



**JON J. P. FERNANDEZ**  
Superintendent of Education

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

#### **GDOE Becomes First School District to Have All Schools Accredited by WASC**

The Guam Department of Education (GDOE) will host a virtual event via Zoom this morning to announce a huge milestone for the department. All 41 of the GDOE schools have achieved accreditation from the Accrediting Commission for Schools, Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). This makes GDOE the first school district in the nation to accredit all schools under WASC. In addition to all schools being accredited, GDOE became the first district in 2015 to receive a WASC district-level accreditation.

The WASC Accrediting Commission for Schools conducts ongoing six-year cycle evaluations in which schools must demonstrate the capacity, commitment, and competence to support quality education and continued school improvement. Accreditation requires continual self-evaluation, frequent reports, and periodic comprehensive reviews.

“All of our GDOE schools have worked hard to achieve and sustain accreditation under WASC, which means all of our schools understand the need for continuous improvement in order to serve all of our students,” Fernandez said. “Achieving this milestone is no easy feat, and I commend our administrators, teachers, staff, parents, and students all across Guam for helping to meet our goal.”

Fernandez set the goal to accredit all schools back in 2014 and appointed Deputy Superintendent Erika Cruz to lead the effort. During the April 2021 meeting, the WASC Commission approved the initial accreditation of Chief Brodie Memorial Elementary School, which was the final school to seek accreditation.

“I am proud of all of our school leaders for joining the effort to achieve accreditation for their schools,” Deputy Superintendent Cruz said. “Their hard work has helped to align the accreditation process with our District goals, vision, and mission. The conversation about student achievement and academic improvement has grown richer with the work and collaboration required to receive the WASC seal of approval. I congratulate all of our schools on this accomplishment.

“The Guam Education Board has supported the superintendent and his team in this partnership with WASC. Our GDOE team has worked diligently to provide our students the quality education and support they deserve,” Guam Education Board Chair Mark Mendiola said. “We are elated to hear that all schools have achieved accreditation status, and we are excited to see the improvements that come from a more intense focus on learning, supported by WASC.”

GDOE and WASC officials will attend the virtual announcement, joined by Guam Education Board members, school administrators, and student representatives. WASC President Dr. Barry Groves and Executive Vice-President, Dr. Marilyn George, will also be in attendance.

“Earning accreditation at all 41 of their schools assures the educational quality of programs and services offered by their schools and reflect high standards of quality and integrity,” WASC President Dr. Barry Groves said. “We congratulate Guam for achieving a huge milestone.”

GDOE Superintendent Fernandez currently serves as a WASC Commissioner representing the Pacific Islands. While he participates both as a member of the WASC finance committee and in Commission decisions, Fernandez abstains from any decisions involving the public, charter, and private schools on Guam.

The formal announcement will take place via Zoom from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. on Wednesday, May 19, 2021. The announcement will also be live-streamed on the GDOE’s Facebook page.

For any inquiries, you may send an e-mail to Interim PIO, Michelle Franquez, at [matfranquez@gdoe.net](mailto:matfranquez@gdoe.net).

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