

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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DepEd reports preliminary results of Random Drug Testing

The recent results of nationwide Random Drug Testing (RDT) in public and private secondary schools show that 72 of the 29,059 students tested were confirmed positive of drug use, a prevalence rate of 0.24%.

From February – December, 2009, the Department of Education (DepEd) and the Department of Health (DOH), in coordination with the Dangerous Drugs Board, have conducted RDT among secondary students in compliance with a Presidential Directive to include for testing all public and private secondary schools.

To date 2,907 or 28.5% of the 10,257 targeted high schools nationwide had been visited for the random drug testing. The National Reference Laboratory of the DOH reported 90 positive cases from the screening test, but only 72 were confirmed positive, of which, 70-positive for marijuana and two cases for shabu.

Although preliminary results reveal a relatively low rate of drug use 0.24 % (less than 1 percent), DepEd continues to strengthen the implementation of the National Drug Education Program (NDEP), which gives emphasis to the integration of drug prevention concepts in appropriate subject/learning areas at both elementary and secondary levels and alternative learning system, and in co-curricular activities.

Education Secretary Jesli Lapus said, “These efforts will bring us closer to our goal for zero drug use among our 22 million elementary and high school students under the care of DepEd.”

Lapus instructed NDEP program coordinators to ensure that principals of schools with positive cases come up with specific interventions and to conduct periodic monitoring of program implementation, in close coordination with the local government units and other concerned government and non-government organizations.

Moreover, guidance counselors in the secondary schools have been more active in initiating various school activities geared towards drug abuse prevention among the school populace and in the “No Smoking” campaign in schools and DepEd offices.

An assessment of the RDT program was conducted on recently. DepEd and DOH officials and RDT team members discussed coverage, best practices, issues and concerns; and formulated the 2010 Work and Financial Plan for the drug testing and interventions to be instituted.

To date, almost 96% of the 874 high schools in the National Capital Region have already been visited by the DOH analysts. Some 26 students were

confirmed to be using drugs. A number of schools divisions in 14 regions were likewise visited by the RDT teams. Only Region XII and ARMM were not scheduled in Calendar Year 2009 due to limited resources.

The guidelines have been issued through Board Resolution No. 3 Series of 2009 by the Dangerous Drugs Board, and such guidelines have been disseminated to all regions/divisions through DepEd Order No. 80 Series of 2009.

RDT will resume starting January 15 till the end of classes in March 2010. The 20 analysts hired by DOH for the activity will be supported/assisted by DepEd health personnel during the school visits.

END

PRESS RELEASE