

2003 Annual Report

**Ministry of Education
Republic of Palau**



**Submitted to
Inter-agency Coordinating Group**

30 January 2004

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MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
Republic of Palau

2003 ANNUAL REPORT
30 January 2004

The Palau Ministry of Education (MOE) is the largest of the eight ministries of the Palau National Government. The MOE personnel, as well as the scope of MOE's operation, are spread all over the republic, with employees and schools from the northeasternmost state of Kayangel to the southwesternmost state of Tobi.

At the beginning of school year 2003 - 2004, basic statistics of the Ministry of Education were as follows:

- ✓ 20 public schools: 19 elementary schools and one high school
- ✓ 3,231 public school students: 2,432 in elementary schools and 799 at Palau High School
- ✓ 466 employees, 262 (56%) of whom are classroom teachers
- ✓ Annual operating budget of \$6,398,00 (FY04)
- ✓ Eight (8) federal grant programs

MOE has the smallest administrative structure among all eight ministries of the republic. It is organized into the following seven major units.

- ✓ Office of the Minister of Education
- ✓ Bureau of Education
- ✓ Division of School Management
- ✓ Division of Curriculum and Instruction
- ✓ Division of Research and Evaluation
- ✓ Division of Personnel Management
- ✓ Administrative Services

In 2003, MOE strived to improve its educational services to the public. Highlights of its major achievements are described below, beginning with those activities undertaken to address its MAP recommendations.

MOE MAP RECOMMENDATIONS

MAP Recommendation #1: Continue with implementation of the Palau 2000 Master Plan for education improvement.

This is an ongoing activity. The Palau 2000 Master Plan has six priorities: (1) professional personnel and certification system, (2) partnerships with families and the community, (3) improving standards to bring the real world into curriculum and instruction, (4) governance and policy setting, (5) preschool and kindergarten education, and (6) facilities.

Professional personnel and certification system. MOE has completed two certification systems: one for teachers (October 2000) and the other for administrators (principals)

(October 2002). The teachers certification system had been submitted by the President to the OEK, which has shelved it for the time being. OEK wants teachers and other MOE employees to take National Teachers Examination first. During summer 2004, PRAXIS I will be administered to all teachers and other MOE employees. The principals certification system was submitted to the President in January 2003. Currently, MOE is working with PCC to include in its education degree program courses required for teachers' certification.

Partnerships with families and the community. MOE had assisted in establishing two organizations as education partners. One organization is Belau Family School Community Association (BFSCA). This organization, which consists of parents and community members, works closely with parents, schools, communities, and the MOE to provide training and information on many issues to parents, schools, and communities. A series of workshops for parents was held at six schools, and these workshops were attended by 200 parents. Topics addressed at the workshops included effective parenting techniques, career goals setting and career planning, helping students on their career plans, and making education more relevant to children's needs. Another organization is Belau Employers & Educators Alliance (BEEA). This organization works closely with MOE to place students on job sites to work as part of their learning. The BEEA, during its September 2003 meeting, approved a calendar of work-based learning activities for students for school year 2004.

Improving standards to bring the real world into curriculum and instruction. Several initiatives have been put into place for this activity. Learning targets have been developed to guide instruction. Block scheduling was implemented at Palau High School to allow more practice time. Several articulation courses from PHS to PCC have been completed. Career guidance and planning has been introduced at elementary and high schools, and students are placed on job sites for job shadowing, job mentoring, career practicum, and summer work experience.

Governance and policy setting. In January 2002, MOE was restructured based on Executive Order 203. This has resulted in more effective and efficient administration and management of the ministry and its programs. However, an elective Board of Education, planned in the Palau 2000 Master Plan, has not been implemented. MOE has set several policies, including those of Internet use and course taking at PCC, and has been working on a more comprehensive policy manual for the ministry.

Preschool and kindergarten education. Several years ago, the OEK passed a law mandating schooling for five years old to 17 years old. That effectively called for a kindergarten program. Without sufficient budget to support the kindergarten program, MOE could not begin the program. OEK later changed mandatory schooling to begin for six years old. MOE nevertheless has been working closely with the Head Start Program in the areas of curriculum, assessments, and training.

