



# SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

[HTTPS://WWW.SAIPANINTERNATIONALSCHOOL.COM/](https://www.saipaninternationalschool.com/)

## SELF-STUDY REPORT

PO Box 503121  
Saipan, MP 96950

April 17-19, 2024

ACS WASC Focus on Learning Continuous Improvement Guide 2022 Edition

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## **Introduction**

Saipan International School (SIS) offers a wide range of programs designed to meet the academic, social, and personal development needs of its students. With a commitment to excellence, innovation, and holistic education, SIS provides a comprehensive learning experience that prepares students for success in an ever-changing world.

### **Academic Programs:**

SIS follows an American-based curriculum that is rigorous, challenging, and aligned with international standards. The core academic subjects include English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, and world languages. The curriculum is enriched with hands-on learning experiences, inquiry-based projects, and interdisciplinary activities that promote critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills.

In addition to the core subjects, SIS offers a wide range of elective courses and advanced placement (AP) classes for students who wish to pursue specialized interests or academic excellence. These courses cover a variety of subjects including fine arts, computer science, physical education, and more, allowing students to explore their passions and talents.

### **Extracurricular Programs:**

SIS believes in the importance of providing students with opportunities to explore their interests, develop their talents, and build social connections outside of the classroom. The school offers a diverse array of extracurricular activities and clubs to cater to the interests of its student body. SIS offers everything from sports teams and performing arts groups to academic clubs and community service initiatives.

The school also organizes enrichment programs, workshops, and guest speaker events to complement the academic curriculum and provide students with additional learning opportunities. These programs cover a wide range of topics including leadership development, career exploration, cultural awareness, and environmental stewardship.

### **Technology Integration:**

SIS recognizes the importance of technology in education and is committed to providing students with access to cutting-edge tools and resources to enhance their learning experience. The school is equipped with state-of-the-art technology facilities including computer labs, multimedia classrooms, and a well-stocked library. Technology is integrated into the curriculum to engage students, facilitate collaboration, and develop 21st-century skills such as digital literacy, critical thinking, and problem-solving.

## **Global Citizenship Initiatives:**

As an institution committed to diversity and inclusion, Saipan International School (SIS) recognizes the importance of fostering an environment where students from diverse cultural, ethnic, and socio-economic backgrounds feel valued, respected, and supported. The school celebrates cultural diversity through various initiatives, events, and activities that promote cross-cultural understanding and appreciation. SIS actively promotes inclusivity by providing equitable access to educational opportunities, supporting students with diverse learning needs, and creating a safe and welcoming space for all members of the school community. Through its commitment to diversity, inclusion, and global citizenship, SIS prepares students to thrive in a multicultural world and become compassionate, empathetic, and socially responsible global citizens.

## **Stakeholder Involvement**

Saipan International School is more than a collection of buildings. It is a partnership of teachers, parents and community members all committed to providing the best possible education for its students. This report could not have been possible without the combined efforts of many, many people. Chief among these were the faculty and staff who participated in both focus group and divisional committees. All aspects of the report were presented in stages to the Board of Directors who also had oversight of the entire report. Finally, student input was sought for aspects of the report directly applicable to the students.

## **High School Student Council**

- Stephanie Kim, President
- William Lee, Vice President
- MJ Magno, Treasurer
- Jack Linden, Secretary

## **Middle School Student Council**

- Lya Kim, President
- Yewon Huh, Vice President
- Michael Guintu, Treasurer
- Juny Kim, Secretary

## **Faculty and Staff**

- Stacia Beiniks, Social Studies, Masters by Research in Politics and Public Administration, University of Limerick
- Angela Bernal, Pre-Kindergarten, Bachelors of Education, Northern Marianas College
- Kimberlee Church, English, Masters of Education in International Teaching, Framingham State University
- Stacey Eno, Grade 5, Masters of Education in International Teaching, Framingham State University

- Tony Flores, Science & Mathematics, Bachelors of Science in Physics, University of Hawaii, Manoa
- Clarita Gosepe, Cleaner
- Frederic Guintu, Mathematics, Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering, Don Honorio University
- Suyin Jin, Mandarin
- Ingur Lee, English, Statistics & High School Team Leader, Masters of Education in English, Bob Jones University
- April Liske-Clark, Science & Middle School Team Leader, Masters of Science in High School Biology, Western Governors University
- Doris Materne-Rioux, Grade 3, Bachelors of Education, Northern Marianas College
- Christopher Mosler, English and Social Studies, Master Arts Philosophy of Education, University College London
- Amie McRoberts, Grade 4, Bachelors Education, University of Northern Iowa
- Mona Mercado, Pre-Kindergarten
- Siqi Qin, Mandarin, Masters in Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language, Fudan University
- Julia Newman, Receptionist
- Kiana Sablan, Kindergarten, Bachelors of Education, Northern Marianas College (in progress)
- Milagro Saiki, Business Manager
- Ronald Snyder, Headmaster, Doctor of Education, University of Bath
- Angela Taflinger, Counselor, Masters of Social Work, Indiana University.
- Pamela Walsh, Grade 2 & Elementary Team Leader, BA Mass Communication, St. Paul's University
- Jeremy West, Physical Education, Bachelors of Science in Bible, Corban University
- Megumi West, Grade 1, Masters of Arts in Teaching, Warner Pacific University

**Board of Directors**

- Guy Pudney, Chairperson
- Brad Ruzala, Vice-Chairperson
- Kyoungmin Song, Treasurer
- Russ Wilcox, Secretary
- Yang Zhu, Director
- David Banes, Director
- Martin Jambor, Director

## Chapter 1: Progress Report

Saipan International School (SIS) had been purposefully advancing the schoolwide action plan that was established in the last self-study and visitation when it encountered two notable challenges. Super Typhoon Yutu devastated the island and destroyed portions of the campus. Then, the Commonwealth was put under strict guidelines during the COVID-19 pandemic, including several short-term campus closures. Both of these events had ripple effects, putting the school's resources under heavy strain.

On October 24, 2018, Super Typhoon Yutu slammed into the island, inflicting severe damage to the island's and school's infrastructure, rendering SIS without public utilities until January 2021. The southern face of the elementary school collapsed during the storm, destroying instructional materials and many technological devices. The walkway between the high school and middle school was blown away, slamming into our school trees and destroying the playground. Downed power poles blocked the road for days. Despite these challenges, the SIS community demonstrated remarkable resilience, swiftly clearing debris and establishing makeshift learning environments in the remaining classrooms and in temporary tents outside. SIS was the first school to resume instruction, just two school days after the typhoon and held our annual Halloween carnival just one week later. With substantial assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, SIS undertook extensive repairs, augmented playground facilities, and bolstered existing structures. However, this initially led to a huge outlay of unexpected funding by the school to address cleanup and thereafter repairs. FEMA continues to work with SIS on a project to expand the existing court.

Then, in March 2020, the onset of the global pandemic precipitated the closure of school premises for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year. SIS adeptly transitioned to online learning via Zoom and its GeckoNet platform, ensuring continuity of instruction and support for students, notably those preparing for Advanced Placement examinations. SIS again led the way in returning to normal and was even able to hold an in person graduation event that year on the hillside behind the school. However, the imperative of immediate survival measures during the pandemic necessitated a shift away from the primacy of the schoolwide action plan. Ripple effects included addressing the closure of public school campuses for two straight years and mitigating the economic downturn in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), which led to an influx of applicants requesting financial aid. Despite these hurdles, SIS remained among the select few schools on Saipan to persist with in-person instruction, albeit under stringent safety protocols including mask mandates and desk shields. These challenges, though daunting, underscored the resolute determination and adaptability of the SIS community in steadfastly pursuing its educational objectives amidst adversity.

Prior to these significant developments, Saipan International School had been on track to meet all of the objectives set in the schoolwide action plan that was developed in the previous self-study. Staff and leadership had been successful in meeting two of the three goals.

The leadership team evaluated the existing effectiveness of using Star Reading and testing in Achieve 3000 along with national tests like the PSAT and the Advanced Placement exams to meet the goal of implementing “standardized testing that will provide data to analyze that reflects student academic progress overtime and will inform instruction.” In 2019, the leadership team found existing testing to be lacking and selected the NWEA Measure of Academic Progress to meet this need. The first MAP test was given in Fall 2020 to establish a baseline for growth and the staff went through a series of professional development training in 2021 and 2022 to enable the successful implementation of the MAP test as a driver of instruction and as a reporting tool to parents.

The Counselor and the Student Support team were successful in developing and adopting a comprehensive child protection plan that is constantly being improved to meet current conditions. With the ease of COVID-19 restrictions, SIS has many new guests on the campus from the stakeholder communities. Defining what they have access to and how we ensure child safety remains a challenge and a top priority moving forward.

Goal #1 was “Improve the areas of curriculum, instruction and assessment aligning with national standards and the school's SLOs to ensure quality and continuity of the overall education delivered to students.” The school saw great strides initially with this goal. Program areas were evaluated on their strengths and weaknesses, Dimensions Math was adopted for grades K-8, Advanced Placement offerings were increased, unit plan templates were explored and unit plans were set up to guide in the articulation process. But it was at this point that the process stalled and it is here where teachers moved into survival mode, relying on publisher created timelines instead of using achievement and growth data to develop a relevant curriculum for school. As seen in the MAP data, results remain acceptable but this continues to be an area of growth moving forward. SIS and many other schools faced unprecedented challenges that impeded the continuation of accreditation goals for curriculum development. The abrupt shift to remote and hybrid learning necessitated immediate adaptation to ensure educational continuity, diverting resources, time, and attention away from long-term strategic initiatives. Schools were compelled to focus primarily on the immediate necessities of remote and hybrid teaching, learning, and student support, including the implementation of effective technical and emotional assistance to students, parents, and educators.

Furthermore, the closure of the school campus, however brief, and the transition to virtual environments disrupted established workflows and collaborative processes essential for curriculum development. The lack of face-to-face interaction hindered effective communication and collaboration among educators, administrators, and other stakeholders. Moreover, the pandemic-induced economic downturn strained financial resources, compelling SIS to prioritize immediate operational needs over longer-term strategic initiatives like curriculum development.

Saipan International School remains committed to the accreditation process. All stakeholders are involved and the plans developed remain at the forefront of staff development and planning whenever possible. The school identified several areas of growth during the previous self-study and attempted to turn these into areas of strength. Indeed, the school of six years ago is not the school of today. Student data is now used to improve instruction across the board. New courses have been added, 100% of the staff have undergone a background check and are Emergency First

Response trained. These areas form the backbone of our professional development plans and tasks are shared with other non-public schools on the island through the headmaster who is the President of the Commonwealth Coalition of Private Schools and the Non-Public Representative to the State Board of Education.



## Chapter 2: School Profile and Supporting Data and Findings

### The SIS Community

In the early 1990's, a group of parents desiring a quality educational program for their children combined efforts to form a new school. They sought to create an environment that fostered academic, emotional, and social growth in each child. On September 18, 1994 this dream became a reality. Saipan International School began the 1994-95 school year started with 45 students, preschool through sixth grade. By 1995, the original building was inadequate to accommodate an ever-increasing enrollment. Members of the school board leased a site in As Lito to construct a new school. In August of 1995, classes started with 114 students, preschool through seventh grade. In 1998, a new four-classroom building was constructed to accommodate the ever-growing student population. To provide the students of SIS with the best resources possible, a new science lab and media center were added to this building in the spring of 2001. An additional classroom was built in the summer of 2002 to meet the needs of the growing student population. In January, 2008, a new building was constructed to allow for expansion of the high school. The building contained a large multipurpose room, six classrooms and another science lab. During this time, the school saw rapid growth in the area of international students, particularly from Korea. After Super Typhoon Yutu, an enlarged walkway and covered patio was built and the lower field was restructured to include a pond, gardens, a pala pala, a yurt and outside seating areas.

Currently Saipan International School has a population of approximately 250 students, Early Childhood through Grade 12. This works out to a student to teacher ratio of 13:1 and an average class size of 17.85. Class size is limited to 22 in Elementary School and 26 in Middle and High School. The community is made up of a diverse group of families, some working in government, some local businesses and some in home stay situations to enable the children to receive a US-based education. Currently 63 students are on a student visa. Over the last six years, the school has seen a rapid growth of Chinese students and this has increased the demands on our ELA programming. This began with the growth of Chinese tourism prior to the pandemic but has maintained. A large influx of students from the public school system has occurred, starting with the pandemic. Currently, the CNMI is in an economic crisis and many parents are struggling to meet the tuition demands of the school. At the same time, the public school system is projecting a 43% budget deficit next year with plans to shorten the school year to 168 days, layoff more than 20% of its workforce and increase class sizes. Many of the school's new applicants are public school students but the implications of the economic situation remain to be seen.

Demographically, the student body is almost evenly split between male and female. US Citizens make up 74% of the student body followed by Korean (17%) and Chinese (15%). The school also collects data based on ethnicity. The top five, self-identified ethnicities are:

- Chinese (28%)
- Korean (27%)
- US (24%)

- US CNMI (15%)
- US Mainland (9%)
- Pilipino (9%)
- Japanese (3%)

Parents are represented by the Board of Directors but also volunteer in many capacities during school events and competitions. The Bake Sale Queens are a group of mothers who run the monthly community lunch at school, coordinating with the homeroom teachers. Students represent the school in many community organizations including, Rotary Interact, National Speech and Debate Association, MathLeague, NMI Model United Nations, American Red Cross, Marianas Islands Nature Alliance, etc.

