

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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DepEd Investment in Tech-Voc Paying Off

The effort of the government to help produce skilled workers who can take on the demands of the employment industry is paying off as evidenced by the quality of its graduates and the increasing number of secondary schools wanting to adopt the tech-voc curriculum.

Education Secretary Jesli Lapus disclosed recently that for school year 2007-2008, more than 77 percent of the tech-voc fourth year high school students who took the TESDA Skills Competency Assessment passed the National Certification I and II in the areas of automotive, carpentry, food processing, agricultural crop and animal production.

“That is very encouraging considering that the Strengthened Technical Vocational Education Program (STVEP) was introduced in selected schools only in 2007,” Lapus said.

Many Tech-Voc high school graduates are now employed in food business as well as in automotive industry. Some graduates subcontract building construction while others have started their own business.

DepEd is currently embarking on a continuous skills enhancement training of its tech-voc teachers to further improve the level of instruction. Relative to this, it has started the groundwork to create a backbone of DepEd skills/ competency assessors.

“I am happy to report that of the 88 who took the TESDA assessors qualification last December 2008, all or 100 percent passed,” Lapus disclosed.

STVEP was designed to provide more employment opportunities and squarely address job mismatch. It provides tech-voc high school students with TESDA-certifiable skills in technical, vocational, and industrial areas.

Last year, 121 tech-voc schools were added to the DepEd list of secondary schools offering the TESDA-assisted tech-voc curriculum, plus another 21 more to bring the total to 282 in its official list.

This year, there are 150 more tech-voc high schools wishing to be part of the STVEP. “We must be doing something valuable and relevant in tech-voc education that merits the interest and appreciation of our students,” Lapus added.

Lapus noted that despite the growing demand for skilled workers in various technical and vocational fields – many Filipinos remain unemployed. Regrettably, a lot of these young unemployed Filipinos have college degrees.

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“Apparently, some college diplomas may not be relevant for employment or entrepreneurship,” Lapus shared.

As in many countries, the Philippines offers tech-voc education or applied academics in high schools. And that here in the Philippines, tech-voc is being offered in the post-secondary level supervised by TESDA. Currently, there are 282 tech-voc high schools that implement competency-based curriculum or CBCs.

Today, students have a choice for relevant education that can be used either for higher learning or post secondary education. Armed with skills, they can opt to venture into entrepreneurship or be employed directly either formally or informally.

To meet the demands of local and global labor markets, DepEd and TESDA have developed CBC in 22 areas of specialization; 15 areas in Arts and Trades; four in Agriculture; and three in Fisheries which have been pilot tested in 140 tech-voc high schools nationwide and have undergone assessment.

To sustain the momentum that the DepEd has built, it has recommended to President Arroyo the issuance of an executive order: “Strengthening the Technical Vocational Education in the Public Secondary School System and to ensure the inclusion of the Department of Education in the Ladderized Education System Amending for the Purpose Executive Order No. 358.

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