



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education

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IMPLEMENTING RULES AND REGULATIONS (IRR) OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10618
(An Act Establishing Rural Farm Schools as Alternative Delivery Mode
of Secondary Education and Appropriating Funds Therefor)

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

1. For the information and guidance of all concerned, enclosed is a copy of the **Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act (RA) No. 10618** entitled *An Act Establishing Rural Farm Schools as Alternative Delivery Mode of Secondary Education and Appropriating Funds Therefor*, otherwise known as *Rural Farm Schools Act*.
2. Pursuant to Section 34 (Effectivity Clause) of the IRR of the Rural Farm Schools Act, this Order shall take effect 15 days after its publication in the Official Gazette or a newspaper of general circulation.
3. All DepEd Orders and other related issuances, rules and regulations and provisions which are inconsistent with these guidelines are hereby repealed, rescinded, or modified accordingly.
4. Immediate dissemination of and strict compliance with this Order is directed.


BR. ARMIN A. LDISTRO FSC
Secretary

Encl.: As stated
Reference: DepEd Memorandum: No. 176, s. 2013
To be indicated in the Perpetual Index
under the following subjects:

LEGISLATION
POLICY
RULES AND REGULATIONS
SCHOOLS
SECONDARY EDUCATION

Model: IRR RA 10618
0489-August 3, 2015/8-4

IMPLEMENTING RULES AND REGULATIONS OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10618, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE RURAL FARM SCHOOLS ACT

Pursuant to Section 16 of Republic Act No. 10618 (An Act Establishing Rural Farm Schools as Alternative Delivery Mode of Secondary Education and Appropriating Funds Therefor), the following Rules and Regulations are hereby issued:

RULE I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Section 1. Scope and Application. These Rules and Regulations shall apply to all public and private secondary schools which offer the rural farm school program.

Section 2. Declaration of Policy. It is hereby declared the policy of the State to protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels and take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all. Further to this, the State shall establish, maintain and support a complete, adequate and integrated system of education relevant to the needs of the people and society and encourage nonformal, informal and indigenous learning systems, as well as self-learning, independent and out-of-school study programs particularly those that respond to community needs.

The State shall likewise promote sustainable agricultural productivity and rural development by empowering the human capital in the countryside through access to avenues of learning suited to the needs and realities of the rural agricultural communities.

In furtherance of the principles of social justice and social equity, the State shall provide the necessary support to the beneficiaries of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) including, but not limited to, the provision of access to a broad range of educational opportunities to their children.

Section 3. Definition of Terms. For purposes of these Rules and Regulations, the following terms shall mean or be understood as follows:

a) Act refers to Republic Act No. 10618 entitled “An Act Establishing Rural Farm Schools as Alternative Delivery Mode of Secondary Education and Appropriating Funds Therefor),” otherwise known as the Rural Farm Schools Act.

b) Alternative Delivery Mode refers to the nontraditional education program recognized by the Department of Education (DepED) which applies a flexible learning philosophy and a curricular delivery program that includes non-formal and informal sources of knowledge and skills.

Alternative Delivery Modes also refer to tried and tested alternative modalities of education delivery within the confines of the formal system that allow schools to deliver quality education to marginalized students and those at risk of dropping out in order to help them overcome personal, social and economic constraints in their schooling.

An alternative delivery mode may include the use of facilitator-aided and interactive self-instructional print and audio-based learning materials, video tapes, face-to-face structured learning groups, semi-structured and unstructured discussions, one-on-one tutorials, study groups and self-learning groups, demonstration sessions, home visits, mentoring and remediation.

c) Rural Farm School refers to a parallel learning system and an alternative delivery mode of secondary education. It provides for facilitative and experiential learning on the core subjects of the secondary education curriculum with focus on agri-fisheries, designed to address the needs of children in rural, agricultural, and fishing communities.

This may be classified into:

1. **Public Rural Farm School** refers to a rural farm school operated by the government or any of its political subdivisions; and

2. **Private Rural Farm School** refers to a rural farm school operated by a private entity, a non-government organization or a farm association. This is a school which is not funded by the government or any of its political subdivisions.

d) Family Enterprise Project refers to a study or research submitted by the student at the end/culmination of his/her formation in the Family Farm School to improve the family enterprise and family income. It is presented by the student and his/her family to a panel of experts to further improve the project. This is implemented afterwards by the student's family.

e) School Governing Council refers to a committee composed of the school head or his/her representative, parents, teachers, and representatives of other government agencies mentioned in the Act.

