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DepEd scales up community involvement initiative with Brigada Eskwela Plus

The Department of Education (DepEd) today launches the implementation phase of Brigada Eskwela Plus or the National Community Involvement in Education Initiative, a program that aims to enlist the help of the community in cleaning school grounds and repairing classrooms, school furniture and other school facilities year-round.

DepEd Secretary Mona Valisno said, "We at the department aim to engage the community year-round to do more for public education."

The department, together with its partners from the private sector, is launching Brigada Eskwela Plus with a kick-off caravan that will visit San Joaquin Elementary School in Pasig City and Quezon City High School in Quezon City.

Since its inception in 2003, Brigada Eskwela has become a movement that has ensured the readiness of public schools for school opening. More than 7 million volunteers comprising parents, teachers, employees, local government units, alumni associations and civic organizations have joined Brigada Eskwela in 2009 alone.

Adopt A School Program Executive Director Mari Paul Soriano said, "Brigada Eskwela Plus is the department's frontline initiative that believes in the role of the community in improving public education."

"The achievements gained by Brigada Eskwela inspire us to utilize existing partnerships with the communities to get parents involved in ensuring that the schools are conducive for learning, that their children are enrolled and actually learn in school – which is the essence of Brigada Eskwela Plus. Critical to this scaled-up initiative is showing the parents the value of their children's education," he added.



Phase I shall tap the community to do year-round repairs of school furniture, classrooms, other physical facilities and cleaning of school grounds, with a focus on roof repairs for the coming school year.



Phase II shall enlist volunteers to help identify drop-outs and school-aged children (aged 6-16 years old) who should be in school. It also aims to urge their parents to bring them back to school in line with the Education For All goals that the country has pledged to meet by 2015.

The last phase shall contribute to the improvement of academic performance of public schoolchildren with the help of their parents and other community stakeholders.

Brigada Eskwela Plus is implemented by the department's Adopt A School Program National Secretariat. It was launched during the incumbency of former DepEd Secretary Jesli Lapus, who, in 2008, successfully urged all 44,619 public elementary and high schools to join Brigada Eskwela.

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