# MID-CYCLE VISIT
# VISITING COMMITTEE REPORT

## ACCREDITING COMMISSION FOR SCHOOLS
## WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

### FOR

# AGUEDA I. JOHNSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

**#192 Dero Road**

**Ordot, Guam 96910**

**Guam Department of Education**

**March 11-13, 2014**

**February 16-17, 2017**

**Visiting Committee Members**

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# I.  Introduction

**General comments about the school, its setting, and the school's analysis of student achievement data.**

Agueda I. Johnston Middle School (AIJMS) is located in the central village of Ordot, Guam.  During the past three years student enrollment has remained relatively the same serving approximately 800 students with a predominantly male composition in grades six through eight. Ethnically, Chamorro(56.5%) is the largest student population followed by Chuukese(19.2%) and Filipino(7.6%) respectively.  There has been an increase in the Saipanese, Belauan and Samoan populations with slight decreases in the other ethnic populations (Tinian, Korean, Pohnpeian and Hispanic). The majority of new students are enrolled annually from four elementary feeder schools.

Currently 40% of the school population receives special program services, approximately 10% Special Education Services and 30% the ESL Program. Since SY 15-16 there was an alignment of prep periods of SpEd Consult teachers with the grade-level teams.This school year, AIJMS was able to consistently comply with SpEd mandates in servicing students in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) with full support from the program's consultation and monitoring program. In SY 16-17 there was an initiative to phase out science and social studies from the SpEd resource room to participate in the general education mainstream curriculum with accommodations and modifications based on their individualized Education Plan (IEP). The last time the school conducted a Free and Reduced Lunch count, the poverty rate was approximately 75%. With the advent of the Community Eligibility Program all students currently receive a free lunch.

AIJMS has a dedicated team of faculty and staff who work toward building and supporting student's academic and social successes. Currently AIJMS employs 93 school personnel.  A large percentage of personal (50.5%) have been at the school less than 5 years which is a contributing factor to the difficulty in implementing change. A large number of faculty and staff have earned degrees; 29% Bachelor's degrees, 45.2% Master's degrees and one individual with a Doctoral degree.

## Significant Changes or developments

Since the last visit in 2014 significant changes have been made. In SY 16-17 the school adopted the concept of "The Pirate Way" that identifies programs or interventions that support positive student  outcomes. These programs have evolved and have been custom tailored to fit the specific needs of the AIJMS school community in order to drive social and academic successes of all students.

Among the major changes are:

<u>Block</u> <u>scheduling:</u> to create more rigor in instruction, build personal relationships between teachers and students and focus on a curriculum that provides a student-centered atmosphere

Implementing the island-wide <u>Middle</u> <u>School</u> <u>Professional</u> <u>Development</u> <u>cadres</u> <u>with</u> <u>peers</u> (content and grade level) and <u>student</u> <u>centered</u> <u>intervention</u> <u>programs</u> (academic and social successes) to support the focus on learning framework to ensure student success.

<u>Common</u> <u>Core</u> <u>State</u> <u>Standards(CCSS)/Middle</u> <u>School</u> <u>Curriculum</u> <u>Map</u> <u>Alignment</u>: AIJMS community has infused the consensus curriculum maps created by island-wide middle school PD content cadres with the CCSS. Alignment serves as the foundation for the implementation of proficiency scales, Standards Based Grading (SBG) and Common Formative Assessment (CFA)

<u>The</u> <u>shift</u> <u>from</u> <u>the</u> <u>SAT10</u> <u>test</u> <u>to</u> <u>the</u> <u>ACT-Aspire</u> <u>test:</u> Three years ago the district moved from the SAT 10 test to the ACT-Aspire test. The shift from one test to another will necessarily impact data interpretation.

<u>Positive</u> <u>Behavior</u> <u>Intervention</u> <u>System</u> <u>(PBIS)</u>-quarterly assembles for individual grade levels and
<u>Ahoy</u> <u>Assemblies</u> monthly for all grade levels with topics that encourage student achievement both academically and socially and recognize/reward students for their successes.

<u>Math</u> <u>Instructional</u> <u>Coach</u> To address the data that in the past two years has shown that most students struggle with computational skills, AIJMS has developed curriculum support in the form of a math instructional coach to mentor math teachers and lead Professional Learning Communities (PLC) to better understand student deficiencies in their academic performance. During PLC meetings student data is analyzed and appropriate strategies and interventions are identified to assist in the overall increase in scores.

