

## PRESS RELEASE

**DepEd to reactivate Election Task Force Operation Center**

As millions of voters are expected to troop to the polling places throughout the country for the 2010 synchronized Barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan elections on October 25, the Department of Education will open its Election Task Force Operation Center to assist teachers in fulfilling their duties on election day.

The center will be the operations hub that will monitor the conduct of the elections, particularly ensuring that teachers are provided with adequate information as well as technical, and legal assistance in the course of the performance of their duties as members of the Board of Election Tellers (BETs).

“The center will also serve as DepEd’s institutional link to volunteer organizations, partner agencies and individuals, with the COMELEC and other DepEd units involved in elections,” Undersecretary Alberto Muyot said.

DepEd, being one of the lead agencies actively involved in the country’s elections, has issued Memorandum 449 series 2010 on the establishment of the Election Task Force Operation Center. It will be set up at the Bulwagan ng Karunungan, DepEd Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City on October 24, 1pm until 12nn of October 26.

Muyot adds, “To avoid past experiences and incidents that create anxiety among our teachers, we have gone the extra mile by establishing a legal assistance network for teachers who may get caught in election-related cases.”

Muyot, who leads the department on matters related to the coming elections, will be co-chaired by Undersecretary Rizalino Rivera in the task force.

The task force was activated in the past elections and has been successful in providing prompt assistance to teachers on poll duty.

The task force will be composed of the Steering Group that will provide the overall policy direction of the task force in terms of guidelines and priorities to be pursued; Operations Group will oversee the day-to-day operations of the center, particularly in the coordination of assignment and deployment of Teachers’ Defense Team and the Regional Task Force Operation Centers; Secretariat Unit who will provide a daily summary report, feedback and information on issues and status of all the complaints.

A Call Center Monitoring Database Unit will also be set up to receive all incoming calls and advice the concerned unit for appropriate action. It will also refer the complaint or issues to appropriate partner government agencies or to any volunteer organization or individual. Action undertaken shall also be monitored by the said unit, and provide feedback to the Steering Group.

Moreover, Teachers’ Defense, Legal and Technical Unit shall provide immediate technical or legal assistance/advice and coordinate with volunteer legal organizations and individuals in providing technical or legal advice/assistance,

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while the Communications Unit will coordinate information dissemination to the media and facilitate communications and other matters related to public and media relations.

Further, the Logistics and Support Unit shall deploy and deliver logistical support while the External Coordination Mobile Unit will provide transportation services in support of the logistical, administrative, and operational requirements of the center.

“As we deploy our teachers for this special duty, DepEd joins the rest of the nation in making this political exercise an honest, orderly, and peaceful one,” Muyot said.

DepEd Election Task force will also be established in all regional and division offices for easier coordination and evaluation of complaints.

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