

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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DepEd contracts coop of differently abled persons to supply school furniture

To add to the existing furniture in public schools, the Department of Education (DepEd) renewed its partnership with the National Federation of Cooperatives of Persons with Disability (NFCPWD) for the manufacture and delivery of 120,000 units of armchairs in selected elementary and secondary schools nationwide.

Since 1999, DepEd, through its Physical Facilities and Schools' Engineering Division (PFSED), has tapped NFCPWD to utilize the furniture making skills of differently abled workers nationwide.

NFCPWD is a federation of twelve primary cooperatives in the country – seven in Luzon, two in Visayas, and three in Mindanao. These cooperatives were established to produce various products with school chairs and desks as their main line of business.

In 2005, NFCPWD manufactured and delivered 48,460 desks and armchairs amounting to P37.84 Million. This further increased to 96,996 units of desks and armchairs worth P99.97 Million in 2006.

"DepEd is constantly working to augment the furniture in our public schools to meet the ideal ratio," DepEd Secretary Jesli Lapus explained.

The department's Desk and Armchair Program covers selected schools in all regions including the Autonomous Region for Muslim Mindanao (ARMM). Schools with the least number of desks and armchairs were selected as beneficiaries.

Beginning in 2005, the General Appropriations Act has allocated 10% of the budget for the Desk and Armchair Program for the procurement of desks and armchairs from cooperatives organized by differently abled persons.

Lapus said that "this project will also give our differently abled workers a chance to contribute to the improvement of our school facilities and provide them with a decent livelihood."

NFCPWD was certified by the Cooperative Development Authority as the only secondary-level cooperative of Persons with Disability (PWD) engaged in the manufacture of quality school desks and chairs.

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