**SELF-STUDY VISITING COMMITTEE REPORT**

**ACCREDITING COMMISSION FOR SCHOOLS,**
**WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES**

**FOR**

# Saipan International School

**Aslito Road**

**Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands 96950**

**April 17-18, 2024**

**<u>Visiting Committee Members</u>**

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## Introduction

- **Provide a brief background of the school, a concise description of programs offered, and a description or list of schoolwide strategies that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion.**

Saipan International School is an independent, not-for-profit international school located on the island of Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands. Founded in 1994, SIS has 254 students enrolled in Pre-K through 12th grade, making it one of the larger private schools and the only international school in the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI).

Programs include:
- An American-based curriculum encompassing core academic subjects ELA, math, science, social studies, Mandarin as a world language, and a wide range of elective and Advanced Placement classes. The school is transitioning to Project Aero standards for English and math, in addition to the AP curriculum. High school students are required to take at least 20 credits.  They are able to receive an SIS Diploma for taking the core academic courses, or an SIS Honors Diploma for taking 5 additional Advanced Placement courses. In addition, the school offers an SIS ESL Diploma, and finally an Advanced Placement International Diploma if they pass the AP tests with a score of 3 or above.
- The integration of technology into the curriculum with access to computer labs and multimedia classrooms. All students are required to sign an Acceptable Use Policy for technology.
- An extracurricular program offers multiple opportunities for student participation, including sports teams and performing arts groups,  academic clubs,  and community service initiatives.
- Students represent the school in many community organizations including, Rotary Interact, National Speech and Debate Association, MathLeague, NMI Model United Nations, American Red Cross, and the Marianas Islands Nature Alliance.

Committed to diversity and inclusion, 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. The Parent/Student Handbook identified an "English Use" policy which is designed to support the students in their preparation for college.  During the initial meeting with the Leadership Team, one of the members stated "it is an international school and diversity is expected.  The students value others and tolerate different ideas.  There is a oneness of humanity here.  SIS celebrates diversity and differences.  Those who are narrow minded become more global."

- **Summarize the involvement and collaboration of stakeholders/education partners in the self-study process.**

The committee verified that all educational partners were involved in the self-study process. Faculty and staff participated in both focus groups and divisional (high school, middle school, elementary school) committees. The school worked together in the focus groups to gather data and to write the responses which were then shared with the larger group to determine the areas of strength and growth. The Board of Directors periodically reviewed progress and had oversight over the entire process.

Student input was sought for those parts that were most directly applicable to them. The Student Government identified the following: Student-Teacher Relationships, K-12 events that bring together the entire school, and ability to create new extracurriculars as school strengths. The areas of growth identified by the students included expanding AP classes to 9th and 10th grades, improving communication about events, and providing Dual Enrollment Opportunities. Parents did participate in a survey at the beginning of the school year that centered on communication not necessarily on the self-study process. There is no Parent Teacher Association for SIS. Because of the transient nature of the student population, there is no formal alumni group for the school. Families tend to stay for two-year contracts on the island. Alumni will visit if they happen to be on the island, but there is not an organized alumni group.

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**The involvement and collaboration of stakeholders in the self-study reflects a thorough, accurate description and analysis of what currently exists at the school, as well as aligned schoolwide prioritized areas of strength and growth.**

**Visiting Committee Rating:**     Highly Effective     **Effective**     Somewhat Effective     Ineffective

**Narrative Rationale:**

All faculty were involved in the focus group discussions and writing of the draft of the report. Time was given during the year for the groups to meet together to collect evidence and provide a draft of the section. As a group, they decided on the two main areas for improvement focusing on curriculum and student safety plans. Students in the student council also provided their own selection of the top three strengths and areas of growth. The headmaster edited the final version of the Self-Study. The action plans for areas of growth utilized previous identified areas that had not yet been addressed. The parents stated that they were not involved in the accreditation process. The Board was aware of the accreditation process and provided input. Student input was provided mainly through the annual Student Community Survey.

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## Chapter 1: Progress Report

- **Synthesize any significant developments since the last self-study visit and their impact on student learning.**

1. October, 2018, Super Typhoon Yutu inflicted severe damage to the island and the school infrastructure. SIS was without public utilities until January 2021. The southern face of the elementary school collapsed, the walkway between the high school and middle school was blown away, and the playground was destroyed. The school resumed classes two days later, moving into remaining classrooms and temporary tents. SIS installed emergency generators to run fans and water pumps and opened up on October 29th.  For two months, students met inside classrooms, under rented tents outside and in remaining classrooms.
Assistance from FEMA supported the rebuilding of the facilities, and the repairs to all of the elementary building damages during the 2019-20 school year. There was a substantial expenditure of school funds to address the cleanup and other repairs. FEMA continues to work with the school. The school has  expanded the playground areas and created a space in the lower field for relaxation that included a new Pala Pala, three large seating areas with integrated trees, a pond and a deck with a pavilion. SIS also received mitigation funds to strengthen the walkway structures. As a result, the walkway was fully rebuilt in concrete at double the previous width and with an integrated, cement roofed patio.
2. March 2020 saw the closure of the school premises and a reliance on online instruction until the end of the school year due to COVID restrictions. The closure of local public school campuses for two years and the economic downturn in the CNMI led to an increase in applicants requesting financial aid, impacting the school's budget. Fifteen students currently receive tuition assistance. Faculty may have up to two children attend SIS tuition free.
3. To support the analysis and use of student academic performance data, the school has replaced STAR reading and testing and adopted NWEA Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) assessments, although STAR reading is still used in identifying ELL students. Other assessments, namely the AP and PSAT, are also used to measure student progress. Achieve 300 is used by some teachers as an instructional tool.
4. The Counselor and a Student Support team developed a child protection plan that focused primarily on child abuse.

- **Briefly describe the action plan implementation process and how the school monitors progress.**

During the focus group meeting, the Leadership Team shared that the typhoon damage, followed by the pandemic, provided obstacles to the implementation of the action plans.  The action plan for curriculum is still considered a major area of concern and the school has identified it as an action plan priority in order to provide a consistent academic curriculum. While time was provided for the school to work on accreditation once things returned to normal, the school decided to revise the action plans when they appeared dated.  Implementation of the new action plans is set for 2024-25.

The leadership committee also shared that for the plan to be successful there is a need for more consistent monitoring of progress.  Specific processes for monitoring have not yet been clearly

defined. The headmaster, with oversight by the Board, will have ultimate responsibility for implementation of the action plan.

- **Summarize the school's progress on the action plan that incorporated all schoolwide growth areas from the last self-study and all intervening visits.**

The typhoon and Covid slowed work on the action plan for a time, but the school has shown limited  progress in addressing its goals and growth areas.

*Areas of growth identified from the last full self-study:*

*1. 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.*
- *Regularly evaluate, review and revise curriculum to focus on adopted standards and identify gaps and weaknesses*
- *Create curriculum maps that are aligning scope and sequence of units to facilitate integration among disciplines*

The school made initial progress on these first two growth areas in regard to curriculum development and articulation. Dimensions Math was adopted for grades K-8 and Advanced Placement offerings were increased or changed, depending on student interests and test results. The school currently offers 15 AP classes for 11th and 12th grade students and AP PreCalculus and AP Seminar for 10th grade. Some courses are offered on alternating years.

The school reported that due to the aftermath of the typhon and meeting the challenges of the pandemic, curriculum development stalled and diverted resources, time, and attention away from long-term strategic initiatives. Teachers relied on publisher created timelines instead of using achievement and growth data to develop a relevant curriculum for school. Additionally, the economic downturn strained financial resources, compelling SIS to prioritize immediate operational needs over longer-term strategic initiatives like curriculum development. Curriculum guides are not complete in all areas and subjects. A unit plan template has been developed but is not yet used across the campus in all curricular areas and grades. Technically, other than Advanced Placement, textbook programs, and English and math AERO, and the SAVVAS for science, the Visiting Committee had difficulty finding identified standards to lead instruction in the other subject areas.   Completion of this work is included in the current action plan.
**This growth area remains the major priority in the school's current action plan.**

- *Be more intentional in the use of diverse instructional strategies*

Individual teachers do attend training, such as AP workshops held in the states or virtual training, that help to strengthen instructional practices for the high school program.  The Faculty Handbook contains a list of suggested strategies for teachers to use for diverse instruction and accommodations. The committee did observe students engaged in a variety of learning experiences including collaborative problem solving, group projects, jigsaw research, computer and multimedia usage by both teachers and students, and student presentations. Because of the

diverse population and new students with limited English skills, the school utilizes Title I teachers to provide individual tutoring for students on a pull-out basis.

**The committee found that the school has not made the use of diverse instructional strategies with an intentional focus.**

- *Provide targeted professional development to ensure teachers are aware of research-based strategies to assist struggling students in the regular classroom.*

Teachers have received training accompanying the adoption of curricular and assessment programs the Hànyǔ Shuǐpíng Kǎoshì (HSK) Chinese Proficiency Test, Journey's K-6th grade reading instructional materials, and Dimension's Math K-8th grade. During the focus group meetings, some teachers stated they use online resources to update their professional strategies. AP teachers routinely attend workshops based on their curricular subject.

**The committee did not find evidence of professional development focused on strategies to assist students in the regular classroom.**

- *Develop assessments based on the aligned national standards curriculum and SLOs to assist with instruction*

Formal formative assessments have not been developed in all curricular areas nor have assessments been tied to the SLOs. Teachers were able to share examples of informal formative assessments, such as the monitoring of skill acquisition in a PE class.

The school has adopted NWEA MAP testing. AERO standards for English and math are going to be used since the faculty felt they provided easy to understand standards for parents and students. NGSS and NCSS standards are currently being used for science and social studies.

**The school has identified this as a continuing area for growth in the current action plan.**

- *Evaluate the need for dedicating set faculty meeting days to collaborate and implement changes in curriculum, instruction and assessment*

The committee found that prior to the typhoon and the pandemic that two staff meeting times a month were set aside for teachers to meet either by subject areas or by divisions, thus creating a formal time for curriculum work. This practice has recently been reinstated. Staff professional development on topics such as student safety occur on non-teaching days. During focus group meetings, the teachers shared that there is little time during the regular school day for teachers to meet for collaboration and stated that a schedule of time for collaboration would be needed to align the curriculum.

