

PRESS RELEASE

Luistro orders review of capacity building activities

Answering the call of President Benigno Aquino III to spend government's budget wisely, Education Secretary Armin Luistro instructed all offices of the Department of Education (DepEd) throughout the country to prepare justifications for their planned trainings, seminars, workshops, conferences, and other capacity-building activities.

Through DepEd Order No. 100 series of 2010, Luistro asked all concerned offices to submit their prepared information to the Executive Team headed by the Office of the Undersecretary for Programs and Projects Yolanda S. Quijano.

"Effective immediately, we should seriously watch our department's spending. We should only allocate funds for worthwhile endeavors as we are also currently reviewing the budget to rationalize expenses," explained Luistro.

The order pertains to all forms of training activities, seminars, workshops, conferences, and other capacity-building programs organized by DepEd Central and Field Offices and those co-organized with non-DepEd institutions. It also covers those activities for both teaching and non-teaching staff scheduled to be implemented starting September 15 to December 2010, including those already with approved authority to conduct.

"The review will somehow reduce training expenditures and prioritize important ones in terms of needs and effectiveness in addressing the Key Policies, Thrusts and Directions enumerated in DepEd Order 25 series of 2010 and in meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and Education for All (EFA) targets within five years," said Luistro.

In line with this, all offices submitted a list of all programmed trainings, seminars, workshops, conferences, and other capacity-building activities set for the above-mentioned dates. The Executive Team will then determine the need and effectiveness of each activity and will establish its support or contribution towards the attainment of goals and objectives of EFA, MDG, Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan (MTPDP), and Organizational Performance Indicator Framework (OPIF).

All proposals are required to contain justifications and supporting documents, objectives and outputs, number of target participants and level of competencies for the targets, and expense details of the project or program.

"The current administration is taking a positive stance. As President Aquino puts education a top priority in the next six years, DepEd is set to scale up basic education performance to ensure that all school-aged children are in school by 2015. We are doing our mighty best to deliver what is expected of us given the perennial lack of resources that continues to hobble the Department," assured Luistro.

The order also covers those organized by non-DepEd institutions wherein attendance is on official business and payment of registration fees and

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transportation allowances are charged against government funds. These activities are likewise subjected to the review of the Executive Team and are also required to submit all necessary documents. Attendance on official business means that all expenses are covered by government funds.

Quijano's team is in the process of reviewing all the proposals as instructed by Luistro. The deadline of submission of the required documents and requests for approvals is September 10.

Luistro stressed that to avoid any conflicts in the implementation of their programs, "only activities subjected to the review and are approved by the Executive Team will be implemented."

The thrusts listed in D.O. 25 are: to sustain school-based management and initiate school-wide performance assessment; to expand the targeted coverage of quality-assured early childhood education programs; to increase school participation, completion and achievement at the elementary and secondary levels using all delivery modalities available, including strengthening of alternative delivery modes; and to expand the coverage of cost-effective literacy programs for youth and adults.

Also included are: to help teachers practice quality teaching through the adoption of the National Competency-Based Teacher Standards in pre-service education, hiring, deployment, training and promotion of teachers; to increase the quality of effort in curriculum development and instruction at all levels and clarify the continuum of competencies expected of basic education graduates in the Philippines; to establish and implement a new system for funding basic education including the adoption of the new formula that rationalizes the grant of maintenance and other operating expenses to DepEd offices and schools; to establish and implement the Quality Management System as a means to, among others, making the entire basic education system measurable and its officials fully accountable for results; to harness public-private partnerships in improving the provision of basic education services; and to tighten system of governance by, among others, improving financial management operations and harness ICT to fast track the attainment of DepEd's governance objectives.

Luistro added that, "all in-service training for teachers must focus on making them become effective in teaching these competencies."

Given that the review is aimed to save funds and prioritize urgent needs in the basic education, DepEd chief is confident that the Philippines is on track in implementing education reforms to meet its commitment under the EFA goals by 2015 - the deadline set by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

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