

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **Lapus seeks a more active private sector in Brigada Eskwela 2009**

Education Chief Jesli Lapus appeals to private sector companies to “increase their involvement in this year’s National Schools Maintenance Week or Brigada Eskwela. Education is the entire community’s concern – sprucing up our schools for school opening is not the responsibility of DepEd alone.”

In an effort to bridge the needy schools and private sector assistance, Lapus ordered all regions to submit a list of schools in dire need of assistance in terms of manpower and construction materials. “This way, our partners from the private sector can extend their assistance even to schools outside the National Capital Region.”

From May 18 to 22, personnel of private sector companies can help public schools in many ways. They can repair broken chairs and tables, repaint the walls, make the schools green by planting, and other masonry works. They can also give non-cash donations such as construction and cleaning materials.

Lapus added that “Brigada Eskwela has come a long way.” From 2003 when DepEd posted Php4 Million worth of savings in MOOE (Maintenance, Operating and Other Expenses), this has since jumped to Php2 Billion when Lapus relaunched the Adopt-a-School Program – the office in charge of Brigada Eskwela – in 2006. Last year, the savings posted amounted to Php2.9 Billion.

Lapus takes every opportunity to thank DepEd’s partners from the private sector who have contributed to the success of Brigada Eskwela. “Without their assistance, the government could not have saved that much MOOE. I am also grateful for the countless and nameless volunteers – from private sector companies and individuals to parents and alumni, from LGU to barangay officials – who have found time to help prepare our schools for school opening.”

From Php239 Million in 2003, the peso value of volunteer time reached Php1.18 Billion in 2006. Last year it was pegged at Php1.6 Billion.

A similar, upward trend can be observed in the peso value of donations-in-kind, which started at Php153 Million in 2003 and shot up to Php843 Million in 2006. Last year, it reached Php1.3 Billion.

“I hope that DepEd and the private sector can surpass last year’s achievements for the benefit of our public schools and students. I also urge employees of other government agencies – both national and local – to join their respective communities on May 18-22 in preparation for school opening,” Lapus said.

**END**

*For queries on Brigada Eskwela 2009 and for the list of schools in dire need of assistance, interested private sector companies and individuals may contact the Adopt-a-School Secretariat at (02) 6388637 or 6388639.*