On January 15, Governor Falan delivered his ‘State of the State’ Address at the Yap State Legislature. Pictured above is Governor Henry S. Falan, Lt. Governor Jesse Salalu, and Senator Jesse Ragulmar.

Message from the Director’s Office
On January 15, Governor Falan delivered his first ‘State of the State’ address. Part of his address was to reiterate the importance of ‘Thinking Globally, Acting Locally’ as a philosophy to move the State forward. Often in today’s world with all the major issues we face, it can be challenging to know how we—as individuals—can ‘act locally’ to make a difference. When we think of supporting schools we tend to think of improving facilities, ordering textbooks, and instructional materials, training teachers, etc...which are all important. Yet there are many other things that contribute to successful schooling and illustrate how local actions can collectively make a significant impact. I’m reminded of this every day on my short drive to work witnessing the local actions of community members helping to make sure our students get to school safely.

I pass a principal standing by the road to make sure her students cross the street safely, I pass by the Gaanalay hill intersection where I see policemen standing (often in the rain) directing traffic to keep people safe and assist children to safely get to school. I pass the PTS buses, whose drivers have an excellent safety record, and I pass parents walking alongside their small children on busy roads. These actions, and many more, help to make sure our students get to school safely.

Starting in this newsletter issue, and continuing until the end of the school year, will be a new feature section called ‘Spotlight On…’ that highlights some of the events, projects, and initiatives our schools are undertaking to ‘act locally’ to make a positive difference in their school and community. We look forward to sharing their submissions with you.

YHS Welcomes New Principal
With the start of the New Year, YHS welcomed a new principal, Lazarus Ulith. Principal Ulith is no stranger to education, having served over 30 years as a classroom teacher, program coordinator, and high school principal. In addition to the vast experience he brings to the school, Principal Ulith also served the State as a Senator in the 9th State Legislature. YHS will be undergoing their first round of Accreditation Evaluations in the next couple of months, so in addition to ensuring the smooth operation of the school, the staff are busy with preparations for their evaluation.

In his introductory meetings with YHS staff and students, Principal Ulith stated, “I believe in the power of working together collaboratively and using the TEAM approach (Together Everyone Achieves More).”
An Innovative Solution to Provide Healthy Meals for Students through Community Engagement

Starting in January, the Tamilang Youth Organization (TYO) opened a new cafeteria service for the students at Tamilang Elementary School. After witnessing that their students sometimes skipped breakfast, forgot to bring their lunches from home or came to school with non-healthy food items, they knew that their students could not learn well. They saw extreme cases that involved students taking other student lunches, which became such a problem that the school board had to step in and conduct village visits to raise public awareness of the situation. Observing all this, TYO wanted to do something that would benefit the students at their school—and came upon the vision of creating a cafeteria for their school. They believed this would help promote a healthy diet among their youth and in turn, help them with their academic performance. With their community’s support, they believed they could make it sustainable.

A vision of this magnitude does take time. TYO started its plans on the cafeteria in 2013 originally looking at a timeline of 2-3 years. Due to grant and fund searches, pre-application and application processes and coordination among TYO and other community groups and government agencies, it took them a bit longer. They did not ‘give up’ and after 8 years of project work, coupled with tremendous persistence, dedication, partnership, and community support, their vision become a reality. The TYO Cafeteria is now serving healthy lunch meals to all students at Tamilang Elementary School for free of charge. Villages in the community donate fish, taro, and other healthy local foods for the meals. Volunteers prepare the healthy lunch meals each day and TYO oversees the arrangements related to the project.

TYO recognizes that many people and groups have helped them achieve their vision. Much time was volunteered by TYO board members and officers by meeting once a week for over 7 years to plan and organize. They had the assistance of their community’s US Peace Corps volunteers who assisted them in their research, documentation and application processes. They conducted multiple village visits to raise awareness of the project and to solicit support and assistance.

They acknowledge the support of the Tamil Community (Teb, Meerur, Bugol, Aff, Dechmur, Maaq, Thol, Madlaay, Dabach, Doomchuuy, Gargey), Tamil Council, TES School Board and administration and TES PTA, WCHC, former and current Governor, and the Yap Community Action Program.

When asked about advice they would have for other school communities interested in projects such as this, they stated, “People’s hearts have to be in the right place in order for any project like this to begin and succeed. Project goals should be focused on the community well-being, not on fame or financial gain. Getting the right key people who are committed and love their community is a must. With the support of the community, visions can become realities.”

YDOE salutes the Tamil Youth Organization and Tamilang community for their innovative cafeteria project in service to the children at Tamilang Elementary School!

