



NEWSLETTER

Learning from Stingrays

Our school recently visited Saipan SeaTouch, where students observed, touched, and learned about stingrays. For many of us—including myself—it was our first close encounter with these creatures. Some students reached out with confidence. Others hesitated. Both responses were natural.

Many parents in Saipan have seen fin-like shapes moving near Beach Road in the evening. I once thought they were sharks. Later, I learned they were stingrays. Even in the early morning, swimmers often see them gliding silently nearby—calm, quiet, and unthreatening. Yet we fear them for one reason: their sting.

Research and real experience tell a different story. Stingrays use their barb only when they believe they are in danger. Because they often rest beneath the sand, people are injured only when they unknowingly step on them. That is why swimmers are taught the stingray shuffle—sliding the feet gently across the sand instead of lifting them. The vibration warns the stingray and gives it time to move away before harm occurs. This lesson reaches far beyond the ocean. We feared stingrays because we misunderstood them. Knowledge replaced fear.

People deserve the same grace. After meeting countless individuals over many years, I have learned one truth: no one is simple. Every person carries a story we cannot see. In every school, there are students who struggle. Some are restless. Some are withdrawn. Some fall behind academically. Compared to confident, cheerful students, they may feel unfamiliar. But unfamiliar does not mean dangerous. It means unseen. When we take time to understand a student's story, our response changes. We stop reacting. We start guiding. We stop judging. We start teaching. We learn how to shuffle.

The stingray shuffle is not only a movement of the feet. It is a movement of the heart. When we approach our students with care, they feel safe. When we approach them with understanding, they grow.

May we all learn to use our own stingray shuffle—in our classrooms, in our homes, and in every relationship we are trusted to guide.

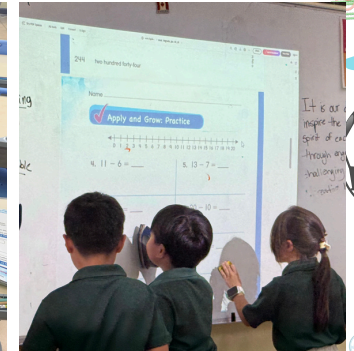


Yeon Ho Song
Principal





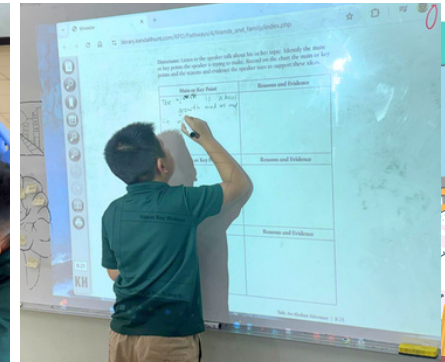
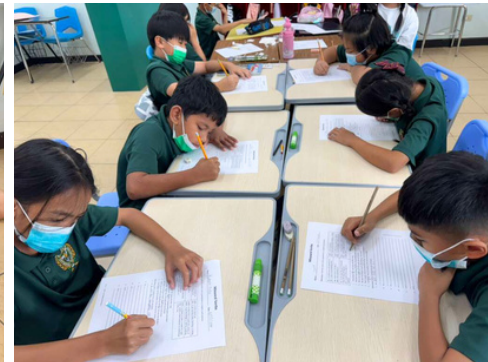
Kindergarten - Left to right: Science prediction - exploring which substance can clean dirty coins better, learning about Moses and the Red Sea craft, and learning positional words using our stuffed toys.



1st Grade - Left to right: Practicing for chapel, learning about the solar system, engaging in new unit, and working together to solve equations.



2nd Grade - Left to right: Learning about when Saul became blind and Paul's missionary journeys; and observing erosion by water.



3rd & 4th Grade - Left to right: Playing to board games to practice base words and suffixes, demonstrating the proper use of verbs, and identifying main idea and evidence from a speech.



5th & 6th Grade - Left to right: Building popsicle stick bridge and taking creative photos that reflect the Bible class themes.



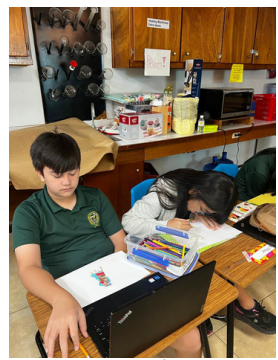
But seek first the kingdom of
 God and His righteousness,
 and all these things shall be
 added to you.

MATTHEW 6:33



January Birthdays

Katana Glenn	3
Hazel Kim	11
Alaina Goomtam	12
Tom Pangelinan II	21
Anna Li	25
Ariah Goomtam	26



7th & 8th Grade – Left to right: Making flower vases and connecting how making good choices (Luke 15) lead to growth and beauty; conducting an experiment using grains of sand; and working on their own artistic interpretation of the prodigal son.

SeaTouch Field Trip



Friday Chapel



Dates to Know

Tuesday, January 27

Spelling Bee
Schoolwide Finals

Friday, January 30

Professional Development Day
-CDC: Early Pick Up 12:30 pm
-Elementary: No After School

February 9-12

Spirit Week

Friday, February 13

Outdoor School



Saipan Seventh-day
Adventist School



saipansdaschool



Saipan SDA School



www.saipansdaschool.org



Child Development Center



Toddlers – Left to right: Practicing proper pencil grip to improve their pincer grasp and having fun during circle time.



Preschool – Left to right: Learning the ABB pattern and painting a picture of Nehemiah building a wall.



Pre-Kindergarten – Left to right: Students pass and play fiddle sticks, and use play dough to form a word as they identify and master syllables.

After School Academy



Gardening



Indoor Play



Art