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**DepEd, AGAPP strengthen efforts to ensure readiness of Grade 1 students**

To better prepare children for school life and help them develop a positive attitude toward schooling, the Department of Education has committed to expand kindergarten/early childhood education through a partnership with *Aklat, Gabay, Aruga tungo sa Pag-angat at Pag-asa* (AGAPP) Foundation called “*Silid Pangarap*”.

The department has been actively pushing for partnerships with the private sector and the civil society to collaborate on various projects that will contribute to the education for all (EFA) goal of the department, particularly in reaching all five-year old children and providing them with the much needed learning environment and experiences.

“Taking into consideration the big responsibility we have, we seek the full support of all education stakeholders. And we are happy how things are turning out. Many groups now see how they can contribute in creating a difference in young children’s future by investing in education,” said Education Secretary Armin Luistro.

Among the list of recent partners who have responded to the department’s call to support education is the AGAPP Foundation.

AGAPP Foundation designed a project that actively promotes the mobilization of the private sector resources and talents in support of DepEd’s existing programs such as the public Kindergarten Program and Every Child-A-Reader Program.

“This partnership is part of the expanded preschool education that will help us ensure that all Grade I entrants have the necessary preparations to make them ready for academic work and consequently succeed in formal school,” noted Luistro.

DepEd, through the Bureau of Elementary Education (BEE), has formalized the partnership through a memorandum of agreement. In August 2010, DepEd-BEE and AGAPP Foundation launched School Libraries cum Preschool Classroom.

This involves the construction of one-storey buildings furnished as school libraries which shall also be utilized as kindergarten classrooms with accompanying age-appropriate instructional materials. It will also support teacher training and school staff development with focus on early childhood care and development and family literary.

Moreover, the partnership will also help promote partnership building and networking among volunteers and non-government organizations (NGOs) at the local level closer to the schools.

“We can only secure the future of this country if we improve basic education. While we do not have all the answers to address all the education backlogs, our

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hope remains that more stakeholders will support our efforts towards education reforms. We carry on the positive stance in making our EFA goal a reality," Luistro stressed.

In support of the project, the department has issued Memorandum No. 488, series 2010, to urge all divisions to submit a list of schools with preschool classes to be considered as potential recipient schools of this project. The list shall include the schools' basic information such as total enrolment for each preschool class disaggregated by gender and age; name of teacher, appointment status, and number of preschool class handled, and other assignments; type of classroom occupied by each preschool class (e.g. new classroom, temporary classroom, storage room, etc.); existing instructional materials used by the preschool teacher, and Form 3 "Principal's Report and Attendance" of the School for the last three months, school site development plan, and photos of school facilities.

The potential recipient schools will have to accomplish and submit the forms on school profile and questionnaires for partner schools as basis for ocular inspection and final selection.

The data requested shall be one of the major data needed by the AGAPP Foundation and DepEd-BEE in identifying the recipient schools in each division. Questionnaires can be downloaded from DepEd website: [www.deped.gov.ph](http://www.deped.gov.ph). For more information, please contact the numbers below. All concerned are requested to fax their reports at telefax nos.: (02) 636-6540; (02) 638-4799 or e-mail to [simebol@yahoo.com](mailto:simebol@yahoo.com); [josefina\\_lacuna@yahoo.com](mailto:josefina_lacuna@yahoo.com); [litamesdicul@yahoo.com](mailto:litamesdicul@yahoo.com).

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