*2. Select and implement standardized testing that will provide data to analyze that reflects student academic progress overtime and will inform instruction.*

After reviewing the effectiveness of existing assessment tools (STAR Reading and Achieve 3000), the leadership team replaced these with the NWEA Measure of Academic Progress (MAP). The first MAP was given in the fall of 2020. Staff received professional development

training in 2021 and 2022. Currently MAP test results help drive instruction and are used as a reporting tool to parents. The school also uses results from PSAT and AP assessments. STAR and Achieve 3000 are still used by some teachers to determine reading levels.

*3. Establish a comprehensive child protection program that includes(1)background checks for all staff and volunteers that have direct contact with students; (2) training for all personnel about child abuse as well as supporting the social emotional needs of students impacted by abuse.*

The committee found that the school had made some progress in this area. The Counselor and a Student Support Team developed and adopted a child protection plan that sets definitions for child abuse, how to recognize it, and outlines preventative measures and guidelines for the school's response in case of suspected abuse. Staff did participate in a full-day Emergency First Response Course in the fall of 2023. The protection plan also states that all school employees must be suitably vetted and have valid references and that all volunteers who have regular contact with students will be screened, trained, and supervised. The headmaster confirms that 100% of the staff have undergone a background check. The school reported that this plan is continually reviewed to reflect current conditions.

The school has other safety protocols, but there is a need to combine these separate but related protocols into a comprehensive student protection plan that includes routine drills, interactions with adults, protocols for disease and natural disasters.

**This endeavor was completed for the Child Protection Plan. The school would like to add more categories for this and it is one of the school's identified student learner needs and is outlined in the second action plan goal.**

- **Analyze how the use of prior accreditation findings and other pertinent data are driving school improvement to increase high achievement for all students and why identified growth areas may not be identified in the current schoolwide action plan.**

The school reported and the committee verified that although the prior accreditation findings are essential in driving school improvement, outside events and financial constraints slowed progress. The school recognizes the value and need to address these growth areas and is returning to a focus on curriculum, instruction, the use of data and support for students. These areas continue to be in the forefront of the school's current action plan which incorporates identified growth areas.

| The use of prior accreditation findings and other pertinent data to ensure high achievement of all students and drive school improvement. |
| --- |
| **Visiting Committee Rating:**  Highly Effective    Effective    **Somewhat Effective**    Ineffective |
| **Narrative Rationale:** |
| The committee found that although there was initial progress on addressing the growth areas, that work was interrupted by the typhoon and the pandemic. The school as a whole is beginning to turn its focus to growth areas of curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The current action plan is the same as the one developed six years ago. Staff is poised to address these areas. Time for collaboration is the greatest barrier to completing these goals. |

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

- **Succinctly describe the school location, type of school, grades served, demographics, major school programs, and other relevant school information.**

Saipan International School is an independent, not-for-profit international school located on the island of Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands. Opened in 1994, the school now serves approximately 250 students, Early Childhood through 12th grade. Student teacher ratio is 13.1 and class the average class size is 17.85. Classes are limited to 22 in Elementary and 26 in Middle School and High School. Students attend a seven period day followed by an elective period for enrichment or remediation. The school offers two Pre-Kindergarten classes and one of each of the other grade levels from Kindergarten to 12th grades.

SIS is governed by a seven-person board of directors that is elected by current parents of students in the school for a two-year term.

The school 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 the ELA programming. A large influx of students from the public school system has occurred, but with the economic crisis more families are struggling to meet the school's tuition. Currently 32 students receive ELL support.

Socioeconomically, 6.07% of students qualify for free lunch programs, while the remaining 93.93% all qualify for reduced lunch programs.

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 top five, self-identified ethnicities are: Chinese (28%), Korean (27%), US (24%) (of these US CNMI (15%) and US Mainland (9%), Pilipino (9%), and Japanese (3%). Currently 24% of students are local (indigenous population and those who have migrated permanently), an increase for the school.

There are 18 teachers, one counselor, two administrators and one co-teacher. Completed certification is a contractual obligation for teachers or they must demonstrate they are working toward it. Currently two teachers are in the process of certification. Almost all teachers have degrees. Teachers come from the US, Korea, the Philippines, China, and Mauritius. The majority of teachers (13) have been at the school for 5 years or less, with five teachers having between 7 and 9 years of experience, and 2 teachers having between 15-20 years of experience. The business manager has 30 years of experience at SIS.

SIS currently leases the land for its facilities. 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.

SIS student attendance rate is approximately 95%. Annual turnover in the student population is about 10%. Students leave the school when their families return to their homeland after their two-year contracts or decide to migrate elsewhere.

Major school programs include:
- An American-based curriculum encompassing core academic subjects ELA, math, science, social studies and Mandarin as a world language, and a wide range of elective and Advanced Placement classes
- An extracurricular program offering sports teams, performing arts groups, academic clubs, and community service initiatives. Enrichment programs, workshops and guest speakers cover a wide range of topics such as leadership development, career exploration, cultural awareness and environmental stewardship.
- Specialized programming especially for high school students such as working with the Distance Education Program in the Public School System, taking online classes at accredited universities, or attending evening classes at Northern Marianas College.
- 1:1 device ratio. K-8 students have access to an iPad. High school students either provide their own devices or use school laptops.

Student performance data:

- The school currently offers 15 AP classes, and in 2023, 128 exams were taken. Students scored 3 or better on 80 exams, some students taking multiple exams. 75% of the students taking Advanced Placement exams in May 2023 scored at least a three on one or more AP Exams. This year, 65 students will take AP exams, with over 260 tests being ordered. The chart indicates the number of students for 2023 who received passing scores (3 and above).

| Number of Students Receiving Passing AP Scores | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |
| Biology | 9 | Human Geo | 9 |
| Calculus AB | 2 | Japanese Lang | 1 |
| Calculus BC | 4 | Microeconomics | 1 |
| Calculus BC/AB | 5 | Physics 1 | 1 |
| Chinese Lang | 1 | Psychology | 2 |
| Computer Science | 2 | Seminar | 18 |
| English Lang | 7 | Statistics | 7 |
| English Lit | 9 | | |

- Currently the school has one year of NWEA data. This shows from Fall 2022 to Fall 2023 shows the school average for Mathematics grows from 74th percentile to 78th percentile. Median growth was at 66th percentile.
- Schoolwide in math, the students placed in the 66th percentile in Fall 2023-24, up from 65th percentile last year. Growth at 51st percentile. This data has not been disaggregated by subgoups.
- 65% of students in grades 1-5 are performing below the expected reading benchmarks, with particular weaknesses in comprehension and vocabulary skills.

- STAR results from 2022-23 indicate an increase in all grades 2-6 from the pre to the post test in reading. The average results from MAP Reading indicates five grade levels improved, four grades declined, and one grade stayed at the same level from the previous test. In MAP Math, the average scores indicated four grades improved while six grades declined in scores.

- **Include the school's vision, mission, schoolwide learner outcomes and 2-3 identified major student learner needs.**

The **mission** of SIS is to help each child reach his or her full potential by providing a positive environment that fosters academic, emotional, and social growth. This environment is created when trust, respect, and acceptance are values shared by students, parents, and school staff.

**Vision**: to achieve its mission by developing the most rigorous and challenging academic environment in the Commonwealth.

**Virtues**: to be an important part of the SIS experience. We want all members of our community to incorporate them into their being.

**Leadership:** The learner demonstrates exemplary standards and is a role model for other SIS learners.
Motivate self and peers to achieve goals
Expect best of self and of peers
Be a follower when the situation calls for it

**Respect:** The learner will listen objectively, seek conflict resolutions, and understand the value of working cooperatively and independently with regard for diverse cultures and viewpoints by developing the following skills.
Treat others with dignity and courtesy
Accept and value different ideas and belief systems in others
Demonstrate teamwork and leadership skills

**Initiative:** The learner will set, pursue, and accomplish challenging personal goals in his or her education or career, and obtain personal independence through self-confidence by developing the following skills.
Have a realistic and positive view of oneself
Develop skills to maintain a healthy lifestyle
Be willing to take risks in creating and developing ideas

**Responsibility:** The learner will meet his or her responsibilities in a timely and orderly manner.
Acts without needing strict supervision
Be accountable for own behavior
Meet deadlines including turning in homework and being to class on time

**Perseverance:** The learner will continuously develop recommendations and solutions to

individual problems and apply learned skills to resolve each situation by developing the following skills.
Adjust to and overcome obstacles in life
Choose commitments wisely and stick with them until they are completed
Continue to work on problems until they are resolved

**Compassion:** The learner will identify and develop personal values such as fairness, honesty, caring, tolerance, and self-control by developing the following skills.
Be sensitive to the feelings and needs of others
Empathize with others holding differing values or opinions
Show care for others in need
Perform service for others.

**Integrity:** The learner will be open and honest in all interactions with all people.
Honestly evaluate the information being learned
Use the work of others only when they are given proper credit
Be honest in our interactions with all people

**Graduate Profile:** The school has also created characteristics expected of all graduates. They will review its appropriateness for the school in light of discussion in the focus group.

**Schoolwide Learner Outcomes:** SIS has adapted the 4Cs of 21st Century Learning as Schoolwide learner outcomes (SLOs). The 4Cs will be embedded in everything they do at SIS in order to prepare students for career and college readiness. The school has posted a list of the SLOs in the classrooms including indicators for each of the four categories.

At SIS, Students Engage in…

Communication

Critical thinking

Collaboration

Creativity

**The school has identified two major student learning needs:**

1. 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.
2. Develop a comprehensive Student Safety Plan that incorporates the child safety plan, socioemotional supports, emergency systems and drills

**Acceptable progress by all students toward clearly defined schoolwide learner outcomes (major student learner needs), academic standards, and other institutional and/or governing authority expectations.**

**Visiting Committee Rating:**    Highly Effective    **Effective**    Somewhat Effective    Ineffective

**Narrative Rationale:**

The teachers stated that the students know the virtues and the SLOs and the committee observes these posted in every classroom and around campus. The students can earn certificates and rewards based on these virtues.