RULE II. ESTABLISHMENT OF RURAL FARM SCHOOLS

Section 4. Establishment of Public Rural Farm Schools. Within one (1) year after the effectivity of these Rules and Regulations, the DepED shall encourage the establishment of at least one (1) public rural farm school in every province. The DepED shall select among the identified public high schools in each

province a school which may offer the rural farm school program. The DepED shall give priority to existing agricultural and fishery schools. However, a new rural farm school may also be established.

The DepED shall articulate the curriculum standards and policies on the operation and management of the public rural farm schools.

The DepED shall conduct assessment of all existing public secondary agricultural and fishery schools and family farm schools to determine the capability and readiness of the said schools to implement the program in a particular province.

Section 5. Criteria in Determining Public Schools that may Implement the Rural Farm School Program. The criteria in determining public schools that may offer the rural farm school program shall include but shall not be limited to the following:

- a) Must be outside the thirty-kilometer radius of an existing rural farm school;
- b) Must have qualified teachers/tutors as defined by the Act and technical support staff, instructional classrooms, laboratories, and other facilities related to the program;
- c) Must have a memorandum of agreement with the local government unit (LGU) and other existing partners; and
- d) Must have an established school governing council.

Section 6. Staffing Pattern and Salary of Public Rural Farm School Personnel. The following shall be the staffing complement of the public rural farm schools:

a) School Head/Principal. Every rural farm school shall have a school head/principal to oversee its operations, management and school-community coordination. The school head shall be tasked to implement action plans to secure the participation of the community and devise a tool for home-school collaboration.

b) Teachers/tutors. The teachers/tutors of the rural farm school are specialists in their fields of study and have undergone appropriate training in Rural Farm School Pedagogy. They shall act as teachers, guidance counselors, mentors, rural developers, livelihood project proponents, marketing specialists and/or project consultants, as the case may be. They shall establish a working partnership with the parents by conducting parent-tutor dialogues, mentoring and parent workshops.

c) Administrative staff. They are the academic and support staff of the school. They shall assist their immediate supervisors by carrying out basic clerical tasks such as typing correspondence, sending out emails and faxes, making copies, sorting the mail and other related functions. They may also be in charge of the office equipment and supplies, including, but not limited to keeping inventory of office supplies and ensuring that office machines are kept in working order. They may also handle additional clerical responsibilities such as keeping employee attendance records, printing and sorting payroll checks, preparing recruiting materials and other related tasks.

d) Technical Staff. They are the agriculture and fishery technicians of the school. They shall perform tasks related but not limited to machine repair and maintenance, physical plant preparation, and occupational safety standards implementation.

The abovementioned personnel of the public rural farm school shall perform their corresponding duties and responsibilities based on the approved Civil Service qualifications standards. Said personnel shall likewise receive their monthly basic salary based on the compensation prescribed under the Salary Standardization Law, as amended, in addition to other benefits prescribed by law.

Section 7. Establishment of Private Rural Farm Schools. Notwithstanding the provisions of the 2010 Revised Manual of Regulations for Private Schools in Basic Education, the following requirements for the establishment of private rural farm schools are:

a) Family farm association duly registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC);

b) Board Resolution of the family farm school association indicating adherence to the four (4) pillars of the family farm school system;

c) Membership in a recognized national federation of family farm schools to assist the association in curriculum development/contextualization, training of school head and academic staff, capacity-building for administrative and technical staff, among others; and

d) Recognition and accreditation by DepED.

After the effectivity of these Rules and Regulations, the DepED, in consultation with other government agencies and the recognized national federation of family farm schools, shall issue the necessary guidelines for the establishment of a private rural farm school.

Section 7.1. Use of Four Pillars of Formation in Establishing Private Rural Farm Schools. A private rural farm school may use the following four (4) pillars of formation: Alternance System, Responsible Association, Integral Formation, and Rural Development.

