

## PRESS RELEASE

**Luistro: Convince your parents, enroll your siblings**

The Department of Education asks its students to use the holiday break in convincing their parents to enroll their younger siblings who are of school age during the early enrolment set on January as part of its intensified efforts to achieve the 2015 Millennium Development Goal (MDG) targets.

Education Secretary Armin Luistro sees that this Christmas break will be an opportune time for students to inform their parents of the pre-registration undertaking of the department to have children of school age enrolled before the May to June enrollment rush.

“One of the greatest challenges DepEd faces is convincing parents to bring their children to schools, to keep them there and finish basic education. Since Christmas break gives families a time to bond, we encourage our present students to convince their parents to enroll their younger siblings who are already of school age during the pre-registration period set by the department early next year,” said Luistro.

Luistro added that this move is among the efforts of the department to ensure that it remains on the right track in hitting the Millennium Development Goal (Goal) targets and the Education For All (EFA) commitment as the 2015 deadline comes closer.

He also noted that DepEd’s EFA commitment includes the provision of a quality program for pre-school and early childhood care and development for children aged three to five.

Research studies show that the critical years in a child’s life are from birth to 6 years. At this stage, basic character, values, abilities, personality, skills, aptitude, attitudes, and knowledge are formed. Further research shows that children who have a slow start are likely to experience problems right through childhood and into adolescence.

“Given these facts,” Luistro said that, “it is the responsibility of the family and the government to ensure that every child gets all the support needed to create a head start in education.” And because of that, “we should strengthen the very basic academic preparation of children, which is pre-school. We should make our young children’s first school experience enjoyable so that this positive experience will motivate them to remain in school and complete their education.”

DepEd’s effort of providing quality pre-school education involves adoption of a standard curriculum, training and hiring program for pre-school day care’s teachers’ development, a nutrition and health program for students, construction of classrooms, and distribution of learning supplements to students.

Moreover, to encourage parents to send their children to school, the government continues to implement the “no collection” and “no mandatory uniform” policy in public schools.

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“We believe that early childhood care is a very sound government intervention program that guarantees our children's smooth transition to primary school. It also gives them a better chance to complete basic education. Ultimately, a solid foundation in education is a sure route out of poverty. We would like to stress the need for us to work together to further improve early childhood care and education especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged sector,” Luistro said as he calls upon the support of all sectors in bringing all school-aged children to schools and in making the EFA goal a reality.

**END**

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