



# Akoyikoyi School Annual Report



2014 – 2015

"AWAKENING OPPORTUNITIES"

IN THIS REPORT

## Letter from the Director

The 2014-2015 school year ends this week; grades K-3 completing 180 instructional days, 4-5.5 hours of school every day. This year was a great success and can be summed up in six words: Chris, Grace, Melanie, Marybeth, Cory, Martyn. These six individuals are responsible for the fantastic learning environment, student achievement, excellent attendance, care and love that filled Akoyikoyi School.

Children came early to go to our small library, or to help their teacher sharpen pencils, or straighten desks. Others stayed after school to hang with their teacher or engage in a learning game or playing soccer or basketball taught by Daichy, SHIP-HOOPS youth director.

I cannot adequately express in words the positive impact these people have had on the community and the children they served.

There were challenges this year. We had a lot of children in our one large room but were fortunate to receive a grant from the Australian Government which allowed us to build another classroom. It was noisy and sometimes very hot, but the teachers kept their "Eyes on the Prize:" educating the children in their care, and doing so magnificently!

We are also blessed by the incredible support of our students' parents who continue to support the school and prioritize education for their children.

There will be a short break, and then the learning cycle continues with Kindergarten orientation and two weeks of summer school, designed to prepare the young children for their first school experience and reduce the summer slide.

People have asked me, "What makes a successful school?" Without hesitation I reply, "Dedicated teachers!" And we had six of the best this year! We were blessed!

Sincerely,  
Clark Graham,  
Director of Akoyikoyi School



### Xavier High School Students Inspire Akoyikoyi Youth

Akoyikoyi students have benefited greatly from positive collaboration with a group of great role models from Xavier High School, a Jesuit institution that serves all of Micronesia. Page 3



### Akoyikoyi Weathers the Storm

At the end of March, Typhoon Maysak swept through Chuuk causing widespread damage. Luckily there was no damage to the school, and classes began shortly after the storm had passed. Page 5

# About Akoyikoyi

## Our Mission and Vision

*Help children achieve the necessary education to be accepted to a good high school and eventually a good college, gaining knowledge and skills to live productive lives, bettering themselves and their communities.*

## Current Situation

It is well known, and supported by numerous studies and data, that Chuuk State schools rank among the lowest performers in the entire Pacific: children can decode but have difficulty comprehending, sometimes even in their native language. Simple arithmetic skills are a challenge; many lack awareness of their traditional ways and are caught in a money economy that has taken them from a lifestyle of simple self-sufficiency to poverty. Having neither the knowledge of their ancestors to live sustainably,



nor the education necessary to become productive in today's world, they are "in-between" those worlds. Education can provide the necessary bridge and is a major component to success in the future. Akoyikoyi is a charter type school currently enrolling grades K – 3. Last year, Akoyikoyi was granted a three year accreditation, the only elementary school in the state to receive such recognition. The school utilizes

Direct Instruction to get students speak and hearing English as young as possible and get them prepared to read and write in their second language as quickly as possible. Success with this has been evident as students are taught in primarily English and display an impressive ability to understand and speak English within the classroom on a daily basis.

## Akoyikoyi Recognized as Mix-It-Up Model School



In the 2014 – 2015 school year, Akoyikoyi hosted its third annual Mix-It-Up Lunch. The program is sponsored by an organization called Teaching Tolerance, and "encourages students to identify, question and cross social boundaries." For the event, we welcomed high school students from Chuuk, Yap, Pohnpei, Kosrae, Republic of Marshall Islands, Palau, Phillipines, Kiribati, and South Korea. The students all attend Xavier

High School in Chuuk, and came down for a couple hours to share cultural traditions and stories from each of their native countries. Chuuk is a small place, so it was an awesome opportunity for Akoyikoyi students to meet and interact with a group of great young adults from all over Oceania. Akoyikoyi was one of only two international schools that were recognized for "sustained commitment to creating a respectful and inclusive school community."



## THE DAY IN PICTURES



Seniors John Taman and River Thomas help 3<sup>rd</sup> grader Mark Rudolph with his painting



Akoyikoyi students of all ages are taught a line dance by students from Xavier

## FAST FACTS

96%

Student Attendance Percentage for the 2014- 2015 school year.

83%

Parents of Akoyikoyi students surveyed who do not actively work



*Xavier and Akoyikoyi Students pose with a sign they painted during the first annual Xavier-Akoyikoyi Art and Music Day led by Xavier HS seniors*

## Events with Xavier HS a Huge Success

Akoyikoyi School is very grateful this year for support received from the local Jesuit School, Xavier High School. Generally regarded as the preeminent preparatory school in all of Micronesia, Xavier is home to students from all four states of FSM, Palau, The Marshall Islands, Kiribati, Phillipines, and South Korea. These young adults are motivated, kind, smart, and many other qualities that make them ideal role models for our students at Akoyikoyi. This year, our relationship with Xavier strengthened as they actively reached out to us several times throughout the 2014 – 2015 school years.

Our first event was the third annual Mix-It-Up Lunch in which students from all across Micronesia come to speak to our students about their culture and home. This unique opportunity to bring together so many different cultures earned us an award as a Mix-It-Up Model School, one of only two international schools in the world to earn it.

The second event in which we collaborated was the first Xavier – Akoyikoyi Art and Music day. Occurring in November, Mr. Rowan

and Ms. Briggs brought their art and music classes to Akoyikoyi to engage the children in games, art, and songs. The students had a great time, and even worked together to paint different pieces of a puzzle that, when put together, showed “Xavier Loves Akoyikoyi”.

Towards the end of the year, seniors at Xavier High School are responsible for turning in their final project called a “capstone project.” For this year, several groups got involved at Akoyikoyi to teach kids valuable lessons about the importance of protecting the local coral reefs and mangroves. One group even brought down a recycling bin to educate the children about what materials can be reused and even lead to extra money for the school.