Alternance System refers to a system of formation wherein students have periods of learning in both the school and the family enterprise. The periods can be in a ratio of 1:1 or 1:2 in favor of the family enterprise.

Responsible Association or Family Farm Association refers to an organization composed of families, institutions and professionals of the rural area. Its task is to be the frontliner in the development of the community through youth and community formations.

Integral Formation refers to a comprehensive formation plan for the professional, intellectual, human, social, moral, and spiritual development of the individual learner.

Rural or Community Development is the long term goal of the rural farm schools. There is development when people are formed in the human values and virtues of cooperation, hard work and judicious use of natural resources. Socio-economic development is seen when their source of income is improved and civic consciousness is strengthened.

Section 8. Staffing Pattern and Salary of Private Rural Farm School Personnel. The following shall be the staffing complement of the public rural farm schools:

a) School Head/Academic Head refers to the school head/principal as defined in Rule II, Section 6 (a) of this IRR. The school head/academic head shall be tasked to facilitate the tutors' participation in professional development activities primarily, training in the Family Farm School pedagogy, including technical skills training and extension services by the DepED, the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), and the Department of Agriculture (DA). The academic head shall also ensure that the curricular program based on the Family Farm School pedagogy is properly implemented and adequate educational resources are available and accessible to the students.

b) Teachers/tutors refer to teachers/tutors of the private rural farm school are specialists in their fields as defined in Rule II, Section 6 (b) of these Rules and Regulations.

c) Administrative staff refers to the academic and support staff of the school. They shall assist their immediate supervisors by carrying out basic clerical tasks such as typing correspondence, sending out emails and faxes, making copies, sorting the mail and other related functions. They may also be in

charge of the office equipment and supplies, including, but not limited to keeping inventory of office supplies and ensuring that office machines are kept in working order. They may also handle additional clerical responsibilities such as keeping employee attendance records, printing and sorting payroll checks, preparing recruitment materials and other related tasks.

d) Technical Staff refers to the agriculture and fishery technicians of the school. They shall perform tasks related but not limited to machine repair and maintenance, physical plant preparation, and occupational safety standards implementation.

The salaries and other benefits of private rural farm school personnel shall be based on the standards prescribed by the Labor Code, as amended.

Section 9. Basic Qualification Standards for Teachers/Tutors.

Notwithstanding the provisions of the Implementing Rules and Regulations of Republic Act No. 10533 (Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013), the following qualifications may be considered in the hiring of rural farm school teachers/tutors:

a) National Certification from TESDA;

b) Certification for a Farm School Teacher who has undergone the farm school pedagogical training as approved by the DepED.

Section 10. Fees. The public rural farm schools shall be free from tuition and other school fees, except those fees authorized by the DepED. Private rural farm schools shall set minimal tuition and other fees subject to the approval of the DepED. The relatives of CARP beneficiaries up to the third degree of consanguinity in the descending line shall be exempt from payment of the fees.

RULE III. STUDENTS

Section 11. Eligible Students. Graduates of elementary school education, regardless of age, shall be eligible to enroll in the rural farm schools for their secondary education.

Section 12. EGASTPE Beneficiaries. All accredited private rural farm schools, their mentors or facilitators and students shall be eligible for subsidies under Republic Act No. 6728, as amended by Republic Act No. 8545, or the "Expanded Government Assistance to Students and Teachers in Private Education Act".

Section 13. Priority for CARP and Agri-Fishery Beneficiaries. Relatives of CARP beneficiaries up to the third degree of consanguinity in the descending

line shall be given priority in admission when the rural farm school cannot accommodate all of those applying for enrollment.

CARP Beneficiaries refer to farmers or their kin who had received certificates of land ownership award (CLOA) or emancipation patents under Republic Act No. 6657, as amended, otherwise known as the “Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law of 1988” and Presidential Decree No. 27 (Decreeing the Emancipation of Tenants from the Bondage of the Soil, Transferring to Them the Ownership of the Land they Till and Providing the Instruments and Mechanism Therefor).

Agri-fishery beneficiaries refer to the children of farmers and fisherfolk identified and recognized by accredited farmers and fisherfolk in the locality.

