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40 Students, 20 Teachers, 3 Schools Highest in Reading Growth with Achieve3000 Usage

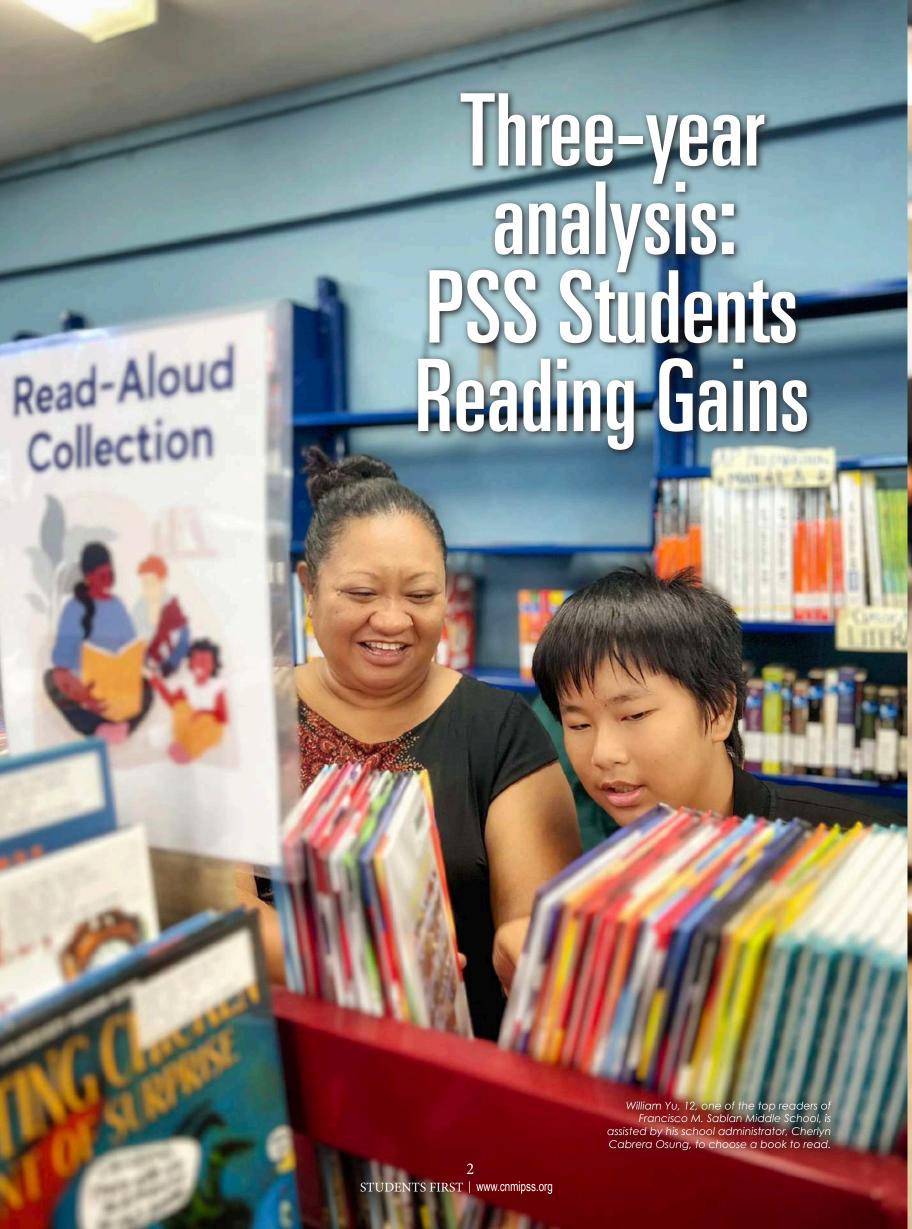
SEOM SABIAN

READING SUCCESS

PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS
READING GAINS

L-R: Francisco M. Sablan Middle School sixth grade students Jannie Manglona, William Yu, and Israt Chowdhury, are among the public school students that registered highest reading gains.