With all these events, we are thankful to Xavier High School for involving us because it provides tangible motivation for our students to keep working hard so they too will one day be able to go to Xavier. The love shown by these wonderful role models is an inspiration to me, and most importantly our students.

# Akoyikoyi Financial Report

Our primary sources of income come from the Chuuk Department of Education (CDOE), the FSM Department of Education (FSMDOE), private donations, and two grants that have helped with additional expansion costs.

## Sources of Revenue :

**CDOE :** Akoyikoyi is thankful for the support of the Chuuk Department of Education who is the primary source of funding for the school's operational costs.

**FSMDOE :** We are grateful to the FSMDOE who provides some additional funding to the school to assist in operating costs.

**Small Grant Scheme (SGS) Grant :** Last summer, Akoyikoyi received a grant from Australia. This grant was used to build a classroom extension that served as the 3rd grade classroom.

**LDS Church :** The Latter-Day Saints Church provided money to help in purchasing curriculum materials.

**Private Donations :** Akoyikoyi also depends on the generosity of private donations from various donors and online fundraising efforts.

In 2023 the Compact of Free Association ends. The United States has announced that there will be no further funding provided. Akoyikoyi School, therefore, must create an endowment to sustain the school so that we are self-sufficient and able to continue into the future.

Akoyikoyi is grateful for the support provided by volunteer

organizations that provide the necessary teachers that permit us to add a grade every year. For the 2014-2015 school year, the Akoyikoyi staff are :

## Two (2) Jesuit Volunteers

- Melanie Lara – 1st Grade Teacher
- Chris Pieterick – Principal

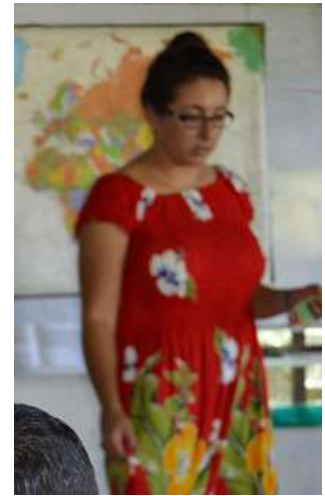
## Two (2) World Teach Volunteers

- Cory Van Auken – 3rd Grade Teacher
- Marybeth Arcodia – 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Teacher

## One (1) Australian Volunteer

- Martyn Burne – Master Teacher

Without the support of these organizations, Akoyikoyi would be unable to operate, and we are incredibly grateful for their aid. We hope that we are able to continue building on strong relationships with these volunteer organizations in the future as we continue expanding the school.





# Akoyikoyi Weathers Typhoon Maysak

March 29th, 2015 marked one of the biggest storms to have hit Chuuk in a long time as the lagoon was directly in the path of Typhoon Maysak, a large typhoon that left a wide swath of damage throughout Micronesia. With 80 – 90 percent of buildings being damaged, many schools and businesses were forced to shut down for some time as all focus went to repairing the damage that was left. On Saturday before the storm hit, several members of the Akoyikoyi staff went out to the school to prepare. Electronics were stashed away in cabinets, and mats were put across the windows to help block out some of the wind and rain.

Monday we showed up to survey the damage and were pleasantly surprised to discover that apart from some minor water damage and things that had been blown around, the school had stayed strong and sustained no serious damage. On that day, 15 students still showed up with the expectation that we might possibly be open for school, and by Tuesday we officially reopened for school with nearly 70 percent attendance.

We are thankful for the community support that we receive as a school, and the dedication that families show in ensuring that their children attend school on a daily basis.

The fact that we had 25% of our students show up the day after being hit by the typhoon is a testament to the culture that Akoyikoyi school is working to develop in placing great value on being committed to education.

In the aftermath of the storm, there have been food shortages and tainted water due to compromised water catchments. The loss of crops including a majority of the banana and breadfruit trees have left a lot of families without local food that they are dependent on. Because of this, word went out that any assistance donors could provide would be greatly appreciated.

Following the storm, we have been very thankful for the showing of support we have received. Generous donors have sent lots of clothes, nutrition bars and an assortment of other useful items that we have been able to distribute to our students and their families. These gifts have been great for our students and our community, so we want to give a big thank you to all who have sent supplies to the school.

Special thanks to Dixon and Rosemary Tiffany and their friends as well as the University of Guam Social Work Program for their amazing donations to our school.

## AROUND TOWN



Tree bases more than twice as large as an average person was not enough to keep these massive trees from being blown over.



Typhoon Maysak left a wide path of destruction as many houses made of metal roofing or plywood sheets were blown over by strong gusts of wind.



Giant breadfruit tree lies upended in Penia Sene on the island of Weno in Chuuk.

# Looking Forward

Following a successful 2014 - 2015 school year, Akoyikoyi has begun looking forward into the next year to ensure that we are continually able to build on the previous year in improving the quality of the service we provide to our students and community. As we welcome a new Kindergarten class in to the school, we will now be offering grades K – 4 and serving nearly 80 students from

the villages of Sapuk, Penia, Peniasene, and Tunnuk.

To accommodate the increase in size, we are looking towards finding a space in which we will be able to lay down roots for a permanent school site. Space for new students and classes is one of the big issues still facing the school, but one we are hopeful could be resolved soon. We are also always in need of teachers,

so if there is anybody interested in teaching at the elementary level where there is great need, please get in contact with the school to get more information. Email Clark Graham ([rekiichuuk2@gmail.com](mailto:rekiichuuk2@gmail.com)) or visit the website [www.ship-hoops.org](http://www.ship-hoops.org) if you are interested in learning more about Akoyikoyi School or SHIP-HOOPS as a program.

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