All private schools in the CNMI may receive Educational Tax Credit donations from local businesses. These donations may be deducted from the Business Gross Tax collected by the Division of Taxation and Revenue. As such, Saipan International School has an extensive relationship with many local businesses.

### **ACS WASC accreditation history for school**

Saipan International School has been accredited through ACS WASC since 1996 when it received its initial accreditation. SIS was the first accredited non-public school in the Commonwealth and remains one of three to hold current accreditation status.

### **School purpose**

The mission of Saipan International School is to help each child reach his or her full potential by providing a positive environment that fosters academic, emotional, and social growth. Building off of this mission, SIS has developed a vision, to achieve its mission by developing the most rigorous and challenging academic environment in the Commonwealth. This has created a niche market for the school as *the* university preparatory school in the Commonwealth.

The mission, vision and schoolwide learner objectives are expressed in the SIS Graduate Profile. The profile outlines the characteristics, skills, knowledge, and values that a student is expected to possess upon completing their education at SIS.

Furthermore, SIS is committed to principles of equity and inclusion, evidenced by its robust affirmation of multiculturalism and diverse learning styles, experiences, and skill levels. The institutional ethos of inclusivity extends to welcoming students of diverse backgrounds, irrespective of ethnicity, religion, gender orientation, or special learning needs.

### **School Program Data**

Saipan International School offers specialized programming to its students, particularly in high school. This may include working with the Distance Education Program in the Public School System or taking online classes at accredited universities. Some students also have taken

face-to-face evening classes at Northern Marianas College. All external classes must be taken from an accredited school or university in order to be granted credit. However, external classes do not impact the GPA of the student at the school.

The largest resource allocation for specialized programs is in Advanced Placement courses. Currently, SIS offers 15 AP classes to its students, the highest number in any school in the Commonwealth, public or private. AP classes are weighted, with students receiving a 1.25 boost to the raw GPA.

The school also has a 1:1 device program at the school. All students in grades K-8 have access to an iPad and students in high school provide their own devices. A limited number of school laptops (Lenova Thinkbooks) are available to students who do not have access to a device of their own. Teachers host virtual learning sites with a Moodle-based program, GeckoNet, in middle and high school. Elementary teachers use Class Dojo. All students can access their grades in real time using the school student management system, OpenSIS.

Certification is a contractual obligation for teachers at SIS. If a teacher does not have certification but is currently working towards it, the Board of Directors can authorize employment with stipulations. Currently, two teachers are in the process of seeking certification. All non-teaching staff and/or uncertified staff must undergo a background check.

Saipan International School offers a US-based, international curriculum. Currently, the school is in transition to Project Aero standards in addition to AP curriculum. Standardized tests include the NWEA Measure of Academic Progress, the SAT, the PSAT, Achieve 3000 and Accelerated Reader. The NWEA MAP is given twice per year, in August and May but may be given a third time for students of concern.

All students have a seven period day schedule and an Elective period from 1:45-2:45 for enrichment and remediation classes. Teachers are obligated to five class periods per day. EC-Grade 6 teachers interact primarily with students in a homeroom situation but older students change classes frequently to take advantage of teacher expertise. During the elective period, some classes are organized around community groups such as Model United Nations. SIS has one College Counselor who also offers limited Socioemotional support when necessary. For greater needs, the school works with Systems of Care, a community wellness center. Currently 32 students receive ELL support from one of two teachers.

Attendance is taken through OpenSIS and is typically above 95%. Tardy students are also accounted for in OpenSIS and students of concern are counseled individually by a member of the leadership team. Parents are generally supportive of our educational approach and the attendance policy. Most parents are professionals who hold an advanced degree. Roughly 10% of the student population changes each year.

SIS currently leases the land for its facilities in As Lito. Student facilities are housed in four separate buildings. These include standard classrooms, a library, an ESL room, and three

outdoor Pala Palas where lunch is served. The school also features an outdoor basketball/volleyball court, a sport's field, a relaxation area, a student veranda and two playgrounds. All school facilities are inspected and licensed by the Department of Commerce, the Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Safety and the Department of Labor.

### **Staff**

SIS has 18 teachers, one counselor, two administrators and one co teacher whose combined years of experience in education exceed 200 years. Six teachers hold masters degrees and one administrator holds a doctorate. All teachers are either certified or in the process of obtaining certification. All teachers teach primarily in their content area but may offer a class that falls in their area of expertise. For example the AP English Teacher also teaches AP Statistics. He is not certified to teach Mathematics but he is authorized to teach the course through College Board. Being an international school, SIS recognizes the importance of national and ethnic diversity in the teaching staff as well. Teachers come from the US, Korea, the Philippines, China, and Mauritius.

### **Professional development programs/activities and numbers participating**

SIS staff undergo professional development aligned to the schoolwide action plan (e.g., training Emergency First Response) and also to support their instructional areas, such as Dimensions Math training, NWEA MAP training and AP Summer Institutes.

All teachers are obligated to participate in 10 staff development sessions per year but many supplement these with training on weekends and in the summer. This is particularly true of AP teachers who typically use federal funds to attend AP Summer Institutes. Details of AP training for summer 2024 are listed below.

### **Student participation in co-curricular activities and extra-curricular activities**

SIS students are very active in extracurricular activities. Three high school members and one MS member of the national team for Speech and Debate are SIS Geckos. The SIS MS MathLeague team took first place in the Commonwealth this year and one member will be representing the CNMI in the national competition this May. The regional winner of the spelling bee is a Grade 7 student. SIS is the founder of the Model United Nations conference in the CNMI.

In addition to academic extracurricular, SIS students also work in several service and athletic organizations. SIS has a recycling program with the Marianas Islands Nature Alliance, a Rotary Interact Charter, and a Red Cross Support Club. In athletics, SIS students routinely participate in island competitions in Cross Country, Volleyball, Badminton, Basketball, Track and Field, and Soccer. They have earned many championship trophies. For example, this year, both elementary boys and girls, and middle school girls teams one the Cross Country Championships, the HS Girls took the Soccer Championship.

## **School financial support**

The per pupil expenditure at SIS is \$5,200, well below the national average of \$14,437 and the public school expenditure of \$6,700. This included monies received through tuition and fees and Educational Tax Credits. Additionally, SIS receives target funding from several Federal grants. The American Rescue Plan funded emergency expenditures associated with the COVID-19 pandemic and also programs designed to mitigate the effects of lost instructional time. Purchases included mobile learning centers, outdoor learning area extensions, textbooks and a large library order. SIS received \$1.3 million from the ARP. The Consolidated Grant is an approximately \$180,000 annual grant that provides funding for supplemental instructional materials, professional development, college, career and life readiness, technology, student competitions and athletics. FEMA provided SIS with nearly \$1.1 million in assistance to rebuild the school after Super Typhoon Yutu and to replace damaged instructional materials.

## **Student Performance Data**

NWEA Data was calculated from Fall to Fall as Spring MAP testing will take place in May. The school average for Mathematics was in the 78th percentile in Fall 2023 up from 74th percentile in Fall 2022. Median growth was at 66th percentile.

Schoolwide, the students placed in the 66th percentile in Fall 2023, up from 65th percentile last year. Growth at 51st percentile. Subgroups are not disaggregated and so this data also includes ELL students. Being a small school, teachers are able to look at student data individually to determine progress and achievement.

As seen in the five year report, 75% of the students taking Advanced Placement exams in May 2023 scored at least a three on one or more AP Exams. This is up from 67% in 2022, but still below the mid-80% in the three years prior. Additionally, SIS received a Gold Status on the AP School Honor Roll. SIS was the only school in the CNMI to make the honor roll. 18 students last year earned the distinction of AP Scholar. This year, 65 students will attempt AP exams, with over 260 tests being ordered. This is an all time high for SIS.

## **Schoolwide Learner Goals**

Integration of the schoolwide learner goals is an area that the curriculum committee has targeted as an area of growth. However, while SIS has yet to fully integrate the SLGs into the curriculum and assessment framework, students have shown considerable success in demonstrating achievement in them. In addition to the school virtues, which are recognized in monthly assemblies, SIS has also adopted the 4Cs of 21st Century learning as SLGs. The 4Cs are Communication, Collaboration, Creativity and Critical Thinking. In Communication, the English department continues to encourage participation in writing contests in the CNMI and the nation. SIS students have been considerably successful in these competitions. SIS has swept the VFW

Patriot's Pen and Voice of Democracy contests for the last five year. SIS also has won the non-public school writing contest for three years in a row to send a student to the Close Up Foundation trip to Washington DC.

## Chapter 3: WASC Criteria and Indicators

### Category A: Organization for Student Learning: Vision and Purpose, Governance, Leadership, School Continuous Improvement Process, Staff, and Resources

Saipan International School (SIS) has excelled in swiftly adapting resource allocation decisions to support student achievement and well-being, particularly in crisis situations. Collaboration among leadership, governance, and staff ensures effective decision-making aligned with the school's vision. Notably, SIS fosters inclusivity and equity, welcoming diverse student backgrounds and needs, evident in its commitment to multiculturalism and support for students with special learning needs. However, there remains a need to establish professional goals and link teacher evaluation to schoolwide objectives for continuous improvement, enhancing the quality of instruction and support for students. Additionally, while SIS has made strides in upgrading facilities and instructional materials, ongoing investment is essential to meet diverse learner needs effectively and ensure optimal utilization of resources. By addressing these growth areas, SIS can further enhance its ability to empower students to reach their fullest potential academically, socially, and emotionally.

#### Criterion A1: Vision and Purpose

Saipan International School (SIS) puts students at the heart of all of its practices. At the heart of SIS's educational philosophy lies a meticulously crafted vision and purpose, reflective of students' needs, grounded in research-based practices, and underscored by principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

SIS has a clear vision and purpose that resonates with the institution's core values and aspirations. SIS has an unwavering dedication to fostering a positive environment conducive to academic, emotional, and social growth for every student.

Furthermore, SIS is committed to principles of equity and inclusion, evidenced by its robust affirmation of multiculturalism and diverse learning styles, experiences, and skill levels. The institutional ethos of inclusivity extends to welcoming students of diverse backgrounds, irrespective of ethnicity, religion, gender orientation, or special learning needs.

SIS refines and aligns its vision and purpose periodically with the evolving needs of its stakeholders. Furthermore, SIS has a robust communication strategy aimed at effectively disseminating its mission, vision, and schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile to all stakeholders. By prominently featuring these foundational statements across various communication channels, SIS endeavors to foster a comprehensive understanding and appreciation of its overarching vision and purpose among its diverse stakeholders.

Through a collaborative partnership among educators, board members, parents, and other stakeholders, SIS endeavors to realize its enduring vision of empowering every student to reach their fullest potential.

#### A1.1 Vision and Schoolwide Learner Goals/Graduate Profile:

Saipan International school has had a clear mission, purpose, schoolwide learner goals and school virtues for several accreditation cycles. These are published on the school website and in the Parent-Student Handbook.

The mission of Saipan International School is to help each child reach his or her full potential by providing a positive environment that fosters academic, emotional, and social growth. Building off of this mission, SIS has developed a vision, to achieve its mission by developing the most rigorous and challenging academic environment in the Commonwealth. This has created a niche market for the school as *the* university preparatory school in the Commonwealth.

SIS has recently combined this information into a Graduate Profile. The profile outlines the characteristics, skills, knowledge, and values that a student is expected to possess upon completing their education at SIS. It will serve as a guide for educators in designing curriculum and instruction to help students develop the desired attributes and competencies as part of our schoolwide action plan.

### **A1.2 Equity and Inclusion:**

The vision and purpose of the school reflects a belief that all students can learn and achieve.

Although the school seeks to meet its mission and vision through a challenging and rigorous curriculum and course offerings, it recognizes that this path is not for everyone and some students may choose different paths.

Additionally, students at SIS are welcome regardless of ethnicity, religion, gender orientation and special learning needs. This is expressed specifically in the mission statement through its focus on multiculturalism as well as the statement that “Saipan International School is committed to creating an educational environment that affirms a wide variety of learning styles, experiences, skill levels, and interests.” The vision statement also recognizes different paths, i.e. career or entrepreneurship, that do not take them to university settings. Additionally, the board of directors amended article 11 in the school charter to include:

It is the Corporation’s express policy that Saipan International School shall admit students of any race, color, creed, national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available at Saipan International School. Saipan International School shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national or ethnic origin in the administration of the school’s education policies, admission policies, scholarship loan programs, and athletic or other school-administered programs. Nor shall the Corporation discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national or ethnic origin with regard to hiring or employment of the Principal or Staff of Saipan International School, or any other employee of the Corporation.

It should be noted that, while many students at SIS have service plans for learning needs, SIS is not financially capable of meeting all special needs. Parents with students with special needs are counseled upon entry or evaluation by the educational psychologist on whether the school can meet those needs. In most circumstances, funds provided through the Federal Programs Office



are used to hire tutors, speech or occupational therapists, buy assistive technology, etc and the students are able to be happy and productive members of the school community. Rarely, the parent is counseled that the school is not capable of meeting the needs of the students and they are counseled to seek another placement.