The advanced placement high school students are demonstrating that they are meeting the high academic standards required of the program. Students who do not meet the requirements for advanced placement are able to take honors courses to maintain a challenging, yet reachable, curricular goal.

The school recognizes the need to reevaluate the role and the relationship between the vision, mission, the Virtues, and Schoolwide Learner Goals.

## Chapter 3: Quality of the School's Program

## CATEGORY A: ORGANIZATION FOR STUDENT LEARNING: VISION AND PURPOSE, GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP, STAFF, SCHOOL CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PROCESS, AND RESOURCES

### A1:  Vision and Purpose

### A1.1 Vision and Schoolwide Learner Goals:

SIS has a clear vision, purpose, schoolwide learner goals, and school virtues that reflect the school's core values - fostering a positive environment that supports academic and personal growth for all students. This vision is reflective of students' needs, reflects the belief that all students can learn and achieve, and is based on research-based practices. To achieve this mission, the school provides a rigorous and challenging academic environment.

During the self-study process, the school has created a Graduate Profile outlining the characteristics, skills, knowledge, and values that define what every graduate should achieve. The school intends to review the efficacy and use of this graduate profile.

### A1.2 Equity and Inclusion:

The belief that all students are welcome regardless of ethnicity, religion, gender orientation, and special learning needs is expressed in the mission statement, the vision, and included in the school charter. The school celebrates multiculturalism.

Although students with service plans for learning needs are accepted, the school is not financially able to meet all requirements for special needs students. Private schools are not required to complete the IEP for special needs students. Funds from the Federal Programs Office are used to help support these students' learning needs for tutoring. Specialized services are the responsibility of the parents. Title I funds are used for tutoring for English Learners.

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

The mission, vision and purpose were reviewed as part of the accreditation process by students, staff, and the Board of Directors.   All stakeholders are aware of the vision, mission, virtues, and student learner outcomes.

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

The committee found that the school effectively communicates the mission, vision, schoolwide learner outcomes, and virtues. These are posted on the school website and found in the Parent Student Handbook. The committee also observed posters in each classroom and in the hallways of the school.  Children in the kindergarten have a virtue song that they sing to learn the school virtues.  There are award assemblies and certificates given to students and classes to recognize achievement of the virtues.

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*Vision and Purpose* **that supports high achievement for all students.  Defining of the school's vision and purpose through schoolwide learner goals and academic standards.**

**Visiting Committee Rating:**    __Highly Effective__    Effective    Somewhat Effective    Ineffective

**Narrative Rationale:**

SIS stakeholders have clearly defined vision, mission, virtues, and SLOs to guide the work of the school.  Communication of these items is done through posters, the website, newsletters, and through teacher lessons.  The virtues are part of a thematic lesson every month and the students are rewarded for their demonstration of them.  The SLOs are based on 21st Century Skills and are relevant for all students at SIS. High achievement is supported by the school's strong vision, mission, and SLOs.

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**A2:  Governance**

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

SIS is governed by a seven-person board of directors that is elected by current parents of students in the school for a two-year term. The Board sees its role as one of determining policy, overseeing strategic planning, financial planning, hiring and evaluation of school leadership, monitoring compliance, community engagement, and risk management.  Educational policy is set by the Headmaster, but the Board is kept informed as a way of assisting with strategic planning and increasing community engagement. The Board also routinely reviews assessment results and student events and achievements. The Teachers Handbook (4/24) provides steps for the grievance procedures.

The school reported that 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 by all stakeholders is an area of growth.  The Board meetings are open to all stakeholders; however, few people other than the board members are in attendance.  The Board tried changing the time of their meetings to address concerns of parents.

> *Governance* **that supports high achievement for all students.**
>
> **Visiting Committee Rating:**     Highly Effective     **Effective**     Somewhat Effective     Ineffective
> **Narrative Rationale:**
>
> SIS has a Board of Directors who are actively involved in monitoring the schools planning, hiring, and compliance.  Elected for a term of two-years, the Board members have connection to the community of the school and the community at large.  Planning ahead, the Board has determined to update the bylaws.  Understanding the role of the Board was identified in the Self-Study as an area of growth.

## A3:  Leadership for Learning

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

SIS collects a variety of achievement data such as grades, narrative reports, NWEA MAP exams, Accelerated Reader, PSAT, and AP assessments and reports. The headmaster leads data dialogue discussions with the staff on standardized data results. The Headmaster uses walk-throughs to observe classes and meets with individual teachers if student data results fail to meet growth targets.

AP teachers review the instructional report from the College Board to analyze program deficiencies, and they attend AP workshops during the summer.

Students needing additional support are discussed in divisional meetings, or in informal meetings between teachers, during which interventions are determined. These interventions may include tutoring, study hall or assignment to Title I Reading support. Individual progress in  math and English is shared with parents during parent-teacher conferences. School level results are shared with parents, the Board, and often published in the newspaper for the community.

Currently NWEA data is used effectively for program evaluation, but there is a need for more training so that this data can become an effective driver of instruction in the classroom.

Developing and implementing more intentional procedures and practices for analyzing and monitoring data would better support the school's improvement process.

Teachers and administration collaborate on program revisions or additions.  Parents are able to work with the administration on repairs to facilities.

### A3.2 Leadership Role in Accountability:

Facilitated by its small size, the school practices shared decision-making. Issues such as planning and major programmatic changes are discussed by the staff or the leadership team. The Board is also involved if there are financial considerations.

The school has several committees and teams that promote student learning. In support of student learning, all teachers serve on a departmental committee and a divisional team. These groups set their own goals each year and work towards meeting those goals.

Parents involved in school fundraising, like the bake sale, feel free to share suggestions and concerns with the business manager.

The school's mission, vision, and SLOs are considered the responsibility of the Board; however,

input from faculty and students was solicited.

Due to the small size of the school, many of the school's processes are informal. Formalizing practices and procedures would strengthen accountability for all staff and would promote more consistency in the implementation of school initiatives and programs. It would also ensure transparency and follow-through of decisions.

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

The school's action plan is directly correlated to student learning and within the curriculum work includes the creation of a unit assessment to measure progress. The plan's major emphasis is on curriculum development. Although identifying instructional practices as a component of the stated goal, the plan does not emphasize addressing instructional practices. As currently written, the plan focused attention on the actions of staff with the implication that this curriculum work will then impact student learning. There is a need to more purposefully connect the school's actions to its impact on student learning through the analysis of student achievement data.

The school sees the second goal, the development of a more comprehensive Student Safety Plan, is also related to student achievement, that meeting the physiological and safety needs of students by providing a safe, supportive, learning environment is fundamental to student success.

> *Leadership for Learning* **that supports high achievement for all students.**
> **Visiting Committee Rating:**     Highly Effective     <u>Effective</u>     Somewhat Effective     Ineffective
> **Narrative Rationale:**
>
> There is an open-door policy at the school and all stakeholders feel that they can take suggestions, like activities, repairs, or curriculum changes, to the administration. The headmaster empowers the teachers to research and plan events for increased student involvement or achievement. The headmaster leads the faculty in the data discussions. Individual faculty members also use data to make decisions, some more effectively than others. The school would benefit from more formal and consistent practices in the use and analysis of data to support student needs and setting goals. This, in turn, would promote accountability for the implementation of goals and initiatives. There is a need for defined collaboration time to share strategies and discuss student achievement.

**A4:  Qualified Staff and Professional Development**

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

The committee verified that the school's leadership and staff are qualified. SIS strives to hire teachers with US certification or equivalent for all of its faculty positions. 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 but are either waiting for final approval after completing all the requirements or in the final year of study. The Headmaster holds a doctorate in education, the business manager has a degree in human resources, and ten teachers hold advanced degrees.

The Self-Study states that all SIS teachers are required to submit to a background check as

indicated in the existing child protection plan. The Headmaster confirmed that all current teachers have had background checks and it is a requirement for all new teachers. Those coming to the school locally need police clearance and those coming to the school from other locations are required to provide FBI clearance.

The Headmaster conducts annual performance appraisals for all employees based on the employee's performance of the duties stated in his position description. The Headmaster will schedule the appraisal interview. Teachers set goals in the areas of planning and preparation, the classroom environment, instruction, and professional responsibilities. These goals are specific, measurable, and have a defined time period for completion. During discussions with the teachers, frequent visits of the administration were cited as the means for teachers to improve their instruction. The frequent walk-through, followed by feedback, have been beneficial to the teachers and useful for the administrator to monitor the instructional staff.

The school has identified a need to establish professional goals and to link teacher evaluation to schoolwide objectives for continuous improvement.

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

The school values professional development and has hosted two Commonwealth Coalition of Private Schools conferences that focused on curriculum development and design, the accreditation process, and project-based learning. Staff also attended another coalition conference on inclusion and multiculturalism. This coalition has dissolved due to challenges from the pandemic.

Currently the school is providing professional development on campus. For a time, this was focused on remote learning. More recently the school has completed Emergency First Responder training and Mental Health First Aid training and curriculum. During the focus group meetings, the teachers expressed a need for defined collaboration time to share strategies and discuss student achievement. They have full daily schedules with courses and electives and full weekend schedules with student athletics and events. There is no written professional development plan based on the needs identified through the analysis of student achievement data. The APSI offers training and the Federal Programs Office supports funding for advanced placement training during the summers for teachers.

At this time the school does not have an intentional process for measuring the impact of professional development on student learning.

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

The school's policies and procedures are outlined in a Faculty Handbook (revised 4/24) and a Parent-Student Handbook which is available on the school's website. Much of the communication occurs informally due to the small size of the school. Notices are sent to the teachers through emails, chat rooms, and newsletters. A weekly newsletter is sent out to the teachers and parents to share the week's activities. Policies and strategies are first shared by the administrator to the lead teachers who then pass on the information to the teachers in their team (elementary, middle, and high school teams).

> *Qualified Staff and Professional Development* that supports high achievement for all students.

