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## **Governor Lemanu Visits Tafuna High School to Assess Infrastructure Projects and Urgent Concerns**

This morning, November 14, 2024, Governor Lemanu P. S. Mauga visited Tafuna High School to review ongoing infrastructure projects focused on revitalizing the school's facilities and creating a supportive learning environment. Key stakeholders joined the visit, including Department of Education (DOE) Director Samasoni Asaeli, Department of Public Works (DPW) Director Faleosina Voigt, American Samoa Power Authority (ASPA) CEO Wallon Young, State Energy Program (SEP) Manager Sisifo Taatiti of the Territorial Energy Office (TEO), and Justin Newton from Legacy LLC, the contractor overseeing the school's electrical infrastructure project.

During the visit, Governor Lemanu toured several classrooms and spoke with Principal Tutuila Togilau, who raised an urgent issue regarding non-functional air conditioning units. With the classrooms currently lacking proper ventilation and cooling, the Governor expressed deep concern about the discomfort faced by students, noting that many are suffering in the enclosed, hot conditions.

SEP Manager Taatiti and Mr. Newton from Legacy, LLC, provided progress updates to Governor Lemanu. They assured the leaders that the necessary electrical infrastructure upgrades, funded by the Territorial Energy Office, will begin as soon as the materials arrive on the island in the next month or so. The upgrades will include comprehensive retrofitting of the school's lighting and a substantial enhancement of the electrical capacity to accommodate new AC units installed by DOE throughout the school. These efforts are part of a larger initiative by TEO to modernize energy infrastructure across all schools in American Samoa.

In response to concerns about the need for reliable air conditioning in schools, Governor Lemanu P. S. Mauga, alongside the TEO, took action to upgrade Tafuna High School's electrical infrastructure. Recognizing the importance of creating a safe and comfortable learning environment, the project was initiated in March 2024. Although the goal was to complete the upgrades before the new school year, unforeseen delays impacted the timeline. TEO Manager Sisifo Taatiti emphasized, "This project sets an important precedent for energy improvements in our educational facilities, with student safety and protection from electrical hazards as our top priority."

To address immediate needs, CEO Wallon Young has committed to working with TEO and Legacy, LLC, to implement temporary measures that will restore cooling to some classrooms until the full project is completed. This cooperative effort aims to provide relief for students while long-term solutions are put in place.

Governor Lemanu emphasized the importance of the project, stating, "The comfort and well-being of our students is a priority. We cannot allow our children to endure these conditions, and we are committed to delivering the necessary upgrades efficiently."

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