AIJMS has started the process of reviewing the School-wide Learner Outcomes (SLOs) to reflect the academic achievement and relevance to students.

<u>WRAT</u>  Wide Range Achievement Test

In SY 15-16 AIJMS stakeholders began to infuse the guiding principles of <u>McRel's</u> <u>Balanced Leadership framework and Power Walkthrough.</u>

## Student Attendance
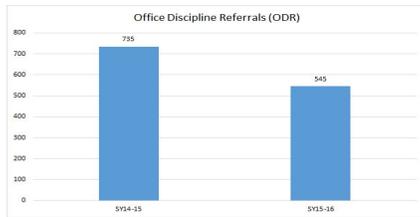


There has been a  4% increase in student attendance over the past two school years.
Contributing factors include:
- School Attendance Officer who monitors student attendance and proactively works with the families and conducts home visits as needed
- Grade level teams develop interventions and support for students
- Incentives for students to stay in school

## Student Discipline


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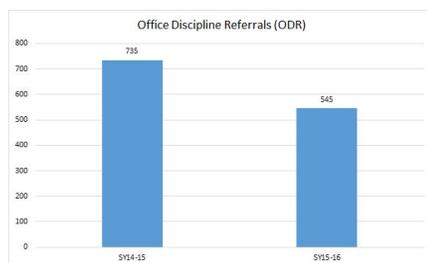
There has been a decrease in the number of Office Discipline Referrals(ODR) in the last two years.
Contributing factors include:
- Implementation of the Positive Behavior Intervention System during "Team Pirate Time" (PTP) that focuses on building positive character and self-esteem.
- Initial Child Study Team (ICST) that looks at academic achievement and behavior while involving parents to be more actively engaged in their child's education.
- Teams facilitate in-school detentions during activities to allow students time to complete missing assignments and tests.
- The restructuring of EIF (Alternative educational setting) with a more focused approach to interventions that aim to address the function of the misbehavior and helps provide students with the skills necessary to function  successfully in the regular classroom

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**Student Achievement Data:**

**ACT Aspire National Percentile Rank (NPR) Grade Level Comparison to the District 2014-2015, 2015-2016**

   According to the results of this assessment, eighth graders scored  higher than their District counterparts in reading and math.  In both years sixth graders scored on or above District counterparts. In comparison, seventh graders showed the greatest need of improvement in the areas of English and Reading with a discrepancy of approximately 4 points and 7 points.

**ACT Aspire Scaled Score (AIJMS Cohorts Comparison to the Nation and District) 2014-2015, 2015-2016    English, Math, Reading**
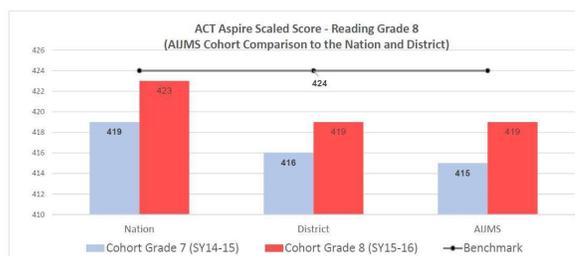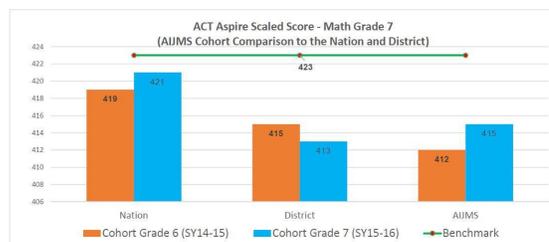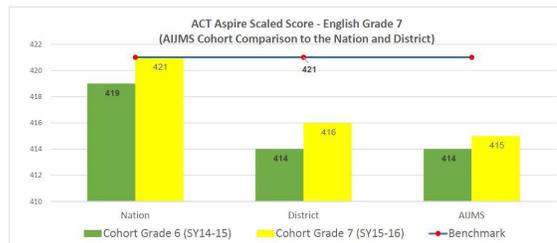






The tables above present results from the current 8th grade population.
Scores show that although students are on level with the district, there still is a need to increase their academic achievement to meet the scaled score benchmark.