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DUBLIC school students' engagement and participation in reading using Achieve3000 literacy during the last three year period prior to the COVID pandemic has surpassed expected growth.

Based on a three year analysis, the public school students on Saipan, Tinian and Rota "are consistently surpassing the expected end of year Lexile average score," Patrick Staley, international director of product and professional services for McGraw Hill/International Achieve3000, disclosed during a state-level presentation of the Public School System's pre-COVID pandemic data.

"Your students have gone above and beyond the 200 Lexile (reading average) points...and, again, when we look at the data, it's really student success," adds Staley.

A Lexile level is a popular method used by schools in the nation and in many countries to measure a student's reading ability.

The higher the Lexile measure, the higher the student's reading level.

Data culled by Achieve3000 disclosed that in 2018, public school students on Saipan, Tinian and Rota were expected to have an average end of year lexile score of 671, however, the CNMI's actual Lexile average was 699.

In 2019, the expected Lexile of 736 was surpassed when students averaged an end of year Lexile measure of 843.

And in 2020, the expected Lexile average score of 775 was greatly surpassed by students averaging an end of year Lexile measure of 982.

This indicates tremendous progress in literacy acceleration for students across the district.

Based on the three-year trend, the success is credited on the "efforts of teachers and students" to succeed.

"This growth in Lexile mean that they — your students are getting closer or are now closer in the complex level," shares the McGraw Hill/ /International Achieve3000 experts.

For two years, 2020-2022, participation of students in Achieve3000 was impacted by the COVID pandemic.

Acheive3000's differentiated literacy solutions were implemented by the Public School System during the 2016-2017 school year. Participating students completed the pre-test during the first few sessions with the Achieve3000 reading program to determine the reading Lexile.

During its first year implementation, it showed that PSS students have already exceeded the expected Lexile growth by 18 points- from 36 expected mean growth to the actual of 54 mean growth.

CNMI students' excellent performance in Achieve3000 prompted the people behind the program to use the Commonwealth as a model in the Pacific.



40 Public School Students, 20 Teachers, 3 Schools are Top Performers in Supplemental Literacy Program

ORTY public elementary, middle and high school students just surpassed the average use of Achieve3000, an globally-recognized online supplemental learning that helps students advance reading skills.

Along with the 40 students, twenty classroom teachers

were also recognized for their dedication, particularly for "consistency of program usage as well as highest average student lexile growth".

While Achieve3000 is implemented throughout the school district - 20 schools on Saipan, Tinian and Rota - three of these schools - one from elementary, middle



Acting Commissioner of Education Eric Magofna, standing background and Interim Instructional Technology and Distance Education Director Lorraine Catienza led PSS officials, together with officials from McGraw Hill/International Achieve3000 Programs Patrick Staley, Julie Eckard, director for business development, in honoring students, classroom teachers and schools on Friday afternoon at the MHS cafeteria.

and high school - registered the highest percentage of their teachers actively using Achieve3000 programs at their respective schools.

Acting Commissioner of Education Eric Magofna and Interim Director for Instructional Technology and Distance Learning Lorraine Catienza led school district officials in honoring the students, teachers and schools. Held at the Marianas High School cafeteria, the school district leaders were joined by executives from McGraw Hill/International Achieve3000 Programs: Patrick Staley, director for product and professional services, and Julie Eckard, director for business development.

Parents, school leaders and community members witnessed the celebration.

Achieve3000 is a globally recognized provider of differentiated instruction and learning acceleration in the U.S. and 49 other countries. In the CNMII, both public and private schools endorse the program to aid student achievement and success, particularly reading. Public and private school teachers in the CNMI, along with other school districts use the program with an entire class but the assignments are tailored to each student's reading ability level.

The federal Every Students Succeeds Act (ESSA) recognized Achieve3000 "for demonstrating strong evidence of efficacy based on results from third-party randomized controlled trial study of its solutions for middle and high school students."

