

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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DepEd sends preschool teachers to post-graduate scholarship

This semester break, from October 22 – 26, 2008, will not be a break after all for some 629 teachers all over the country. They will spend the annual 5-day break attending classes for a diploma course leading to a masters degree in Early Childhood Education.

But they will study on scholarship with full benefits and stipend.

Grantees include 60 teachers from Region I, 45 teachers from Region II, 70 teachers from CAR. They will be sent to Benguet State University, Benguet. In the Visayas, 238 teachers from Region VI will get training in Carlos Hilado Memorial State College in Talisay City, Negros Occidental. Fifty-six teachers in Region XII and 160 teachers from ARMM will study in the University of Southern Mindanao, Kabacan, North Cotobato.

The program is designed to provide preschool teachers in public schools quality preparations to meet the standards required by the department for preschool teachers. DepEd requires pre-school teachers to have degrees in Preschool Education, Teaching Early Grades or Early Childhood Education.

“We expect to enhance teachers’ competencies particularly on the use of developmentally appropriate methods and strategies in developing the child’s full potential in physical, social, emotional and cognitive areas,” said Education Secretary Jesli Lopus.

According to Lopus, the preschool graduate program consists of two terms. The first half will be during the semester break, while the second term is slated in summer of 2009

“This way they will all be able to accomplish the two-term program by the Summer of 2009,” Lopus added.

The scholarship program is intended for regular and newly deployed preschool teachers in Social Reform Agenda (SRA) provinces and preschool supervisors installed for the last three years. As an additional requirement, the grant is for teachers 50 years old and below.

Lopus said: “DepEd recognizes the importance of preschool education in determining the readiness of children upon entry in grade 1. Quality preschool education sufficiently prepares children for higher education.”

Teachers enrolment in the semester program kicked off in October 8 with orientation slated on October 20. Their training will run for 54 hours.

PRESS RELEASE

Grantees are entitled to their salaries, free tuition fees, a stipend of P3,000, lodging allowance of P2,000, book allowance of P2,000 per term. Their traveling expenses will likewise be covered by DepEd.

Last summer, the first batch of 580 teachers and 6 coordinators already began their institution-based summer institute program. These teachers will continue their training next summer.

Preschool teachers from Regions III, IV-A-IVB, and NCR were trained at the Philippine Normal University. Those from Region V went to Bicol University. Teachers in Region VI, VII, and VIII received training in Cebu Normal University while those in Region IX, X, XI and CARAGA studied at the University of Southeastern Philippines in Davao City.

Various preschool services are being made available to five year old pupils. Most common is the DepEd Preschool Program, which is free since teachers receive a regular salary from the National Government.

In 2007, 835 permanent teachers were deployed to meet the growing demand and provide more access to preschool education. There are also 714 SRA teachers currently deployed.

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