Agrarian Reform Community refers to a barangay or cluster of barangays where a critical mass of agrarian reform beneficiaries is situated. It also refers to a barangay at the minimum or a cluster of contiguous barangays where there is a critical mass of farmers or farm workers who are beneficiaries of the government’s agrarian development program which includes land tenure improvement and effective delivery of agrarian support services for rural development.

Section 14. Students from Disadvantaged Sectors. Priority shall be given to learners from the disadvantaged sectors, namely: farmer-peasant, artisanal fisherfolk, workers in the formal sector and migrant workers, workers in the informal sector, indigenous peoples and cultural communities, women, differently-abled persons, senior citizens, victims of calamities and disasters, youth and students, children and the urban poor who have relocated to the rural areas.

RULE IV. CURRICULUM AND TEACHING METHODOLOGY

Section 15. Curriculum. The curriculum of the rural farm school shall follow the core secondary curriculum of the DepED and themes duly identified by the local family farm/rural association and community as their learning needs. There will be a focus on agri-fishery, forestry, farm entrepreneurship, community development, education for sustainable development, and other community-specific topics.

The last two (2) academic years in the rural farm school educational system shall focus on integrative learning across all subject disciplines in the curriculum, with emphasis on farm entrepreneurship theory and practice and its promotion as a tool in cultivating local entrepreneurs. The curriculum may be embedded with the appropriate TESDA training regulations in agriculture

and/or fisheries, depending on the local community needs thereby revitalizing rural economics and repopulating rural communities.

Farm Entrepreneurship or Agricultural Entrepreneurship refers to the systematic integration of finance, business and agriculture to facilitate community-based business ventures across the value chain of agricultural commodities or enterprises. It is a process of identifying, starting and managing a farm business or enterprise, sourcing and organizing the required resources and taking both the risks and rewards associated with the venture. In this type of entrepreneurship, the farm is considered as a means of generating income to support decently the farm family.

Section 16. Use of Alternative Delivery Mode for the Rural Farm School Program. The alternance system of formation or other alternative delivery modes as approved by the DepED may be used in the curriculum implementation of the rural farm school program. Assessment of student learning in the rural farm school program shall be in accordance with the existing guidelines of the DepED.

The DepED may also enter into partnerships with private rural farm school associations or other learning institutions in the implementation of the public rural farm school program.

Section 17. Assessment of Performance of Schools Offering the Rural Farm School Program. The DepED shall assess both public and private secondary schools offering the rural farm school program based on the existing curriculum and service standards through existing program monitoring and evaluation mechanism across different levels of education governance.

RULE V. SKILLS TRAINING AND EXTENSION SUPPORT TO RURAL FARM SCHOOLS

Section 18. Skills Training and Extension Support for Tutors of Rural Farm Schools. The DepED, DAR, DA, Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) and ATI shall provide continuous technical skills training and provision of teaching and learning materials including, but not limited to books, student workbooks, teaching guides, prerequisite equipment and tools on the subjects offered, and other extension services to the tutors of rural farm schools.

The TESDA shall assist in the training, assessment and certification of the tutors to qualify them to teach the embedded Training Regulations (TR) in the curriculum, as the case may be. TESDA shall also assist in the embedment of the competency-based curriculum in the Rural Farm Schools and in the assessment of the students for National Certification (NC).

Section 19. Training of Tutors. The DepED will manage the development of the curriculum for the training of rural farm school teachers/tutors. Training may be provided by the DepED, other concerned agencies or private institutions accredited by the DepED and other appropriate government agencies. The training programs shall be benchmarked with those countries that have already institutionalized the rural farm school system of education.

RULE VI. ACCREDITATION OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE RURAL FARM SCHOOLS

Section 20. Policies and Standards on Accreditation of Rural Farm Schools. The DepED, in consultation with the DAR, DA, TESDA, ATI, and the recognized national federation of family farm schools, shall prescribe policies and standards on accreditation of rural farm schools based on established international principles of the rural farm school system. The DepED shall issue a policy articulating the requirements for accreditation of public and private rural farm schools. Rural farm schools shall not be allowed to operate unless accredited and/or recognized by the DepED.

The DepED may withdraw the accreditation or suspend the operation of a rural farm school if it fails to maintain the standards set for its accreditation or recognition.