**Visiting Committee Rating:** Highly Effective __**Effective**__ Somewhat Effective Ineffective
**Narrative Rationale:**

All teachers are certified and have degrees with a few completing their programs. The teachers have taken the initiative to take courses or workshops on their own, and with the financial support of the school when possible. Teachers annually take courses to improve their strategies for advanced placement courses. There is no written professional development plan. Nor is there a formal process for measuring the effectiveness of professional development on student learning. There is a means to communicate information through media. Informal sharing of ideas and suggestions may lead to changes or improvements after discussions with the headmaster.

## A5: School Continuous Improvement Process

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

The SIS action plan's first goal is indirectly tied to student achievement data, student learner needs and academic standards, reflecting an emphasis on academic achievement through the improvement of curriculum and teacher preparation.

The second goal, developing a comprehensive safety and support plan, reflects the need for a safe learning environment for all students. The teachers identified the areas for improvement for the action plans as a whole group. There is no evidence that student achievement led the decisions for action plans.

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

The planning process is collaborative. The Board sets broad policies and gives strategic guidance about the direction of the school. The headmaster is responsible for developing strategies and implementing the Board's directives. Decisions on curriculum and standards are made by the staff. The recent change from Common Core Standards to Project Aero Standards (American Education Reaches Out) for English and math, involved a group of staff members undertaking the initial investigation and then it was adopted by the whole staff.

Input from students and parents is primarily through the Student Community Survey or a more recent communication survey. Both groups are very involved in planning extracurricular activities. Parents in the Bake Sale group discuss school student and school issues and share suggestions and concerns with the Business Manager or the Headmaster.

### A5.3 Systems Alignment:

Strategic planning is tied to the school improvement process. The school has identified the establishment of professional goals and teacher evaluation as areas for growth. This has been added to the action plan as part of the curriculum articulation process. The school does not have a defined, long range strategic plan.

### A5.4 Correlation between All Resources, Schoolwide Learner Goals, and Plan:
The budget over the last two years has been supplemented with Federal emergency funds and

grants. Many of the decisions for allocation of the funding focused on the need to recover from typhoon damage. The administrator prudently utilized all the funds, according to the requirements identified by law, and was able to provide extensive school improvements to the campus, the materials, and student assistance. The work on the action plans were delayed until the required funding was utilized and the school returned to normal conditions.

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***School Continuous Improvement Process*** that supports high achievement for all students.

**Visiting Committee Rating:**     Highly Effective     Effective     **Somewhat Effective**     Ineffective

**Narrative Rationale:**

Although the school recognizes the importance of addressing student learning needs through a cycle of continuous improvement, such efforts were put on hold for a time due to circumstances beyond their control. The school, having returned to a more normal state, has refocused on the areas previously identified and are poised to commit to this work. A continuous cycle of improvement has been hampered by the lack of dedicated meeting times, consistent application of policies and protocols in all programs and divisions, an intentional process for the use of data, monitoring progress of the goals tied to student achievement, and accountability.

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## A6: Resources

### A6.1 Resource Allocation Decisions:

Major spending priorities are set by the Board, in consideration of plans made by the headmaster and business manager. All resources are used in support of student needs. The school's main source of income is tuition but it also receives funds from the Consolidated Grant for supplemental instructional materials, professional development; college, career and life readiness; technology; student competitions; and athletics, and from the educational Tax Credit, donations from local businesses. The school has also received funding from the American Rescue Plan Act and FEMA to help mitigate the impact of the typhoon and COVID.

The headmaster and board prudently utilized all the federal funding opportunities available to assist the school and provide resources for the teachers and students.

Some resource allocation is made in consultation with the full staff, particularly for plans using federal funds. The Public School System required SIS to submit an Equitable Service Needs Assessment in order to obtain Federal Funds from the Consolidated Grant. The staff dedicated a professional development session to grant parameters for the consolidated grant. For this grant, the staff completed the equitable service needs assessment based on student needs in divisional and/or discipline needs. A copy of the Equitable Service Needs Assessment was provided for review. Once the grant resources are known, the staff will discuss prioritization based on actual allocations.

Although the school had a deficient balance for two years due to the unexpected challenges resulting from the typhoon and the pandemic, the school recognized the need to bring the budget into balance. Last year it had a surplus of $30,000 and anticipates that the current year's surplus will be at least the same.

**A6.2 Practices and Procedures:**

The Visiting Committee confirmed that there are procedures in place regarding budget, audit, and accounting practices. The board receives a monthly report that includes the ongoing budget, cash on hand, enrollment, staffing, and federal grants. All spending is overseen by the business manager, the headmaster, and treasurer. The headmaster prepares the final budget. The business manager handles the money, prepares invoices, and keeps the books. The school contracts with an outside professional accountant who monitors the financial records and prepares reports and tax forms. It should be noted that the last formal audit occurred in 2017.

**A6.3 Instructional Materials:**

Requests for instructional materials and equipment are given to the business manager who reviews them for appropriateness and passes them to the headmaster for approval. The business manager oversees placing orders and receiving materials. All requests are tied to supporting the learning process. Adoption of any new curriculum can be spearheaded by a faculty member. All students have access to laptops or ipads to use in the classroom. Procurement and delivery to the island can be a prolonged issue. Most materials must be shipped to the island and the cost is sometimes challenging. The school has been using publishers in China to publish the Advanced Placement Research student papers.

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

The committee observed through a virtual tour and classroom observations that the facilities are safe, functional and well-maintained. All facilities are inspected and licensed by local governing authorities and support student achievement. The school needs to provide drinking water for all the students since the water on Saipan is not potable water. Although the school has upgraded its internet capabilities, to ensure wireless access throughout the school, a better network is needed to support learning for all students. During the visit to the school, the headmaster received approval for installation of the Starlink System. The school has identified the need for a covered gym area and an enclosed cafeteria with air conditioning. The students agree that those two facilities need to be improved and added the request for an additional girls bathroom for the high school area. With no physical gym there are no shower facilities. The headmaster shared plans to increase the area for the sports/physical education activities and to include a covering for the courts. With limited money, a permanent gym and cafeteria would have to be planned for a later date.

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*Resources* **that supports high achievement for all students.**

**Visiting Committee Rating:** <u>**Highly Effective**</u>    Effective    Somewhat Effective    Ineffective
**Narrative Rationale:**

All resources are directed to meeting the students' academic, social and personal needs. Although funds are limited, the school has maximized their use providing students with a safe, clean, positive learning environment with quality instructional materials. Although staff, students and parents reflected that more resources would always be helpful, all felt that quality resources were sufficient to support their programs. The headmaster has plans for facility improvements, provided there is funding available.

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There has been no audit of the budget and expenses since 2017.

## CATEGORY A: ORGANIZATION: VISION AND PURPOSE, GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP, STAFF, SCHOOL CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PROCESSES, AND RESOURCES

**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
4. A unified vision, mission, virtues, and schoolwide learning outcomes guide the school
5. Committed faculty, administration, and staff who sustained the high levels of achievement in spite of multiple natural disasters
6. A planned review and revision of the current bylaws by the Board of Directors in support of the mission and vision of the school.
7. The administration is caring and supportive of faculty, students, and parents.

**Areas of Growth**

1. Professional goals linking teacher evaluation to schoolwide objectives for continuous improvement
2. Schoolwide policies and procedures consistently practiced to support a diverse faculty and student population.
3. Professional development focusing on use of student performance data to drive effective instruction in the classroom and its impact on student learning.
4. Dedicated time for collaboration for staff to analyze student work, share strategies, and discuss evidence of student achievement.
5. An audit on the school's financial records conducted routinely to verify appropriate financial practices and resource use.

**Important evidence from the self-study and the visit that supports these strengths and growth areas for continuous improvement include the following:**

- School Reports
- Meetings with focus groups, business manager, parents, board members, and students
- Observation of classes and campus
- Review of evidence provided

## CATEGORY B. CURRICULUM

### B1: Rigorous and Relevant Standards-Based Curriculum

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

Saipan International School (SIS) provides a rigorous, relevant, coherent standards-based curriculum that supports the achievement of the schoolwide learner goals, academic standards,

and the college and career readiness indicators in order to meet graduation requirements.

The SIS curriculum review process identified the need to update the curriculum. Elementary school Journey's K-6th grade reading instructional materials were received and adapted in 2019. Dimension's Math K-8th grade math curriculum were received and adapted 2020 in the elementary division and 2021 in Middle School. Curriculum materials for High School have undergone delays in the federal programs procurement process since 2019 resulting in the recent reorder of the materials.

Teachers received training on Dimension's Math and a plan is in place to train new teachers.

The AP program support texts arrived for students' use in August 2023. Only a partial order of novel sets for the middle and high school programs arrived in September of 2023. Text supports for the middle school and language have not arrived at the time of this report due to federal programs procurement issues.

SIS has successfully established itself as a leading hub for Chinese language education. SIS was designated as a global Chinese test center in 2018 and signed the "Chinese Test Service Cooperation Agreement," formalizing the school's partnership with the HSK program. The use of new beginner curriculum materials in Mandarin language fundamentals and cultural nuances seamlessly transitioned SIS to prepare students to take the Hànyǔ Shuǐpíng Kǎoshì (HSK) Chinese Proficiency Test. The official textbook and rigorous linguistic training prepare students with the requisite skills to excel in the proficiency assessment empowering students to excel in a globalized world.

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

SIS continues to work towards combining the concepts and skills taught, the schoolwide student goals, academic standards, and the college and career readiness indicators with all teachers and contents. SIS has adapted AERO Math and Language Arts Standards to align curriculum with standards. They use this to prepare students to take the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) testing for grades K-10. Science and Social Studies is considering switching to AERO standards and in the meanwhile is still using Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies (NCSS). A template has been provided to elective teachers that follows Understanding by Design (UBD) for writing curriculum. All elective teachers are required to complete and submit an adopted template for their individual elective activities but still needs to be fully implemented. SIS expresses that it has become over reliant on the skills and expertise of its faculty, particularly its most senior teachers. SIS is concerned about the school's annual turnovers for the transient faculty and prospective retirements for the experienced faculty.