Facilities. The facilities unit continues to implement the facilities maintenance objectives, schedules, and activities of the MOE. A baseline facilities database for all MOE facilities throughout the Republic, completed in 2002, is being used by the maintenance personnel. MOE is now in the process of building a facilities maintenance scheduler and tracker and getting the maintenance personnel trained in its use. In 2003, MOE implemented a computer based job order system. The facilities maintenance staff have been trained and provided with computers and are now being encouraged to use the system. Work continues on improving

the computerized system and adding more components such as requisitioning, inventory, and condition-status-reports.

MAP Recommendation #2: Review and implement the teacher and school administrator certification programs.

As reported earlier, MOE has completed two certification systems, one for teachers and the other for administrators (principals). The teachers certification system is at the OEK while the administrators certification system is at the Office of the President. OEK has tabled the teachers certification system for now, and it wants teachers and other MOE employees tested first. Such test in the form of PRAXIS I will take place this coming summer. Meanwhile, MOE has been working with PCC to determine courses required for PCC's education degree program as well as for teachers' certification.

MAP Recommendation #3: Establish a comprehensive framework for prioritizing scholarship needs in line with identified national labor priorities and requirements.

This recommendation is appropriately for the Palau Scholarship Office, which operates independently from the MOE.

MAP Recommendation #4: Increase funding for school books and instructional materials.

This activity has been completed. RPPL 6-12, which is the budget law for FY2002, increased funding for school books and instructional materials by \$523,000.

MAP Recommendation #5: Develop education indicators providing outcome and efficiency measures.

This activity has been completed. Indicators now used include quarterly student grades, Palau Achievement Test, student absenteeism, teacher absenteeism, retention rate, dropout rate, and graduation rate. The tenth version of Stanford Achievement Test (SAT10), which will be administered to all students in March and April 2004, will be another indicator for measuring student achievement. MOE continues to monitor these indicators and to determine if other indicators could be used to measure outcome and efficiency.

MAP Recommendation #6: Review the school consolidation program and provide strategies for timely implementation, including cost analysis.

This is an ongoing activity. MOE has met with the governors regarding school consolidation. The governors urged MOE to continue school consolidation as planned but suggested that two high schools be established in Babeldaob: one at the north and one at the south. Governors from Ngchesar, Ngatpang, and Ngaraard have offered public lands in their states for schools. MOE has visited a border site between Ngaraard and Ngardmau for a school site and continues to work with CIP personnel and the governors on school consolidation.

MAP Recommendation #7: Review and develop strategic plan to incorporate "character building" into the education system curriculum framework.

This is an ongoing activity. MOE has decided to integrate character building into existing curricula, particularly the Palauan studies curriculum, and has sponsored some training for

teachers, principals, parents, community members, and students on the implementation of character education in the schools and the home. Some 300 copies of a very popular and widely used character building textbook entitled "The Virtues Project: Educator's Guide" had been purchased and distributed to all public schools throughout the Republic for use in integrating character building into the existing curricula.

On September 26, 2003, all public elementary school principals attended a character building training offered by the International Interreligious Framework for World Peace (IIFWP) at the Coral Reef Center Conference Room. In addition, two elementary school principals, from Ngiwal and Melekeok Elementary Schools, continued their character building training by attending a Virtues Project training at Mindszenty High School Cafeteria from September 26 to 28, 2003. From December 03 to 08, 2003, all public school principals, teacher representatives from all public schools, school counselors, parents, community members, students, and staff attended a Virtues Project training at Happy Landing II. The training was well received by all 110 participants who attended this training.

Another activity included assigning a virtue to each month in the MOE school calendar, which had been disseminated to all MOE personnel. The intent of this activity was for all schools to practice the virtue assigned specifically to each month. Posters with desirable virtues have also been printed and distributed to all schools.

Ngiwal Elementary School staff, parents, and students are actively practicing the virtues as evidenced by their having sponsored a virtues training with their parents on December 22, 2003, and their televised virtues program with senators and delegates at the Olbiil Era Kelulau on January 15, 2004.

MAP Recommendation #8: Establish and implement an effective facilities maintenance program for school facilities and equipment at all levels of the education system.

