

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
JUNE 13, 2008

DepEd reports successful opening of classes

The Department of Education (DepEd) Information and Action Center (IAC) today reported a weeklong successful opening of classes for school year 2008-09.

Through the IAC, DepEd provided a quick response to queries, complaints and requests from the public during the hectic back-to-school week from June 2 to 13.

Education Secretary Jesli Lapus observed that there were less calls received this year and attributes this to the “active information drive of the department to assure the public of its policies and programs.”

He added, “Once again we have proven to our public that the Department of Education is one big action center.”

During its first week, there were 240 cases received, of which 41% were requests, 33% complaints and 25% were inquiries. Meanwhile, 374 cases were received last year, of which 63% were complaints, 28% inquiries and 10% requests. A consolidated report including those from the regions is still being processed.

Most complaints received were on the collection of fees by some schools. Prior to school opening, DepEd issued strict orders for school heads to refrain from collecting fees as a requisite for enrollment. Education Secretary Jesli Lapus stressed that the DepEd will not tolerate illegal practices in public schools.

Meanwhile, most inquiries were on the accreditation tests that were offered free, in time for the 2008 Independence Day celebration. Of the requests received by the IAC, most were on admission to public high schools.

DepEd regional directors and schools division superintendents were directed to designate two action officers to oversee regional and local concerns similar to IAC in the central office.

Education Undersecretary for Regional Affairs and IAC Officer Ramon Bacani noted the importance of evaluating the nature of the complaints, inquiries and requests that IAC received from the public, and the manner with which the Department responded to these cases. He added, “Let it be clear that today is not the end of the action center as it is an ongoing activity.”

He expressed gratitude to those who worked at the IAC in the DepEd Central Office as well as in the regions, “for their patience, resourcefulness, and courtesy to our public.”

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Although IAC only ran during school opening, from June 2-13, DepEd will continue to address queries and complaints through DepEd's DETxt facility.

According to Erna Aganon, Executive Assistant V and Head of DETxt Action Center, the public can continue to call in their questions or complaints through its hotline numbers 636-1663 and fax number 638-8641. They can also text through DepEd's Text Messaging Service with number 0919-456-0027 or by texting DEPED FDBK <NAME> <MESSAGE> and sending it to 2622 for both Globe and Smart or through email at action@deped.gov.ph.

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