

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **DepEd welcomes students to SY 2009-2010**

The Department of Education (DepEd) welcomes some 22 million elementary and high school students to public schools today, June 1, for the opening of school year 2009-2010.

“This year’s school opening will be smooth and orderly because of the preparations DepEd initiated with the assistance of its Oplan Balik Eskwela convergence partners,” said DepEd Secretary Jesli Lapus. “The results of our joint efforts will not only be beneficial on school opening day, they will also benefit our public schools all year round.”

As part of Oplan Balik Eskwela, the Department of Education (DepEd) has been tapping the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), Department of Health (DOH), Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC), Department of National Defense (DND), Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA), Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services and Administration (PAGASA) and the Philippine National Police (PNP), PNP-National Capital Region Police Office, Manila Electric Company (Meralco), Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS), Manila Water and Maynilad.

The Education chief also urged parents to cooperate with DepEd in resolving their respective concerns.

“Parents should value their children’s education. Our battle cry is simple: *Edukasyon ang solusyon*,” Lapus said.

“It is the parents’ responsibility to let us know of their concerns. Resolving each specific concern requires the cooperation of both DepEd and the community. I urge them to work with us, and our Balik Eskwela Command Center Hotlines are open to receive their queries and complaints,” he added.

Until June 5, the public may contact DepEd’s Balik Eskwela Command Center Hotlines 6361663, 6331942, 6340222, 6359817, 6363602, 6364880, 6366550, 6387529, 6387530, 6387531 and 7065332. This center at the DepEd Central Office in Pasig City is open from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm to handle walk-in queries and complaints.

The public may also contact DepEd through SMS by sending their name, address and query to 09194560027 or by texting DEPED FDBK name, address and query and sending it to 2622.

“Education is a team effort. It requires all of us to be involved,” Lapus said. “And the success of our Balik Eskwela operations is made possible through the participation of education stakeholders throughout the country.” **END**