This is an ongoing activity. As reported earlier, MOE has developed a facilities database of all buildings and structures under it. The database contains measurements and conditions of all buildings, classrooms, other rooms, and fixtures at the schools and the central office. The database is currently being used by MOE maintenance personnel to determine materials needed for school repair and renovations. The next phase is to develop a facilities maintenance plan that makes use of the completed database.

MAP Recommendation #9: Establish a comprehensive security program throughout the school system, with the cooperation of the Bureau of Public Safety and determine the viability of privatizing (initially focusing on the Palau High School).

This is an ongoing activity, with the exception of the privatizing effort. MOE plans to continue providing security guards for Palau High School.

In addition to the public school safety program conducted by National Emergency Management Office (NEMO), the MOE, in coordination with the Ministry of Justice, has implemented a safety and prevention program at Palau High School. A Youth Affairs Coordinator from the Ministry of Justice has been assigned to assist the school principal and counselors in monitoring students from wandering off-campus. A new policy has been developed and implemented to keep students in campus during classes from 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

The new policy covers the following areas:

- ✓ The assigned police officer and the school security guards will be monitoring the campus and off campus to prevent students from roaming around and not attending classes.
- ✓ Students must be on campus between the hours of 8:00 -11:15 a.m. and 12:15 - 3:30 p.m. everyday. All students must report to the resource center or the school library if their teacher is absent.
- ✓ Students must obtain an off-campus pass from their teacher if they have to go off-campus to do research or attend other class activities. The pass must be in the students' possession at all times, in case the assigned officer asks for it.
- ✓ For any student who is reported to be in an off-limit area during school hours, the assigned police officer or school security guards will escort him/her to the Vice Principals' Office for an appropriate detention, and his or her parents/guardians are notified.
- ✓ All community members will be working closely with the school in monitoring students and reporting them to the school or contacting the assigned police officer.

MAP Recommendation #10: PHS restroom facilities improved.

This activity has been completed; it should not have been a MAP recommendation.

MAP Recommendation #11: Review and evaluate the food service program and make appropriate recommendations regarding program continuation and/or improvement to nutritional requirements.

This is an ongoing activity. The MOE Division of Research and Evaluation conducted a survey of students, parents, and community members to determine their thoughts about certain options under consideration for school lunch program. A total of 2,543 respondents from all states throughout the Republic, except Southwest Islands states, participated in the survey. Of this number, 1,671 or 66% were non-student respondents. Results of the survey indicate that parents are willing to share the cost of the student lunch program.

MOE is currently working on a food service study that includes a fee schedule for parents to share the cost of the food service program. The study, which is about 70% complete, will be submitted to the Inter-agency Coordinating Group when fully completed.

MAP Recommendation #12: Review classroom fixtures and equipment and recommend necessary replacements or updates, including associated cost estimates.

This activity has been completed though MOE continues to upgrade classroom fixtures and equipment within its budget. A \$600,000 grant from the Republic of China (Taiwan) enabled MOE to acquire classroom fixtures and equipment for schools. Other equipment, such as computers, are being increased and/or upgraded through federal grants.

OTHER MOE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The following are other MOE accomplishments in 2003. Even though they are not specifically stated in the MAP recommendations, they are connected to MOE's ongoing efforts to implement the Palau 2000 Master Plan, which is a MAP recommendation.

Adoption of a Vision Statement and a New Mission Statement

Established for the first time, a vision statement for MOE, along with a new mission statement, became official on July 1, 2003. A 10-member MOE committee conducted a total of 18 public meetings throughout Palau, getting input and ideas from all school communities about the vision and mission statements. The vision statement and the new mission statement have been printed, laminated, and distributed to all MOE employees for posting at their work sites.

A workshop for principals on the vision and mission statements have been scheduled to take place in February, 2004, after which the principals will conduct similar workshops at their school sites. The purpose of the workshops is to articulate and internalize the vision and mission statements among the teachers and other MOE employees in an effort to rally school personnel to really work toward the mission and the vision.

Development of School Improvement Plans

A principals' institute during summer of 2003 produced the first official annual school improvement plans for all public schools in the republic, with the exception of the Southwest Islands schools. Conducted by the Director of Education, the principals' institute tasked each principal to develop a school improvement plan for school year 2004 based on existing data on student achievement, teacher qualifications, parental involvement, and others. The school improvement plans are currently being implemented at the schools.

