

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Eastern Visayas answers call to improve achievement in the sciences

The Department of Education (DepEd) in Regions 8 today launched the Science Mentoring Program to train selected teachers across the region to improve their competency in teaching physics and biology.

"Our teachers' continuous education to upgrade their teaching skills has a direct impact on the kind of public school graduates we produce," said Education Secretary Jesli Lapus.

Seventeen physics teachers and an equivalent number of biology teachers were recently trained to improve their teaching skills in content and delivery. These mentors will in turn share their knowledge and experiences with other science teachers in their respective DepEd divisions.

The mentoring program is based on Project Turn (Turning Around Low Performance in English) and the National English Proficiency Program (NEPP) of DepEd.

For its part, the Science Education Institute (SEI) of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) donated laptops and printers to teachers worth over P1.5 million pesos. A turn-over ceremony was held during the 33rd Founding Anniversary celebration of DepEd Region 8 in Palo, Leyte. Director Ester Ogena of DOST-SEI handed over the units to the teachers.

Earlier, Lapus directed all DepEd offices to review the results of the NAT and initiate programs that will improve the achievement levels of their students. One such program is the Project Turn.

"We immediately got our heads together to craft a program to comply with the Secretary's directive," shared DepEd Region 8 Director Sol Matugas.

DepEd and DOST have an earlier agreement to deploy DOST-SEI scholars to secondary schools nationwide. Upon completion of their degree course, the scholars are required to render four years of service in public high schools in their respective home regions as part of their service obligation.

Since school year 2002-2003, there have been 957 teacher items allocated to DOST-SEI scholars. In 2007, DepEd created more than 16,000 teacher items, the highest number in years.

Project TURN is a program focused on improving the competency in English of both teachers and students in 1,898 schools identified to have low performance on the subject based in the 2007 National Achievement Test.

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While the NEPP is aimed at strengthen its skills of English teachers who will in turn mentor other teachers of the same subject area. To date, 7,300 English proficient teachers have received intensive and hands-on training on English proficiency to become mentors to less proficient teachers in their respective schools. In turn, these teachers have cascaded what they learned to a total of 95,600 teachers.

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