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American Samoa Department of Education Holds Church Service to Officially Open the New School Year 2024-2025.

On Sunday, August 25th, the American Samoa Department of Education (ASDOE) held a special church service to officially open the new School Year 2024-2025 at the Fagaima Methodist Church “Ave ole Fetūao”. The service was attended by Senate President Tuaolo Manaia Fruean, members of the Fono, Attorney General Fainu’ulelei Alailima-Utu, government officials, church leaders and ASDOE teachers.

Reverend Peter Schuster led the ceremony, reflecting on Psalms 121: "I look up to the mountains; my help comes from the Creator of Heaven and Earth." He explained that in Hebrew belief, God resides on the highest natural forms, the mountains. "When faced with adversity, we must look up to the highest, for He will not forsake us but help us," Reverend Schuster said. He emphasized that the journey of education will be challenging, but as the new school year begins, we must seek God's wisdom and guidance to see beyond our understanding.

The Attorney General delivered a special address on behalf of the American Samoa Government, thanking the congregation's respected leaders for holding this service to recognize the start of the new school year and to show appreciation to the dedicated teachers. "My gratitude goes to ASDOE, especially the teachers, for a successful 2023. Despite the challenges you faced, you all strived to educate our children. As we begin a new year, I encourage you to face these challenges and always remember to rely on God, as He is our best teacher."

The Attorney General emphasized the importance of being a teacher: "Success is not about how much money you make, but about the difference you make in people’s lives." He expressed his gratitude to ASDOE for their commitment to American Samoa over the years, providing education to our people, many of whom are now serving our territory in both government and private sector positions. The Attorney General concluded his remarks by saying, "Let us work

together to ensure that our students receive a proper education, which begins with us, parents and teachers. May God bless this new school year.

As the new school year unfolds, ASDOE remains committed to its mission of nurturing the minds and hearts of American Samoa's students. With the support of dedicated educators, community leaders, and families, the department is poised to inspire the next generation to excel academically, embrace their cultural heritage, and navigate the challenges ahead with confidence and faith. The church service marked not only the beginning of a new academic year but also a renewed dedication to the holistic development of every student in American Samoa.

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