If anyone would like additional information on this project, you may contact Tamil Youth Organization at 350-2119.
During my first week at Gagil Community School, it caught my attention that some students were eating their lunch while others were staring and hoping for someone to share their lunch with them. I continued to observe that for the students who did bring their lunch, did so without any vegetables or fruit. At our first school staff meeting, I brought up this issue with my staff for discussion seeking ways we could provide food/fruits so kids would not go hungry while in school. This was also brought up during PTA meetings but yet I continued to see little or no difference.

The keys to the development of children and their future livelihoods require adequate nutrition and education. Children who go to school hungry cannot learn well. They have decreased physical activity, diminished cognitive abilities, and reduced resistance to infections. Their school performance is often poor. So we started seeking help/advice from other agencies that could help our school start a school vegetable garden. I wanted something to benefit the whole community, especially the children. With the help of Women’s Inter- est Office, Yap CRE, DOE, parents and the Gagil Community, we are now building a nursery where we can grow vegetables for our kids to take home, prepare and bring to school for their lunches. We plan to create learning gardens of moderate sizes, which can be easily managed by students, teachers, parents, and community members but still include a variety of nutritious vegetables and fruits. We also want to keep it simple so that these kind of gardens can be easily replicated by students and parents at their homes. We are still in the building phase of our project and appreciate all the support we can get to make this project successful for our students.

We started off this New Year with many expectations for our students, our staffs and our school. A lot has happened in the past few months in terms of preparation for the Accreditation Evaluation team that is coming to our school in the month of February. On top of the preparations, we have a new and committed member on board. We want to introduce to the community the latest member of our faculty here at Yap High School. We the faculty, staffs and students want to take the time to give a warm welcome to our new principal Lazarus Ulith. Lazarus Ulith has been a principal for the High School in Ulithi for so many years. He was part of our state Legislature for the past four years before he came our new principal. We thank him for joining our family here at Yap High School and be part of our team to make a difference in our children’s lives.

The school faculty, staffs and students are working endlessly to insure that our school is well ready for the Accreditation team. Our students took part in putting up the school mission and vision statements throughout the school. Our teachers are getting their classrooms ready by putting up visual aids and students’ works, as well as lesson plans in place for the Accreditation team. We look forward to the accreditation evaluation results so that we can plan better for improvements at our school.
February Events
School Accreditation Evaluation
Waab Zone Schools February 3-15
Woleai Zone Schools February 3-7
COM Entrance Test (COMET) will be administered on February 5-7. Please contact COMFSM Yap campus for reservation and details.

Xavier Entrance Examination
The test is schedule to be administered on February 15th, 2020 at St. Mary’s School campus. Registration will be on that day, opening at 8:30am. This year’s exam was not written by Xavier. Due to several reasons, they contracted a company to provide the exam. The fee has increased this year to $10.00 per test due to logistics of the test. The exam is to begin at 9:00 am and is two and a half hours long. Test takers are recommended to bring something for snack or hydration for the day.

TOEFL
The TOEFL test measures the ability of non-native speakers communicate in English in an academic setting. It accurately measures how the students can read, understand, and write in English in a college or university classroom.

Mail – in registration deadline for TOEFL test - February 27, 2020. Test fee is $180.00. For more information contact Sandy Keiji at the Curriculum Division

Friday, February 21st: YCHS Admissions Applications Due.

SAT 2020
The SAT is focused on what you’re learning in high school and what you need to know to be successful in college.

Mail – in registration deadline for SAT is February 14, 2020. Test fee $49.50(SAT), $64.50 (SAT with essay***). **recommended. For more information contact Sandy Keiji at the Curriculum Division.

March Events
Online registration deadline for SAT. March 3, 2020
TOEFL online registration deadline March 6, 2020. SAT test date. March 14, 2020. For more information contact Sandy Keiji at the Curriculum Division.
Evening of Prose & Poetry at the Yap Catholic High School. Friday, March 20th.
March 21, 2020 - State Testing (NMCCT and State Standards Tests) Administered between April 20- May 15

April Events
TOEFL TEST - April 4, 2020 - Approximate score reporting
April 1, 2020 - Mail-in registration deadline for SAT
April 3, 2020 - Online registration deadline for SAT
March 21, 2020 - State Testing (NMCCT and State Standards Tests) Administered between April 20- May 15

May Events
Friday, May 1st 2020 - Under the Tree Music Showcase at YCHS.

June Events
Last Day of Instruction for Waab Zone elementary Schools - June 19, 2020.

July Events
Approximate score reporting dates for TOEFL - July 17, 2020