Awardees

The 40 students were recognized as top performers of their respective schools and were recognized based on "Top Smart Ants" usage and for Achieve3000:Highest Lexile Gain with consistent usage of the program".

The student awardees are:

Garapan Elementary: Ray Chen (Smarty Ants) and Pryce Jenfer Cadge (Highest Lexile Gain)

GTC Elementary School: Thoshini Kewlani (Smarty Ants) and Gianalynn Faith Cangco (Highest Lexile Gain)

Kaman Elementary School: Vic Junior Igitol (Smarty Ants) and Dounnie Valmarie Santos (Highest Lexile Gain)

Koblerville Elementary School: Gabrielle Gale Blanco

(Smarty Ants) and Dayron Jay San Nicolas (Highest Lexile Gain)

Oleai Elementary School: Gabriel Nathan Vidal (Smarty Ants) and Yuan Jebrielle Chavez (Highest Lexile Gain)

San Vicente Elementary School: Paisley Deleon Guerrero (Smarty Ants) and Mackenzie Rose Ann Namelo (Highest Lexile Gain)

Sinapalo Elementary School: Attina Louresse Rosario (Smarty Ants) and Kirsten Skye Manglona (Highest Lexile Gain)

Tinian Elementary School: Kobe John King (Smarty Ants) and Jayliah Skye Reyes (Highest Lexile Gain)

William S. Reyes Elementary School: Lloyd Manuel Sencio (Smarty Ants) and Loriell Pantola (Highest Lexile Gain)

Hopwood Middle School: Kadesh Job Pelayo and Mariana Tababa (both Highest Lexile Gain)

Chacha Oceanview Middle School: Payton Thomas Pangelinan and Aiden Weischigh Billy (Highest Lexile Gain)

Dandan Middle School: Ysharei Sanje and Reese Kaeley Tolentino (Highest Lexile Gain)

Francisco M. Sablan Middle School: David Cui and Chrisdea Mercado (Highest Lexile Gain)

Tanapag Middle School: Carlos Avante Cashwell and Brianna Alexa Chlarson (Highest Lexile Gain)

Da'ok Academy: Yoshida Beltau and Taisei Jesus Desebel (Highest Lexile Gain)

Dr. Rita H. Inos Jr. Sr. High School: Katrina Shayne Tacud and Stefanie Manglona (Highest Lexile Gain)

Kagman High School: Ulusmar Ogumoro Uludong and Jarrod Raychesko Muna (Highest Lexile Gain)

Marianas High School: Joel Devlin Deleon Guerrero and Fatima Althea Lumanlan (Highest Lexile Gain)

Saipan Southern High School: Vicente Seman and Mariel Hembra (Highest Lexile Gain)

Tinian Jr. Sr. High School: Alexia Josepha Pangelinan and Eric Zhou (Highest Lexile Gain)

The classroom teacher awardees were honored based on their consistency of program use as well as the highest average student lexile growth.

The 20 classroom teachers recognized are: Maria Cepeda (Garapan Elementary School); Tawny Barcinas (GTC Elementary School); Lavena Babauta (Kagman Elementary School); Relly Ann Ada (Koblerville Elementary School); Christina Mae Ruiz (Oleai Elementary School); Valerie Sablan (San Vicente Elementary School); Mack James (Sinapalo Elementary School); Jocelyn King (Tinian Elementary School); Ilyssa Geronimo (WSR Elementary School); Linda Birmingham (Hopwood Middle School); Riza Pasaylo (Chacha Oceanview Middle School); Francine Cruz (Dandan Middle School); Rhonda Gross (Francisco M. Sablan Middle School); Sheena Saures (Tanapag Middle School); Sonya Olopai (Da'ok Academy); Chanelle Manglona (Dr. Rita H. Inos Jr. Sr. High School); Loremel Hocog (Kagman High School); Stephen Woodruff (Marianas High School); Leilani Rabauliman (Saipan Southern High School), and Patricia San Nicolas (Tinian Jr. Sr. High School).