### **A1.3 Development/Refinement of Vision and Purpose:**

As a part of every accreditation self study, the mission, vision and purpose is evaluated by the students, staff and then by the Board of Directors in open session.

During this self-study, the leadership committee found that there was a need for a vision statement and a graduate profile to be added to the mission, schoolwide learning objectives and school virtues in order to provide a more comprehensive picture of what the expectations of the students are. While the mission statement contains a description of the entire purpose of the school, it is left open to interpretation in how to meet it. The vision seeks to provide this clarification.

### **A1.4 Communicating and Understanding Vision and Purpose and Schoolwide Learner Goals:**

There are effective processes for communicating with all stakeholders/educational partners to ensure the understanding of the vision, purpose, and schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile. The SIS mission, vision, schoolwide learner goals, and virtues are all posted on the school website. They are additionally published in the Parent Student Handbook along with the graduate profile. Each room in the school also has a poster listing the mission, schoolwide learner goals and the school virtues.

## **Criterion A2: Governance**

The Saipan International School Board of Directors is a policy board, responsible for establishing and updating school policies that govern broad, non-educational aspects of school operations, including academic programs, hiring and evaluating the Headmaster, financial management, and more.

- **Strategic Planning:** The policy board plays a key role in developing the school's long-term strategic plan, which outlines the institution's goals, objectives, and priorities. This plan guides decision-making and resource allocation to ensure the school's mission and vision are effectively pursued.
- **Financial Oversight:** The policy board is tasked with overseeing the school's financial management, including budget approval, financial reporting, and ensuring fiscal responsibility. Board members review financial statements, approve major expenditures, and set tuition rates. Board members sit on the Educational Tax Credit committee, soliciting needed funds for school success.
- **Hiring and Evaluation of School Leadership:** The board is responsible for hiring and evaluating key school leaders, particularly the headmaster. Recently, the Board approved

the hiring of a secondary principal to assist in administrative duties and board members participated in the recruitment process.

- **Monitoring Compliance:** The board ensures that the school operates in compliance with relevant laws, regulations, accreditation standards.
- **Community Engagement:** The board serves as a liaison between the school and the broader community, including parents, students, alumni, and other stakeholders. Board members may engage in outreach efforts, attend community events, and solicit feedback to inform decision-making.
- **Risk Management:** The board identifies and manages risks that may affect the school's operations, reputation, or financial stability.

During the pandemic, board meetings were severely limited and broad power was entrusted to the headmaster to address the continuously changing environment and conditions imposed upon us by Public Health, the Governor and the Legislature. Recently, it has begun meeting more regularly and moving past questions of survival and the resulting fiscal crisis to overseeing and giving advice on school programs and activities. As per SIS BOD By-Laws, educational policy is set by the Headmaster but the BOD is kept informed as a way of assisting with strategic planning and increasing community engagement.

The Headmaster routinely informs the Board of results from NWEA MAP assessments, AP exams, SAT and PSAT exams, university acceptances, scholarship recipients, and academic and extracurricular competitions in which our students engage. Results of community surveys are distributed electronically and reviewed during the board meetings. The bulk of time at board meetings is dedicated to financial oversight and strategic planning. Board meetings always reserve time for public comments. All matters of personnel are discussed during the executive session and are confidential.

### **A2.1 Relationship between the Governing Board and the School:**

Attendance at board meetings has traditionally been low but has been exceedingly low since the pandemic. During the pandemic, all meetings had to be held electronically and were limited to emergency decisions, usually confidential. Parents were also not allowed on campus during the pandemic. Therefore, while SIS's ability to serve the students academically was much greater than most schools in the Commonwealth, our ability to promote community engagement was curtailed. Therefore, while there may be a clear understanding of the rules and rights governing students at SIS as laid out in the handbook, the understanding of the role of the board is an area of growth that will need to be addressed as the school reengages and energizes the community.

### **Criterion A3: Leadership for Learning**

Saipan International School (SIS) takes a collaborative approach to data collection and student intervention, including various assessments and interventions for at-risk students. The headmaster leads discussions on data results, while AP teachers undergo training for program

improvement. However, more training is needed for effective use of NWEA data. Student test results are shared with parents and students, and school-level results are disseminated widely.

Leadership involves collaborative decision-making among staff and the board of directors, with clear goals set for disciplinary and divisional teams to promote student learning and coherence. The action plan focuses on curriculum development and student safety, aiming to improve outcomes and establish comprehensive safety protocols in light of past events like Super Typhoon Yutu and the pandemic.

### **A3.1 Broad-based and Collaborative:**

Saipan International collects data in the form of teacher generated grades, narrative reports, NWEA MAP exams, Accelerated Reader, PSAT, Advanced Placement assessments,

Students of concern are discussed in divisional meetings. Interventions include working with the parents to find tutoring, assigning students in danger of receiving unsatisfactory grades to study halls during the Enrichment and Remediation period, and assigning to Title One Reading support.

The headmaster leads data dialogue conversations with the entire staff on the results from NWEA MAP and AP during staff meetings. Individual conversations are held with teachers with results failing to meet growth goals. AP teachers download the instructional report from the College Board to analyze programmatic deficiencies. AP teachers regularly go through follow up training for the courses they teach or courses the school may be interested in offering in the future.

Although SIS is comfortable using the NWEA data for programmatic evaluation, more training is needed to make it an effective driver of instruction in the classroom.

Individual results on standardized tests are shared and discussed with parents during Parent-Teacher Conferences. PSAT/SAT and AP results are discussed with students in advisories or in Junior/Senior seminar as part of the strategies for university applications. School level results are shared with the parents, the board of education and are often published in local newspapers.

Program results and recommendations are included in each board meeting and are open for all parents to attend. College nights and open houses also present data to parents about the programs the school has to offer.

### **A3.2 Leadership Role in Accountability:**

Being a small school, many decisions are discussed with the general staff or at least among the leadership team. This is most often the case for planning and for major programmatic changes. However, for plans that necessitate financial changes, the board of directors is also involved in approving them.

Furthermore, each staff member serves on a disciplinary committee and a divisional team. The focus and purpose of these teams is to promote and support student learning and future planning. Each group has a defined purpose, and the Headmaster has given very clear directions for each team to set its own goals at the beginning of the year and works towards those goals.

Membership in these two groups are mandatory for all full time teaching staff. Some members belong to the two or more departmental teams and/or division teams, promoting departmental and divisional coherence. This cross representation has proven to be very helpful.

Refinement of the school's mission, vision, and schoolwide learner outcomes fall within the Board's domain. However, input from faculty and students was all accepted for their review in this self-study.

### **A3.3 School Action Plan Correlated to Student Learning:**

Student achievement is at the center of all discussions at Saipan International School. The action plan (see below) focusses on two areas: curricular development and student safety. SIS leads the Commonwealth in overall student achievement when measured by external assessments and presence on national academic and sports teams. However, the faculty realize that there is always room for improvement and have decided unanimously as a group to identify curriculum development as the number one priority. A child safety plan was developed after the last accreditation visit. Many protocols and procedures were also developed in the aftermath of Super Typhoon Yutu and during the pandemic. All teachers have been trained in emergency first response and the school has a registered nurse on the teaching staff. However, the faculty and staff feel that there is a need to combine these separate but related pieces into a comprehensive student protection plan that includes routine drills, interactions with adults, protocols for disease and natural disasters. SIS would be the first school in the CNMI to develop a student protection plan that incorporates all levels of safety.

### **Criterion A4: Qualified Staff and Professional Development (1–2 pages maximum)**

In ensuring the excellence of its educational programs, Saipan International School (SIS) places great emphasis on the qualifications, preparation, and supervision of its staff. This introduction offers a glimpse into the rigorous procedures and high standards upheld by SIS in selecting and nurturing its faculty members. From stringent qualification requirements to ongoing professional development initiatives, SIS prioritizes the professional growth of its staff to best serve its students' academic needs.

#### **A4.1 Qualifications, Preparation, and Supervision of Staff:**

Employment contracts show qualifications and requirements of staff. Members of the school administration are highly qualified for their positions. The headmaster holds a doctorate in education, focussing on student engagement and motivation, with over 30 years experience in

international education. The business manager has a degree in human resources and institutional knowledge for the entire history of the school. Ten out of the 19 teachers hold advanced degrees. The school requires certification for all of its teaching staff or a formal exemption from the board of directors. Currently, two teachers lack a current certification. One has completed all of the requirements and is waiting for approval. The second is in the final year of study.

All SIS teachers may be contractually required to submit to a background check. This is a critical part of the existing child protection plan.

#### **A4.2 Professional Learning and Impact on Student Learning:**

Prior to the pandemic, SIS hosted two Commonwealth Coalition of Private Schools professional development conferences. The 2017 conference focussed on curriculum development and the accreditation process. The 2018 conference focussed on curriculum design and project-based learning. This formed a cornerstone of our action plan from the previous accreditation cycle. The following year was hosted by another school, focussing on inclusion and multiculturalism. Attendance was required for all staff. Unfortunately, due to restrictions imposed by the COVID19 Taskforce, it became impossible to continue the conference and the coalition has since been dissolved. Plans are in place to reform as the Coalition of Independent Schools (COIS) but this is slated for SY2024-25. In the interim, SIS began hosting its own professional development workshops on campus. Initially, these focussed on remote delivery of instruction but recently the school has also completed Emergency First Responder certification for all staff, mental health first aid training and more curriculum work. However, in approaching curriculum development, it became apparent that the pandemic had negatively impacted the school's ability to complete this portion of the action plan.

#### **A4.3 Communication and Understanding of School Policies and Procedures:**

The school has policies, codes, procedures, and resources that deal with maintaining a safe, healthy, and nurturing environment. Emergency procedures are practiced and published in the Parent-Student Handbook and there is broad understanding of the access to the handbook and what it contains.

### **Criterion A5: School Continuous Improvement Process**

At Saipan International School, planning processes are inclusive and collaborative, engaging stakeholders such as staff, students, and parents. The board provides strategic guidance, while decisions regarding curricular enhancements are made in consultation with the headmaster and faculty. Additionally, parent and student groups actively contribute to extracurricular planning. Professional development aligns with school improvement goals, although challenges such as natural disasters and the pandemic have necessitated adjustments to the schoolwide action plan.

#### **A5.1 Schoolwide Action Plan Correlated to Student Learning:**

The current action plan directly arrives from an analysis of student achievement data, the schoolwide learner goals and the academic standards. Student achievement data illustrates a school that places high regard to academic achievement, surpassing the national norms on the NWEA WASC and leading the region in number of AP scholars, Questbridge recipients, National Merit Scholars and more. It should be noted that SIS is not selective in its enrollment beyond a minimum English language proficiency in high school classes. SIS holds to its mission of helping each child reach its full potential by setting high expectations and creating opportunities for the children to meet these expectations.

SIS has roughly 100 students in High School and offers almost all of its AP courses during the junior and senior year (with the exception of AP Pre-Calculus and AP Seminar), yet it consistently has 17-19 AP Scholars. Prior to 2020, SIS had never received a Questbridge scholarship. However, with the focus on academics in our continuous improvement process, SIS has had Questbridge recipients every year since then and has two out of 23 students in the class of 2024. The national teams for speech and debate and math league are dominated by SIS, with half the spots being held by its students and the other half split by the remaining schools in the CNMI.

Middle school has seen growth in its programs as well, particularly with the founding of its own student council. This year, the MS STUCO has hosted the Valentine's Day Candygrams, sold holiday treats and has worked with the MS team to plan a MS Dance for its students. Elementary school student-collaboration is limited, mostly within the student-teacher relationship but it is the Elementary parents that form the closest groups within the educational support community.

#### **A5.2 Broad-Based and Collaborative:**

Students, parents and staff all have a role in the planning and implementation process at Saipan International School. The board sets broad policies and gives guidance about the direction of the school, based on parent feedback. For example, upon assuming his role in 2016, the headmaster was instructed by the board to increase the number of Advanced Placement courses in high school, particularly in the sciences. At that point, the school only offered Language and Composition, Literature and Composition, Statistics, US History and European History. While the board gave strategic guidance, curricular decisions remain with the headmaster and the faculty. In evaluating these programs, Social Studies was redesigned to offer all four disciplines in semester-long courses in grades 9 and 10 and then Human Geography, Microeconomics and Macroeconomics in grades 11 and 12, while the two history courses were deleted due to poor pass rates.. Physics II, Physics C and Biology were added to the sciences. Calculus AB and BC were added. The AP Capstone diploma program and its two courses, Seminar and Research, were added. Chinese Language and Culture was authorized but has not been officially taught yet.

The parent and student groups are also very involved in planning extracurricular activities, sometimes with the assistance of the staff, and sometimes on their own. For example, Model United Nations began as a student-initiated and student-run club. They created a fundraising scheme and took the club to Jeju, Korea for a MUN Conference. Upon returning with a best delegate award, the club expanded its outreach, training other island schools in the MUN process

and hosting its fourth NMI MUN Conference for Middle and High School students. Parents are very influential in running the [monthly bake sales](#) as well as the International Thanksgiving.

As mentioned above, curricular decisions are made by the staff after carefully considering student needs and programs. Both standards and textbook adoption came through a collaborative process involving a group of staff members at first and then the whole staff together. During this self-study, the staff decided to move away from the Common Core State Standards to the [Project Aero Standards](#) (American Education Reaches Out), a program designed to assist state department-sponsored overseas schools in implementing standards-based education. Due to the international nature of the school, the high turnover of staff and students and the comprehensiveness of the Aero standards, they were adapted and will form a key role in the curriculum articulation plans (see below).

