



Chuuk Advisory Group on Education Reform

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Third Meeting of the Chuuk Advisory Group on Education Reform

Weno, Chuuk, Federated States of Micronesia—July 26, 2013—The Chuuk Advisory Group on Education Reform held its third quarterly set of meetings in Weno, Chuuk, from July 22 through July 26, 2013. The Advisory Group is assisting the Chuuk State Board of Education and the Department of Education to implement education reform commitments that were made at the Chuuk High Level Meeting on Education Reform held in Weno, Chuuk this past November, 2012, with representatives and staff from the FSM National Government, the U.S. Government and the Chuuk State Government.

Members of the Advisory Group include three eminent friends of Chuuk State, including Tom Bussanich, the Director of the Division of Budget and Grants Management in the Office of Insular Affairs within the United States Department of Interior; Patrick Tellei, the President of the Palau Community College; and Francis X. Hezel, a Jesuit Priest and the founder of the Micronesian Seminar.

The Advisory Group once again met with the Chuuk State Governor, Board of Education and Department of Education to discuss the on-going progress of ten High Level commitments as well as additional recommendations made by the Advisory Group during its first two quarterly meetings. The Advisory Group and the Chuuk Board of Education had very productive meetings and concurred on many of the reform issues being considered.

Despite this much improved and expanded reform discussion, the Advisory Group conveyed its concern regarding the slowness of the Chuuk State Government to finalize the process of appointing and confirming a Director of Education, as well as vacant and expiring Board of Education positions. The Advisory Group also expressed concern regarding Chuuk State's slow progress in implementing primary school consolidations, as committed by all parties at the High Level event.

With the hiring of professional Human Resource, Reform and Management Consultants, the Advisory Group is encouraged that several outstanding reform initiatives will begin to move forward, including the development of a contract system for teachers that will limit leave during the school year, monitoring of student, teacher and principal attendance at all schools, development of a methodology governing the selection of school principals, improving physical facilities and making sure schools have the basic requirements for strong school instruction.

Tom Bussanich expressed his sincere appreciation on behalf of the Advisory Group to the Board of Education for its much invigorated participation throughout the week. According to Mr. Bussanich, "when all of the parties to a project work together to find solutions to hard

problems, solutions are usually found, and the Board showed a strong commitment during our meetings to move this reform forward.”

The Advisory Group will return to Chuuk for its next quarterly meeting in the last week of October of this year.

For additional information on background documents, meeting proceedings, correspondence and Advisory Group reports, visit <http://www.pitiviti.org/chuuk>.

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