. (<http://www.communityplaythings.com/resources/articles/RoomPlanning/SampleClassrooms/montessoripreschoolC.pdf>)

**Cost:** Cost for this item could be high, but it is expected to be handled through gifts and grants. The Castle Foundation has expressed interest if a plan is submitted to it for funding.

**STRATEGY 5: Increase the visibility of the pre-school through regular outreach to the campus and the community.**

**STRATEGY 5A.** Appoint an *ad hoc* marketing committee to review the marketing plan for the lab school. Communication and Business students could be asked to serve on this committee.

**Rationale:** The school’s website (<http://www.lracmontessori.org/>) is quite attractive and informative. An advisory committee could help develop the critical marketing materials and demonstrate how the site can employ words that will put them at the top of search engine lists. Of 42 searches, for example, conducted by the faculty/staff advisory group for this review, the pre-school was mentioned in only 30 of 42 searches on the first 3 pages. Assuming that on average, 10 schools are mentioned on each page, only 12 of the 42 appeared on the first page. (See complete report in Appendix Fifteen.)

**Cost:** Once again, cost is minimal, depending on whose time is used.

**STRATEGY 5B:** Consider renaming the school.

**Rationale:** At this point the official name, L. Robert Allen Montessori Laboratory School, does not sell the school either to parents or on the website. There needs to be a new name for the school overall; perhaps just renaming the classroom after L. Robert Allen will be appropriate. The above mentioned marketing committee can come up with some naming suggestions.

**Cost:** Except for the cost of changing signs, once again this change should be minimal.

### **STRATEGY 6: Ensure financial stability of the Pre-School.**

**STRATEGY 6A.** Increase the number of school days (See Strategy 2A above.).

**Rationale:** Currently, the Pre-School is closed from July through mid-August, during Christmas and Spring Breaks. Keeping the school open particularly during the summer months will not only serve as a parent friendly move (see Strategy Two above) but also will increase revenue for the school considerably. Cost for the increased salaries, will be covered by the increased tuition. (See Appendix Six for the Pro-Forma Income Statements.)

The School might also consider keeping open for Christmas and Spring Breaks, in "day care" rather than "school" mode. Pricing and staffing would have to be adjusted if this were implemented.

**Cost:** Cost would be met by increased tuition.

**STRATEGY 6B:** The Dean and the Director will hold regular meetings to discuss enrollment goals, staffing and pricing.

**Rationale:** This makes Pre-School enrollment "top of the mind" for the Director and the staff. It also brings the Dean into a closer relationship with the Pre-School.

**Cost:** There is no cost in this item.

**STRATEGY 6B.** The Pre-School will look into becoming an official “feeder” school for some of the surrounding Catholic Schools (ex: Sacred Hearts, St. Patrick’s, Maryknoll, St. Francis).

**Rationale:** There is a marketing advantage for this in that parents can be sure to have a place for their children after pre-school. It also gives the Pre-School an academic edge.

**Cost:** No cost.

**STRATEGY 6C:** The Pre-School should look into applying for tuition grants from local organizations such as Kamehameha Schools, Office of Hawaiian Affairs, and the Hawaii Community Foundation.

**Rationale:** This would be a method of ensuring tuition goals are met. Several faculty members have said that they would be interested in pursuing this strategy.

**Cost:** No cost.

## **CONCLUSION**

This program review assumes that the Montessori Laboratory Pre-School will be a model 21<sup>st</sup> century school, and that the six strategies outlined in the report will ensure financial viability as well as academic integrity for the pre-school.

**STRATEGY ONE:** The Montessori Laboratory Pre-school will use technology to enhance and monitor the learning of the children, and to make itself accessible to students for their classroom needs and to researchers who would like to study early childhood education in a montessori setting.

**STRATEGY TWO:** The Montessori Laboratory Pre-School will seek to become known as a parent-friendly school adapting to the needs of 21<sup>st</sup> Century families.

**STRATEGY THREE:** The Pre-School shall become a site of active research at Chaminade University. This research shall include for students: O&P, action research, and service learning; for faculty, it should serve as an easily accessible site for research about children.

STRATEGY FOUR: Develop a plan to create an inviting, inspiring, and interactive learning environment for children, teachers, parents, students, and researchers.

STRATEGY Five: Increase the visibility of the pre-school through regular attempts to reach out to the campus and the community.

STRATEGY SIX: Ensure the financial viability of the Montessori Laboratory Pre-school through enrollment and pricing management.

The Goal and the Six Strategies outlined deal with the key elements of any school: Curriculum, customer service, operations, facilities, marketing and finances. The Pre-school already provides a solid base for these strategies to work. It seeks now the administrative and community support to become amore integrated and viable participant in the mission of the Chaminade University 21<sup>st</sup> Century educational experience.

In preparing this report, those who worked on it were pleasantly surprised by the depth of support that the Pre-School has garnered. Most of the letters which are found in the appendices of this report were written within a one-week period after it was announced that the Pre-school could close at the last University Planning and Advisory Committee meeting of the Spring Semester. Not only did parents write letters of support but the Honolulu Community expressed its support as did the Chaminade Community (see Appendix Sixteen), the Education Division Advisory Committee, and the Education Division itself. The greatest evidence of solidarity is the number of people from the university who have contributed to the preparation this report. They have represented both full-time and part-time faculty members, staff, administrators, retired faculty and students. Over twenty people have shared in the work.

The second surprise is how many of the answers for the Pre-School's low enrollment in 2010-2011 seemed self-evident. The President of the Faculty Senate's memo to President Ploeger (See Appendix Seventeen) made many of the suggestions encompassed in this report at the beginning of the process. The comments of the Education Advisory Committee were made almost immediately as well and all of their ideas are in this report. At each of the meetings of the members

of the committee working on this report, the themes that developed into the goal and the strategies presented in this report appeared to be easy to make. In a sense what has been missing is the administrative will to accomplish them.

One cannot close without commending the Director for all of her hard work both physical and administrative over the years. Much of the support for the school is due to her leadership.

Those who have participated in the creation of this Program Review see the Chaminade Montessori Laboratory School as an important presence on campus and as an equally important part of Chaminade University's academic program.