### **A5.3 Systems Alignment:**

Strategic planning, including professional goals, has been tied to the school improvement process. For example, all K-8 teachers of Mathematics received training in Dimensions Math and all teachers received training in physical and emotional first aid. AP teachers have often received additional training for their subjects, particularly when the results demonstrated the need. All AP teachers for the 2024-24 school year will be engaging in some form of professional development this summer.

Establishment of professional goals and teacher evaluation is an area of growth that has been identified and added to the school-wide action plan as part of the curriculum articulation process. The committee for category B felt that this was critical in establishing responsive and accountable curricula (see below)

### **A5.4 Correlation between All Resources, Schoolwide Learner Goals, and Plan:**

As mentioned above, Saipan International School had to place many aspects of the schoolwide action plan on hold and move its time, fiscal, personnel and material resources to meet the challenges created by Supertyphoon Yutu and the school's loss of power and facilities as well as the pandemic when teachers were forced to quickly adapt to a remote and hybrid environment. The school was successful in meeting the challenges but elements of the action plan related to curriculum development had to be put on hold.

### **Criterion A6: Resources**

Saipan International School's resource allocation decisions ensure the sufficiency and effective utilization of human, material, physical, and financial resources in alignment with the schoolwide goals. Transparent procedures facilitate the development of an annual budget and adherence to quality accounting practices. Swift adaptation to unexpected funding enabled the acquisition of updated instructional materials, facilities, and technology to support students in achieving academic standards and college and career readiness expectations. However, ongoing

challenges underscore the need for continued investment in network infrastructure and staffing to meet diverse learner needs effectively and ensure proper utilization of federal grants.

#### **A6.1 Resource Allocation Decisions:**

Major spending priorities are set at Board meetings, discussing plans made by the headmaster and business manager. However, some resource allocation is made in consultation with the full staff, particularly for plans using federal funds. This year, in anticipation of new protocols for the consolidated grant, a professional development session was dedicated to grant parameters. The majority of the equitable service needs assessment was completed by the staff based on student needs in particular divisional and/or disciplinary areas. Following consultation with the federal programs office, the headmaster will meet with the staff to discuss prioritization based on actual allocations.

#### **A6.2 Practices and Procedures:**

The headmaster gives a report at each board of directors meeting. The report includes a financial component that discusses the ongoing budget, cash on hand, enrollment, staffing and federal grants. SIS policy requires two signatories on all checks issued, typically the headmaster and the treasurer of the board. All spending is overseen by both the business manager (from an accounting perspective), and the headmaster and treasurer (from a budgetary perspective). An external accountant is also employed by the school in order to reconcile the accounts annually and ensure quality accounting practices are followed.

#### **A6.3 Instructional Materials:**

The previous schoolwide action plan included a curriculum review cycle and reevaluation of the instructional materials. However, due to American Rescue Plan funding, SIS found itself the recipient of an unexpected \$1.3million that had to be spent in a short period of time. Therefore, the school quickly evaluated instructional materials and bought all new texts in Mathematics, English, Social Studies and Science. The school also ordered new school furniture in all of the classrooms, following requirements set by the staff. Laboratory materials and manipulatives were also secured. The majority of the remaining materials, including replacement education technology, online subscriptions, lab materials and consumable workbooks are replaced annually using Title II Part A funding: Supporting Effective Instruction.

#### **A6.4 Facilities Conducive to Learning:**

All SIS facilities are reviewed and licensed by the relevant local governing authorities and on file in the office. The facilities of the school are conducive to learning and nurturing children. SIS is constantly upgrading its network structure to ensure wireless network access throughout the school. The school has just upgraded its internet capabilities and added more iPads for students' use. A better network is needed to facilitate learning and additional staffing to improve the support for all learners, particularly those of high need and high achievement.



**ACS WASC Category A. Organization: Vision and Purpose, Governance, Leadership, Staff, Resources Summary**

*Prioritize and list the strengths and growth areas for the criteria and indicators in this category based on the school's identified major student learner needs.*

**Areas of Strength**

1. Ability to make rapid decision in the best interest of the students
2. Use of federal funds to supplement the school budget
3. Collaboration between leadership, governance and staff

**Areas of Growth**

1. Establishment of professional goals
2. Linking teacher evaluation to schoolwide objectives

## Category B: Curriculum

Saipan International School provides a rigorous academic program from kindergarten through high school. At the high school level, SIS focuses on preparing students for the challenges of higher education through an extensive number of AP classes and honors course options. At the middle school level, SIS focuses on developing both academic content skills and learning behaviors that facilitate success in high school. The elementary level facilitates social emotional growth along with academic rigor that challenges individuals to reach their highest potential. SIS provides a variety of opportunities that foster collaboration and creative responses, as well as instructional materials and approaches to encourage effective communication and challenging critical subjects. Over 50% of SIS graduates are members of the National Honor Society, and over 90% of SIS students continue their education at colleges or universities worldwide.

While SIS has been stressing fast improvements in curriculum and opportunities for students, the previous action plan focused on curriculum development which was set back due and considered incomplete.

### Criterion B1. Rigorous and Relevant Standards-Based Curriculum

All students participate in a rigorous, relevant, and coherent standards-based curriculum that supports the achievement of the schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile, academic standards, and the college and career readiness indicators in order to meet graduation requirements. Saipan International School identified the need to update both curriculum materials (textbooks, novel sets, science materials, etc.) as part of our curriculum review process. These texts and materials were ordered starting in 2018 as part of a cycle of curriculum review. As a result, *new reading instructional materials were adapted in 2019 (Journey's K-6th grade)* and math curriculum in 2020 (Dimension's Math K-8th grade) were implemented in the elementary division in 2020 and the Middle School in 2021. All teachers receive training on Dimension's Math and plans are in place to train new teachers. While textbooks and new novel sets were adopted and ordered and reordered between 2019 and 2023 for the high school programs, these materials have been slow to arrive. The math, science and social studies, AP program support text arrived for student use in August of 2023. The novel sets for the middle and high school programs only partially arrived in September of 2023 with several novels still outstanding from the order. Unfortunately, the text supports for the middle school and language have not arrived at the time of this report. This issue is beyond the control of Saipan International School as the funding for new materials was granted through the federal programs office and administered through the Public School Systems' payment office. The SIS administrative team is working to resolve this ongoing problem.

From 2019 to 2023, SIS's Chinese curriculum underwent a comprehensive transformation, meticulously designed to meet the evolving needs of students at different proficiency levels. Initially, the curriculum commenced with the utilization of new textual materials, tailored for beginners to acquaint them with Mandarin language fundamentals and cultural nuances. As students progressed, the curriculum seamlessly transitioned to the HSK Standard Course, strategically chosen as the official textbook for the HSK Chinese test, aiming to equip students with the requisite skills to excel in this proficiency assessment. This phase emphasized rigorous

linguistic training and exam preparation, ensuring students could confidently navigate the HSK Chinese test. Building upon this foundation, Integrated Chinese marked the culmination of this developmental trajectory. This advanced textbook not only aligned with the requirements of students preparing for AP Chinese Language and Culture Exam but also laid a robust groundwork for their future collegiate endeavors. Through a judicious selection of materials and integration of innovative pedagogical approaches, the curriculum evolution from Happy Chinese to HSK Standard Course to Integrated Chinese epitomized a dynamic and holistic approach to Chinese language education, catering to students' diverse learning needs and aspirations.

The implementation of the HSK program at Saipan International School began with the school's application and subsequent designation as a global Chinese test center in 2018, marking a significant milestone in its commitment to promoting Chinese language proficiency among students. This endeavor was further solidified through the signing of the "Chinese Test Service Cooperation Agreement," formalizing the school's partnership with the HSK program. To ensure the effective management and administration of the program, teachers underwent rigorous training and obtained management certification through training exams, demonstrating their competence in overseeing HSK-related activities. The school then facilitated an on-site inspection by sending pictures to the inspection center, affirming its adherence to program standards and protocols. Each year, the school organized and administered different levels of the HSK Chinese test, providing students with opportunities to showcase their language skills and earn internationally recognized certifications. Through these efforts, Saipan International School has successfully established itself as a leading hub for Chinese language education, empowering students to excel in a globalized world.

### **B1.1 Current Educational Research and Thinking:**

Saipan International School is committed to providing high quality instruction but has faced challenges in implementing a fully articulated curriculum at all levels. SIS recognized this issue with our previous WASC goals and began making efforts toward developing a scope and sequence for all of its courses as well as beginning professional development sessions using the UBD format. Unfortunately, this was interrupted initially by Super typhoon YUTU, which caused serious damage to the island and its infrastructure, particularly electricity and the water supply. This disrupted classes, interfered with internet access and caused substantial stress to our entire community for the rest of the school year of 2018-2019. Following YUTU, was the worldwide shut down caused by Covid-19 which forced the school online for the second half of school year 2019-2020. While SIS was able to open for face to face classes, the school structures were limited to help prevent the spread of Covid-19. In addition, modifications were made for students who were not able to attend face to face instruction. This hybrid approach meant that teachers were tasked with additional instructional responsibilities making it difficult to find additional time for curriculum review during the school year of 2020-2021.

Beginning 2021-2022, SIS began the process of curriculum review with the adoption of a new math program in the elementary school (Dimensions Math), the implementation of the NWEA MAP testing and a review of textbooks for adoption in English, Social Studies and Science. SIS submitted its selected text book order as part of curriculum support and to ensure a coherent curriculum spiral. Unfortunately, due to island wide procurement and funding these books have

become available this year. At the time of writing, SIS was still waiting for English textbooks and curriculum supported library material that had not arrived on the island.

The culminating result is a widely fractured curriculum with some areas such as Singapore Math and AP courses having been more effectively articulated than other areas such as middle and high school English and Social Studies. Moving forward, SIS has committed to NWEA MAP data and is evaluating the best use for the Learning Continuum offered by NWEA which is also connected to the Common Core Standards adopted by SIS. In addition, SIS recognizes the gaps in our curriculum and is implementing a curriculum review cycle.

### **B1.2 Congruence with Schoolwide Student Goals:**

Saipan International School believes that a well-rounded education not only encompasses academic excellence but also the development of essential life skills. SIS's curriculum is designed to align with the school's learner goals and graduate profile, which emphasize leadership, respect, initiative, responsibility, perseverance, compassion and integrity. By integrating these goals into the teaching practices and curriculum, SIS ensures that students are not only academically proficient but also well-prepared for success in higher education and future careers. Additionally, SIS continuously assesses and adapts curriculum to meet evolving academic standards and college and career readiness benchmarks, ensuring that all students receive a comprehensive and relevant education.

Unfortunately, SIS has fallen short of its goal to create a unified, fully articulated and structurally reviewed curriculum. This was one of the goals from the last accreditation cycle. While most classes are outlined with syllabi or course overview, several middle and high school classes lack fully articulated goals and curriculum vertical links, skills spirals and current syllabi. SIS has become over reliant on the skills and expertise of its faculty, particularly its most senior teachers. This is an area of concern as SIS does experience turn over and retirements annually, making reliance on individuals a dubious course of action. While many goals from the previous self-study (see summary) have been completed or partially completed, this is an area of growth which needs to be more systematically addressed as SIS moves forward.

SIS has reviewed and decided to use the AERO Standards as a blueprint for further alignment of curriculum with standards. Currently SIS uses the AERO Math and Language Arts standards for its NWEA MAP testing of grades K-10). This decision represents a departure from the Common CORE Math and Language Arts standards previously used for curriculum purposes. Standards for science and social studies remain the same NGSS and NCSS respectively but may also shift to AERO.

Beginning steps have been implemented to both standardize SIS instructors' approach to writing curriculum and to begin a more comprehensive approach to unit planning. At this time a template has been developed and shared that uses the concepts and methodology of UBD (Understanding by Design). Administrative instructions are for all teachers to complete and submit a completed template for their individual elective activities. These classes are meant to allow students to explore different interests without the fear of impacting their GPA and as such

are graded on a pass/fail basis. These classes are also more fluid, allowing for more creativity in both materials and assessment.

### **B1.3 Academic Standards and College and Career Readiness Indicators:**

Saipan International School offers nearly a dozen Advanced Placement (AP) courses in any one year. By the end of their senior year, each student will have taken at least one AP course but on the average most students will have taken three to four before they graduate from high school. AP courses offer high school students a rigorous college level experience that exceeds high school standards and passing the AP exam is an indicator that the student is ready for college. Many students also volunteer their time in services that give them insight and work experience that sometimes relate to careers they look to have after college.

### **B1.4 Curricular Integration:**

In curricular integration, teachers organize lessons around common learning content across disciplines. Intentionally design learning experiences that incorporate content, skills, and perspectives from multiple disciplines. Encouraging students to see the interconnectedness of knowledge and develop critical thinking skills by applying what they have learned in one subject to solve problems in another. For example, Social Studies tries to link to English or other classes. Science lessons might link to math graphing skills. Elementary teachers integrate art, science and social studies when appropriate. The ESL teacher and faculty coordinate assistance to ESL students in all classes. Teachers integrate reading, writing, and oral communication into language arts; integrate history, geography, economics, and government into interdisciplinary social studies courses. Teachers organize lessons around students' questions and concerns. To develop students' ability to transfer knowledge to different situations. By implementing these strategies, students can create an enriching learning environment where students can see the interconnectedness of different disciplines and develop the skills needed for success in college and beyond.

