

February 11, 2012

Ho'okako'o Corporation (HC) through its Board Chairman Keith Vieira has accepted the resignation of Waimea Middle School (WMS) Principal John Colson effective March 31, 2012. Colson will immediately take sabbatical leave to focus on statewide public charter schools issues and opportunities that can benefit all public charter schools in Hawai'i.

Principal Colson served the school for four years and was successful in working with the teacher team, staff, families and students to raise Hawai'i State Assessment (HSA) test scores, strengthen the educational and social environment of the campus, develop significant partnerships, and reinforce high expectations for public school children. Working with the HC Board, he prevented student furloughs at WMS, and helped the school-community adopt five core values including Integrity, Respect, Accountability, Kaizen (doing better every day) and Pa'ahana (hard, industrious work). These values have become foundational to the WMS education experience.

Chair Vieira acknowledged Colson's work at the school and wanted the school-community to know that Principal Colson's work and comportment epitomized the core values of the school. "We respect John as an educator and administrator and his decision to pursue his passion for charter schools and we wish him the best," Vieira said. Colson's resignation was not due to any impropriety.

Ho'okako'o Corporation, which is Waimea Middle School's Local School Board, will place an interim principal for the remainder of the school year. An executive search to find the next Principal of WMS will begin immediately allowing a new leader to be seated by the start of the next school year - July 1, 2012.

When asked what is next, Colson said, "Waimea has been my home for more than 35 years and I am an educator. I hope to find a leadership position in education in the area and I also hope to develop partnerships with WMS as a means of staying connected to the dedicated professionals and families of the school. I truly valued my tenure at WMS and feel blessed to have had the opportunity to work with this focused, innovative team of educators and with our students and families."

Waimea Middle School is beginning to pursue initial accreditation with the Hawai'i Association of Independent Schools (HAIS) and the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) and finishing a community survey conducted by the QMark group from Honolulu that will be used to help guide the future of the school.

Any questions about Waimea Middle School should be directed to Megan McCorrison, the Executive Director of Ho'okakoo Corporation.

#####