Implementation of Computer Technology in Schools

All schools now have Internet access at their computer aided instruction labs. A better-focused technical support unit has been set up to respond to calls and problems with school site hardware or the MOE network infrastructure. The Southwest Islands schools still have no computers as we are trying to resolve the power and communication situation at the schools.

Improving Student Achievement Through Improved Reading

In 2002, the Reading Success Network (RSN), a federally funded program sponsored by Pacific Resources for Education & Learning (PREL), was piloted in three elementary schools in Palau. The main goal of this program is to improve student achievement through improved reading in grades 1 to 3. RSN utilizes innovative teaching strategies and activities in teaching reading to lower grade students. In 2003, the program expanded to include additional four schools in implementing this program. In 2004, MOE intends to include all schools in this program.

Several trainings and two retreats have been held for the 30 RSN teachers this school year to share teaching methods for reading, discuss and share mid-year student assessments, and to learn to use the Excel program to process and analyze student assessment data. One RSN

training, hosted by Melekeok Elementary School principal and her staff, focused on sharing of effective reading strategies, with demonstrations by the participants.

Career Guidance Program in Schools

The Career Guidance Program has continued to provide training and technical assistance to schools requesting assistance. Approximately 100 elementary school teachers attended a series of workshops provided by the Career Guidance Program. The workshops focused on career development, employability skills, student portfolios, and career exploration. In summer of 2003, 40 teachers attended a one-week training on the implementation of the career guidance curriculum.

A Career Guidance Handbook and a tabloid have been completed. The tabloid will be printed and distributed to all schools. The tabloid will help students learn more about different careers that are available locally and abroad.

Ten career guidance course proposals for PCC have been developed. These course proposals will be reviewed and approved by MOE Management Team before they are submitted to PCC Dean of Academic Affairs for consideration.

MOE continues to provide opportunities for students to develop their leadership skills, study skills, and work experience. In 2003, the following activities were offered to Palau High School students:

Career Mentoring Program - A total of 147 Palau High School junior students enrolled in the four career academies (Natural Resources, Industrial/Engineering, Health/Human Services, and Business Industry) participated in the mentoring program during the month of February 2003. Forty-six (46) private businesses, non-governmental organizations, and government agencies participated by hosting students at their various establishments. Students spent eight hours a day for one week at the workplace, learning basic work skills such as operating copiers and fax machines, answering telephones and taking messages, using different computer programs, and doing other hands-on work as required by their mentors.

Job Shadow I - Seventy-four (74) Palau High School sophomore students participated in the Job Shadow Program during the month of April 2003. Forty-one (41) private businesses, non-governmental organizations, and government agencies participated by hosting students at their various work sites. Job Shadow is a six-hour learning activity in which students are placed at work sites of their choice and shadow an employee or supervisor at the sites, performing tasks related to their career interests.

Career Practicum - A total of 102 Palau High School seniors participated in a one-month career practicum. Forty-seven (47) companies participated by hosting students at their various businesses.

Summer Work Experience Program - A total of 209 students from the different high schools in Palau participated in the 2003 Summer Work Experience Program (SWEP). Eighty-seven (87) private businesses, non-governmental and government organizations participated in the SWEP program by hosting students at their various businesses or agencies.

Students' Partnership Conference - A total of 420 students participated in the Students' Partnership Conference last summer that was sponsored by MOE Comprehensive School Health Program. This conference addressed concerns our youths are faced with today and offered suggestions on how to avoid getting into situations that might be detrimental to their health and well-being.

Job Shadow II - A total of 133 Palau High School sophomore students participated in a six-hour Job Shadow Program on November 21, 2003. Forty-seven (47) private businesses, non-governmental organizations, and governmental agencies hosted these students in their various businesses or agencies.

Implementing PE Curriculum Framework

The physical education curriculum framework for grades 1 to 12 was completed in May 2003. A series of training for PE teachers was held in June 2003. PE teachers who attended these training sessions reviewed the completed curriculum framework with the assistance of a local consultant and discussed how the curriculum framework was going to be implemented in the different grade levels in August 2003. The consultant also demonstrated several activities to develop lifetime skills for different age groups.