### **B1.5 Community Resources and Articulation and Follow-up Studies:**

Saipan International School prioritizes its community involvement. The school's student population is largely involved with clubs, sports, and afterschool programs that enhance the learning opportunities of all. Parents and students are weekly informed of school and classroom events. Students strive to volunteer and give their personal time to grow in order to be contributing members of not only the SIS community, but Saipan as an island. Students are given the chance to pursue their interests in college with school wide "college nights" and active communication with the local college and also those universities afar.

## **Criterion B2. Equity and Access to Curriculum**

Saipan International School continuously strives to meet the needs of all learners in diverse and differentiated ways. Providing personalized, interdisciplinary content, students are given the opportunity to make real world connections and apply what is learned to their daily lives.

Teachers are trained in various strategies to provide the skills needed for students to be successful. There are a variety of resources present and curriculum to be used as needed. Parents are given the chance to participate in curriculum aid outside of school in order to help their student at home. With collaborative efforts, Saipan International School and the community of families work hard to be certain that our population graduates with all the tools they need to succeed in being a lifelong learner.

### **B2.1 Variety of Programs and Full Range of Choices:**

Saipan International School firmly believes that all students should have access to a comprehensive range of realistic college and career options. To achieve this, SIS has offered a diverse range of courses and after school programs, helping students identify their interests and talents. SIS is committed to providing a supportive and inclusive learning environment that fosters individual growth and self-discovery. Offering a diverse range of electives like chess, Chinese, Spanish, film studies, yoga, competitive speech, environmental sustainability/plastic recycling, video editing, and the history of gaming empowers students in grades 6-12 to explore their interests and talents. By engaging in such varied activities, students develop critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, and communication skills essential for success in college, careers, and other educational pursuits. These electives not only cater to diverse learning styles but also expose students to different cultures, disciplines, and industries, broadening their perspectives and enabling them to make informed choices about their future paths. Whether students aspire to pursue STEM fields, language studies, arts, or entrepreneurship, these electives provide a solid foundation and foster a lifelong love for learning, ensuring they are well-prepared to navigate a dynamic and competitive global landscape. Through a variety of programs and resources, SIS helps students identify their unique interests, talents, and passions. Whether it's through career technical education, guidance on college applications or mentorship opportunities, SIS ensures that every student has the tools and knowledge to pursue their desired educational and career pathways with confidence and enthusiasm. SIS is dedicated to preparing students for the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead, and SIS takes pride in the fact that our graduates are well-equipped to excel in their chosen field and make meaningful contributions to society.

Elementary students do not have a choice of election in their enrichment and remediation block but all students receive weekly instruction in Art, Music and Dance, Reading Enrichment, Drama, and Socioemotional Learning. This is in addition to the two specials of Mandarin and Physical Education that they engage in on an every other day basis.

### **B2.2 Access to Curriculum, Including Real World Experiences, by All Students:**

Saipan International School ensures that every student, regardless of background or circumstance, has the opportunity to engage with materials that are not only academically challenging but also directly applicable to their lives. Saipan International School 1-K has adopted the Elevate Science Program from Savvas Realize. This program is “phenomena-based, hands-on science curriculum immersing students in the inquiry process.” The program is filled with many real-world examples and allows students to experience science through virtual simulations and hands-on activities. For example, when students are studying the earth's history, they will examine fossiliferous limestone found locally containing organic remains, such as

shells, corals, and other marine organisms, along with sediments. Students will gain valuable insights into past life forms and environmental conditions that once existed on Saipan. Science is “elevated” for problem-solving, critical thinking, and the NGSS performance expectations. At the high school level, SIS offers AP courses in math and science that are typically more rigorous than standard high school courses and require students to complete college-level readings, assignments, and exams.

### **B2.3 Student-Parent-Staff Collaboration:**

At Saipan International School, we prioritize the creation of a school community where everyone, whether parents, students, or staff, experiences a deep sense of belonging and worth. We firmly believe that a caring and inclusive environment is essential to the holistic development of our students. We work together to develop and monitor individualized learning plans. The school provides college application services for students. Beginning in 11th grade, students participate in course work with their counselor to identify their special interests and find the best fit for their major after high school. By 12th grade, students will work with their counselor in and out of the classroom to build a strong foundation for college applications. This includes not only academic goals, but also college and career aspirations. We understand that each student is unique. In a collaborative effort between parents, students, and staff, we have established high school classroom counselors to help elementary schools with voluntary after-school enrichment programs to ensure that each student's individual needs are met. We are committed to building strong relationships and open lines of communication within the school community, such as: The school hosts the annual Gecko 5000 Cross Country Invitational; Open House for students and parents in August; parents make food and sell it at the school at monthly “Bake Sales”; Parent-Teacher Conferences are held twice each school year; and parents have access to grades and progress reports, as well as special announcements through the OpenSIS system. Collaboration is at the core of our program, and we actively involve parents, students, and staff in each student's educational journey. This is the cornerstone of our success, ensuring that every student feels supported and empowered to pursue their dreams and aspirations.

## **ACS WASC Category B. Curriculum Summary**

### **Areas of Strength**

1. Implementation of Dimensions Math K-8 Curriculum
2. Mandarin Growth, Year to Year (50% Annual Advancement in Level)
3. Improvement in MAP Testing Results

### **Areas of Growth/ Goals**

1. Establishment and alignment of standards within grade level across all standards
  - a. Updated Curriculum Mapping
  - b. Identify current gaps at all levels and subjects
  - c. Evaluate materials

- d. Align materials
- 2. Aligning assessments to curricular standards
  - a. AERO standards
  - b. High school semester finals
- 3. Accountability of effective implementation of curriculum in the classroom environment
  - a. Teacher evaluation (Danielson)
  - b. Dedicated Curriculum Position
  - c. MAP Testing and coordinated summative semester assessments
  - d. Self evaluation and goal setting



### **Category C: Learning and Teaching**

Saipan International School (SIS) prioritizes student engagement in challenging and relevant learning experiences, fostering an equity-centered environment where every student feels valued and supported. Core virtues such as leadership, respect, and compassion guide students, instilling a sense of purpose and moral direction. SIS utilizes NWEA MAP testing to assess students' academic progress and tailor instruction accordingly, ensuring adherence to current academic standards and fostering educational innovation.

At SIS, college and career readiness is integral, with courses offered at each high school level supported by federal programs grants. The institution's commitment to excellence extends to its diverse student and teacher body, reflecting a global identity and socioeconomic diversity.

Through a variety of teaching strategies and resources, SIS promotes student-centered instruction, encouraging collaboration, critical thinking, and real-world application of knowledge. Students participate in hands-on projects, AP classes, and community service initiatives, preparing them for higher education and future careers.

The school prioritizes student voice and agency, utilizing tools like the Student Community Survey and monthly STUCO meetings to address concerns and foster open communication. Additionally, SIS integrates digital learning tools and problem-solving approaches, with a focus on using technology to enhance learning effectiveness and tackle real-world issues.

Furthermore, SIS emphasizes career preparedness through its comprehensive High School advisory program, guiding students through essential study habits, career exploration, and college application preparation. Through these initiatives, SIS remains dedicated to creating a vibrant and inclusive learning ecosystem that empowers students for success in an ever-evolving world.

#### **Criterion C1: Student Engagement in Challenging and Relevant Learning Experiences:**

Saipan International School is an equity-centered learning environment. Students feel valued and supported in their learning process. The students at SIS are constantly being challenged with relevant learning experiences that reflect school-wide goals. Here at SIS we have our core virtues which are awarded to one individual at each grade level, one per month. Our virtues are Leadership, Respect, Initiative, Responsibility, Perseverance, Compassion, and Integrity. These virtues serve as guiding principles, instilling in students a sense of purpose and moral compass that extends beyond the classroom.

Saipan International school maintains and keeps up to date with the current academic standards by following the MAP testing protocols and using that knowledge that we gain to better understand the level of our students to better the classroom instruction. This strategic approach allows us to gain valuable insights into the academic progress of our students, enabling us to tailor classroom instruction to meet their individual needs effectively. By staying abreast of

current academic standards, SIS remains at the forefront of educational innovation, consistently striving for excellence.

Saipan International School has college and career readiness courses at each level of high school to ensure that our students are ready when the time comes to move to the next level of their academic learning. College and career readiness is supported through a federal programs grant.

Saipan International School (SIS) stands as a beacon of educational excellence, committed to providing an equity-centered learning environment where students not only acquire knowledge but also feel valued and supported throughout their educational journey. At the heart of our educational philosophy is the belief that every student deserves an enriching and empowering experience.

One of the distinctive features of SIS is the unwavering commitment to challenging students with relevant and meaningful learning experiences aligned with school-wide goals. The atmosphere at SIS is one where intellectual curiosity thrives, and students are encouraged to explore and push the boundaries of their academic potential. As students progress through the high school levels at SIS, they are equipped with the tools for success in the ever-evolving landscape of higher education and careers. The institution offers college and career readiness courses at each high school level, a testament to our dedication to preparing students for the next phase of their academic journey. This forward-thinking approach ensures that SIS students are not only academically proficient but also ready to navigate the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

Saipan International School stands as a model of educational excellence, fostering an environment where equity, achievement, and character development are paramount. With a focus on challenging experiences, core virtues, adherence to academic standards, and college and career readiness, SIS is dedicated to nurturing well-rounded individuals prepared for success in the broader world.

### **C1.1 Results of Student Observations and Examining Work:**

The students of Saipan International School actively engage in challenging and relevant academic pursuits that foster a dynamic and enriching learning environment. Recognizing the importance of preparing students for a rapidly evolving world, the school emphasizes hands-on projects, collaborative initiatives, and real-world applications in its curriculum. Whether through innovative science experiments, community service projects, or participation in global awareness campaigns, students at Saipan International School are encouraged to explore their interests and apply their knowledge to address contemporary issues. This approach not only cultivates critical thinking and problem-solving skills but also instills a sense of responsibility and global citizenship among the students, preparing them for success in an interconnected and ever-changing society. All of this takes place in an environment that is both diverse and accepting.

Students are able to show their proficiency in a wide variety of ways. Examples of different project-based assessments can be seen in these pictures ([1](#), [2](#), [3](#)). Another example of work that challenges and prepares students for future learning and jobs is what is completed in AP classes.

Our AP offerings and the number of students engaged in AP classes has been steadily increasing. SIS currently offers the most in-person AP classes of any school in the CNMI.

The environment that has been nurtured here is demonstrated through the annual community survey where respondents reported they felt valued, accepted, and respected.

Because of the diversity of our student and teacher body, equity is essential. Our student body reflects a global identity with 25.91% of our student population holding a passport other than the USA. The student body includes students holding 9 different passports. Likewise, our teaching staff hail from diverse backgrounds, including the USA, Korea, the Philippines, China, Peru, and Mauritius. The community also represents socioeconomic diversity with 6.07% of students qualifying for free lunch programs, while the remaining 93.93% all qualify for reduced lunch programs.

### **C1.2 Student Understanding of Learning Expectations:**

Ensuring students grasp the standards and expected performance levels across various subjects is a cornerstone of our educational mission at SIS. We are dedicated to facilitating this understanding through the dissemination of detailed syllabi and regular PowerPoint presentations in class. Furthermore, we leverage technology such as ClassDojo and Geckonet to provide parents and students with continuous access to these learning expectations. By doing so, we aim to empower our students with the knowledge and tools necessary for both academic success and readiness for future endeavors in college and career paths.

### **Criterion C2: Student-Centered Instruction through a Variety of Strategies and Resources:**

In the pursuit of nurturing an equitable and enriching learning atmosphere, educators employ an array of dynamic strategies and rich resources. This multifaceted approach is meticulously designed to ignite the spark of curiosity and critical thinking in every student, fostering their growth and development.

Upon a comprehensive examination of the school's endeavors to meet the Learning and Teaching criteria, coupled with an analysis of supporting indicators, it becomes evident that commendable efforts are being made. The commitment to cultivating an inclusive environment where every student thrives is unmistakable.

The utilization of diverse teaching methodologies, ranging from innovative technological tools to collaborative ventures and hands-on experiences, plays a pivotal role in enhancing the educational journey. Such a diverse array of resources contributes significantly to the holistic development of learners.

SIS stands as a beacon of dedication to creating a vibrant and inclusive learning ecosystem. The evidence unequivocally demonstrates the positive impact of these initiatives on student

achievement and overall well-being. It underscores the institution's unwavering commitment to continual improvement and the delivery of a comprehensive and effective education that prepares students for success in an ever-evolving world.