The three schools that have seen the highest percentage of their teachers actively using the Achieve program are: Tinian Elementary School for the elementary level, Francisco M. Sablan Middle School for middle school, and Dr. Rita H. Inos Jr. Sr. High School for high school.



Supporting Instructional Technology Integration of the School District

HE CNMI Public School System aims to use technology to engage students in higher levels of learning, promote college and career readiness, and support the professional growth of educators and staff.

One of the strategic priorities of the school district is to support the professional development of High Performing Personnel.

Over the past several months, the Instructional Technology & Distance Education Office has provided over 50 school-level workshops on a variety of tech-related topics to support teacher use of technology in instruction, reflecting the school district's continued support towards the effective integration of technology in all classrooms across schools on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota through tech-focused professional development of classroom teachers and school leaders.

Among the highlighted instructional technology workshops for teachers and school leaders are:

Gamification in the Classroom focuses on the use of game design elements to create interactive learning environments and make learning more engaging. Teachers learned how to increase student engagement and motivation through the use of game-based websites and assessments. Gamification helps students develop skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaboration in all grade levels and subject areas. The Gamifying Your Lessons PD has been the most requested out of all the offerings by ITDE.

Techy Ways to Make Class More Engaging covers various topics like virtual field trips, simulations, educational apps, web-based audience response tools, and more to truly create









an engaging learning experience. Participants learn to use technology as a tool to provide new ways for students in all grade levels to engage with the content. Additionally, the PD provides opportunities for participants to explore the tools as students as they are being demonstrated by the facilitators.

Encouraging Student Voice & Creativity with Technology: In this training, participants explore technology applications that increase student voice and engagement in instruction. Teachers explore tech tools such as Poll Everywhere and Flipgrid. The session also focuses on encouraging creativity through tools like Blogger.

Achieve 3000 Program Training: In partnership with Achieve 3000 specialists, ITDE has been able to provide support to school admin, classroom teachers, Title I and ELL teachers on using Achieve3000 programs to accelerate literacy gains for students.

Nearpod Training for Teachers: The Nearpod platform provides teachers with technology tools that support interactive digital resource engagement. During these workshops, teachers 1) learn how to deliver engaging instruction with Nearpod 2) navigate the Nearpod Website to create and access content 3) utilize a variety of Nearpod tools for formative assessment 3) Use best practice instructional strategies to personal learning with Nearpod tools and 4) plan training for school or department-level Nearpod implementation.

Distance Education Community of Practice Sessions: During these workshops, online teachers are provided with best practices to support the retention and academic achievement of their online students. Sessions focus on topics such as creating social presence in online courses, effective online lecturing, and engaging discussion boards.





Overall winner, Dr. Rita Hocog Inos Junior High School with their Leadership Corps instructor, Edwin Orilla, left.

Four Public Schools Dominate 2023 Middle School Leadership Corps Drill Competition

IDDLE school cadets from all of Saipan, Tinian and Rota public middle schools competed and showcased exceptional discipline, bearing and skills during the 2023 Middle School Leadership Drill Competition on April 15.

Held at the Koblerville gymnasium, hundreds of cadets from all of the Public School System's middle schools competed in the unarmed color guard, armed color guard, and unarmed regulation categories.

Rota's Dr. Rita Hocog Inos Junior Senior High School dominated the competition, winning first place overall. They also won first place in unarmed color guard, armed color guard and unarmed regulation.

Rota's RHI sent a 19-person team, led by its Leadership Corps Instructor, Edwin Orilla. The winning team is comprised of Robert Manglona II, Edward Q. Hocog III, Aire Logan Hocog, Damian "J" Atalig, Brian Cabrera, Kaden Manglona, Guadalupe Weilbacher, Rianie Camacho, J'Ana Hocog, Doriann Lizama, Abcde Hocog, Danice Malaborbor, Kylee Manglona, Raiahli Barcinas, Hannah Salas, Kassidy Garces, Hailey Manglona, Iha Hocog, Haani Barcinas

Dr. Rita Hocog Inos Junior High School also took the Best Commander armed color guard, with Damian "J" H. Atalig, taking the trophy.

