

PRESS RELEASE

Number of high school drop-outs drops

The effort of the Department of Education to significantly reduce drop-out rates among high school students is paying off as 56 secondary schools across the country have reported zero incidence of students quitting school.

Public schools that achieved 0 and less than 1% simple dropout rate are in the Division of Romblon in MIMAROPA, Agusan del Sur, Butuan City and Surigao City in CARAGA, Urdaneta City and San Carlos City in region 1, Guimaras and Antique in Region 6, Leyte and Southern Leyte in Region 8. Deped is continuously collating data which tend to show that measures to address drop-out rates are bearing positive results.

Education Secretary Armin Luistro said DepEd's Dropout Reduction Program (DORP) offers alternative delivery programs that aim to keep students in school and finish their basic education.

"Our end-goal is to retain the poorly schooled and those who are in danger of dropping out because of difficult social and economic situations and provide them quality education," said Luistro.

DepEd records show that the DORP have posted remarkable accomplishment, reducing the high school dropout rate from 12.51% in 2005-2006 to 8.55% in SY 06-07 and even a lower 7.45% in SYs 07-08 and 08-09.

At present, DepEd is implementing drop-out rate reduction programs in 1,117 secondary schools nationwide with 56 schools posting a zero simple dropout. Moreover, some 40,000 students-at-risk of dropping out (SARDOs) were saved.

"Imagine if there was no intervention, where would they be now?," added Luistro.

DORP intervention programs were designed to address the problems faced by students which prevent them from completing their elementary and high school education. Many students cannot report to class regularly because of various reasons such as work, financial problems, physical handicap, family and health issues, among others.

The Open High School Program (OHSP) under DORP is a distance education program that allows working students or previously out-of-school-youth (OSY) to continue studying using specialized learning modules.

The Effective Alternative Secondary Education (EASE), meanwhile, provides an innovative learning tool that allows students to pursue lessons outside school using modules. Some children may have to be temporarily absent from class because of justifiable reasons such as natural calamity, farm harvest time, seasonal work or an illness. EASE which evolved from OHSP is recommended for learners whose absence in school is temporary while OHSP is for those who cannot really attend regular high school.

The Schools Initiated Interventions (SII) is the most effective help for SARDOs since the school itself fits the kind of help a student needs according to his unique circumstances. The SII has enabled schools to determine, based on interview, specific problems of students or the real causes for dropping out.

“We first assess the situation of students based on the result of family, individual, community, or school assessment and design a learning intervention that best respond to their needs,” said Prudencia Martinez-Sanoy, DepEd education program specialist and DORP coordinator.

Meanwhile, Luistro has appealed to private high schools to also adopt the program and help further reduce the drop-out rate.

Speaking before the members of Private Secondary School Administrators Association of the Philippines in Region 6, Luistro said: “Our experience show that it can be done. But we have to do more. We need partners from private high schools so that this program can be scaled up and every learner can be given a chance to be properly educated.”

DepEd has committed its full assistance to private high schools which would adopt DORP. “We will provide you the technologies, best practices and technical support you will need so that, together, we can reach out to learners who need intervention,” added Luistro.

DepEd is confident that it is well on track in meeting its Education For All (EFA) commitment to bring all learners to school by 2015.

END

PRESS RELEASE