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

SIS utilizes Advanced Placement (AP) courses as a benchmark to demonstrate that students exceed high school standards and are ready for college. The school is transitioning to AERO standards for English and math. Students volunteer their time in community service projects that give them insight and work experience that prepares them for future careers. The school has identified the graduation requirements which includes credit hours as well as community service hours.

**B1.4 Curricular Integration**:

SIS has had great academic success with its students and would benefit if more teachers were to combine other subjects to meet objectives across the curriculum to include academic standards and college and career readiness indicators.  Teachers have expressed a desire to have both horizontal and vertical alignment meetings to better prepare the elementary students for the next grade level.  They are also interested in doing cross-curricular work.

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

SIS students participate in clubs, sports, and after school programs. Parents are informed of the school and classroom events and are able to observe the sporting activities. Students volunteer in the school and community providing pride in themselves and the school. Students are able to obtain information about college through "college nights." The school counselor has an advisory program to prepare students for completing applications, filing for financial aid, and selecting colleges. As the school is a K-12 school, teachers are able to articulate regularly about student progress. There is limited access to alumni who often leave the island with their families or for college.

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*Rigorous and Relevant Standards-Based Curriculum* **that supports high achievement for all students.**
**Visiting Committee Rating:**     Highly Effective     **Effective**     Somewhat Effective     Ineffective
**Narrative Rationale:**

SIS provides a rigorous, relevant, and standards-based curriculum which prepares students for further education.  Extensive evidence was provided that the students are achieving as evidence in their AP scores and admissions to colleges, as well as academic competitions.  There was limited access to syllabus, curriculum plans, lesson and unit plans, to assess the connection of the curriculum to high achievement; however, the school had identified the improvement and alignment of the curriculum as one of the goals for their new action plan.

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**B2:  Equity and Access to Curriculum**

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

SIS offers a diverse range of elective courses and after school programs helping students identify and develop different interests and personal talents. Elementary students receive weekly instruction in Art, Music and Dance, Reading Enrichment, Drama, and Socio-emotional Learning, along with Mandarin and Physical Education on a every other day basis to prepare them for secondary education. The students in the high school have the options to take honors or advanced placement.  While the students are in the same classroom, the assignments for the AP students are more challenging. The electives provided areas of student interests from study hall to chess to film editing.

**B2.2 Access to Curriculum, Including Real World Experiences, by All Students:**
SIS students are all offered a rigorous, relevant, and coherent curriculum that are academically

challenging and applicable to their lives. The elementary school has adopted the Elevate Science program from Savvas Realize. It provides online standards-aligned content, flexible class management tools, and embedded assessments that deliver rich data instantly to teachers. The program is filled with many real-world examples and allows students to experience science through virtual simulations and hands-on activities. Science classes improve problem-solving, critical thinking, and the NGSS performance expectations. SIS offers high school students AP courses in math and science that are rigorous and require students to complete college-level readings, assignments, and exams. The counselor provides a course for the students to determine their personality, skills, and connect these to possible career choices. They then research careers and colleges, and visit them virtually to plan their career or college selection.

The students do not have a choice in the course that is taken and all students have equal access to the curriculum. The high school students have a choice of AP or honors courses.

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

SIS prides itself in creating a school community where parents, teachers, students, and staff experience a deep sense of belonging and worth. The school works with students and parents to develop and monitor individualized learning plans. The counselors work with students in 11th grade to identify college majors, and work with students in the college application process during 12th grade. The High school classroom counselor helps elementary schools with voluntary after-school enrichment programs to ensure that each student's individual needs are met. SIS builds strong relationships and open lines of communication within the school community as: school host to the annual Gecko 5000 Cross Country Invitational; providing Open House for students and parents in August; selling food at the school monthly Bake Sales, Parent Teacher Conferences (twice each school year); and parents have access to grades real time and progress reports, as well as special announcements through the OpenSISsystem, phone calls and emails. The transient community, as well as the home language, has caused an obstacle to the creation of a PTO. There is informal discussion occuring with the parents and the open door policy of the school provides a welcoming and encouraging atmosphere for suggestions and ideas.

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*Equity and Access to Curriculum* that supports high achievement for all students.

**Visiting Committee Rating:**   __Highly Effective__   Effective   Somewhat Effective   Ineffective

**Narrative Rationale:**

All students are able to make appropriate curricular choices and pursue a full range of realistic college and career options. There is a rigorous, relevant, and standards-based curriculum to prepare the students for their career choices. The diversity of the student body has created a multicultural microcosm that prepares students for the global environment in which they live. The family atmosphere provides a sense of family for parents, teachers, and students where support and acceptance are the first priority.

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## CATEGORY B: CURRICULUM

### Areas of Strength

- Students learn from an energetic, caring, loving group of teachers.

- Rigorous, relevant curriculum with real-world experiences in both curricular and co-curricular programs
- Moving to AERO standards
- Strong Advanced Placement Program
- Equitable access for all students
- Focus on college and career readiness
- Students are engaged and dedicated to learning
- Parents are very supportive of the academic program and the focus on high achievement

**Areas of Growth**

- Teachers need more opportunities to work on their Understanding by Design (UBD) Templates/Unit Plans
- Intentional alignment of the curriculum to the standards and the SLOs
- Accountability in the monitoring of the curriculum to ensure consistency in grading policy, unit plans, syllabi across all curricular areas and grades
- Professional development, based on student data, to add interventions and strategies for student achievement

**Important evidence from the self-study and the visit that supports these strengths and growth areas for continuous improvement include the following:**

School Self-Study report

Focus group meetings

Observation of classrooms

Review of evidence

Website

## CATEGORY C.  LEARNING AND TEACHING

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

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

The school prides itself on providing a challenging, relevant,  equity-centered learning environment for students. The school emphasizes hands-on projects, collaborative initiatives, and real-world applications in its curriculum, such as science and community service projects, and assessments.  There is a wide range of challenging AP classes as well as Title I English support for those students who need additional support.  During the Visiting Committee observations of classrooms, students were working in groups, engaged in the lessons, actively involved in assisting one another on projects, and interested in learning.  In the elementary classes the kindergarteners were already reading and able to differentiate between sentences and questions.

Because of the diversity within the student and staff populations, the school values equity in all aspects. Student survey results show that 92% of the students felt valued and accepted, 91% that teachers treat them with respect, and 90% that they feel accepted as a person. In addition, 91%

feels that SIS keeps them engaged in classwork and activities. While 50% agree that they are appropriately challenged by assignments in class, 38% strongly agree that they are challenged. An area identified by the school as a concern was that only 70% feel that they may express their personal opinions to their teachers.

Students in the high school are required to have 50 hours of community service over 4-years and the counselor keeps track of the hours. National Honor Society students assist the students through tutoring for 2 hours a week. The students worked diligently on environmental issues by recycling plastic into other useful items. The students in the Advanced Placement Research class have presented environmental research in other locations and have their research published by the school annually.

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

Students reported they understand what is expected in each class and that teachers share a syllabus. However, the committee found that the teachers do not use a consistent format nor is there careful monitoring of this expectation. During classroom observations, daily agendas, learning objectives or standards were not seen in the majority of classrooms, although students were actively engaged in learning activities. There did not appear to be uniform practices evident in all classrooms which are vital for assisting second language speakers. The advanced placement students are aware of the high expectations required of the program. Some students opt for honors classes. During the focus group meetings, the Visiting Committee learned that the instruction is the same for both groups, who share the classroom, but the assignments vary depending on the enrollment in honors or AP. There was little evidence that the elementary or middle school students are aware of the learning expectations.

The school reports that they use technology such as ClassDojo and Geckonet to provide parents and students with continuous access to these learning expectations. AP classes make use of rubrics provided by the College Board.

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*Student Engagement in Challenging and Relevant Learning Experiences* that supports high achievement for all students.

**Visiting Committee Rating:**    Highly Effective    <u>Effective</u>    Somewhat Effective    Ineffective

**Narrative Rationale:**

The Visiting Committee observed classrooms where the students were engaged in challenging and relevant learning. College preparation was obvious in the advanced placement courses. However, the school is in the process of identifying a lesson/unit plan format that would be consistently used across the grade levels. Best practices for lesson planning, like the posting of agenda and objectives, would benefit the students and teachers by clarifying instructional expectations and lesson objectives on a daily basis. Most students understand the expected performance levels, but there is limited indication of the understanding of standards that guide instruction.

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

**C2.1 Teachers Facilitate Learning:**

The committee found evidence that teachers use a variety of instructional methodologies including role playing, Reading Buddies (grades K-4), group projects, jigsaw activities, technology-assisted activities, individual research projects, and student presentations. Guest experts are welcome to provide insight into topics such as environmental conservation. Community involvement encourages learning through cultural activities. The Culture Club encourages students to explore and celebrate diverse cultural aspects promoting understanding and inclusivity.

The SIS School survey shows that 80% of students agree that teachers consistently check for understanding. Many classes had students using laptops for assignments. Group arrangements for class seating was found in almost every class encouraging socialization, problem solving, and critical discussion. Some teachers identified formative assessment that they use occasionally in the classroom to measure students progress toward mastery.

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

Elementary, middle and high school students participate in an annual Student Community Survey at the beginning of the year providing the school with student perceptions about their learning. The results serve as a foundation for fostering open communication and understanding. The Student Council (STUCO) meets monthly and students prepare proposals for activities and field trips. The students in the National Honor Society tutor students after school. Various programs, such as the 4-H club were the initiative of the students. Students are able to present proposals for activities and share their suggestions for school improvement with the administration. The students stated that they were able to select their after school electives to match their interest.

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

The committee found that teachers use technology and digital learning tools to enhance and support student learning in a variety of academic subjects and includes interactive learning and assessment tools. The Self-Study identifies programs used to include NearPod, BrainPop, Moodle, Savvas Science and Social Studies, Delta Math, Khan Academy, Pearson Mastering Biology, EdPuzzle, and Turner's Graph of the Week. Students interested in an advanced placement class not offered at the school take the initiative to go to Keystone Academy for the available classes.

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. The committee observed students and teachers using computers as a learning tool in support of the class activity.