Best Commander unarmed regulation was also from Rota's RHI. He is. Brian James Cabrera





Second place winner, the Leadership Corps team of Hopwood Middle School.



Third place winner in the armed color category is the Francisco M. Sablan Middle School team. They are joined in this photo by Principal Cherlyn Cabrera Osung, Leadership Corps Instructor Jeffrey Bacani and substitute instructor Bonnie Sagana.



Third place winner in the unarmed regulation is the Tinian Junior High School Leadership Corps team.

Second place

Hopwood Middle School took second place overall in all three competition categories: unarmed color guard, armed color guard, and unarmed regulation.

The winning Leadership Corps team from Hopwood Middle School includes: Jonatha Vargas, Rafael Pascual, Pritika Sen, Fiona Zhu, Tasi Reyes, Tahani Jolo, Empress Lopez, Raven Pascual, Toby Yan, Maria Quidato, Alexis Salundaguit, Bianca Long, Walter Clave, Aquinna Santos, Steven Loan, Dyne Rivera, Yong Lin, and John Quidato.

Their Leadership Corps instructors are: Michael Berbes, Jonathan Sugatan and Donovan Pangelinan.

Third place

Francisco M. Sablan Middle School and Tinian Junior High School each won third place in various category.

Francisco M. Sablan Middle School took the third position in the armed color category.

FMS' cadet drill team is led by Leadership Corps instructor Jeffrey Bacani.

The team is comprised of Daniel Sano, Jude Mallari, Sean Omar, Seam Morilla, Amber Guevarra, Maulene Delvo, Xyris Ellazar, Althea Bocago, Aiden Bocago

Leadership Corps substitute instructor Bonnie Sagana also joined them in the competiton.

Tinian Junior High School's thirteen-person team won third place in the unarmed regulation.

The winning Tinian Junior High School team are composed of: Dakota M. Sandbergen, Ayeesha Camilla, Ina E. Mendiola, Jireh C. Cruz, Ava A. John, Stephanie J. Lagunay, Abir Ali, Fivani M. Villagomez, Timid M. Reyes, Katie Ann U. Lizama, Janna B. Mapeso, Alexia S. Pangelinan, and Tevin M. Reyes.

The Leadership Corps instructor for the winning Tinian Junior High School team is Rudyna Walker.

Launched in 2009, the Public School System was the first in the Pacific region to initiate a middle school leadership program. The school district's middle leadership corps program is tailored to the nationally-recognized National Leadership Corps Interactive Curriculum, among others.

Multiple Medals for PSS JROTC Cadets at Nationals

HE Public School System's Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps team that represented the Commonwealth at the Golden Bear West Coast National Drill Meet in Torrance, California has yet again won multiple medals, sustaining its placement as among the nation's best.

The school district JROTC team is composed of multiple cadets from Saipan Southern High School and Marianas High School and they competed against 35 other high school JROTC units throughout the nation.

This is another major accomplishment for the CNMI PSS JROTC Program/Units which continue to win at the nationals every year since it began competing more than a decade ago.

The Golden Bear West Coast National Drill Meet consists of several competitions between four divisions which include unarmed. Armed, color guard, and saber. Armed drill team marches, spins, and competes with demilitarized M-1 garand rifles. The unarmed divisions solely make formations consisting of beats, stomps, clamps, and uniformity. The saver team is a sister division of unarmed, competing with non-lethal savers. Color guard is considered a serious division, due to the fact that the Service flag and the United States Flag are used.