- **Briefly comment on the school's follow-up process. Include a description of the <u>committee</u> <u>that</u> <u>has</u> <u>been</u> <u>responsible</u> <u>for</u> <u>overseeing</u> <u>the</u> <u>progress</u> <u>of</u> <u>the</u> <u>school's action plan and the preparation for the visit.</u>**

The school-wide action plan is reviewed by members of the focus groups that have been in existence since the initial self-study in 2014. The AIJMS community also thoroughly involves themselves in the review of the school-wide action plan on a regular basis

**II. Progress on Critical Areas for Follow-up/School-wide Action Plan**

**Critical Areas for Follow-up:**

1. **The administration and faculty use the Data Team Process and the analysis of formative and summative data to inform instructional teaching and learning so that all students are successful academically, socially and behaviorally.**

AIJMS have implemented a variety of formative and summative assessments to gather data. Examples of formative assessments include quizzes, questions and answers, journals,, sentence prompts, group discussions, board work exercises and activities, reflection papers and self assessments. Results of data determine if the teachers reteach a concept or advance to the next skill. Summative assessments include projects, pre and post tests, chapter tests, comprehensive tests, quarterly final exams and ACT Aspire. Diagnostic assessments, NRST, the WRAT3 and AimsWeb are given twice yearly to measure student growth.

Content and grade-level teams take aggressive measures to exhaust interventions and support for all students. A Child Study Team (CST) is activated when a student is in need of further academic or behavioral interventions, possibly SpEd referral, Section 504 or retention. The goal of CST is to identify, plan, implement and assess targeted, school-based interventions to improve student academic and/or behavioral progress. Parents and students are contacted for participation and discussion on student goals and needs.

The alternative educational setting (EIF) has been supported with two full time personnel who facilitate curriculum and instruction, behavior redirection, and initiate an individual plan for continued success after exiting the program.

2. **The GDOE, administrators and faculty will provide ongoing professional development (e.g., CCSS, digital literacy, STEM) to support all teachers with the expectation of quality implementation which will be documented.**

The GDOE mandates that each school facilitate regularly scheduled Collaborative Learning Teams (CLT) to implement varied strategies in the classroom to provide support for teachers and quality education for students. The Curriculum Instruction Assessment and Intervention (CIAI) Assistant Principal along with the school's Curriculum Coordinator provide ongoing professional development to introduce various

research-based strategies and district mandates to include: CCSS, CITW/CITW-technology, McRel Walkthrough, Literacy Big 8, AimsWeb, CFA, SBG and SIOP.

The AIJMS school community provides an in-school teacher mentorship program for new teacher to the school.  At the beginning of the school year bi-weekly meetings are facilitated to monitor their successful transition to the school community; thereafter, monthly gatherings are facilitated in different host classrooms to discuss best practices and school information vital to the success of daily operation and curricular mandates.

3. **The faculty will regularly engage students in self-reflection/self-assessments based on their demonstrated learning and quality feedback, which is standardized, supportive and on a timely and appropriate basis to increase success for  or all students.**

The faculty encourage students to reflect on their work. Examples of self-reflection tools are the exit ticket, journals, writing prompts, quick writes, student portal and quarterly progress reports.  Teachers strive to give immediate feedback to students. Teachers use reflection as a means of motivating and improving student work ethics as well as helping students to be more responsible for learning and their future.

4. **All stakeholders should continue to explore ways to improve communication and parental involvement, especially with families from the Federated States of Micronesia, in order to be aware of the critical role they play in their child's education.**

AIJMS has continued to explore ways to involve parents in education. AIJMS utilizes student planners, monitor sheets, establishes contact through parent letters, email and phone calls, and hosts two Parent /Teacher Conferences each year. Students are given progress reports and report card quarterly for parents to monitor progress. Parents can enroll in ParentPortal which allows real time updates on assignments and tests as the teachers inputs them.

The Student Parent Community Engagement Project (SPCE) is housed at AIJMS and has a social worker and a CPA along with a SAO who provide extra support in carrying out home visits and maintaining parent communication. SPCE workers are also able to connect parents/families to specific agencies that are able to assist.

The ESL Team has hosted a Parent Symposium for families from the Federal States of Micronesia (FSM) for the past few years.  The Parent Symposium invites FSM community leaders to give inspirational lectures regarding the importance of education and the rules of the educational system. The annual event is designed to allow parents to connect with other community members and become more involved with their child's

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education.

**5. The Administration and faculty should <u>develop</u> <u>a</u> <u>multi-year</u> <u>plan</u> to use technology as a learning tool for students, teachers and the system in order to be successful in the 21st century.**

The use of technology as a tool can be found in classrooms, the library and the school website (www.aijms.net).   The school web site includes school events, team information, teacher syllabi, counseling programs, current events and other relevant school information.  Students are allowed to use their electronic devices to search the web and  create projects. A new initiative by the District is the Classroom Instruction That Work (CITW) with the technology strand. The library is the depository for AV equipment used to facilitate learning in the classroom: televisions, mobile labs (laptop carts), DVD players, cameras, Elmos, and multimedia projectors.  During the summer of 2016, the library was remodeled to accommodate more computers.

