

For Official Release

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Department of Education
Pago Pago, American Samoa



Le'atele Elementary School Dedicates Multipurpose Facility

On March 12, 2025, Le'atele Elementary School held a dedication ceremony for its long-awaited multipurpose building to enhance student safety and well-being. The event, led by Master of Ceremony Principal Ramona Matau, brought together Honorable Governor Pulaali'i Nikolao, First Lady Lois Phillips-Pula, cabinet members, government officials, and community leaders. Reverend Elder F. Tu'ugamala opened the ceremony with a prayer.

Rev. Elder Tuugamala read Job 9:1-9, focusing on verses 4-7, which recount Saul's conversion on the road to Damascus. Initially, he aimed to persecute Christians, but Jesus confronted him in a blinding light, leading to his blindness and transformation into a follower of Christ. This pivotal moment significantly altered Christianity, as Saul emerged as one of its foremost apostles. His journey symbolizes change and new beginnings, much like the gym's purpose to uplift and strengthen individuals and the community.

Governor Pulaali'i expressed deep gratitude to everyone who helped make the project possible, recognizing the Principal and staff for their excellent work. He stressed the administration's commitment to prioritizing student safety and fostering a better learning environment. The governor mentioned that everything is achievable because of Love. He also thanked the American Samoa Department of Education (ASDOE), the Fagasa community, and neighboring villages for their dedication to supporting the project.

Director Taeaotui Punafo Tilei of the Department of Public Works provided details about the multipurpose building. He explained that the project lasted 8 months, from January 2024 to February 2025, completing the work ahead of the scheduled completion date. The facility measures 100 feet by 70 feet and costs \$1.1 million, excluding change orders.

ASDOE Director Maefau Dr. Mary Lauagaia Taufete'e praised the collaborative efforts of the previous administration that brought the project to fruition. The director acknowledged and thanked our former leaders for ensuring our students receive the best. She also emphasized the

community's perseverance and optimism regarding the building's completion within eight months. She thanked the Governor and dignitaries for their presence. She sincerely appreciated the principal, staff, PTA, and especially the students of Le'atele Elementary. She conveyed her heartfelt thanks to the teachers for their unwavering dedication to educating students day in and day out, stating, "Teaching is not an easy task." Fa'afetai ma Faamalo

The ceremony concluded with the dedication by Governor Pulaali'i, First Lady Lois, and other dignitaries, officially signaling the completion of the project. The event marked a significant milestone in the ongoing efforts to enhance facilities and ensure the safety of students at Le'atele Elementary School.