### **C2.1 Teachers Facilitate Learning:**

The commitment to fostering dynamic learning experiences at Saipan International School is evident through a variety of initiatives. Through activities like Reading Buddies and group projects, collaborative learning is fostered, transcending grade levels, and promoting teamwork and peer support from kindergarten through 4th grade. The school embraces diverse learning styles by incorporating various teaching methods, such as roleplay and technology-assisted activities. In addition, we enrich the learning environment by inviting experts from esteemed organizations such as the CNMI Division of Fish and Wildlife and the Mariana Islands Nature Alliance (MINA) to present, offering students valuable insights into environmental conservation. Our approach embeds culturally responsive practices, encouraging community involvement for students to both learn about the local culture and share their own experiences. Culturally inclusive and immersive environments are created by respecting and valuing students' cultural backgrounds. Community involvement is encouraged through activities such as the opportunity to sail with the proa boat from 500 sail, learn how to do traditional weaving, and participate in cultural dances of the island. The Culture Club Presentation is introduced, where students explore and celebrate diverse cultural aspects, promoting understanding and inclusivity. The tangible outcomes of students' intellectual and creative endeavors are showcased through artifacts, exemplifying the depth and breadth of their achievements in both high and middle school projects. This holistic approach aims to create a vibrant and inclusive educational environment, enriching the academic journey for every student at Saipan International school.

### **C2.2 Student Voice and Agency:**

The Student Community Survey, a pivotal tool in gauging the collective pulse of our middle and high school student body, serves as the foundation for fostering open communication and understanding. This comprehensive questionnaire delves into the students' concerns, thoughts, and aspirations. The monthly STUCO (Student Council) meetings provide a dynamic platform for translating survey insights into action. As the student representatives convene, armed with the graphed results depicting the community's sentiments, these meetings become a nexus for deliberation and strategizing. The link between the survey questions and the graphed results serves as a visual roadmap, guiding the discussions and initiatives that emerge from these gatherings. Through this interconnected process, the student voice not only resonates but also steers the course of our educational community, creating a collaborative environment that values and addresses the diverse perspectives within our student body. Saipan International School continues to pave the way for students to use their voices in a professional manner which can then develop communication and leadership skills. Saipan International School continues to improve on providing courses that cater to an inclusive and dynamic learning environment. Thus, giving students more to voice their feedback in terms of how beneficial it is for them on not only an educational standpoint but also personal as well. According to the findings of the student survey, a significant majority, exceeding 90% of students, perceive a sense of acceptance within the school environment. This high level of perceived acceptance underscores the positive social

dynamics prevalent within the school community, fostering an environment conducive to students' well-being and sense of belonging. 83.4% of students are provided with opportunities to apply their acquired knowledge within the classroom setting. This indicates a robust emphasis on active learning methodologies and practical application of academic concepts within the educational framework. Such opportunities not only enhance students' understanding and retention of material but also promote critical thinking and problem-solving skills essential for their academic and professional development.

### **C2.3 Digital Learning and Problem Solving:**

SIS's commitment to using technology to enhance student learning and solve real-world problems is evident both in the wide range of teaching software implemented throughout the school as well as the annual student community survey responses. For instance, 93.7% of survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their teacher uses technology to make learning more effective.

The software used covers a variety of academic subjects and includes both interactive learning tools and assessment tools. For example, SIS teachers use NearPod to create engaging presentations, BrainPop to provide interactive learning modules, and Moodle to create and deliver online courses. Among other resources, SIS also uses Savvas Science and Social Studies, Delta Math for personalized math instruction, Khan Academy, Pearson Mastering Biology, EdPuzzle for interactive videos, and Turner's Graph of the Week.

SIS has a 1:1 iPad to student ratio for all students from kindergarten to 8th grade. For those above 8th grade, a personal laptop is required for each student and additional iPads are available when necessary.

One of the best ways SIS is engaging students to solve real-world problems is through the recycling club where students collect plastic trash, wash it, sort it, and then use specialized equipment to turn it into new things like bag clips and keychains. See the following pictures for examples of the students at work. These new products the students make can then be sold to the community to facilitate further student initiatives.

### **C2.4 Career Preparedness and Applied Learning:**

Enhancing Career Readiness and Practical Learning: Our educators extend learning experiences beyond conventional textbooks and classrooms, enriching students' understanding and equipping them for both collegiate and professional pursuits.

At SIS, we are committed to broadening our students' horizons beyond the confines of traditional education through our comprehensive High School advisory program. Tailored across various grade levels, our approach is designed to meet the evolving needs of our students: In the 9th Grade Advisory class, we introduce students to essential study habits and cultivate an awareness of their individual strengths and weaknesses. Discussions revolve around fundamental steps for academic achievement, including resume building, organizational skills, understanding personality types and learning styles, collaborative teamwork, and refining presentation abilities.

Throughout the semester, students actively engage in group and individual exercises to reinforce their comprehension of these skills.

The 10th Grade Advisory class places a primary focus on career exploration. Through a series of assessments, students identify their interests and strengths, aligning them with potential career pathways. Building upon the foundational skills developed in the 9th grade, students continue to refine their resumes.

The 11th Grade Seminar marks the commencement of college application preparation. Students explore colleges that resonate with their interests and career aspirations, participating in virtual college fairs, interacting with admissions offices, and gaining insights into application timelines. This seminar introduces a college search checklist, guiding students through essential considerations.

The Senior Seminar, a pivotal period for our senior students, is dedicated to meeting impending application deadlines. Students diligently work on their applications, referencing the senior checklist. Emphasis is placed on exploring financial aid options, completing the CSS profile and FAFSA, and reviewing and finalizing resumes, letters of recommendation, and college essays. This comprehensive process culminates in the submission of thorough college applications.

### **ACS WASC Category C. Learning and Teaching Summary**

*Prioritize and list the strengths and growth areas for the criteria and indicators in this category based on the school's identified major student learner needs.*

#### **Areas of Strength**

1. Small Class Sizes
2. Multiple learning styles addressed in the classroom

#### **Areas of Growth**

1. Life Skills / College Preparedness Integration
2. Social Emotional Growth
3. Cross teaching between academic learning

## **Category D: Assessment and Accountability**

Teachers at SIS employ assessments as integral components of the teaching and learning process, utilizing the results to measure student progress towards academic standards and schoolwide learner objectives to modify instructional approaches, and allocate resources effectively. School leadership ensures effective assessment processes, collecting and analyzing performance data to inform curriculum improvements and resource allocation. Differentiated instruction is prioritized, with varied courses and support structures catering to individual student needs, especially evident in three-level English classes and AP Capstone Programs. Standardized tests like MAP Testing and AP exams provide insights into student performance, guiding curriculum adjustments and instructional strategies. Teachers closely monitor student progress, offering timely feedback and employing tools like Class Dojo and student planners for communication. SIS's commitment to holistic student development is reflected in its high rates of academic achievement, National Honor Society memberships, and recognition of character development through Virtue Assemblies.

### **Criterion D1: Reporting and Accountability Process**

Teachers use assessments frequently and integrate them into the teaching/learning process. The assessment results are the basis for (a) measurement of each student's progress toward the schoolwide learner outcomes and academic standards, (b) regular evaluation, modification, and improvement of curriculum and instructional approaches, and (c) allocation of resources.

The school leadership and the faculty use effective assessment processes to collect, disaggregate, analyze and report school performance data to all stakeholders about student progress toward accomplishing the academic standards. The analysis of the data guides the school's programs and processes, the allocation and usage of sources, and forms the basis for the development of the action plan.

SIS teachers recognize the importance of assessment and its integration into teaching and learning. Teachers measure students' progress with appropriate assessments and evaluative measures. Formative and summative assessments are implemented to monitor learners' growth. Teachers identify students who need extra support and modify instructions and assessments in conjunction with the needs of the learners. Student feedback becomes the basis of improvement in curriculum and instruction, and teachers warrant the importance of allocating appropriate resources to deliver course contents that will encourage and adopt a higher level of thinking among students.

The school is working towards strengthening the programs implemented to cater differentiated instructions. For upper high school English classes, SIS provides three level courses (AP, Honors, and Public School System (online class)) to accommodate the individual needs of the students. In addition, new AP and elective courses are added to promote continuous pursuit of knowledge. The language arts program is modified into different learning levels to facilitate effective acquisition of English language in a multicultural setting. Instructional resources are



allocated to all teachers as support in delivery of instruction. The school provides meaningful professional development.

### **D1.1 Professionally Acceptable Assessment Process:**

SIS collects standardized test data from SAT, PSAT STAR Reading, MAP testing, Achieve 3000 and AP Exams. For high school, the headmaster analyzes the test data and shares with applicable teacher groups. Focus Groups and Home Groups all had access to the data during this self-study. Additionally, parents are given access to MAP test results twice a year for their assessment. Several parent sessions are held annually to present the data to the parent community and the board of directors.

### **D1.2 Basis for Determination of Performance Level:**

Broad policies are set by the school leadership. Discussions of assessments take place during professional development days and during staff meetings. For example, homework policy, make up work, plagiarism, treatment of zeros, weighting of AP classes, etc. are all school-level policies that are published in the Parent-Student handbook and were discussed as a full staff in SY2023-24. However, for individual classes, the teacher sets the grading policies.

### **D1.3 Assessment of Program Areas:**

Singapore Math Curriculum was added to promote critical mental math and to facilitate the understanding of abstract mathematical concepts. MAP Testing, STAR Reading, and other tests measure the strengths and weaknesses of our current curriculum. AP test results, both instructional and score reports, guide the AP teachers with new instructional goals and strategies. In grades one through eight, teachers employ a comprehensive science curriculum: Elevate Science. This blended digital and print curriculum ensures vertical alignment for Elementary and Middle school students and centers active, student-centered learning. In High School, SIS offers a course-specific program, exposing students to all the branches of science.

### **D1.4 Schoolwide Modifications Based on Assessment Results:**

School leadership assesses programs and expectations for students' academic growth and progress. Teachers use both formative and summative assessments including quizzes, tests, and verbal assessment to gauge students' current understanding. Starting in 2021 students in grades K-10th grades were tested with MAP Testing to show how our students compared to the rest of the United States. MAP Testing, STAR Reading, and other tests have shown the need for differentiated English education; SIS now has three-level English classes. AP Test results highlighted weaknesses and strengths of our current AP programs that some of the incoming students (mostly second language learners) were not ready for AP class. SIS adopted differentiated language instruction to better serve the students. SIS added AP Capstone Programs and dropped some AP classes.

SIS collects data about students' academic abilities by using standardized tests that are commonly administered on the United States Mainland. SIS changed from SAT10 to MAP Testing to better assess our students and get help for instructional strategies and monitoring student growth in the areas of reading, math, and language use.

SIS teachers design marking systems that suit their grade levels of students. They work off of a standard grading system, with the mark "A" being the highest and "F" being the lowest. In many classes, grades are not only determined by the scores students receive on their tests, but also their participation and effort in their classes. They have a large number of ESL students at the school and a number of leveled English-plus classes. In these classes, students who display progress are promoted and may be assessed on a Pass/ No Pass grade scale.

SIS students are classified according to their reading levels and closely monitored by the teacher through such programs as Accelerated Reader and Achieve 3000. SIS recognizes the importance of student feedback as an important factor in monitoring student progress. Doing so, teachers ensure that all students receive the support they need to maximize their learning potential. This is done through teacher conferences, virtue awards, team meetings, and timely progress reports.

Differentiated instruction and assessments are offered throughout the year. Student data are recorded using grading software quarterly. Doing so, allows the teachers to design, modify, and update their lesson plans according to the needs of the students (Parent-Student Handbook).

## **Criterion D2: Using Student Assessment Strategies to Monitor**

Both teachers and students use frequent and integrated assessments (a) to measure each student's progress toward the schoolwide learner outcomes and academic standards and (b) to provide regular evaluation, modification, and improvement of curriculum and instructional approaches to support the educational progress of every student. Evaluations from tests and students' performance help teachers align SIS curricula to the national curricula, especially AP standards and procedures. The assessments have also been developed solely by the teachers. Every student receives a grade showing their ability and improvement for the courses taken.

### **D2.1 Monitoring Student Growth:**

Teachers determine and monitor all students' growth and progress toward meeting the schoolwide student goals, graduate profile, academic standards, and college and career readiness expectations. Students of concern are discussed in divisional meetings, and teachers look for innovative ways to address the concerns. The Federal Programs officer at the Public Schools System also works closely with the school and the Title One teachers to analyze data from

Achieve 3000, Rosetta Stone, and Star Reading to ensure that the programs are meeting the needs of our students.

## **D2.2 Teacher and Student Feedback:**

SIS teachers provide timely, specific, and descriptive feedback in order to support students in achieving learning goals. Teachers use student feedback and dialogue to monitor progress and learn about the degree to which learning experiences are understood, relevant, and prepare students for college and careers. SIS uses Class Dojo to share communication with parents about upcoming standardized testing. Teachers use Class Dojo to share feedback with parents about student's progress in achieving learning goals. Students' grades are available throughout the year on the online grading system, OpenSIS. Beginning in the 2023-2024 school year, each student was provided a student planner book to improve students' organizational skills and increase communication with parents (Parent-Student Handbook).

## **D2.3 Demonstration of Student Achievement:**

SIS graduates are successfully admitted to the elite schools in the United States, Hong Kong, and Korea.

SIS has a high number/percentage of National Honor Students in three divisions, whose minimum cumulative GPA is 3.7. In the National Elementary Honor Division, which constitutes only 4th and 5th grades, SIS had 10 members and 5 inductees; in the National Junior Honor Society division, SIS had 15 members and 17 inductees, totalling 32 current members; National Honor Society Division of SIS had a total of 37 members and inductees. In summary, 94 of 158 students were members of National Honor societies at SIS in 2022.