Providing Support Services for Students

MOE continues to provide bus transportation and food services to students. In SY2003, a duplicate count of 164,023 students (912 students for each day of the 180-day school year) was transported by bus daily to and from school. In the same school year, MOE served 504,322 meals to public school students.

School Visits by Inspection Team

A newly formed inspection team, headed by the Chief of School Management, has begun visiting and inspecting schools in an effort to improve school environment. Replacing the former monitoring team, the inspection team focuses on the conduciveness and safety of the school environment. So far, only Palau High School and Kayangel and Angaur Elementary Schools are yet to be inspected.

Palau High School Accreditation with Western Association of Schools and Colleges

MOE has initiated the process toward accreditation of Palau High School with the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). An official request for WASC affiliation has been submitted to WASC for review and approval. A school application is now being put together for submission to WASC, with the initial visit from the WASC accrediting team planned for Spring 2004.

Reading and Math Readiness Assessments for Incoming First Graders

The Division of Research & Evaluation, in partnership with the Division of Curriculum and Instruction, developed and administered math and reading readiness assessments to all incoming first grade students to gauge their mastery of basic skills in math and reading upon entry to first grade. Results of these assessments will give Belau Head Start Program an idea

of the basic skills that Head Start students need to obtain in order to prepare them to enter first grade. Additionally, the same data will give first grade teachers an opportunity to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the incoming first grade students so that they can tailor effectively their instruction to meet the needs of the incoming first grade students.

Learning Targets and Quarterly Assessments

In an effort to improve student learning, the Division of Curriculum and Instruction has simplified the learning targets of the five core content areas that must be taught in all public elementary schools from grades 1 to 8. These learning targets were further divided into four quarters so that teachers have a clear idea which learning targets should be taught each quarter. MOE is now developing quarterly assessment instruments for teachers to use in assessing students' mastery of the learning targets at the end of each quarter.

Quarterly and Alternative Assessments

Work has begun in collaboration with the Division of Curriculum and Instruction and a consultant to develop quarterly assessments in core subjects for all grade levels. One important aspect of this work is to ensure alignment of these quarterly assessments to the Palau Achievement Test. The quarterly assessments aim to measure students' mastery of specific learning targets covered in a given quarter. Similarly, collaboration with the Special Education Program is in progress to develop alternative assessments for students with special needs. Objectives addressed in the Palau Achievement Tests are being compiled and used as point of reference in aligning alternative assessments.

Stanford Achievement Test (SAT10) and National Teachers Examination

MOE is currently working, in collaboration with PCC, to have Stanford Achievement Test 10th Edition (SAT10) and National Teachers Examination (NTE) administered to all students and teachers in both public and private elementary and high schools in Palau. SAT10 has been scheduled to be administered to all grade levels from 1st through 12th grade in April 2004 while PRAXIS I will be administered to all teachers and other MOE personnel in June 2004.

Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)

MOE continues its role as a testing center for the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). Students who plan to pursue higher education take this examination as admission of foreign students to post secondary institutions in the United States require TOEFL scores. Even PCC and other post secondary institutions in Micronesia, Guam, and CNMI require TOEFL scores for their degree programs. In 2003, TOEFL was administered to a total of 221 candidates in three test sessions that were held in the months of January, October, and November.

Community Learning Centers for Students and Parents

Through a federal grant program called 21st Century Community Learning Center, MOE established six community learning centers at Ngarchelong, Melekeok, Ngeremlengui, Peleliu, and Harris Elementary Schools and Palau High School. The program provides after-school programs for students and parents. So far, 332 students are participating in the program, receiving tutorial services in core subjects and participating in enrichment activities in music,

dance, sports, and cultural activities. Students in the program have shown improvement in their academic work, school attendance, and social behavior. At Palau High School, the program helped 32 seniors in passing their core subjects, which enabled the students to graduate and receive their diploma. Each of the six community learning centers also provided computer training for parents, who learned computer basic skills and the use of word processing, spreadsheet, email, and Internet.

