

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## More SPED teachers get skills training

Simultaneous summer training programs for Special Education or SPED teachers and school administrators were conducted by the Department of Education (DepEd) in Philippine Normal University, Cebu Normal University, and Holy Cross College of Davao from April 15 to May 9, 2008.

The program had the aim of upgrading the skills of SPED teachers and administrators nationwide. Four kinds of training were provided: training to handle the gifted/fast learners; training to handle children with hearing impairment, mental retardation, and learning disability; training for teachers to handle children with visual impairment; and training on organization, administration, and supervision for administrators and supervisors.

According to DepEd Secretary Jesli Lapus, "as part of its thrust to provide education for all, DepEd is undiscriminating – it caters to the needs of all kinds of learners."

As part of the SPED Personnel Enhancement Program, these summer courses hoped to address the educational needs of children requiring special attention by improving the skills and capabilities of SPED teachers and administrators.

Over forty SPED teachers nationwide participated in the first training program. For the second training, 256 teachers were present. For the third and fourth trainings, there were 61 and 29 participants, respectively.

DepEd has been giving opportunities to SPED teachers to join short-term summer courses, seminars, and training workshops. According to Lapus, "DepEd's foremost concern is its human resource. And we see the need to focus especially on our SPED teachers whose job of educating our special learners deserves commendation."

These trainings are manifestations of DepEd's investment in its human resource. The Education Chief also stressed the role of DepEd in integrating special children in society through education. "These children have great potential and our SPED teachers' role is to tap this potential," he said.

DepEd's SPED Division creates and implements programs and projects that are appropriate for children with special abilities. These include children with aural, oral, and visual impairment.

Lapus further stressed that DepEd is currently allocating more resources to its SPED learning centers. Starting 2006 up to present, P681 Million has been earmarked to finance special projects including those related to SPED.

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This is but one of the initiatives to make Philippine public education more inclusive. In line with the Education for All goals as prescribed by UNESCO, DepEd strives to give children with special needs an education that will help them discover their aptitude and tap their full potential to make them productive members of society.

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