Furthermore, the numbers of honor roll students and AP School Honor Roll Score Reports demonstrate SIS student achievements. 122 students are on the Headmaster's List (GPA 3.75 and above), and 53 students are in the Honor Roll. In 2023, SIS earned Gold Recognition on the 2023 AP School Honor Roll. To qualify for the 2023 AP School Honor Roll, schools must exceed the criteria set by AP Central. In addition, 5 out of 5 students passed the HSK1 Chinese test, a pass rate of 100%; 16 of 16 students passed the HSK2 Chinese test, a pass rate of 100%; and 11 of 12 students passed HSK 3 exam, a pass rate of 91.7%.

Another way in which students are recognized is through our monthly Virtue Assemblies. Each month the school concentrates on one of our SIS Virtues and one of the four 21st Century Learning Objectives. This is a way of celebrating not only the academic achievements, but also the character development that is needed to be successful in the future.

## **ACS WASC Category D. Assessment and Accountability Summary**

*Prioritize and list the strengths and growth areas for the criteria and indicators in this category based on the school's identified major student learner needs.*

### **Areas of Strength**

1. SIS has successfully replaced the old SAT10 to MAP Testing, which gives a more accurate measure of a student's individual proficiency level and growth over time. This accurate and speedy measure enables SIS teachers to track changes in students' performance and to identify areas of improvement and tailored instruction.  
In addition, AP teachers use AP classroom, AP Question Bank, AP Instructional Planning Reports, AP insight, and other resources to identify strengths and weaknesses in their instruction approach, which helps teachers make targeted improvements and can guide decisions about course offerings and student placement.
2. SIS students have competed and won many athletic, academic, and performing arts competitions.
3. SIS graduates successfully enrolled in colleges in the States and other countries.

### **Areas of Growth**

1. An area of growth is punctuality in communicating the long term plan and preparation assessments. School leadership will create a long term plan for assessments that is shared with all stakeholders (board, parents, teachers, students) prior to the beginning of the academic school year. Any additional training required by teachers will be provided in advance as written in the long term plan. Teachers will create a year-long pacing plan at the beginning of the school year for subjects taught to ensure the curriculum is covered entirely during the school year. Use of data from standardized tests will be reflected in teachers' preparation of lessons and in class assessments.  
SIS traditionally and currently uses MAP tests and AP tests to assess students' achievements in respective classes; however, the change of local demographics and the larger inflow of ESL students make modifications necessary to better serve the student population. Some teachers currently use pre-tests and post-tests to address the problems, but SIS needs to come up with more inclusive assessment strategies to better diagnose and assess every student's needs and achievements at school level.
2. SIS uses standardized tests to fine-tune our benchmarks and standards. SIS needs to have a set procedure that can guide decisions about course offerings and student placement. SIS has incoming international students with varying degrees of English proficiency, and, because of its limited resources and personnel, we cannot provide very effective instruction for some students. SIS needs to set a standardized procedure for student placement and course offerings.



## **Category E: School Culture and Support for Student Personal, Social-Emotional, and Academic Growth**

Saipan International School emphasizes family and community involvement, utilizing tools like OpenSIS for communication. While involvement in large events like bake sales and festivals are thriving, routine involvement in learning is not as noticeable. The school promotes inclusivity through diverse cultural understanding, celebrating global holidays, and translating communications into multiple languages. SIS fosters rapport and trust among students and staff but acknowledges there is room for improvement. Policies ensure a safe environment, while initiatives support personal, social-emotional, and academic needs, fostering student self-advocacy.

### **E1: Family/Guardian and Community Involvement**

Saipan International school seeks to involve all stakeholders in the educational process. To do this, it employs many tools to build a school culture that supports inclusivity through direct involvement of parents and students in the decision making process to enhance the learning experience. Our primary communication tool is OpenSIS, where parents and students can access all grades, progress reports, and special announcements. SIS has had success in several areas, especially in the large-scale events such as the monthly bake sale, Open House, The Gecko 5000, the Healthy Heart Walk and especially the International Thanksgiving Festival. This involvement of all stakeholders in the learning process has led to an increase in student well-being and a stronger maintenance of community than other schools in the Commonwealth that were forced to shut down during the pandemic. Around 90% of students feel safe and secure at school and felt their parents knew how they were doing in class and over 95% felt respected by their peers while on campus and when off campus. Finally, although extensive efforts have been made to improve the communication between the school and families, more work needs to be done in areas of website penetration and response times of communication.

#### **1.1 Strategies and Processes**

SIS employs a wide range of culturally and linguistically sensitive strategies to enhance inclusivity and encourage broad family engagement. Parents are kept informed of the day to day activities on Saipan through a wide range of activities. Both students and parents are able to check their progress online through the school's virtual learning environment and through the student information system. Large community events are quite popular and enjoy tremendous support but there has been limited success in encouraging routine involvement in the learning and teaching process. For a large portion of the last accreditation cycle, the school was in survival mode due to Super Typhoon Yutu and the COVID-19 Pandemic. During this time, especially with social distancing protocols in place, parents were either not allowed on campus or were severely limited in their interactions with the general student population. Our community spirit suffered during this time and is only just beginning to return to normal for routine internations. However, because of the limitations, parents, students and faculty were all craving increased relatedness activities. Consequently, interest in larger scale community events increased dramatically.

SIS hosts a "bake sale" each month, sponsored by two classes in the school. Parents from the classes contribute food items and sales are hosted by a group of dedicated volunteers nicknamed "The Bake Sale Queens". These parent volunteers are here for the whole day 8-3. SIS students

and parents also engage in many community events, many of them having a service component. Examples include:

- Beach cleanups may take place several times per year but our main efforts focus sound international beach cleanup in mid-September. The Sept. 15
- Christmas in the Marianas is an annual event where students decorate Christmas trees with recycled or found objects, take part in a fashion contest, participate in a choral group, perform an original holiday skit, etc. While primarily student-based, these events take place after school hours and necessitate heavy parental involvement.
- Gecko 5000 is our annual Fun Run and a part of the All Schools Cross Country series. Public and private school Cross Country runners compete at all levels and this is followed by a community fun run where each class takes pride in having the highest student-parent participation.
- Many of our students represent the CNMI on athletics and activities national teams, engaging the broader community in our programs.
- Our Halloween carnival is an annual tradition where students in grades 6-12 host games booths and a Haunted House for the Elementary Students. Parent turnout and community involvement is very high.

While involvement in large, annual events is high, SIS encourages routine involvement in the learning process through several means. These include:

- Scoop newsletter - weekly, school wide. Announcements for school and wider community events
  - A weekly newsletter, known as “The Scoop”, is sent to all families within the school. It is also available on the school website ([www.sissaipan.com](http://www.sissaipan.com)). Weekly “Next Week in SIS” news briefs are sent out, highlighting upcoming events. Individual classroom newsletters, websites and virtual learning environments are all utilized throughout the school as well.
  - OpenSIS - all grades, parent access to grades and progress reports, special announcements
  - Social media - Facebook, Instagram, the school website, WhatsApp
    - The SIS social media platforms are open to the entire community and allows anyone in the group to post with approval from an administrator or moderator. This social platform is used to celebrate individual and group accomplishments of our SIS students. It is also used to highlight specific accomplishments such as college acceptances, and class activities such as Spanish cooking classes, etc. Finally, it is used as a way of informing community members of upcoming events.
  - Parent/teacher conferences take place twice a year October and March
  - Email: Important messages translated into the main languages of our school community. Email was indicated as the preferred method of communication by over 60% of parent respondents.
  - Open House that we had in August - parents of students, 68% parents of students showed, 100% in some of the homerooms.

## **E1.2 Inclusive Cultural Understanding**

As an international school with a highly diverse ethnic population, Saipan International School is, at its core, an institution that believes in building a highly inclusive cultural understanding. As such, SIS ensures that announcements are made with respect to linguistic diversity.

Announcements to Parents/Community are made by the Administration, teachers, team leaders, members of the board and other staff to maintain a collaborative culture by communicating in a variety of ways. Notices such as Educational Tax Credits, special invitations, Annual General Meeting agendas, etc. are translated into several languages (Chinese, Korean, Tagalog, Japanese, Russian). Other events available are New Student Orientation, Board of Director meetings, and College Night. Class Dojo is the main platform used by Elementary and Middle School to make announcement and it is automatically translatable into many languages (elementary and middle school)

Finally, SIS, while situated in the United States, recognizes global holidays relevant to our school population. Lunar new year is celebrated with a day off to honor our Asian population. Christmas has wide-scale participation throughout the school and Commonwealth. Halloween, Remembrance/ Veteran's Day, and many more are also celebrated at the school. One of our signature events is international thanksgiving, where each ethnic group at the school has the opportunity to showcase its favorite national dish in a truly international feast.

## **E1.3 Rapport and Trust**

Saipan International School has shown great success in encouraging a sense of rapport and trust, developing a family feeling between students and staff. Students report a strong sense of well-being. The greatest indicator of this may be the fact that when asked in a student community survey 54.4% strongly agreed with the statement that they felt accepted as a unique person at school and a further 36.9% indicated that they agree with the statement, i.e. over 90% of students answered in the affirmative. Additionally, the vast majority of students at SIS have reported themselves as being happy (86.7%) with the school. While these are satisfactory responses, a sizable minority of students appeared to not feel as connected to the school as they could and this is an area that could be improved.

## **Criterion E2: School Culture and Environment**

Saipan International School has policies, codes, procedures, and resources that maintain a safe, clean, and orderly environment, in an atmosphere of trust, in order to honor individual differences and social emotional needs.

### **E2.1 Policies and Resources:**

Emergency procedures and evacuation plans are published in the school handbook. The school's facilities are reviewed annually by the Fire Marshall. The campus has seven working cameras that monitor inside and outside campus buildings. The various drills have been communicated to staff, however there is the need to communicate the language of the different drills more clearly



and more often to our student population. Currently, there is not a set schedule of emergency drills for school-wide practice during the academic year

The health of the children is important, and SIS is in compliance with all legal and health requirements including, but not limited to, immunizations. All students are also covered by 24-hour personal accident insurance. Staff can find information about student medical needs in the OpenSIS system when provided by the parents. Basic medical supplies are available at the health center in the main office.

Saipan International School has a maintenance staff that works diligently to keep the campus clean and orderly at all times. The maintenance staff assists the faculty with setting up and taking down extra-curricular events, as well as helping the administration prepare for assemblies, faculty meetings, parent meetings, and graduation and promotion activities.

To ensure internet safety Saipan International School has internet content filtering that blocks unsafe content and applications that are monitored by an IT specialist.

## **E2.2 School Culture and Environment:**

Saipan International School consciously works to create an atmosphere of trust, respect, and equity in support of student achievement and well-being.

- Student Handbook
  - At the beginning of each year, students, parents, and teachers review and sign the Student Handbook to ensure understanding.
  - The handbook contains SIS's non-discriminatory statement and school mission statement
  - The handbook is also in student planners that each students receives at beginning of year
- Student Community Survey
  - 87% of students strongly agree or agree with the statement that “teachers are sensitive to student needs”
  - Over 90% of students strongly agree or agree with the statement that “I feel accepted as a person at this school”
  - 96% of students strongly agree or agree with the statement that “My teachers treat me with respect”
  - Over 70% of students trust their teaching, reporting that “they feel free to express their personal opinions to their teachers”
- Virtue Awards
  - Each month students are nominated by their teachers for specific virtues: responsibility, initiative, integrity, respect, leadership, compassion, and perseverance.
    - Students receive these award certificates in monthly assemblies.
    - Photographs of the award recipients are posted to the Facebook page to be shared with the community.

- Elementary school has an additional celebration of success called the class of the month award.
  - This award is given in various categories including; most improved reading, community service and involvement, Mandarin, math improvement, etc.
  - This winning class is awarded with a half-day field trip to the Pacific Islands Club for swimming and class community building outside of the classroom.

### **E2.3 Personal, Social-Emotional, and Academic Support**

Saipan International School values the individual differences of each of our students including their unique cultural beliefs, values and backgrounds. We continue to embrace our multi-national, multicultural and multiethnic student body, staff and community by valuing those viewpoints and educational needs in order to achieve the highest level of learning for our students.

- Each year a school community survey is administered that all students at SIS answer in late September/early October. It is anonymous, and results from this year’s survey include:
  - 67% of student strongly agree that diversity is valued at school
  - 92% of students strongly agree or agree that they feel accepted as a person at SIS
  - 90% are aware of their options for support at SIS
- Because SIS is a small school, it gives informal but consistent opportunities for teachers to provide social and emotional learning as well as identify students in need of more support. Ways of providing SEL and identifying students in need of additional support include:
  - Elementary school Social and Emotional club:
    - SEL lessons that connect to music, drama and art club activities
  - SEL lessons in the classroom:
    - Songs like “kindness is a muscle” song, community building and restorative circles, vocabulary visuals to respond to unkind comments
  - Social, emotional, and academic support for ELLs:
    - Pull out sessions, as well as support from individual teachers
    - We encourage communication with peers through English and will assign a buddy to identified students.
    - Use of technology to facilitate interpersonal communication
  - Tolerance: personal allowances for illness, family, emergencies, and diet
- SIS holds a number of events during the school year to create and reinforce a caring school culture. Events have included:
  - School spirit week held every year in October
  - Halloween Festival
  - International Thanksgiving Feast
  - Spring Musical

## **Criterion E3: Personal, Social-Emotional, and Academic Support**

### **E3.1 Support:**

- ESL support is offered to those students in grades 1-12 that are three grade levels behind in literacy. Pull out sessions are provided by an ESL teacher. Services are based on the Star Reading assessment. Students will also be provided direct support from their classroom teacher.
- A Social and emotional club is provided for students in grades 1-5. The club begins in October and continues throughout the school year. The lesson is based on social emotional learning in order to help our students gain confidence in themselves, as a friend, and as an academic student. The SEL continues during the students' other club activities for music, drama and art. The objective is to power the SE side of the learning throughout all of the club activities for reinforcement. Class Dojo is also utilized as a resource for additional lessons and videos at the elementary level.
- We offer several academic support electives over the course of the year.