Vocational Improvement Project for Palau High School

A federal grant called Pacific Vocational Educational Improvement Project (PVEIP), administered through PREL, provided support for the vocational programs at Palau High School. The program supported professional development for PHS vocational teachers, including training in different learning styles, a review of career development courses, and participation of three teachers at the Annual Association of Career and Technical Education Convention. The program also funded the establishment of the PHS store as a learning project for business students as well as participation of over 450 students in various work-based learning activities at local businesses and government agencies.

The grant program also provided support for articulation of vocational programs from Palau High School to Palau Community College. Articulation of construction and automotive programs were completed and implemented this school year. Articulation of business, agriculture, and tourism programs are scheduled for the current project year. Through articulation of vocational programs, students will have an opportunity to gain college recognized credits while at high school if they pursue the same field of study at Palau Community College.

Through the program, many learning resources including tools, instructional supplies, and equipment were procured to improve vocational programs at Palau High School. New computers were purchased for Career Development I Lab at Palau High School, and various tools and instructional supplies were obtained for all career academies to support student learning.

Special Education Program for the Disabled

MOE continues to improve its special education services for the disabled as enrollment in the program continues to rise, having increased from 158 to 193, an increase of 18%. Special education classrooms were renovated at Ngardmau, Koror, Melekeok, and Ngeremlengui Elementary Schools as well as at the central office. Resource rooms at Koror and Melekeok Elementary Schools were equipped with computers for the disabled students at the schools. The program provided support for 37 classroom teachers who were taking special education courses at PCC and teachers and specialists who attended training and conferences on assistive technology, deaf/blind services, resource service assistance, speech and language disorder, and monitoring and planning. The Special Education Program also co-sponsored a bi-annual conference held in Palau for Pacific Interagency Leadership Consortium, in which more than 250 participants from Palau and other Pacific entities attended. The program also successfully co-sponsored a fundraising event to purchase a motor wheelchair for an outstanding disabled student who graduated from Palau High School so that she can use the wheelchair for taking courses at PCC.

PRE-GED and GED Programs

MOE continues to provide educational opportunities for adults with interest in school. At Aimeliik, 14 adults have successfully completed 90 hours of basic instruction in each of the five pre-GED classes and have continued on to GED classes, which are expected to end in February 2004. At Kayangel, 13 adults are enrolled in the pre-GED program, which is also scheduled to end in February 2004. At Koror and Ngiwal, 50 adults attended GED classes, and 10 of them successfully passed the GED examination and thereby received their high school equivalent diploma. Those who did not pass any of the five portions of the GED examination will either retake the portions of the test that they failed or re-enroll in the GED classes.

HIV Prevention School Project

The HIV Prevention School Project, a federal grant program administered by CDC, provided support for professional development, peer education programs and activities, and implementation and monitoring of HIV prevention programs and the health curriculum activities.

The project sponsored participation of two personnel in the Youth for Youth Conference on leadership skills and substance abuse prevention, 36 health teachers in an in-service training on health curriculum framework and effective HIV prevention education, participation of MOE personnel in the Pacific Regional Training of Trainers on effective HIV prevention education and Professional Development Partnership Training on planning and evaluation of HIV prevention programs.

The project also supported a PRIDE camp-in program in which over 50 elementary and high school students participated, a peer leadership training for more than 35 students, a PRIDE outreach program at Ngiwal in which more than 50 students, parents, and youth learned various health-related information through motivational presentations, participation of 15 students at the Youth for Youth Conference, PRIDE facilitators training in which more than 40 students participated, the 9th Annual Student Partnership Conference where about 420 students attended 14 workshops and five general sessions on various health-related issues, PRIDE presentations at more than five school and community outreach programs, and the Education Awareness Week programs at the schools. The program also conducted the 2003 Youth Risk Behavior Survey at Palau High School and for 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students at six elementary schools to determine activities of the students that affect their health.

New Federal Grant Programs for MOE

MOE successfully proposed a new federal grant program to enhance teacher quality. A total of \$154,000 has recently been awarded to MOE to pursue its objectives to enhance teacher quality in the republic. The new state grant will run for three consecutive years, with the same annual funding for a total of \$462,000.