The students and teachers have initiated a recycling campaign in which old plastic is broken down and made into new creations, like plates, for reuse. The students are also planning to learn to dive and to work on Reef Conservation.

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

A four-year comprehensive high school advisory program is geared to the needs of each grade level culminating with the Senior Seminar in which the focus is on meeting impending college application deadlines and submissions. The counselor provides an extensive college preparation

experience for the high school students in which they research colleges and have even taken virtual tours of colleges and college fairs. The committee observed research presentations from the students.

The report states that teachers extend learning experiences beyond conventional textbooks and classrooms, enriching students' understanding and equipping them for both collegiate and professional pursuits.  The 8th period of the day is used for enrichment and/or remediation and classes range from recycling and Model UN to crocheting and tutoring. Students also participate in several competitions - math, speech and debate, and science.

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***Student-Centered Instruction through a Variety of Strategies and Resources*** that supports high achievement for all students.

**Visiting Committee Rating:**　　Highly Effective　　**Effective**　　Somewhat Effective　　Ineffective

**Narrative Rationale:**

The committee observed students actively engaged in the learning process through various instructional strategies such as science experiments, jigsaw activities, presentations, group work,  and teacher-led discussions. Technology use supplemented the learning process.

Identified as a growth area by the last self-study, the committee did not find evidence that the staff was more intentional in the use of diverse strategies nor has there been schoolwide professional development focused on strategies. There is no long-term written plan for professional development and the school utilizes whatever workshop or training is available for immediate needs.  The student achievement would be impacted with more diverse, individualized, and consistent use of best practices strategies. Attendance at workshops, such as those offered by the College Board or curriculum adoptions, have supported individual teachers.

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## CATEGORY C: LEARNING AND TEACHING

### Areas of Strength

1. Small class sizes
2. Expectations of high achievement for all students
3. Diversity of rigorous and challenging Advanced Placement courses
4. Diversity of diplomas to meet the needs of the students
5. Programs to assist English as Second Language learners

### Areas of Growth

1. Address social emotional growth
2. Increase curricular integration
3. Intentional attention to the use of diverse instructional strategies
4. Standardize best practices in classroom instruction, i.e. posting of agenda and learning

objectives

**Important evidence from the self-study and the visit that supports these strengths and growth areas for continuous improvement include the following:**

School Self-Study report

Focus group meetings

Observation of classrooms

Review of evidence

Website

## CATEGORY D:  ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

### D1:  Reporting and Accountability Process

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

The SIS leadership uses effective assessment processes to collect and analyze data.  Data collected includes standardized tests, e.g., MAP, Achieve 3000, AP exams, as well as in class assignments and formative and summative assessments.  The headmaster analyzes the standardized testing data and shares it with the teachers.  Teachers utilize the assessment data to determine if the student in high school should take the advanced placement or honors path of courses.  In middle and elementary school, the data analyzed identified students who are in need of additional tutoring from the teacher, honor students, or Title I  tutoring.

Parents have access to the MAP test results twice a year and data is presented annually to the parents and board of directors.  The MAP provides a comparison of the grade level scores. Developmental goals are included in the reports.  The goals for K-2 tests include Reading - Foundational Skills, Language and Writing, Literature and Informational Text, and Vocabulary Use and Functions; Math - Operations and Algebraic Thinking, Number and Operations, Measurement and Data, and Geometry. The goals for Grade 6 include  Reading - Literary Text, Informational Text, Vocabulary; Math - Operations and Algebraic Thinking, The Real and Complex Number Systems, Geometry, and Statistics and Probability. Additional goals are added up through 10th grade.

There is no MAP testing for 11th and 12th grade students; instead they take the Advanced Placement exams if they are interested.  The results of the Advanced Placement exams are in the profile chapter and support that many of the students are successful in their testing.  Some students take the SIS classes offered for advanced placement while other students take online classes independently to prepare for the advanced placement tests.

In the classroom, teachers use Class Dojo, chat groups, phone calls, to communicate with parents about student progress or class events.  The parents have access to the online grading system, OpenSIS, to monitor grades.

The school has reviewed and opted to use NWEA testing for student assessment since it provides specific information for determining student needs.

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

The school leadership sets the policies which are published in the Parent-Student handbook. Policies such as homework, treatment of zeros, weighing of AP classes, were discussed by the staff.  Individual teachers set the grading policies for their classroom and there is no consistency across and within grade level and content areas.  No grading policy is in the 4/24 Teacher Handbook, but the Parent/Student Handbook does have the grading policy delineated.  Early childhood students receive narrative comments in lieu of grades and students in kindergarten through twelfth grade use a grading scale to calculate academic grades.

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A | (100-94%) | 4.00 | C | (76-74%) | 2.00 |
| A- | (93-90%) | 3.70 | C- | (73-70%) | 1.70 |
| B+ | (89-87%) | 3.40 | D+ | (69-67%) | 1.40 |
| B | (86-84%) | 3.00 | D | (66- 64%) | 1.00 |
| B- | (83-80%) | 2.70 | D- | (63-60%) | 0.70 |
| C+ | (79-77%) | 2.40 | F | (59-00%) | 0.00 |

(Advanced Placement courses are weighted at 1.25 or a maximum 5.0 to reflect the AP grading scale and the level of complexity in these university-level courses)

While there is a standard grading system (A-F), the large number of ESL students at the school may be assessed on a Pass/NoPass grade scale.

Both teachers and the Leadership Team recognize the need to focus on the curriculum and have plans to use Understanding By Design templates to create a curriculum that "spirals," provides consistency both horizontally and vertically, and is transparent.  As of the Visiting Committee's virtual visit there were no daily lesson plans and very inconsistent unit plans provided by the school; however, there was an effort to create a scope and sequence in most of the classes.  The teachers are examining the use of AERO Standards for English and Math since the standards are simplified and easier for teachers and parents to understand.  There is not a consistent use of standards for unit planning but the school intends to work on this area.

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

To address student needs identified through assessments,  the SIS provides a variety of AP courses and exams.  The variety of courses at the school and the institution of new curricular choices, e.g., three-level English classes, STAR Reading, Achieve 3000, and Singapore Math, are based on student performance and student feedback.  Science curriculum across the levels, blends digital and print curriculum and the program Elevate Science, ensures vertical alignment for elementary and middle school.  The three-level English program recognizes the needs of the diverse student body.

The results of AP test results guide instruction for the AP teachers. There have been changes to the variety of AP tests and the addition of the AP Capstone (AP Seminar). Resources are available through the AP program for assessments and enhancement of curriculum. AP teachers use AP classroom, AP Question Bank, AP Instructional Planning Reports, and AP insight.

The number of students receiving a passing score for the AP tests supports that the curriculum is preparing them for critical thinking.  A report in the Saipan Newspaper stated that SIS received

"Advanced Placement Program School Honor Roll, earning Gold distinction" with "80% of seniors who took at least one AP exam during high school."

There is limited information on assessments at the elementary level being used to make changes in the curriculum or guide professional development. The Visiting Committee recognized that there is extensive support for the high school college level path from teachers and parents. The allocation of funding has recently included resources and support materials for all grade levels, but there is limited evidence that it is driven by students' assessment results. Most of the support is designed for the advanced placement program.

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

The school leadership used assessments to determine the need for differentiated instruction and used the data to provide students with modified instructions and lessons. Summative assessments, including quizzes, tests, and verbal assessments, are used to measure student progress. The school leadership utilizes MAP testing for comparison of the SIS students with others at the same level. Online programs, like Achieve 3000, provide assessments of students' growth and the teachers review the results to provide support for the students.

Resources support the development of new courses, the allocation of resources, and the design of professional development to support the advanced placement program. The school received federal emergency funding after the typhoon and pandemic and used the money to purchase supplies and repair the facilities.

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*Reporting and Accountability Process* **that supports high achievement for all students.**

**Visiting Committee Rating:**     Highly Effective     **Effective**     Somewhat Effective     Ineffective

**Narrative Rationale:**

Standardized summative assessments are reviewed by the administration and faculty and the teachers provide it to parents. Online grading programs enable parents to monitor student grades. The teachers revise their instructional methods to address the needs of the individual students but no standardized grading policy exists across grade levels. The school revises the curriculum to add new online programs or curriculum to increase student performance, or removes programs that indicate low performance based on AP exams. There is limited evidence that student assessment data is used for modification of the schoolwide programs.

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**D2:  Using Student Assessment Strategies to Monitor and Modify Learning Progress**

**D2.1 Monitoring Student Growth:**

The Self-Study report did not state how the school determines and monitors growth and progress schoolwide. Through focus group meetings, the Visiting Committee learned that teachers use teacher-made pre and post tests to monitor progress. The AP program teachers receive summative test scores at the end of the testing period.

The Federal Programs office at PSS works with Title I teachers to analyze data from federally funded programs of Achieve 3000 and MAP to determine which students may need tutoring assistance. A MAP assessment from NWEA can provide a clearer picture of the student

achievement levels.

During the focus group meeting, the teachers stated that there is limited time to have divisional, grade level, or department meetings to discuss students' progress, strategies to address the needs, or curriculum. During the discussions with the elementary team leader, she stated that she did meet regularly with the elementary teachers. Informal discussions between teachers take place at the elementary level and at the high school level to determine a students path. The school is small in size and in faculty. In some cases the same one or two teachers may teach all middle and high school classes in a particular subject. This means there is not only a lack of time for collaboration but limited people for collaboration. The benefit of this is that the teachers know the students at each grade level and what they have been taught. The downside is the lack of new ideas and strategies, lack of collaboration, and teachers preparing to teach multiple subjects every day.

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

The Self-Study states that teachers use student feedback and dialogue to monitor progress. Informal observations are done by teachers in the classroom to determine if students are meeting the learning goals. The Visiting Committee did not find daily learning goals or agendas in many of the classrooms that were observed. The school recognizes the need to work on refinement of curriculum.

A student survey was provided which could be used for feedback for the teachers. Some teachers mentioned that formative assessment is used to monitor the students progress. There was limited evidence that timely, specific, and descriptive feedback supports students in achieving their goals. Some teachers shared that they are providing feedback and formative assessment with their students. More evidence might have been observed with onsite visits.