### **E3.2 Support Effectiveness:**

- School leadership assesses the effectiveness of support through student's social-emotional learning needs through individual counseling, one on one conversations with students, and yearly school community surveys distributed to the student population. Currently, school community surveys are given 1 month into the school
- We are a small family-centered school so this is often informal. Our school counselor and business manager have open office hours allowing for students, parents, and teachers the opportunity to meet and discuss any concerns that they may have.
- Due to the active involvement of our school community, we are able to notice any conflict and differences in behavior that may impede the students' success.
- Students and parents feel safe and comfortable in sharing concerns, knowing that confidentiality and respect is given.
- The community survey showed that 85% of students feel comfortable and confident that they are able to ask for extra help when they need it.

### **E3.3 Student Involvement**

- Destino Perú (service based learning, self advocacy)
  - Every other year during the summer break, high school students have the opportunity to spend three weeks exploring Peru with our Peruvian Administrator in our Destino Peru program. This is a highly popular program which exposes students to the cultural, geographic, historic and linguistic aspects of Peru. Students are also exposed to deeper cultural and geographic realities through a variety of exposure to different speakers and experts organized by the supervisor.
- Student Involvement Students run clubs and are involved in various organizations such as the following:
  - Music Club
  - 4-H Marianas
  - Saipan Cares for Animals
  - MUN

- Moot Court
- Youth Congress
- Gecko Rotary Interact
- Student Council
- Honor Societies in elementary, middle and high school are very involved with our student population. High school students that participate in Honor Society also serve as mentors to the elementary and middle school students for academic support.
- Students are involved in sports and extra curricular activities such as Volleyball, Cross Country, Soccer and academic competitions and events such as spelling bee, mock trial, speech and debate, college virtual fair for juniors and seniors, essay writing competitions.
- Academic support is provided to elementary students through high school tutoring.

### **E3.4 Student Self Advocacy**

Students deepen their sense of self and make personal and community connections that are meaningful and relevant and allow students to become advocates for their own needs and supports.

- Located in the middle and high school buildings, a problem solving scale is visible for students to process if they are in need of ways to solve their problems. This allows the opportunity for students to have a way to express themselves to their teachers if they are currently struggling with a situation that may need addressed.
- It is not uncommon to find students in a classroom or in an office during breaks, speaking to teachers, office personnel, the counselor or the headmaster on a range of topics from the mundane to the highly personal.  
Just this year we have created american red cross
- Students have excelled in seeking out community connections as evidenced by:
  - Last year a sophomore student created a 4H Club,
  - They spearhead their involvement in Saipan Cares for Animals,
  - They organize the CNMI MUN conference that is now in its 4th year,
  - 9th grade started homework help club,
  - A senior student started a music club,
  - After school art class that high school students offered to elementary school.

**ACS WASC Category E. School Culture and Support for Student, Personal, Social-Emotional, and Academic Growth Summary**

*Prioritize and list the strengths and growth areas for the criteria and indicators in this category based on the school's identified major student learner needs.*

**Areas of Strength**

1. Communication to students about, and continuous reinforcement of, our school values and goals
2. Culture of involvement: daily routines and special events to an atmosphere of trust, respect, and equity in support of student achievement and well-being
3. Safe learning environment: Clean and orderly facilities as well as a culture of welcoming, collaboration, and honoring diversity.

**Areas of Growth**

*E2.3 School Culture & E3.2*

1. SEL: Counselor / Provide teachers with tools to identify and offer support to students with social and emotional learning challenges
  - a. Symbols for labels of places like bathroom, nurse, etc.
  - b. SEL lessons in every classroom, collaboration and communication between teachers (takes place in individual classrooms but we don't have a school-wide organized program)
  - c. Keep individual counselor

*E2.1 Policies & Resources*

2. Promote a safe and secure school environment
  - a. Conduct the various emergency drills at set times during the year following a consistent schedule.
  - b. Emergency drills are published in the handbook but there is opportunity to communicate the different types of drills to the students more clearly.
  - c. Evacuation plans are available to post in each classroom, but could be printed out and posted in each classroom as part of the start of the year room setup. Reminders with words and images about what needs to be done for the different types of drills could also be useful, especially for the elementary school students.

### **Prioritized Areas of Growth from Categories A through E**

The following areas of growth were identified as critical for SIS to develop its new schoolwide action plan. Please note, that several areas of growth from different areas were combined to create a more comprehensive picture of the need.

- Improve the areas of curriculum, instruction and assessment aligning with national standards, the school's SLOs, teacher professional development and evaluation in order to ensure quality and continuity of the overall education delivered to students.
- Develop a comprehensive Student Safety Plan that incorporates the child safety plan, socioemotional supports, emergency systems and drills,

## Chapter 4: Summary from Analysis of Identified Major Student Learner Needs

Category	Major Student Learner Needs	Support in School Profile and Focus Group Finding	Evidence
A	Establishment of professional goals	A5.3	Professional goals are not a part of the evaluation process. This is a lacking for ensuring student and teacher goals are aligned. Establishment of professional goals and teacher evaluation is an area of growth that has been identified and added to the school-wide action plan as part of the curriculum articulation process. The committee for category B felt that this was critical in establishing responsive and accountable curriculum
A	Linking teacher evaluation to schoolwide objectives	Section A and B	There remains a need to establish professional goals and link teacher evaluation to schoolwide objectives for continuous improvement, enhancing the quality of instruction and support for students.
A	Ability to make rapid decision in the best interest of the students	A 6.3	Typhoons are common in the Marianas and poor island communication necessitates the need to make quick decisions. This can be from disasters and/or funding requirements.
A	Use of federal funds to supplement the school budget	A1.2, A6, B1, C1, D2.1	Federal grants were used to mitigate the disasters of Super Typhoon Yutu, The COVID-19 pandemic and are

			used annually to supplement instruction with the consolidated grant. The school quickly evaluated instructional materials and bought all new texts in Mathematics, English, Social Studies and Science
A	Collaboration between leadership, governance and staff	A5.1, B2.3	Being a small school, collaboration is key to ensuring student success as SIS attempts to maximize resource usage and allows students to advocate for individual needs.
B	Implementation of Dimensions Math K-8 Curriculum	B1.1	NWEA MAP data and Math League results indicate a school heavily in support of Mathematics excellence.
B	Mandarin Growth	B1	Successful implementation of the HSK Mandarin exam and corresponding success both provide evidence of this strength.
B	MAP Testing Results	Student Performance Data, B1.1, C1, D1.1, D1.4, D1.4	SIS exceeds national percentiles rankings in both Reading and Mathematics, even without disaggregating ELL students. Currently, the average SIS student ranks in the High category in Mathematics.
B	Establishment and alignment of standards within grade level across all standards	B2	SIS has reviewed and decided to use the AERO Standards as a blueprint for further alignment of curriculum with standards. Currently SIS uses the AERO Math and Language Arts standards for its NWEA MAP testing of grades K-10). This decision



			represents a departure from the Common CORE Math and Language Arts standards previously used for curriculum purposes. Standards for science and social studies remain the same NGSS and NCSS respectively but may also shift to AERO.
B	Aligning Assessment to Curriculum Standards	B1.2	Beginning steps have been implemented to both standardize SIS instructors' approach to writing curriculum and to begin a more comprehensive approach to unit planning. At this time a template has been developed and shared that uses the concepts and methodology of UBD (Understanding by Design). Administrative instructions are for all teachers to complete and submit a completed template for their individual elective activities. These classes are meant to allow students to explore different interests without the fear of impacting their GPA and as such are graded on a pass/fail basis. These classes are also more fluid, allowing for more creativity in both materials and assessment.
B	Accountability of effective implementation of curriculum in the classroom environment	A5.3, B1.2, B1.3 B1.4	Establishment of professional goals and teacher evaluation is an area of growth that has been identified and added to the school-wide action plan as part of the curriculum articulation process. This will tie teacher evaluation with systems alignment of curriculum

C	Small class sizes	Chapter 2: The SIS Community	13:1 student teacher ratio and an average class size of 17.85.
C	Multiple learning styles addressed in the classroom	Chapter 2: School Purpose, A1.2, B2.1, C2.1, C2.3	The school embraces diverse learning styles by incorporating various teaching methods, such as roleplay and technology-assisted activities. In addition, we enrich the learning environment by inviting experts from esteemed organizations such as the CNMI Division of Fish and Wildlife and the Mariana Islands Nature Alliance (MINA) to present, offering students valuable insights into environmental conservation. Our approach embeds culturally responsive practices, encouraging community involvement for students to both learn about the local culture and share their own experiences. Culturally inclusive and immersive environments are created by respecting and valuing students' cultural backgrounds.
C	Life Skills / College Preparedness Integration	B1.2	SIS has fallen short of its goal to create a unified, fully articulated and structurally reviewed curriculum. This is particularly evident in life skills.
C	Social Emotional Growth	E2, E3.1	This has not been addressed in the curricular areas other than in the SE classes in Elementary School and in advisory classes in grades 9 and 10.
C	Cross Teaching between academic learning	B1.2, D2.3	Only Dimensions Math ensures vertical alignment for

			Elementary and Middle school students and centers active, student-centered learning.
D	Adopting the NWEA and AP exams as the primary national standardized tests	School Program Data, A3.1, D1.1, D2.2	SIS changed from SAT10 to MAP Testing to better assess our students and get help for instructional strategies and monitoring student growth in the areas of reading, math, and language use.
D	Results of competitions	SIS community, Student participation in co-curricular and extracurricular activities, School financial report, Schoolwide learner goals, D2.3, E3.3	<p>SIS students are very active in extracurricular activities. Three high school members and one MS member of the national team for Speech and Debate are SIS Geckos. The SIS MS MathLeague team took first place in the Commonwealth this year and one member will be representing the CNMI in the national competition this May. The regional winner of the spelling bee is a Grade 7 student. SIS is the founder of the Model United Nations conference in the CNMI.</p> <p>In addition to academic extracurricular, SIS students also work in several service and athletic organizations. SIS has a recycling program with the Marianas Islands Nature Alliance, a Rotary Interact Charter, and a Red Cross Support Club. In athletics, SIS students routinely participate in island competitions in Cross Country, Volleyball, Badminton, Basketball, Track and Field, and Soccer. They</p>

			have earned many championship trophies. For example, this year, both elementary boys and girls, and middle school girls teams one the Cross Country Championships, the HS Girls took the Soccer Championship.
D	Successful university placement	A1.1, A2, A3.1, B2.3, E1	Beginning in 11th grade, students participate in course work with their counselor to identify their special interests and find the best fit for their major after high school. By 12th grade, students will work with their counselor in and out of the classroom to build a strong foundation for college applications. This includes not only academic goals, but also college and career aspirations.
D	Communication of long term plans	C2.2, E1	Although extensive efforts have been made to improve the communication between the school and families, more work needs to be done in areas of website penetration and response times of communication.
D	Linking testing to course placement for ELL students	D1.4	Tests have shown the need for differentiated English education; SIS now has three-level English classes. AP Test results highlighted weaknesses and strengths of our current AP programs that some of the incoming students (mostly second language learners) were not ready for AP class.

E	Communication to students about, and continuous reinforcement of, our school values and goals	A4.3, D2.2, E1.1	Student Community Survey Parent Communication Survey
E	Culture of Involvement	B1.5, C2.1, E1.1, E2.2, E3.2, E3.3, E3.4	Due to the active involvement of our school community, we are able to notice any conflict and differences in behavior that may impede the students' success.
E	Lack of a Social Emotional Counselor	E3.2	We are a small family-centered school so SEL Counseling is often informal. Our school counselor and business manager have open office hours allowing for students, parents, and teachers the opportunity to meet and discuss any concerns that they may have.
E	Intermingling of ethnic groups	E1.2, E2.3	
E	Promote a safe and secure school environment	Progress Report, A3.3, E1, E2, E3	The faculty and staff feel that there is a need to combine these separate but related pieces into a comprehensive student protection plan that includes routine drills, interactions with adults, protocols for disease and natural disasters. SIS would be the first school in the CNMI to develop a student protection plan that incorporates all levels of safety. Routine drills have been lacking since the pandemic.

## **Chapter 5: Schoolwide Action Plan**

As a part of the process, the action plan will be revised based on the recommendations of the visiting team and approved by WASC. This plan will be published and form the basis for accreditation work over the next 6 years.

### **Appendices**

All Data was Hyperlinked in the body of the report but removed in this version to protect the privacy of the stakeholders.