The school's technology committee meets and plans yearly using input from teachers and reviewing the action plans for the maintenance and upgrade of the school's current technology, the purchase of new hardware and to acquire more multimedia resources. This multi-year plan should be included in the School-wide Action Plan. Technology as a tool.

**6. The school community should develop a capital improvement plan to maintain, upgrade and renovate facilities in order to ensure a safe and secure campus.**

All capital improvement and maintenance requests are made through the District office. The MUNIS, computer-based system, supports all fiscal year programs including maintenance, budgets, payroll, fixed assets, personnel, non-appropriated funds and purchase orders/requisitions. This system is used to document all or any maintenance issues with the oversight of the school's Administrative Officer and the Principal. The Maintenance  Division will determine which personnel to assign based on the specific demands of the school.

The administration also has sought community partnerships that have included facility improvements such as painting and minor carpentry repairs, monthly grass/lawn services and providing resources such as canopies, folding chairs, benches, and monetary donations. In the past three years, security cameras were installed for student safety and security of the facility. Recently as part of the legislature's initiative (Secure our schools Act) the entire campus was outfitted with security alarms. Other campus upgrades included: additional Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) camera installation, A/C in the dining hall, installation of ventilation in restrooms, electrical upgrades to support additional A/C units, partnerships with Guam Police Department Crime Stoppers to

deter crimes, serviced fire extinguishers and various clubs and organization donation for school improvement.

**7. The administration and faculty will create and implement rubric/assessment tools with indicators to assess the achievement of the SLOs by all students.**

AIJMS has started the process of reviewing the SLOs to reflect the academic achievement and relevance to students. Students have begun a discussion to change the current school mascot and subsequent SLOs. Suggested mascots were Chiefs, Olympians, Gladiators, Pirates. Presentations were made at an assembly for each grade level followed by an informal voting to gauge student perceptions.

- **Include a description of any significant changes and/or developments, i.e., program additions since the last full visit, changes in student enrollment, staffing changes.**
- **Describe the impact these changes and/or developments have had on the school and/or specific curricular programs.**
- **Briefly comment on the school's follow-up process. Include a description of the committee that has been responsible for overseeing the progress of the school's action plan and the preparation for the visit.**

**Provide an analytical summary about the accomplishment of each schoolwide action plan section referencing the critical areas for follow-up addressed through each section.**

**Action Plan:**

**Goal 1: Increase student academic achievement by having students actively participate in setting individual goals and monitoring their individual progress based on clear assessment**

Using district curriculum maps, content-grade level teachers island-wide met to create a guaranteed and viable curriculum. Teachers were than able to identify priority standards for quarterly, semester and yearly curriculum design and use these standards to customize lessons and activities. With in-school training in reviewing and analyzing data teachers gain new knowledge regarding the use of data to plan for instruction. Data Analysis Research Team (DART) will facilitate the review, implementation and analysis of common assessment.SMART Goals: AIJMS teachers used Professional Learning Community to develop SMART goals for all content areas.

**Goal 2: To increase student social successes in and out of the classroom.**

The staff analyzes the achievement data of at-risk students. The school has also implemented a recognition program regarding student behavior and has developed a behavioral matrix to reinforce Character Education. One of the SLO's defines Responsible Contributors and is linked to exemplary behavior. This goal address, in part, the previous WASC Visiting Team recommendation of utilizing assessment data to ensure that all students are successful academically, socially and behaviorally.

**Goal 3: To Increase parental involvement for curricular and co-curricualr activities.**

A major recommendation was to explore ways to improve communication and parental involvement. The staff has conscientiously address this recommendation.The site has printed  and issued student planners, establishing student behavioral accountability forms and, developed a technology use policy. The site has developed a school website, distributed notices regarding academic and co-curricular activities and then created and implemented a tracking system to monitor parental support and participation regarding school curricular activities. In addition the administration developed a major symposium for families of Federates States of Micronesia and other immigrants.

**Goal 4: To increase digital literacy in the classroom to further increase student achievement.**

This goal attempts to address another recommendation, that of developing a multi-year plan to use technology . There is still a lot of work to be done. Money for the purchase of equipment and professional development of on the usage of technology seem to be limiting factors. The staff that is technology literate are attempting to mentor other staff on the usage of technology. There are three mobile carts which are utilized throughout the school. The staff intends to develop rubrics regarding digital literacy. Currently the administration keeps data on the classroom usage of the mobile carts. There is an outreach to parents regarding digital literacy.

