

PRESS RELEASE

No to lavish graduation rites, DepEd tells schools

With the upcoming school graduations, the Department of Education (DepEd) reminds public school heads, teachers, personnel and other education stakeholders to keep the graduation rites simple.

Education Secretary Armin Luistro directed all public schools to observe austerity and simplicity and not to collect any graduation fees or any kind of contribution for graduation rites.

"A graduation ceremony displays the initial triumph of the Filipino youth as it gives our students the confidence to face and hurdle more difficult challenges ahead. This alone, even without extravagance, will already turn the celebration special and memorable."

To reiterate the call to observe simple graduation rites (as contained in DepEd Order No. 8, series 2005), DepEd has issued DepEd Order No.4, series 2011, which emphasizes the department's policy on the conduct and collection of fees for graduation rites. It also mentions that graduation rites shall be scheduled any day between April 1-7, 2011.

Luistro noted that this year's theme, "The Graduate: A Partner Towards Transformational Society, An Answer to Societal Change" (*Ang Mga Magsisipagtapos: Kaagapay Tungo sa Pagbabagong Anyo ng Lipunan, Tugon sa Hamon ng Sambayanan*) echoes the message of President Benigno Aquino III that education can fix the problems of our nation leading the country towards being a truly strong society.

"The true value of education is in knowing that, as you graduate, you now have a bigger role to play in society and in our quest for a better nation for all Filipinos. Our graduates are indeed the building blocks to make Philippines a prosperous nation," he stressed.

Although parents-teachers association (PTA or parents-teachers-community association (PTCA) may solicit voluntary contributions from their members for graduation ceremonies, teachers and school officials should not be involved in the collection of these contributions.

Schools should not require glamorous attires or extraordinary venues for the conduct of the ceremonies. The graduation rites should be conducted in an appropriate solemn ceremony befitting the graduating students and their parents and shall not in any way be used as a venue for political forum.

"We should make our graduation ceremonies memorable, exciting and animated without the baggage of extra accost and excessive spending. Graduation rites should be simple affairs that encourage civic duties, promote a sense of community and personal responsibilities," Luistro said.

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Further, no non-academic project shall be imposed as a requirement for graduation while contributions for the annual yearbook should only be on a voluntary basis.

From enrolment period in June to graduation rites in March and April, DepEd has strongly called on all public schools to abide by the “no collection” policy because this is enshrined in the Constitution. This is also a way to encourage parents to bring their children of school age to school and complete basic education.

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