The public schools representing the CNMI took a total of 14 trophies, including the Army Traveling Trophy, which was also won last year by Saipan Southern High School's Unarmed team alongside Marianas High School's Armed team. This year's success was a great achievement for the CNMI schools, and it demonstrated the students; competitive abilities in this prestigious national competition.

They CNMI PSS JROTC team took the Golden Bear Army Award and the Colonel Duffy Award - CNMI

The other awards won by the CNMI PSS JROTC team includes: Novice Color Guard (1st place, MHS), Varsity Color Guard (1st place, SSHS), Varsity Armed Regulation (3rd place, SSHS), Unarmed Inspection Novice (1st place, MHS), Unarmed Regulation Novice (2nd place, MHS), Unarmed Exhibition Novice (1st place, MHS), Varsity Unarmed Inspection (2nd place, SSHS), Varsity Unarmed Exhibition (3rd place, SSHS), Outstanding Commander Varsity Armed (3rd place, SSHS), Outstanding Commander Novice Unarmed (1st place, MHS), and Varsity Armed Sweepstakes (2nd place, CNMI).

The team also won first place in the Novice Unarmed Sweepstakes, third place in Varsity Unarmed Sweepstakes.







First Ever Canary Fun Day A Success

HE sun shone brightly for San Vicente Elementary School's parents and students who filled the school grounds to capacity during the first-ever Canary Family Fun Day.

This as SVES' Parent Teacher Student Association continued its active community engagement . The first-ever Canary Family Fun Day on April 15 was yet again another successful event aimed at engaging more parents to be involved in their child's school life.

With blue skies overhead, the ever-cheerful crowd of parents and students gathered to participate in various activities that the SVES PTSA have put forward. The event took place from 9 am to 1 pm.

"This is one of the best activities that my child and I

have ever participated in," said a single parent. "I'm just (as) excited with other parents that are here today...and (hope) that we will continue to have this more often."

Parents and students were SVES teachers and community members that gamely participated in various activities that include games, dance and singing performances. There were also food vendors to cater and offer various delights .

The San Vicente School PTSA also expressed its appreciation to all the businesses, entertainers, community leaders, lawmakers, student volunteers and teachers and staff for the successful staging of the first ever family fun day.



Administrative Professionals Day of the Public School System

Commissioner of Education Dr. Alfred B. Ada, Associate Commissioner for Administrative Services Eric Magofa and key department heads of the school district facilitated a professional development to close to a hundred administrative professionals from the public schools of Saipan, Tinian, Rota and central office of the Public School System April 25, 2023 at the Pacific Islands Club, coinciding the Commonwealth will join the rest of the nation in celebrating Administrative Professionals Day



PSS Cooperative Education Says 'Thank You, Partners'



