

## ***PRESS RELEASE***

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### **KOHALA ELEMENTARY RECEIVES GIFT OF AUDIOBOOKS FROM HRSS**

Hawaii Resources for School Success (HRSS) donated over 100 audiobooks to Kohala Elementary School (KES) teachers for use in their classrooms last Wednesday, April 22. HRSS purchased the books with funds raised at last year's auction gala.

"In the classroom, it will aid in our efforts to provide differentiation in the curriculum to meet the needs of all learners," said Edeille Thomas, Kohala Elementary second grade teacher.

HRSS is the flagship program of North Hawaii Women and Children's Services (NHWCS), a Waimea-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization established in 1997, whose vision is to ensure that "*Hawaii students and families have access to research-based education practices.*"

HRSS' mission is to "*help and empower diverse learners in school and life*" and HRSS first partnered with KES in August 2007, to train the school's teachers in the national, evidence-based Schools Attuned Teacher Professional Development model. This model, from the All Kinds of Minds Institute, focuses on increasing student success via early identification of and effective intervention for capable students who struggle in school.

KES is now listed on the All Kinds of Minds website as an All Kinds of Minds School of Distinction. Such schools "demonstrate a desire to implement the principles, content, and processes of All Kinds of Minds programs. These organizations have embraced the philosophies of All Kinds of Minds and have made significant progress toward their goal of integrating our programs..."

The audiobook sets follow a gift of Franklin Spellers that HRSS gave to KES last year. Franklin Spellers are electronic devices resembling calculators that help students by providing automatic visual and auditory phonetic spelling correction.

Audiobooks benefit struggling beginning readers by allowing students to listen to a story being read at the proper pace, with appropriate pauses and intonation, and at the same time follow along in the physical book, and thereby make connections between what they are hearing and the words on the page. They also provide students with access to more

advanced literature, helping them develop vocabulary as well as making them feel confident in approaching new content.

“These sets will serve many purposes. First, it's an excellent way to have students enjoy a chapter book. Too often, students see them as "too long" but this way the story flows as they just turn the pages. We hope it will help students view chapter books in a more friendly light,” said Noreen Hagio, Kohala Elementary second grade teacher. “We also hope it will increase their enjoyment of reading and appreciating longer stories. They will see how each chapter develops the story line to make the characters as well as the story more interesting.”

Beth Custer, HRSS Program Director, said, “We are grateful to the generous donors who attended our fundraising event and made this gift possible. I am thrilled that we could provide these valuable resources to teachers and offer another strategy to support the learners in their classrooms.”

*For more information about HRSS and/or KES, please visit [www.hawaiischoolsuccess.org](http://www.hawaiischoolsuccess.org) or call 808-885-9318.*