

Co-op to help teachers buy more for less

As part of its commitment to improve the living standards of teachers, the Department of Education, Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP) College of Cooperatives, Philippine Cooperative Center, and the Federation of Teachers' Cooperatives launched the "Negosyong Pangeskwela for Teachers' Cooperatives" on March 8, 2008 at the Philippine Cooperative Center.

"This partnership among the four organizations will accomplish a lot for our public school teachers," DepEd Secretary Jesli Lapus said. "Economic empowerment of teachers remains a major concern of the department," he added.

The co-op aims to 1) establish a centralized procurement system in public elementary and high schools; 2) increase income and purchasing power of DepEd personnel; and 3) provide quality and affordable goods and services to public school pupils, students and teachers.

"Utilizing the economies of scale will translate to huge savings for our teachers and allow them to avail themselves of quality products at affordable prices," Lapus explained.

The cooperative will simultaneously be launched in 48 public schools in the National Capital Region (NCR). Graduating students of PUP will be deployed as interns who will oversee the initial operations of these school-based cooperatives. They will also be in-charge of providing technical assistance to teachers.

"We at DepEd are grateful for the support of these students who are willing to share their technical know-how with public school teachers," Lapus said. He also stressed that DepEd is "promoting an entrepreneurial mindset and culture. And it is worthwhile for our teachers to explore business opportunities that will benefit them."

This initiative is supported by the department's Employees Welfare and Benefits Division, Philippine Cooperative Center, and Federation of Teachers' Cooperatives.

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