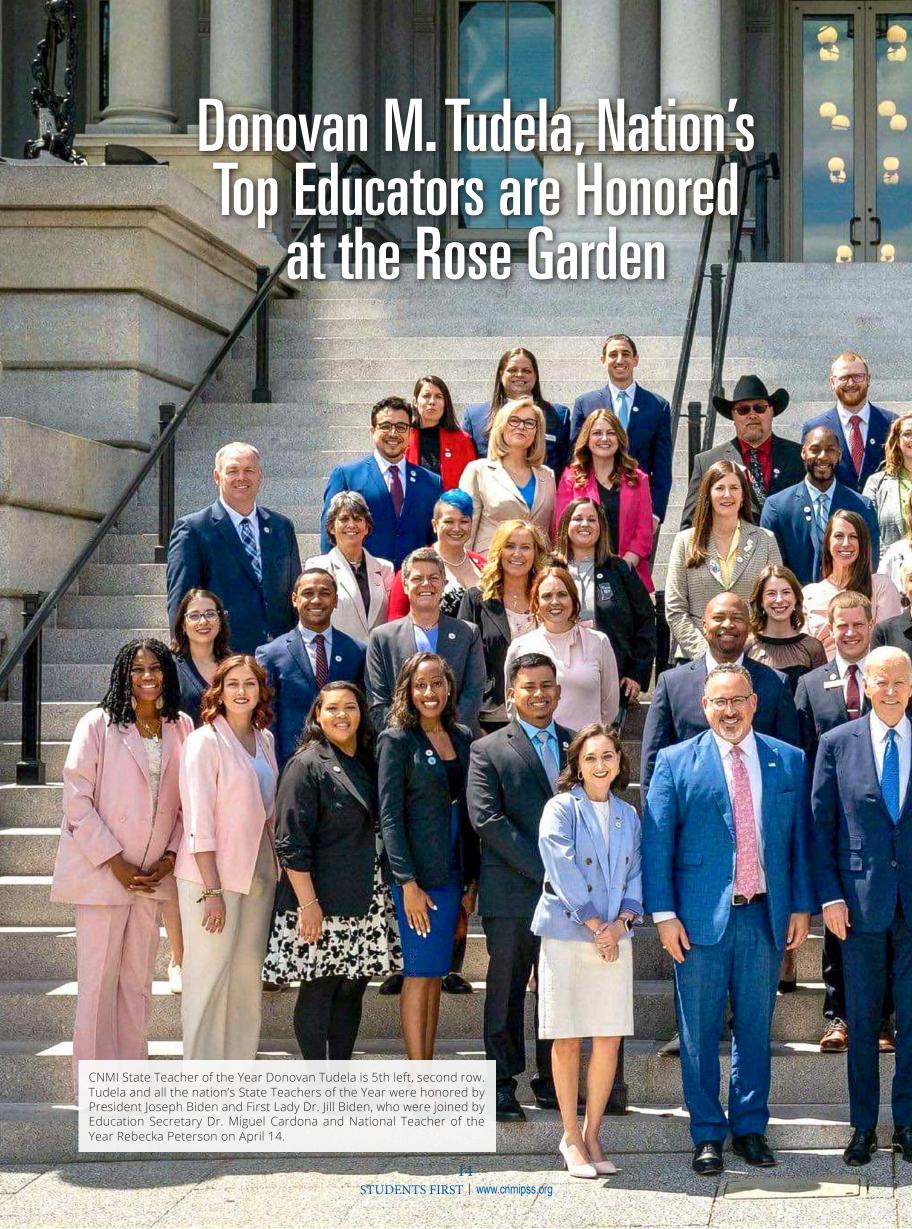
HE school district's Cooperative Education Program continues to successfully afford students with training and apprenticeship-- and thanks to its strong community and private sector partners.

On April 26, the Public School System's Cooperative Education Program and its over hundred students-interns hosted its Spring 2023 Appreciation Event to express its appreciation to its private sector partners.

Joined by Board of Education member Maisie B. Tenorio and Commissioner of Education Dr. Alfred B. Ada, the appreciation event highlighted students' testimonials and presentation of plaques to the program's long-standing private sector partners.

Similar event was also held separately for Rota and Tinian private sector partners of the PSS Cooperative Education Program

The students-interns are from all four public high schools on Saipan, Tinian and Rota including one from the private school.







Hopwood Middle School Parent Leader Thrilled District is Adding Modular Classrooms

OPWOOD Middle School PTSA President Jerika Peter said that the Public School System is doing its best to address the construction needs of the largest public middle school in the Commonwealth, and the community should also understand that any delays in the process "is outside the control of the school district".

Peter, representing the second largest school-based parent organization in the CNMI, is optimistic that with the construction — and immediate completion - of the modular classrooms for Hopwood Middle School, classroom learning will return to normalcy.

Pending the reconstruction of new school buildings, which is scheduled next year, PSS is adding 20 modular classrooms.

Peter expressed optimism that classroom learning will return to its normal schedule soon.

"To be honest, we are just waiting for approval from the (responsible federal agency) to proceed with construction," Peter told Students First.

She added: "During our last parent meeting, we informed everyone that we do have the funding to construct the buildings and classrooms but it is the approval that we are waiting for. The approval is not on the PSS side but on the (federal agency side)".

