

## PRESS RELEASE

**RP teachers invited to prestigious International Reading Convention in the US**

The Philippines is sending ten public school teachers to the United States to represent the country to the prestigious International Reading Association (IRA) in April this year after winning a presentation slot for its "Mentoring the Mentors," an international model for effective English teaching.

Selected elementary and high school teachers from the Department of Education will present the Philippine model on English teaching during the 55th IRA Annual Convention in Chicago, Illinois from April 25 to 28 this year. The delegation which will be headed by DepEd Undersecretary Vilma Labrador is composed of 5 elementary, 5 secondary and 4 consultants from the National English Proficiency Program (NEPP).

"This is another source of pride for us-- that our best practices have gained notice in other parts the world," said DepEd Secretary Mona Valisno.

The country has been chosen as presenter at the IRA Convention owing to the successful implementation of its "Mentoring the Mentors: The Philippine DepEd Model to Enhance Teaching and Learning" which has sufficiently shown effectiveness through increased English literacy in pilot areas.

The success of the mentoring program is attributed to its comprehensive one-on-one training of teachers so that they can train other teachers who can become excellent teachers of more non-native English speaking Filipino pupils.

The complete mentoring program is implemented over three years. The first year is on basic training on English communication skills. The second year is an enhancement of the first year program, and the third year is a further deepening of the skills or "broadening the horizon." This helps develop teachers' skills and self-confidence," explained Dr. Rosalina J. Villaneza, NEPP head.

The move to improve English teaching in public schools was supported by Executive Order (EO) 210 issued by President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo which gave birth to the National English Proficiency Program (NEPP).

The training for mentors has three programs: Teachers as Learners, Teachers as Facilitators, and Teachers as Mentors.

The program's target is to develop at least two mentors in elementary schools. One is for a mentor for teachers in Grades 1 to 3, and other mentor is for teachers in Grades 4 to 6. To be effective, each mentor trains a maximum of 10 teachers or mentees in a school-based mentoring program.

DepEd piloted the mentoring program in Regions IX, XII, and the Autonomous Region for Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) and in Regions 1 and IV-B for the national pilot.

PRESS RELEASE

It subsequently found out that Grade 6 pupils who took the National Achievement Test (NAT) in English subjects had improved performance after the mentoring program.

"We are looking forward to contributing to making a difference not only here but internationally," said Villaneza.

From an average grade of only 54.05 percent in School Year (SY) 2005-006, achievement scores rose to 60.78 percent in SY 2006-2007, and up further to 61.62 percent in SY 2007-2008 and to 61.81 percent in SY 2008-2009.

"Our approach here is school-based training or school-based management because this is an effective way that delivers results," she stressed.

**END**

**PRESS RELEASE**