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

The Self-Study states that assessments and student feedback are used by teachers to design lessons according to the student's needs. "Teachers ensure that all students receive the support they need to maximize their learning potential." Differentiated instruction is used to meet the individual student's needs. Tutoring is provided by the teachers and by the Title I tutors. The Teacher handbook provides suggestions for modifying instruction to meet the needs of the diverse learners. The school has designed a three-level English class to address the needs of the second language speakers who arrive at the school with different levels of command of the English language. They are moved through the levels as their proficiency increases.

School response in the Self-Study discusses student achievement in the honor society, but it did not address if the assessments are used to guide, modify, and adjust curriculum and instructional approaches. The focus group meeting provided some additional evidence.

> *Using Student Assessment Strategies to Monitor and Modify Learning Progress* **that supports high achievement for all students.**
>
> **Visiting Committee Rating:**      Highly Effective      Effective      **Somewhat Effective**      Ineffective
> **Narrative Rationale:**

The school Self-Study did not answer any of the prompts directly or indirectly. The Visiting Committee needed to find the evidence through questioning in the focus groups. There was little evidence provided to support the use of assessments to monitor and modify learning to support high achievement. Most of the school focus is on the high school advanced placement program. There was limited observation on the use of timely feedback to provide learning mastery. Evidence did not support there was widespread use of formative and summative assessment to guide, modify, and adjust curricular and instructional approaches.

## CATEGORY D: ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

**Areas of Strength**

1. The school reviewed, researched, and selected summative assessments to measure student achievement and to provide a more accurate and speedy measurement of student proficiency
2. The school has revised and updated the curriculum to meet the needs and the potential of the students
3. Regular assessment of second language speakers to provide timely interventions to meet their needs

**Areas of Growth**

1. Consistency and analysis of assessment, both vertical and horizontal, to measure student progress
2. Consistent grading policy
3. Accountability for monitoring the instruction in the classroom to assure consistency and focus on standards and curriculum

**Important evidence about student learning from the self-study and the visit that supports these strengths and growth areas for continuous improvement include the following:**

Self-Study

Focus group meetings

Observation of classes

Evidence provided by the school

Newspaper articles

School website

# CATEGORY E:  SCHOOL CULTURE AND SUPPORT FOR STUDENT PERSONAL, SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL, AND ACADEMIC GROWTH

## E1:  Family/Guardian and Community Involvement

### E1.1 Strategies and Processes:

Due to its diverse teacher and student population, SIS is able to address both culturally sensitive and linguistic needs.  The use of a virtual learning environment and student information system, keeps all parents connected to student progress as well as events at the school.  The community and parents are involved in the school events like a monthly bake sale, beach cleanups, International Thanksgiving, Christmas in the Marianas, Gecko 5000 fun run, interscholastic athletics, and Halloween carnival. A weekly newsletter is sent home to parents and is available on the school website.  The grading program, OpenSIS, includes special announcements as well as progress of the students.  Parent/teacher conferences are held twice a year with more regular contact of the parents being done through emails. There is an open-door policy and parents and teachers are able to communicate with one another or the administration.

### E1.2 Inclusive Cultural Understanding:

A strong inclusive cultural environment is supported through the diverse ethnic population of the school.  Announcements for parents and the community, specifically meeting agendas, are translated into several languages (Chinese, Korean, Tagalog, Japanese, Russian). Orientation is provided for new students and parents to help orient them to the school culture.  Class Dojo is used in elementary and middle schools for announcements that can be automatically translated into other languages. Cultural celebrations recognize the diversity of the population with events for wide-scale participation.

### E1.3 Rapport and Trust:

SIS considers itself a family for students and staff.  The Self-Study student survey stated  that all students may not encourage a sense of rapport and trust to support their well-being.  However, all students interviewed seemed to be comfortable with their teachers and classmates.  Student surveys indicated the majority of the students feel they are accepted as unique individuals and that they are happy at the school.  The Self-Study recognizes that not all students feel connected to the school and consider this an area that could be improved. The parents trust that the children are protected, supported, and cared for by the faculty.

The students participated in a survey which indicated that students have positive feelings about the school and the teachers.  The majority feel they are treated with respect and they know where to go for assistance when they need it. With every focus group and meeting, the idea that SIS is a family community that accepts differences and is tolerant of all stakeholders was emphasized.

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*Family/Guardian and Community Involvement* that supports high achievement for all students.

**Visiting Committee Rating:**   __Highly Effective__   Effective   Somewhat Effective   Ineffective

**Narrative Rationale:**

SIS has a diverse cultural and linguistic population and attempts are made to communicate with

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> the families in the home languages.  There are events held at the school for parents and the community.  Students and parents have access to a variety of online resources for school communication including progress reports, class activities, and announcements. The school and the Board would welcome more parental participation and involvement.

## E2:  School Culture and Environment

### E2.1 Policies and Resources:

A school handbook provides policies and resources such as emergency procedures.  There are working cameras to monitor the campus.  The Self-Study plans to improve the communication needed for fire drills to address the diverse linguistic needs of the students.  There is a health center in the main office to address student medical needs. One teacher is a certified nurse and handles minor issues with the children.  Teachers receive training in CPR.  The school students are also covered by personal accident insurance.  The school is clean and orderly at all times with the diligent work of the maintenance staff and faculty.  The school ensures that internet content is filtered and there are blocks in place monitored by the IT specialist.

The school provided a copy of the teacher handbook as well as the one for students and parents.  Both handbooks identify policies to ensure a safe campus.  The teacher handbook includes the code of ethics and teacher requirements and policies.

The school would like to have a cumulative child safety plan and have included it in their new action plan.

### E2.2 Trust, Respect, and Equity:

SIS creates an atmosphere of trust, respect, and equity by providing all families with a student handbook outlining the school mission and policies.  The student survey supports that students feel they are treated with respect (96%) by their teachers.  Students are recognized monthly for Virtue Awards in which students are recognized for responsibility, initiative, integrity, respect, leadership, compassion, and perseverance.  The elementary school also has a class of the month award for those most improved and the winning class is awarded a half-day field trip to a local hotel for swimming and community building.

In the Leadership Team, the idea that the school celebrates the diversity and tolerance of the individuals was emphasized.  With the transient population, students and their families are moving every few years.  The school helps to provide students with a global image.

### E2.3 School Culture:

SIS embraces its multi-national, multicultural, and multiethnic student body, staff, and community.  The student survey supports that students feel accepted and that their diversity is valued.  The small size of the school helps to create the familial atmosphere where students can find support and teachers address social and emotional learning.   There are music, drama, and art club activities as well as lessons focusing on social emotional learning.   Communication with peers is supported through peers and technology.  School events support the diversity of the population.

*School Culture and Environment* that supports high achievement for all students.

**Visiting Committee Rating:** __Highly Effective__ Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

**Narrative Rationale:**

SEL is addressed through clubs, lessons, and songs. Student behavior is encouraged through the use of awards and field trips. Activities support the diversity of the student population. There are policies and regulations that support a safe and clean and nurturing environment. There is a community of trust and support for all stakeholders. The high expectation of achievement and confidence is supported by the school and parents and is apparent in the students.

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

**E3.1 Support:**

ESL support is given to those students from 1-12 who are behind in English literacy. The Star Reading assessment is used to determine which students should be included in this pull-out program for tutoring. The school offers academic support electives which include technology activities like Minecraft and Gaming; arts like music, crochet, and film and video editing; chess to name a few.

There are nine students who have been identified as students with special needs who receive individualized attention and tutoring. None of the students are required to have IEP if in the private schools, but they do have in class accommodations.

Teacher handbook (updated 4/10/2024) includes the following suggestions for modifications. There is no indication of how many teachers are using these accommodations.

The following are accommodations that may be implemented within our school program based on documentation from diagnostic testing:

1. Extended time testing; double time maximum
2. Preferential classroom seating
3. Use of mechanical aids such as laptop computers, tape recorders, or electronic translators
4. Use of designated note takers to supplement student's own notes, when possible
5. Use of audio books
6. Use of a word-processing program for written tests/quizzes and in-class papers
7. Implementation of a foreign language waiver
8. Use of a calculator if the intent of learning a certain topic or concept is not compromised.
9. Allowance of outside tutors to come in during study periods to provide one-to-one tutoring.
10. Implementation of recommendations made by the psychologist/counselor as determined feasible by the school.

**E3.2 Support Effectiveness:**

Yearly surveys are used to assess the support of school programs to address SEL. The surveys are given at the beginning of the school year - there is no indication of measuring school improvement through an end of the year survey; however, after discussions with the Visiting Committee there is a plan to begin a post survey to measure improvement.

In addition, conversations and individual counseling provide the school with a sense of the effectiveness of its programs.  Students, parents, and teachers are given the opportunity to discuss issues with the school counselor or business manager.

During the Leadership Team meeting, the counselor expressed a need to hire a second counselor to focus on the social, emotional, and personal issues in order to allow one counselor to focus on college preparation.

**E3.3 Student Involvement:**

Students have won awards for athletics, academic and performing arts competitions.  The school offers "Destino Peru" every other year in which students spend three weeks in Peru on a service-based learning experience.  Student clubs, both inside and outside school (e.g., Saipan Cares for Animals) provides opportunities for enrichment and service to the community.  The extra-curricular activities include sports and academic competitions.  The students are very active in sports and the teachers try to provide support for all the events from volleyball to track and field. The students have won the distinction of having college-level scores from Advanced Placement. The last class of the day provides activities for student enrichment and interest. Students take the initiative to request proposals for field trips.

**E3.4 Student Self-Advocacy:**

The school's focus on social emotional learning and acceptance of diversity enables students to sense their own worth as individuals.  The service learning projects and virtues supported by the school provide a sense of self as well as a connection to the community.

Students have taken the initiative to create a 4H Club and a 9th grade homework help club.  An after school art class for elementary school and tutoring are offered by high school students. These activities are demonstrations of self-confidence and self-actualization.  The student government felt that they had the ability to share suggestions.  They were involved in the accreditation process by identifying areas of strength and growth.  They identified student-teacher relationships, K-12 events that bring together the entire school, and the ability to create new extra-curricular activities as their strengths.

