

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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***Bonjour* to French classes in public schools**

Focused in preparing Filipino students for their role as global citizens, the Department of Education (DepEd) is set to offer French classes in selected public high schools in the country starting next school year.

“On account of globalization, our graduates are competing with people from other countries when they join the workforce. Learning a widely used international language early on will give our graduates that competitive advantage,” said Education Secretary Jesli Lapus.

Lapus and French Ambassador Thierry Borja de Mozota inked an agreement today to formally introduce French in 13 science high schools starting school year 2010- 2011.

Six science schools from the National Capital Region (NCR) and seven in Region VII (Central Visayas) were selected in the pilot phase of the Special Program in Foreign Language. The science high schools in NCR include Quezon City, Makati, Manila, Caloocan, Mandaluyong, and Muntinlupa.

Those in Region VII are the science high schools in Cebu City, Mandaue City, Minglanilla, Toledo, Tagbilaran, Medellin as well as the Science Tech Education Center.

These pilot schools had high Mean Percentage Scores in English. They are expected to serve as lead schools in the regions in mainstreaming the Special Program in Foreign Language.

Through the program, the department gears up students for a more pro-active role in a linguistically and culturally diverse global workplace. Earlier, Spanish was offered in 17 selected regional schools in the country.

The program also eyes the development of students’ skills in listening, reading, writing, speaking and viewing as basic skills to acquire communicative competence in a second foreign language.

“The program is likewise expected to expose our students to other peoples’ circumstances which could lead to better understanding and appreciation of cultures other than our own,” Lapus added.

Last May 2009, selected teachers from the participating schools underwent a month-long intensive training program at the Alliance Française in Manila and Cebu. The teachers are currently in the second phase of their training which runs until March 2010.

The Alliance Française de Manille and the Alliance Française de Cebu (formerly Les Amis de la France) serve as long-term support centers for the continued training of more Filipino teachers.

The program is spearheaded by DepEd's Bureau of Secondary Education (BSE). Also in the event were, DepEd Undersecretary for Programs and Projects Vilma Labrador and BSE Director Lolita Andrada.

The French Embassy was also represented by its new Counsellor for Cooperation and Cultural Affairs, Mr. Christian Mérer and Ms. Emilie Flambeaux, an Attaché dedicated to the promotion of the French language.

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For more information on the Special Program in Foreign Language, please contact Ms. Ana Marie Hernandez of the Bureau of Secondary Education at 635-9826.

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