PRESS RELEASE

MCA-Belize Awards US$21.7 Million Grant to U.S. Partner to Strengthen Secondary Education

Belize City, October 21, 2026

Today, the Millennium Challenge Account-Belize (MCA-Belize) and U.S. non-profit School-to-School International (STS), in partnership with Florida State University, marked the signing of the Equipping Secondary Educators Program Partnership (ESEPP). This US$21.7 million grant—the single-largest investment under the Belize Compact's Education Project—brings together Belizean and U.S. expertise to strengthen educational leadership, teacher development and secondary education nationwide.

The signing ceremony took place in the presence of Hon. John Briceño, Prime Minister of Belize, and H.E. André Bauer, U.S. Ambassador to Belize. Florida State University's Learning Systems Institute (FSU-LSI) will serve as a cooperating partner in the program.

Under the agreement, MCA-Belize will provide a grant of up to US$21.7 million to STS to implement ESEPP in partnership with Florida State University, which will provide technical expertise and support to strengthen teaching quality, teacher preparation, school leadership, and education quality systems in Belize. STS will contribute approximately US$5.4 million in additional resources, bringing the total value of the partnership to approximately US$27.1 million.

The ceremony included remarks by Prime Minister Briceño, Ambassador Bauer, and Dr. Marcia Bouloy, Executive Director of MCA-Belize. Dr. Wesley Hickey, Managing Director of the Education

Project, and Mr. Drake Warrick, Chief of Party for School-to-School International, also provided an overview of the partnership and the work it will support.

ESEPP will support the Belize Compact's goal of increasing the number of post-primary graduates with competencies relevant to labour market demand. Working closely with the Ministry of Education, Culture, Science and Technology and other education stakeholders, the partnership will strengthen existing Belizean education institutions and systems.

The program will focus on four key areas: school leadership, professional development for secondary teachers, pre-service teacher preparation, and improved teaching and learning materials. These investments are designed to strengthen the capacity of educators and institutions to improve teaching and learning outcomes for Belizean students.

ESEPP forms part of the US$125 million Belize Compact between the Government of Belize and the United States Government, through the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), which is investing in education and energy to address key constraints to Belize's economic growth.

The Belize Compact: Empowering Minds, Energizing Belize.

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