



**Rural, Insular, Native Achievement Programs (RINAP)
Progress Update**

Grantee Name CNMI Public School System (PSS)

<input type="checkbox"/> ESF I – SEA	<input type="checkbox"/> IA – Consolidated Grant
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ESF II – SEA	<input type="checkbox"/> Republic of Palau
<input type="checkbox"/> ARP – SEA	<input type="checkbox"/> ESF I – Gov
	<input type="checkbox"/> ESF II – Gov

Topic¹ **Subrecipient and Beneficiary Monitoring:** In your responses, please describe any significant actions taken to ensure that Federal funds are being used for their intended purposes and in a manner that minimizes the potential of waste, fraud, and abuse. Provide supporting documentation (e.g., communication of rules, regulations, and grant requirements, grant and contractual agreements that specify grant requirements, or quarterly budget and payroll reports), as applicable. Supporting documentation should also include evidence that the subrecipient monitoring schedule outlined in the ESF Initial Report has been implemented. If implementation has not occurred as planned, provide an explanation and outline the planned subrecipient monitoring activities scheduled to occur throughout the remainder of the grant performance period.

Directions: *In preparation for the Progress Update, grantees will receive an electronic form four weeks in advance of the grantee interview to submit their responses and associated documentation. Grantees must submit their completed form (and upload any related supporting documentation) two weeks in advance of the grantee interview. Where applicable, grantees should upload documentation that supports the narrative response (e.g., public notice to stakeholders, guidance documents, sample monitoring report, media interviews, speeches, meeting agenda, etc.). Narrative responses should be brief and in bullet form, aligned with grantee goals and priorities.*

As it relates to the progress update topic:

1. What were the grantee’s key accomplishments this past quarter?

- The CNMI Public School System (PSS) re-launched its new district ADA-compliant website www.cnmipss.org on January 8, 2021.

¹ The topic will change for each progress update and will be selected by the U.S. Department of Education. Grantees will be notified of the topic at least one quarter in advance of progress updates and the topic will be the same for all grantees completing a progress update. The topic will be closely related to a specific, or set of related, statutory or regulatory requirements. The specific, or set of related, statutory or regulatory requirements outlining Departmental oversight authority will be cited in the electronic questionnaire distributed in advance of progress updates (e.g., Internal Controls: 2 C.F.R. 200.61).

- We fully transitioned to *blended learning* on February 2, 2021, a combination of in-person and online instruction, for all PSS elementary, middle, and high schools in Saipan, Tinian and Rota.
- We are actively seeking to improve access to digital devices and the Internet. We are cognizant to the fact that not all students have consistent access to the Internet. As such, we have partnered with the private sector under the “Community Hotspot Initiative” so students can continue to receive unprecedented and uninterrupted online learning.
- Ongoing Professional development that supports teachers make large shifts for distanced instruction. Teachers are also provided additional daily planning time to redesign instruction and make the substantial instructional shifts necessary to provide high-quality learning experiences.

Artifacts

[New CNMI PSS Website](#)

[CNMI PSS Newsletter on Blended Learning](#)

[Memo: F2F transition to Asynchronous for January 26-29, 2021](#)

[Press Release: Blended Learning](#)

Objectives 1 - 6 were reported as “Completed” from our last quarterly update.

Objective 7: By December 2020, 75% of participating teachers will report an implementation rating of "satisfactory" as measured by the Remote Learning Fidelity Implementation Instrument.

Based on 389 instructional staff respondents, 19% reported slightly satisfied, 37% reported moderately satisfied, 28% reported quite satisfied, and 8% reported very satisfied on the Remote Learning Implementation Survey. This reflects a total of 92% of respondents rating the implementation of remote learning as satisfactory.

Artifact for Objective 7:

[CNMI PSS Remote Learning Survey for Instructional Staff](#)

2. What were the grantee’s key challenges this past quarter?

- Student attendance and engagement during remote learning represents a top challenge for CNMI PSS. Students will be logged in but do not respond when called upon by the teacher. Teachers are prohibited from requiring students to turn the camera on during online learning. This was a big concern because students are signed in to be counted as present, but are not engaging in the instruction which leaves teachers frustrated.
- A secondary challenge is getting parent cooperation to get students to attend remote learning classes.
- Establishing Special Student Attendance Codes (attendance taxonomy) with school leadership and teacher buy-in.
- The implementation of remote learning, including the training of instructional staff and Learning Management System (LMS) technical difficulties, was a

challenge. At the time of transition to remote learning, the CNMI PSS Instructional Technology & Distance Education (ITDE) Office was only staffed by two personnel: a director and program manager. ITDE was able to leverage a small pool of experienced online teachers to serve as trainers for the transition to remote learning. Training focused on the basics of the identified LMS.

- Another challenge was the technical difficulties faced during the implementation of remote learning. Certain technical factors led to LMS system outages, which impacted instruction. While the LMS technical support team was able to remedy the situation, LMS users (students and instructional staff) expressed frustration with the frequency of outages.
- Teacher burnout is also a big issue. The COVID-19 pandemic has increased the pressures put on teachers. We are seeing teachers leaving the profession and opting to work in central office, the private sector, or move off-island. Reasons for quitting included stress, family-care responsibilities, etc.

3. What methods, tools, and processes are you utilizing to address these challenges?

- Blackboard has provided assurance that they will increase the capacity of our LMS to ensure services are not interrupted again.
- We need to collect better data on attendance and engagement. We are incorporating innovating metrics, such as participation in wellness checks and responses on student and family engagement surveys. These will help us develop a clearer picture of student and parent engagement patterns. We are also employing a variety of communication methods, not just face-to-face (or synchronous) interactions. In this way, written communications (e.g., emails, SMS text messages), videos, Zoom chats, and other methods of fostering engagement are used to evaluate and improve student and parent engagement.
- With school leadership and teacher input, we established a comprehensive and manageable attendance taxonomy that was adopted by the schools. The taxonomy accounts for most attendance scenarios and provides one category for each attendance scenario.
- Teachers are actively reaching out to parents of students who are not attending either the online or face-to-face classes. This includes home visits because some families lack transportation.

4. How can the U.S. Department of Education help the grantee address these challenges?

The CNMI would like continued support and advocacy for additional technical assistance and funding to support remote and blended learning, teacher retention, addressing student learning loss, and mitigation efforts to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in school settings. Additionally, technical assistance to improve remote learning and re-engage students as they return back to face-to-face learning.

5. What are the grantee’s technical assistance needs related to these challenges?

The CNMI PSS would like to receive information regarding evidence-based interventions plans other districts may have in place to mitigate learning loss due to the impacts of school learning and remote learning.

Public Burden Statement

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1810- 0757. The expiration date is December 2, 2021. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is required to obtain or retain benefit 2 CFR 200.327 and 2 CFR 200.328. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate, suggestions for improving this individual collection, or if you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual form, application or survey, please contact Joanne Osborne, Rural, Insular, and Native Achievement Programs, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave. SW, Rm. 3E306, Washington, DC 20202 or email joanne.osborne@ed.gov directly.