> *Personal, Social-Emotional, and Academic Support* that support high achievement for all students.
> **Visiting Committee Rating:**     Highly Effective     **Effective**     Somewhat Effective     Ineffective
> **Narrative Rationale:**
>
> The school supports the talents of the students by providing a variety of elective classes.  There is support for emotional and social experiences through the diverse environment.  The virtues projects support the confidence of the students as well as their tolerance of diversity.  Students have a sense of self-efficacy and are advocates of their own needs.  The school has a selective population geared toward advanced placement and college readiness.  Students and parents choose SIS and may have to provide additional support for special needs and for advanced

placement courses.

## CATEGORY E: SCHOOL CULTURE AND SUPPORT FOR STUDENT PERSONAL, SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL, AND ACADEMIC GROWTH

**Areas of Strength**

1. Students plan and create a rich variety of extra-curricular activities
2. An inclusive environment for diversity of language and culture
3. Support by teachers, students, and parents for high achievement
4. Created a Child Protection Plan
5. Create and maintain a safe, orderly and clean campus

**Areas of Growth**

1. Address all students sense of belonging
2. Consider a post student survey to measure success
3. Action plan to create a comprehensive Student Safety and Support Plan
4. Recognition of the school need to address social, emotional, personal issues

**Important evidence about student learning from the self-study and the visit that supports these strengths and growth areas for continuous improvement include the following:**

Self-Study

Student Surveys

School Website

Mid-Cycle Report

Evidence provided through links

Focus Group Meetings

## Chapter 4: Synthesis of Schoolwide Strengths and Growth Areas for Continuous Improvement

### Schoolwide Strengths

**The purpose of identifying schoolwide strengths is to provide input and support for the school to use these strengths in their continuous improvement to ensure high quality student learning and well-being.**

The visiting committee identified the following specific schoolwide strengths

1. SIS has a unified vision, mission, virtues, and schoolwide learning outcomes that guide the school to high achievement
2. SIS has a committed faculty, administration, and staff who sustained the high levels of achievement in spite of multiple natural disasters
3. The SIS administration is caring and supportive of faculty, students, and parents.
4. SIS students learn from an energetic, caring, loving group of teachers.

5. SIS offers a strong Advanced Placement Program for student achievement
6. SIS has a focus on college and career readiness
7. SIS parents are very supportive of the academic program and the focus on high achievement
8. SIS has expectations of high achievement for all students
9. SIS offers programs to assist English as Second Language learners
10. SIS school plans and creates a rich variety of extra-curricular activities
11. SIS provides an inclusive environment for diversity of language and culture
12. SIS create and maintain a safe, orderly and clean campus

**Schoolwide Growth Areas for Continuous Improvement**

**The purpose of supporting the school's identified growth areas for continuous improvement and sharing additional growth areas is to ensure the school's continuous improvement for student learning and well-being encompasses the greatest student and school needs.**

**Synthesize schoolwide growth areas for continuous growth and list numerically.** *Be sure that these can be documented by other sections of the report.*

- **Ensure that all Growth Areas have a "who," "what," and a "why" in relation to the impact on student learning.**
- **Confirm areas already identified by the school in the action plan sections.**
- **Confirm areas to be strengthened within the already identified areas.**
- **Identify any additional areas to be added to the action plan that have been identified by the visiting committee.** *This includes areas related to student achievement and other profile data, the school program and operation, and the action plan.*

The visiting committee <u>concurs</u> with the school's identified growth areas for continuous improvement that are outlined in the schoolwide action plan. The school's growth areas for continuous improvement are explained below.

SIS identified two areas of growth and formulated an Action Plan which included Rationale, Action Steps, Resources, Process/Strategy, Evidence of Accomplishment, Timeline, Communication of Progress, and Responsible Person.  The timeline, in most instances, does not extend beyond 2025.

1. The SIS administration should improve the areas of curriculum, instruction and assessment by aligning the school's SLOs, national standards, teacher professional development and evaluation in order to ensure quality and continuity of the overall education delivered to students.
2. The SIS administration and faculty should develop a comprehensive Student Safety Plan that incorporates the child safety plan, socioemotional supports, emergency systems and drills, to provide a safe and nurturing environment that supports student learning.

In addition, the visiting committee has identified <u>additional concrete, specific</u> growth areas that need to be addressed: **Include a Who, What and Why for each growth area for continuous**

**improvement. (Note: Show the relationship to what the school has already identified, if possible.)**

1. SIS administration needs to provide dedicated time for collaboration for staff in order to analyze student work, share strategies, and discuss evidence of student achievement.
2. SIS Board of Directors and administration must ensure an audit on the school's financial records is conducted routinely and in a timely manner to verify appropriate financial practices and resource use.
3. SIS administration needs to provide teachers with more opportunities to work on their Understanding by Design (UBD) Templates/Unit Plans to improve and provide consistency in instruction.
4. SIS administration and teachers need to focus on intentional alignment of the curriculum to the standards and the SLOs to positively impact student achievement.
5. SIS administration needs to ensure accountability in the monitoring of the curriculum to maintain consistency in grading policy, unit plans, syllabi across all curricular areas and grades.
6. SIS administration and teachers need to standardize best practices in classroom instruction, i.e. posting of agenda and learning objectives, to improve student learning across all grades.
7. SIS administration and team leaders need to provide accountability for monitoring the instruction in the classroom to assure consistency and focus on standards and curriculum
8. SIS stakeholders should enhance the supports necessary to address students' social, emotional, and personal issues.

## Chapter 5:  Ongoing School Improvement

- **Include a brief summary of the schoolwide action plan**
1. 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.

2. Develop a comprehensive Student Safety Plan that incorporates the child safety plan, socioemotional supports, emergency systems and drills.

**Evaluate the school improvement issues:**
  – **The effectiveness of the action plan to enhance student learning and support the identified major student learner needs**
  – **The level of commitment to accomplish the action plan, schoolwide and systemwide**
  – **The alignment of the schoolwide action plan to school goals.**
  – **The soundness of the follow-up process for implementing and monitoring the accomplishment of the schoolwide action plan.**

The Visiting /Committee reviewed the two action plans identified by the school and noted that neither of the plans focus on student achievement.  While the first indirectly could impact student achievement through the creation of aligned curriculum, instruction and assessment, the school has not connected analysis of student data or monitoring of student achievement data, in any step

of the action plan.

The Leadership Team admitted that work had not been done on the first action plan as far as implementation.

The second action plan was decided by the faculty and focuses on creating a comprehensive Student Safety and Support Plan.

These action plans do not focus on student achievement, do not collect, analyze or monitor student achievement. In addition the second action plan does not provide a measurement of pre and post student surveys for their sense of social-emotional wellness or safety. Again, this plan focuses solely on training teachers and creating a plan for the school.

The school focus groups overall decided on the two areas for commitment; however, with the majority of faculty being new to the school, it is difficult to determine if there is a level of commitment to, as well as long-term personnel who will be available, to support the follow-up process. Currently, there is a strong headmaster and lead teachers in elementary, middle, and high school who provide some continuation and commitment to the school plans.

The Visiting Committee feels that with adequate identified time the school has the capacity to monitor and implement the action plans. There needs to be a firm commitment and prioritization of the work on the action plans, in spite of the unforeseen circumstances that island life entails. The action plans identify a 2024-25 timeline for completion of the initial steps and updating and review on a yearly basis.

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**The alignment of a long-range schoolwide action plan to the school's areas of greatest need to support high achievement for all students.**

**Visiting Committee Rating:**     Highly Effective     **Effective**     Somewhat Effective     Ineffective

**Narrative Rationale:**

SIS has addressed the largest area of concern, dealing with curriculum alignment. It does not focus on student achievement directly or use student data, but improving the curriculum will positively impact student achievement. The second action plan would provide a safe learning environment for the students to support the achievement at all levels. The Visiting Committee found that both of the action plans, once implemented, would provide the necessary supports for the school and the students.

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**The capacity to implement and monitor the schoolwide action plan.**

**Visiting Committee Rating:**     Highly Effective     **Effective**     Somewhat Effective     Ineffective

**Narrative Rationale:**

With time and commitment, along with consistent personnel, the SIS action plans would reach completion in the timeline identified. There is commitment of the teachers and the administration to work towards the action plans. The focus on curriculum alignment and consistency would greatly enhance all grade levels and student achievement, not just the advanced placement program. The problem which may hamper implementation would be the financial situation on the island, the mobility of teachers, and the inability to find the time needed to work on the plans during the school day.

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## Accreditation Status Factors Summary

| Accreditation Status Factors | Highly Effective | Effective | Somewhat Effective | Ineffective |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| The involvement and collaboration of the entire school community in the self-study that reflects a thorough, accurate analysis of what currently exists as well as aligned schoolwide prioritized areas of strength and growth. | | XX | | |
| The use of prior accreditation findings and other pertinent data to ensure high achievement of all students and drive continuous school improvement. | | | XX | |
| Acceptable progress by all students | | XX | | |
| Vision and Purpose (A1) | XX | | | |
| Governance (A2) | | XX | | |
| Leadership for Learning (A3) | | XX | | |
| Qualified Staff and Professional Development (A4) | | XX | | |
| School Continuous Improvement (A5) | | | XX | |
| Resources (A6) | XX | | | |
| Rigorous and Relevant Standards-Based Curriculum (B1) | | XX | | |
| Equity and Access to the Curriculum (B2) | XX | | | |
| Student Engagement in Challenging and Relevant Learning Experiences (C1) | | XX | | |
| Student-Centered Instruction through a Variety of Strategies and Resources (C2) | | XX | | |
| Reporting and Accountability Process (D1) | | XX | | |
| Using Student Assessment Strategies to Monitor and Modify Learning Progress (D2) | | | XX | |
| Family and Community Engagement (E1) | XX | | | |
| School Culture and Environment (E2) | XX | | | |
| Personal, Social-Emotional, and Academic Support (E3) | | XX | | |
| Alignment of a schoolwide action plan to school's areas of greatest need | | XX | | |
| The capacity to implement and monitor the schoolwide action plan | | XX | | |