

PRESS RELEASE

PHSA wows DepEd chief

In his recent visit to Los Baños, Education Secretary Armin Luistro toured the Philippine High School for the Arts (PHSA) compound and saw for himself what the school has been doing to produce young artists.

Luistro could not help but be amazed by PHSA's curriculum as it lives up to its vision of being a national center for excellence and leadership in arts, research, training, education, and support programs. Accompanied by PHSA Executive Director Carmelo Caluag, Luistro's visit not only allowed him to personally see the beauty of the school located at the foot of Mt. Makiling, it also enabled him to witness the extraordinary talents of its students.

Luistro was particularly impressed with how the school, given its limited resources, is able to make ends meet and still excel with flying colors.

"I was impressed with how talents are honed and enhanced in this special school for the arts in this very conducive location," said Luistro.

Caluag willingly showed the DepEd chief the facilities including the students' regular classrooms and rooms for special arts classes, dormitories, function rooms, the library, the stage for students' performances, and even the executive house inside the school compound.

"It was a good visit – quick, but good bird's eye view (on the part of Sec. Luistro)," said Caluag as he was happy to brief Luistro about PHSA.

The students were happy to meet the education chief and went out of their way to stage a short program for him. They showed what PHSA students are made of through a folk song and a ballet dance.

Luistro challenged the students to carry on with their dreams believing that, "Filipino artists are among the world's greatest."

He also expressed his intention of making other arts schools in the country follow the excellent standards of PHSA through a workshop or by arranging educational tours of students from other arts schools to PHSA. Through this, best practices, relevant education, appropriate approaches and practical application can be shared among other schools and students. With this, Luistro hopes that many talented students can unfold their full potential and bring pride and honor to the country by becoming world-class artists.

Also, he mentioned that by strengthening the country's special schools such as arts schools through specialized curriculum, more people can appreciate the department's move towards the additional two years in basic education or the Enhanced K+12 Basic Education Program.

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“If people would see the benefits of the specialized curriculum like what we have in PHSA, they would also see the fruits that our country will harvest through the proposed K+12 program.,” explained Luistro.

Luistro added that, “under the K +12 program, the two additional years in high school will focus on the preferred skills of learners and they will be given enough time to polish such skill. By the time they graduate from high school they are well prepared and skillful enough to be hired.”

While in Los Baños, Luistro made his usual surprise visits in nearby schools. He went to Lopez Elementary School (ES), Mayondon ES, Bay-og ES, Malinta ES, and Los Baños Central School.

His visit gave him a chance to personally see the real challenges each school has particularly the large class size teacher items. Despite this, he was impressed with how teachers continue to find creative and innovative ways to manage large classes and recognized efforts of school officials in making ends meet.

He was also pleased by how the local and the provincial governments have invested in education to respond to the shortages in classrooms and covered courts.

“I appreciate the efforts of the Los Baños local government and the Laguna provincial government to not only help the national government in answering the resource gaps in education, but also to bring out the best among their community members. I hope that in the near future, more municipalities, cities, and provinces will support the education sector,” said Luistro.

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