

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION | OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

PRESS RELEASE

DepEd underscores importance of securing recognition, permit to operate for NGO-run, community-based learning institutions serving IP learners

PASIG CITY, August 18, 2017 – The Department of Education (DepEd) continuously recognizes and supports the important contribution of non-government and community-led institutions in improving access to culture-based basic education services through Indigenous Peoples Education (IPEd) initiatives.

In most cases, these initiatives are being implemented in Geographically Isolated and Disadvantaged Areas (GIDA), where learners cannot afford to pay tuition and support is usually sought from donors. As a response to the specific context of these learning institutions that operate in social, cultural, economic, and geographical realities, DepEd issued Department Order No. 21, series 2014 (DO 21), or Guidelines on the Recognition of Private Learning Institutions Serving Indigenous Peoples Learners.

Through DO 21, the Department grants recognition and issues permits to operate to non-profit learning institutions serving IP learners who seek to be recognized within the national education system, thereby assuring that their learner's grade level are accredited should the learners transfer or enroll in a public school or in a recognized private learning institution.

This Department Order, which is operationalized by the Division and Regional offices, expands the access options of learners and strengthens the partnership between DepEd and groups that support the educational thrusts of the Department through the provision of culture-responsive basic education for IP learners. It is in this regard that DepEd strongly encourages NGO-run and community-based learning institutions to apply for the Department's recognition.

Applications with requirements deemed complete and approved, following the procedure provided by the DepEd Order, are granted Recognition and authorized to operate. Meanwhile, private learning institutions issued a Permit to Operate are still in the process of completing requirements for full recognition and are given temporary authority to operate.

A number of private schools across the country are already providing wider access to education for IP learners. As of school year 2016-2017, a total of 3,629 elementary and 2,517 secondary private schools nationwide were identified to have at least one IP learner. Of the figures, 1,008 elementary and 668 secondary private schools are in Regions 9, 10, 11, 12, and CARAGA.

A recent significant effort of the Department to provide IP learners in GIDA with better access to education is the establishment of 251 new public schools in 32 schools divisions in Mindanao starting 2016.

To actualize DepEd's commitment to the attainment of the right of indigenous peoples to culture-based education, the hiring of teachers for these schools is guided by Department Order No. 50, series 2016 (DO 50), or the Hiring Guidelines for Teacher 1 Position in Schools Implementing Indigenous Peoples Education and

Effective School Year 2016-2017. DO 50 as well highlights the competency of applicants to use the mother tongue of IP learners as the medium of learning and to contextualize lessons in relation to the community and cultural context of the learners being served.

Hired teachers are then trained based on Department Order 32, series 2015 (DO 32), of the Adoption of the Indigenous Peoples Education Curriculum Framework, which provides guidance in the contextualization of the K to 12 curriculum for IPEd; and Department Order 51, series 2014 (DO 51), or the Guidelines on the Conduct of Activities and Use of Materials Involving Aspects of Indigenous Peoples Culture, which promotes cultural sensitivity for IP learners and communities.

Teachers are also oriented about DepEd's adherence to the long-standing policy of respecting the neutrality of schools and learning communities as zones of peace, where learners and personnel are protected from engaging with armed personnel *and participating in activities that promote values contrary to the learning, caring, and nurturing environment espoused in schools.*

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