Another three-year grant called Territories and Freely Associated States Educational Grant (T&FASEG) has likewise been awarded to MOE for an annual funding of \$591,336. Previously called Freely Associated States Education Grant (FASEG), this grant now includes the U.S. insular areas or territories, resulting in a reduction of individual FAS funding by approximately 35%.

The Special Education Program has also recently received a new five-year grant for \$5,176,555. The first year of this new grant cycle has been funded for \$1,008,916.

Education Awareness Week Survey

An Education Awareness Week survey was conducted for all public schools to gauge perceptions of students, school personnel, parents, and community members of the Education Awareness Week activities. A total of 1,755 respondents participated in this survey. Of this number, 797 or (45%) were students, 335 or 19% were school personnel, 375 or 21% were parents, and 335 or 19% were community members. An overwhelming majority of respondents (91%) was in favor of continuation of Awareness Week activities at schools. The most popular activities cited by the respondents were academic activities, followed by sports. Survey results will be used to plan future Education Awareness Week programs and activities.

Study Conducted on 9th Grade for Peleliu Elementary School

A study was conducted to explore the possibility of establishing 9th grade, the first year of high school, at Peleliu Elementary School. Student data at Palau High School of students originating from Peleliu Elementary School were collected for analysis of their academic performance. A survey instrument was developed and administered by teachers of Peleliu Elementary School. Respondents included students, school staff, parents, and community members. An overwhelming majority of respondents (86%) indicated that they want 9th grade in Peleliu Elementary School.

Professional Development for Teachers, Principals, and Other Employees

In 2003, MOE provide various professional development programs for its employees in the following areas: technology training (for lab managers, lab assistants, and Southwest Island teachers), math mentoring workshop (for grades 1 to 3 math teachers), PE curriculum framework training (for all PE teachers), principals institute (computer training and development of school improvement plans), office procedures training (for all MOE support staff), Reading Success Network training (for all RSN pilot school teachers), career guidance training (for career guidance teachers), learning styles training (for Palau High School Career Development I & II teachers and elementary school teachers), science training (for all science teachers), thematic teaching and multi-grade/multi-age classroom instruction training (for Southwest Island teachers and teachers from small schools that combine classes), and character building training (for all principals, teachers, parents, students, staff, and community members).

Education specialists in the various content areas also continued to travel to school sites to provide training and technical assistance to teachers in lesson planning, student assessment, classroom management, and other effective instructional strategies.

Personality and Behavior Training

Nineteen (19) MOE personnel, most of whom are Palau High School teachers and staff, successfully completed a one-day personality and behavior training on August 8, 2003. The training, entitled "Building Effective Work Team," demonstrated how to use a simple instrument widely used in many organizations to identify, and deal with, individual personalities and behavior for effective teamwork.

Computer Training for Parents and the Public

MOE continues to provide computer training for parents, school staff, and the general public. One phase of basic computer training has been completed with a total of 171 participants. The second phase of the computer training, which is more advance and includes electronic mail and Internet, has begun, with some classes nearing completion. Approximately 400 parents, school staff, and community members are expected to have gone through the two phases of computer training. The computer trainings are taking place at computer labs at public schools throughout the republic.

Math Mentoring Program

A program sponsored by PREL called Math Mentoring Program began its first year of implementation at Palau MOE in school year 2002-2003. The purpose of the Math Mentoring Program is to equip novice math teachers with strategies and skills to teach mathematics effectively and to help them overcome their fear of teaching mathematics. Currently, 28 teachers from all elementary schools, except Southwest Islands schools, are participating in the program. The Math Mentoring Program held nine mini-workshops for math mentees in school year 2002-2003.

2003 Educators Conference on Palau Judicial System

The Ministry of Education, in collaboration with the Judiciary and the Palau Bar Association, sponsored the 2003 Educators Conference from December 22 to 23, 2004 at the PCC Btaches Building. The purpose of this conference was to provide information to teachers about our judicial system, the resources available to augment classroom instruction, and a tour of the Judiciary building to familiarize the teachers about where to go if they need information or set up field trips for their students. Ten 7 & 8 grade social studies teachers from the central schools and 18 teachers from the high schools, both public and private schools attended this training.

