



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education

DepEd O R D E R
No. **51**, s. 2014

19 DEC 2014

**GUIDELINES ON THE CONDUCT OF ACTIVITIES AND USE OF MATERIALS
INVOLVING ASPECTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES CULTURE**

To: Undersecretaries
Assistant Secretaries
Bureau Directors
Directors of Services, Centers and Heads of Units
Regional Directors
Schools Division Superintendents
Heads, Public Elementary and Secondary Schools
All Others Concerned

1. In line with the National Indigenous Peoples Education (IPEd) Policy Framework (DepEd Order No. 62, s. 2011), particularly the policy thrusts to “implement stronger affirmative action to eradicate all forms of discrimination against IPs in the entire Philippine education system” and to “uphold and advocate the protection of the intellectual property rights of IPs”, the Department of Education (DepEd) is adopting the enclosed **Guidelines on the Conduct of Activities and Use of Materials Involving Aspects of Indigenous Peoples Culture**.
2. Aligned with the principles of the K to 12 Curriculum, these guidelines seek to promote among learners and the teaching and non-teaching staff of learning institutions cultural sensitivity, respect for cultural diversity, and a deeper understanding of the cultural expressions of indigenous peoples. These are meant to provide guidance on the ethical assessment of the conduct of learning activities and related engagements of schools, DepEd offices, and other education initiatives which involve various aspects of indigenous peoples culture.
3. These guidelines have been consolidated from a series of consultations conducted by the DepEd-Indigenous Peoples Education Office (IPsEO) with community elders, leaders, and implementers of community-based IPEd initiatives.
4. Immediate dissemination of and strict compliance with this Order is directed.

BR. ARMIN A. LUISTRO FSC
Secretary

Encl.: As stated

References: DepEd Order Nos.: (62, s. 2011), and 103, s. 2011

To be indicated in the Perpetual Index under the following subjects:

BUREAUS AND OFFICES

POLICY

PROGRAMS

SCHOOLS

**GUIDELINES ON THE CONDUCT OF ACTIVITIES AND USE OF MATERIALS
INVOLVING ASPECTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES CULTURE**

Policy Background

The localization and contextualization thrusts of the Enhanced Basic Education Curriculum direct all schools and learning programs to relate curriculum content and competencies to the social and educational context of communities being served.

For schools/learning programs located in indigenous peoples (IP) communities and/or with indigenous learners, one aspect that will define the curriculum's context will be the communities' culture and realities. In recent decades, the cultural expressions (e.g., dances, songs, music, artifacts, symbols) of IP communities have gained attention for use in various learning activities and in the school environment. Textiles, clothing, and other artifacts of indigenous cultural communities (ICCs) have been used in school displays and decorations; dances and songs have been used as intermission numbers in programs; while stories and the community's knowledge have been made part of the teaching-learning process. Some have viewed these efforts as an opportunity to raise social awareness about the presence of IP communities and their particular cultures.

Indigenous cultural communities, however, have raised key concerns regarding the way their cultural expressions have been projected to the public, some of which are the following:

- Cultural expressions have been used for intentions and purposes deemed inappropriate by the community;
- Cultural expressions like artifacts and symbols have been heavily commercialized without regard for symbolic and/or sacred meanings;
- Cultural expressions have been presented in modified form for varied purposes and intents, without regard for its inherent meanings, resulting in mistaken understanding and misrepresentation of the expressions; and,
- Indigenous knowledge is being tackled in class with interpretations and understanding not validated with the community.

The above result in the loss of proper context and erroneous understanding of the community's cultural expressions, leading to the further spread of wrong notions regarding IP cultures nationwide. For the ICCs, the impact is felt among the youth whose practice and understanding of cultural expressions are sometimes based on these popularized erroneous understandings and sensibilities. In some cases, this phenomenon becomes a basis for the loss of confidence in and belongingness to one's indigenous culture.

Recognizing how the education system has, in some instances, been a conduit of such practices, and at the same time facilitates the education process that clarifies misconceptions and nurtures a more inclusive understanding of cultural diversity, the Department of Education (DepEd) adopts these guidelines.

The provisions of these guidelines are to be taken as interrelated and interpreted in a holistic manner. It shall guide the ethical assessment of activities organized by schools, DepEd offices, and other education programs, with due consideration of the specific circumstances and context wherein decisions are made. It can also be used to guide discussions of schools with external parties regarding invitations to participate in activities outside the school.

On Cultural Presentations, Festivals, and Similar Activities

The purpose of the activity should promote cultural sensitivity and respect for cultural diversity.

- The activity should promote a dignified appreciation for the community and its culture.
- The activity should not commercialize indigenous culture nor use financial incentives as undue motivation.
- The activity should foster an appreciation of the performance or presentation from the standpoint and standards of the community and avoid inappropriate comparison and competition.
- Presentations should be appropriate to the purpose or theme of the activity.

Prior to the activity, the appropriate process of seeking permission from the community to present aspects of indigenous culture should be observed.

- The purpose and intention of the activity should be clearly and accurately communicated to the community whose cultural expression is to be shared.
- The presentation should adhere to the standards and other stipulations of the community.