Barring any delays, Hopwood Middle School parents are excited that the modular classrooms will usher in the resumption of normal classroom schedule.

"We know that we have at least 20 modular classrooms that we are expecting this coming school year— and it is good news for us. So, yes, there is action on the part of PSS; they are doing their best to help our students".



HE Public School System is expected to resume Hopwood Middle School's classroom instruction back to normalcy with the construction of the twenty modular classrooms that are expected to be completed by next school year.

A modular classroom is an educational building constructed using prefabricated components which are built off-site and then assembled on location. They are often used as stand-alone single or multi-classroom buildings.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency's approval on the project is now being awaited and, once granted, PSS and its contractor is ready to proceed, according to Associate Commissioner for Administrative Services Eric Magofna, whose office oversees infrastructure development of the school district.

IN-FOCUS

20 Modular Classrooms to be Built at Hopwood Middle School



"Right now the modular classroom plan is pending approval by FEMA. Once it's approved, we can issue the notice to proceed to the contractor to start the construction process," Associate Commissioner Magofna told Students First in an interview.

The 20 modular classrooms will be constructed on the south side of the sprawling campus of the largest public middle school in the CNMI.

"The bid package has been sent out and the contractor was selected. But we cannot issue the notice to proceed to the contractor until FEMA gives us the approval," adds Associate Commissioner Magofna.

Once the modular classrooms are installed, Hopwood Middle School will resume its normal classroom/in-person schedule full-day.

"There will be no more half-day, morning and afternoon sessions. Once we finish the construction, it will allow for Hopwood to go back to its normal schedule," Associate Commissioner Magofna explains.

"PSS is doing everything to get the project moving and we are optimistic that we are able to fully set it up by this coming school year," adds the deputy education chief.

Heather Stole, the disaster program manager for PSS, separately said that two other projects are in the work phase: the fencing and regular classrooms.

The permanent construction for the new school buildings of Hopwood Middle School is likely to begin next year.

It's been a long journey for the school district after it

suffered heavily from natural disaster. On October 24, 2018, supertyphoon Yutu battered Saipan, totally destroying Hopwood Middle School along with other public school campuses.

In February, 2019, FEMA stepped in to build temporary classrooms to ensure continuity in student learning.

Olea Elementary School, William S. Reyes Elementary School, Francisco M. Sablan Middle School, Dandan Middle School and San Vicente Elementary School also suffered the brunt of the super typhoon.





Public School System's All Schools Athletics Hailed As A Success

HE curtain was brought down on the Public School System-McDonald's Athletics 2022-2023 which was hailed as a success following three weeks of competition in various athletics events at the Oleai Sports Complex track and field.

The three-week qualifying game began on March 28 and ended on April 22. Public and private schools through Saipan, Tinian and Rota competed in different track and field events in various age divisions.

The elementary school championships were held on April 28 and 29. The middle and high school finals were staged on May 5 and 6.



Dandan Middle School swept both the boys and girls divisions of the 14 and under (14U). DMS bagged first overall in the girls division; Tinian Jr. High School was second, and Saipan International School was third.

Dandan Middle School was overall champion in the boy category for 14U. SIS and Agape Christian School were tied at second place, and Francisco M. Sablan Middle School was third overall.

"Words cannot express how excited we are," DMS teacher and coach Simon Necesito said. "It's their drive that got them to where they are today. I asked them to give 100% and they gave 100% today. They did amazing throughout the qualifiers and the finals," he added.

"We have a lot of good talents here," said DMS teacher and coach Jeri May Tudela. "All the intense training led to insane results. DMS girls, a lot of hard work went into this, and you believed in yourselves. You guys did great," she told the athletes.

"We always had a strong faith in Dandan Middle School's athletes," Tudela added. "For the most part, I've been waiting for this because I'm very passionate when it comes to athletics. We were able to guide our students with what we got, but the students are the ones who put in the effort."

