

INTRODUCTION

Private schools are a hot topic in Hawai‘i. The subject comes up almost everywhere—at birthday lu‘aus and soccer games, on the golf course, around the water cooler, at the beach, and even in church. Many people, who 15 or 20 years ago would never have considered private school for their children, now feel pressured to consider it.

A quarter of a century ago, most children growing up in the Islands went through the public school system. The few who did attend private schools, even in the state’s wealthiest districts, were the exception, not the rule. Today, many of these same public school graduates have become doctors, lawyers, and businesspeople, and have come back to the Islands to raise a family. Those with children of their own are struggling with what happened here while they were off at college or building a business on the mainland. Many are in shock. Sticker shock—at what a private education might cost them—and shock at how much the public school system has changed, and as some say deteriorated, in such a short span of time.

If the quality of your child’s education is important to you and you want to explore some options to educate your child without going broke or crazy—this book is for you.

Many parents are overwhelmed when it comes to separating valid information from speculation about private schools. In fact, having no first hand experience, some have no hard facts at all and are left with rumors and conjecture. Depending on whom you ask: One school is either exclusively populated by a bunch of stuck-up white kids, or it is one of the best and most diverse schools in the country. Another is the embodiment of a solid American education—or it is a military-based brainwashing organization with a right-leaning dogma. Yet another is a