**Goal 5: To develop a clearly defined leadership structure and their roles to meet the 5 district goals of what all students should know.**

The school's leadership matrix and structure are well documented and publicized. Copies of the structure are in place in the school and on the website for all to see.  The

teams are organized with many different foci including curriculum, grade level, clubs, and more. The roles of the groups are developed with the clear function of enhancing student experience and learning.  Additionally the school community meets twice each year to re-examine the goals and to assess their relevance. This was not part of the critical areas identified by the visiting team.


- **Note the evidence supporting the progress made and the impact made on student achievement.**
- **If any critical areas for follow-up were not included in the school's action plan, indicate what actions have been taken to address these issue(s) and include supporting evidence.**
  **Note: The school's schoolwide action plan should have incorporated all the critical areas of follow-up or major recommendations that were stated in the last self-study visiting committee report.**


The process to create the progress report was led by the school's leadership team. The faculty and staff were divided into focus groups and content groups which met during faculty meeting time and during professional development times. The groups used surveys; both qualitative and quantitative, to collect responses from the faculty, staff, and students

The faculty and staff were divided into 10 different groups and the groups met regularly (weekly, biweekly, monthly, or quarterly)  to discuss various aspects of the report. During the meetings the members were encouraged, using Google docs, to contribute and comment on the items being discussed. The information was presented at a number of monthly PTO meetings and that groups was given the opportunity to comment as well.

## III.  Commendations and Recommendations

### Commendations:

- **Comment on significant progress the school has made in responding to the critical areas for follow-up and in carrying out the related action plan.**

The administration and staff have made a conscientious effort to embed the previous Visiting Team recommendations into the overall operations of the school They seem to have processes in place and attempt to use data to improve academic performance. The GDOE and site have made extensive efforts to offer professional development in the pedagogy and some curriculum in the implementation of the Common Core State Standards.

The administration has attempted to address the Visiting Team's recommendation of increasing parental involvement. There is a major function for the families of the Federation States of Micronesia. The percentage of students that are from the Federation is decreasing. That decline is being offset by increases of migrants from the surrounding islands. The administration maintains an active parent involvement program and there is an outreach to the local communities.

The school has many  issues to address.  The school has nearly a 75% percent poverty rate. With the Community Eligibility Program all students receive a free lunch. Also the instructional focus of  public educational in Guam is changing. The system has adopted the Common Core State Standards as their instructional focus. While there is district and site professional development in this instructional program, there is limited curricular materials. Also the district recently changed the mode of assessment from the SAT-10 to ACT-Aspire. Schools only have two years of data to analyze, thus detailed analysis is anecdotal, however the scores are lower than the school and the district target. Additionally, the data from the previous year's examination arrive late in the first quarter, further hindering effective analysis

The school has a strong and focused principal. In addition the leadership team has created a collaborative atmosphere among the staff and promotes a safe, warm and respectful learning environment. The Visiting Team recognizes that the school is doing their best under the current educational and level of poverty of their students.

**Recommendations:**
- **Comment on any critical areas for follow-up/action plan sections that have not yet been completely addressed, if applicable.**
- **Identify any new areas of concerns, if applicable.**

The implementation of technology however appears to be limited. Some staff allow students to utilize their personal devices in class for obtaining resources and there are three mobile computer cart labs. One of the SLOs refers to being "Technologically Literate Consumers". There is no systematic plan to incorporate technology into daily instruction. Obviously funding is the major obstacle for technology implementation.

The school has major needs for facility repairs. There is not much more  the site can do as the major funding for repairs is controlled by the central office. The support staff keep the school clean and safe.

One recommendation that still needs some additional efforts is the implementation and documentation of SLO instruction. Although some teachers identify the SLO in their daily instruction, there is no systematic monitoring to the degree in which the SLO are taught in daily classroom instruction.

The visiting team feels that the administration and staff have made a sincere effort to address all seven recommendations of the previous visiting team. The school is facing many challenges, from changing academic focus of the district, the economics of the island, and a high poverty rate of the student population. The school has a strong, visible principal, a collaborative and active leadership team and a professional, caring staff. The visiting team feels no additional recommendations are necessary at this time. The visiting team believes the school will achieve improvement in their academic program, it will just take time.