Annual Education Convention

On August 4, 2003, the 21st Education Convention was held at the PCC Cafeteria. The program of that day included the MOE Management Team panel, principals panel, teachers panel, and retirees panel. In these panels, individual school progress and activities were reported, and several major issues in education were addressed. This is an annual event where all MOE employees convene to share concerns and ideas to improve educational services to students and the community.

Internet Access at the Public Library

The public library continues to provide Internet access to students as well as the general public. Additional computers are being purchased with a UNESCO grant to expand the Internet access at the public library. Plans have been made to electronically network the public library with the PCC library, the national archives, and the school libraries throughout the republic.

Inter-Agency Collaboration

MOE continues to collaborate with external agencies on educational matters. It has held several discussions with Palau Community College regarding course offerings and class scheduling appropriate for teachers. MOE also collaborated with the Belau Head Start Program to review their curriculum framework and develop math and reading readiness assessments to assess the basic math and reading skills of five-year old children who will be enrolling as first graders in August 2003. MOE also continues to collaborate with PREL regarding training on classroom instruction and assessment for teachers. These kinds of training are being made available to our teachers through PREL's programs, such as REL, Mentoring Program, and RSN.

Implementation of Performance Budgeting System

An internal system for assigning costs to objectives based on performance budgeting process was initiated, and data collection and processing system was implemented to ensure accurate accounting of budget activities. Through Ministry of Finance lead, MOE began developing the cost allocation plan for the ministry. This is one of the steps required for beginning a sound performance budget system. This effort required modification of the MOE transaction database, a process described below in the "Improvement of Information Systems" section.

Improvement of Information Systems

In FY03, a facilities inventory database and a time clock database were brought on line, with work commencing on a student enrollment system towards the end of the year. The focus of these efforts continues to be better management accountability through better information relevancy and availability.

In 2003, a student busing database was designed and implemented for the Koror schools. This system collects ridership data and provides up-to-date counts by school, driver, and bus stop. Work continues in developing gas-consumption and bus overcrowding reports.

The transaction-tracking database that was developed and implemented in 2002 continues to be in use. However, it was modified to better meet performance budgeting requirements and to provide reports required by the management team. The main effort for performance budgeting requirements is to have the database tie expenditures to core business processes. The main effort for management team's required reports is to generate up-to-date financial reports by operational unit.

Database Improvement and Data Collection

MOE is continually improving its data management. The central database has undergone major modifications and improvement to increase its capacity to handle data entered from multiple entry points. Installation of database systems at Palau High School and George B. Harris Elementary School has been completed. Training programs, specifically on data management, were provided to school principals and MOE support staff. This reflects the ministry's vigorous effort to support all MOE personnel to handle data electronically. Currently, quarterly grades and attendance records are being transmitted electronically from the schools to the Division of Research and Evaluation for analysis and reporting. Efforts are underway to expand this capability to eventually include all school data.

Publication of 2003 MOE Statistical Yearbook

The Ministry of Education published its 2003 statistical yearbook in December 2003. This is an internal document to serve as quick reference readily available to school administrators for important statistical data pertaining to education system. Statistical data contained in the yearbook include current student enrollment, enrollment trend, student graduates, personnel, retirees projection, and MOE annual budget.

Review and Revision of Job Descriptions and Compensation Plan for Employees

As part of the Ministry of Education's effort to improve efficiency and effectiveness of its programs and services and to streamline its operation, MOE began reviewing and revising job descriptions of its staff to better reflect its needs. Through the revised job descriptions, MOE determined appropriate classification and compensation levels of its staff as part of the ongoing government-wide effort to revise classification and compensation structure of government employees. All job descriptions and classification levels of all MOE employees have been completed and submitted to the Bureau of Public Service System for the newly developed classification system being devised by that bureau.

Personnel Actions and Savings in 2003

In 2003, MOE processed a total of 154 personnel actions, as follows: 42 resignations and retirement, 34 appointments, 30 terminations, 18 reallocations, 15 recruitment, 8 merit increase, 5 pay adjustments, and 2 contracts. MOE has managed to save a total of \$79,223.04 annually through personnel attrition. From January to August 2003, thirty-four (34) MOE employees either retired or resigned from their positions, and five of these positions were not filled, resulting in substantial savings for the government.