Authenticity and preparatory concerns in the conduct of the activity should be addressed.

- Community participants should be properly briefed about the purpose of the activity and other details (i.e., background of the audience, expectations, venue, and other related concerns).
- Participants in the presenting group should be the appropriate and duly chosen representatives of the community.
- Resource persons for the activity should be recommended by the community.
- As much as possible, culture-bearers should be present from planning to execution.
- The sacred dimension of the presentations, if any, should be observed (e.g., a ritual that should be done before the presentation).
- Adequate preparation time for the presentation, as deemed necessary by the community, should be observed.
- Authenticity of elements of the presentation (e.g., music, instruments, attire, steps/movement) should be given due attention. Availability of needed materials should be considered in deciding whether or not an activity is to be held. The values being communicated by the cultural expression should be maintained.
- Elements of the cultural expression should not be modified and/or exaggerated for the sake of presentation.

- To avoid stereotyping and inappropriate representation, imitating the physical appearance of members of the community as part of a presentation should not be done.

The audience should be properly oriented to foster the educational quality of the activity.

- The historical background and context of the presentation should be clearly communicated, preferably by a community member designated by the community.
- Opportunity and adequate time for the audience to raise questions and clarifications, if any, should be provided.

On the Use of Indigenous Clothing and Related Paraphernalia

- Indigenous clothing or garments should not be referred to as “costume” since the cultural context of these materials is not for show.
- For teachers and other DepEd personnel who do not belong to the indigenous community, the permission of the community should be sought before wearing their indigenous clothing and related paraphernalia. The clothing is to be used in accordance with the community’s practice and the meanings they associate with its use (e.g., proper occasion, context, etc.).
- Indigenous clothing and related paraphernalia should not be imitated, used for commercial purposes, or made fun of.

On the Use of Community Artifacts

- Appropriate permission should be sought before artifacts are used for whatever purpose. In the absence of an opportunity to appropriately seek permission, the use of the artifact/s should be deferred.
- Appropriate permission should be sought when taking pictures or videos of artifacts.
- Reproduction of artifacts should be decided upon by the community.
- Understanding the origin and proper use of the artifacts should be a prerequisite to their use.
- Sacred artifacts should not be used for presentations and other activities that the community deems to be an inappropriate context for their use.

On the Use of Community Symbols

- The permission of the community should be sought before using the community’s symbols.
- Use of symbols, if allowed, should be in accordance with community protocols, standards, and attributed meanings.
- The community’s ownership of the symbols should be recognized.

On Publications, Videos, and other Related Materials

- Appropriate permission should be sought in producing publications, videos, and other related materials (i.e., articles in newsletters, exhibits, posters, multimedia outputs, etc.) to be made about the community.
- Content of materials about the community should promote understanding and respect for the community's culture.
- The final content including visuals (e.g., pictures and artworks) and local terms used should be cleared and validated with the community.
- Appropriate permission should be sought if outputs of community members (e.g., artworks, write-ups, etc.) are to be included in such materials.

The above guidelines do not limit additional protocols and standards that specific indigenous communities may wish to be observed in the course of their engagement with schools and DepEd offices.

All DepEd personnel and other learning programs/projects should be guided by the basic principle of free, prior and informed consent and respect for cultural integrity.

Private learning institutions and education initiatives are also enjoined to observe these guidelines.

Note on the Annex

The signing of DepEd Order No. 51, s. 2014 was witnessed by representatives of indigenous cultural communities, whose signatures appear in every page of the document, during the National Indigenous Peoples Education Gathering organized by DepEd and held on December 17, 2014 in Mandaluyong City.

A copy of the said document is appended as an annex.



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education

ANNEX

19 DEC 2014

DepEd ORDER
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GUIDELINES ON THE CONDUCT OF ACTIVITIES AND USE OF MATERIALS INVOLVING ASPECTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES CULTURE

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Handwritten signatures and notes are scattered throughout the page, including:
- Top left: A large circular scribble.
- Top center: "Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila" and a signature.
- Top right: "Norman M. ...", "Lina ...", "Sandra ...", and a signature.
- Left margin: "F", "P. ...", "J. ...", "S. ...", "R. ...", "A. ...", "M. ...", "D. ...", "C. ...", "B. ...", "N. ...", "L. ...", "K. ...", "J. ...", "I. ...", "H. ...", "G. ...", "F. ...", "E. ...", "D. ...", "C. ...", "B. ...", "A. ...".
- Right margin: "Norman M.", "Lina ...", "Sandra ...", "Norman M. LATAO", "Rommel S. Luis", "XANTEL SOLIMAN", "D. ...", "C. ...", "B. ...", "A. ...".
- Bottom center: "Carling F.", "F. ...", "F. ...".
- Bottom right: "F. ...", "F. ...".

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- Bottom left: *Handwritten signature*
- Bottom center: *Handwritten signature*
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Bea Trinidad

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TIMOTHY SOFRENIO B. CABATAN

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ROBERTO S. KING

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JANICE CARLING

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ANTHONY

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