Section 21. Monitoring and Evaluation of Rural Farm Schools. The DepED shall conduct regular monitoring and evaluation of public and private rural farm schools to determine continuing compliance with the accreditation status of the rural farm schools and to assess the adherence of the said schools to the standards of quality assurance prescribed by these Rules and Regulations. The monitoring and evaluation shall be conducted at least twice annually. The regional offices shall submit reports to the Office of the Undersecretary for Programs and Projects and the Office of the Planning Service (OPS) at the DepED Central Office.

The DepED shall issue the corresponding guidelines on the monitoring and evaluation of public and private rural farm schools.

RULE VII. TAX EXEMPTION

Section 22. General Provision. Any donation, contribution, bequest or grant which may be made to a rural farm school duly accredited under Section 12 of the Act shall be exempt from the donor's tax and the same shall be considered

as allowable deduction from the gross income in the computation of the income tax of the donor in accordance with the provisions of the National Internal Revenue Code (NIRC) of 1997, as amended; Provided, That the rural farm school has likewise been accredited by the Philippine Council for NGO Certification (PCNC).

RULE VIII. ROLES OF IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES

Section 23. The DepED, through the appropriate bureau and offices, shall regulate the organization and operation of the rural farm schools and the implementation of its curriculum as prescribed herein. The DepED shall also designate or work with appropriate agencies to oversee and regulate the operations of the rural farm schools.

Section 24. The DA-ATI shall:

- a)** Designate national and regional focal persons to coordinate the implementation of the rural farm schools program;
- b)** Make available the use of ATI Regional Training Centers in the conduct of training activities based on existing policies and guidelines;
- c)** Assist in curriculum development on entrepreneurship and agriculture-related courses;
- d)** Assist in organizing the students to qualify them for the extension and training services provided by the ATI;
- e)** Develop standards in the establishment of learning sites for practicum of the students; and
- f)** Assist in the documentation of best practices/success stories.

Section 25. The DAR shall:

- a)** Assign/designate DAR counterpart/representatives to relevant technical and steering committees to be created for the smooth operationalization of the program;
- b)** Ensure the involvement of the appropriate personnel of DAR in the identification and selection of children of CARP beneficiaries for admission in the rural farm schools;
- c)** Provide technical assistance/guidance needed by the program in the following areas: (i) organization and strengthening of family farm associations; (ii) linkaging of farm products with markets and the private sector; (iii) skills

trainings on entrepreneurship and other business skills, product/project/business development, packaging, marketing, and resource mobilization activities;

d) Assist DepED, DA, TESDA, and ATI in operating and mobilizing necessary support from the LGUs, NGOs, and other stakeholders.

Section 26. The TESDA shall:

a) Provide technical assistance in the embedment of the appropriate TESDA Training Regulations in Agriculture and/or Fishery depending on the local community needs;

b) Provide technical assistance in the embedment of competency-based curriculum that will incorporate the TR in the rural farm school curriculum;

c) Assist in the training, assessment, and certification of the tutors to qualify them to teach the embedded training regulations in the rural farm school program; and

d) Extend assistance in the assessment of students for national certification.

RULE IX. TRANSITORY PROVISIONS

Section 27. All existing family farm schools may apply for accreditation at DepED within one (1) year from the effectivity of these Rules and Regulations.

Section 28. Upon approval of these Rules and Regulations, a Program Management Committee shall be convened to formulate the Manual of Operations of Rural Farm Schools. It shall be composed of officials of DepED, DA, DAR, TESDA, ATI and private rural farm school associations, or their representatives.

To effectively operationalize the rural farm school program, regional and division program management committees shall also be created.

RULE X. FINAL PROVISIONS

Section 29. Appropriations. The Secretary of Education shall immediately include in the Department's program the operationalization of the public rural farm schools, the funding of which shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

Section 30. Separability Clause. If any provision or part of these Rules and Regulations is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

Section 31. Repealing Clause. All other laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations inconsistent with the provisions of the Act and these Rules and Regulations are deemed repealed or modified accordingly.

Section 32. Effectivity Clause. These Rules and Regulations shall take effect fifteen (15) days after publication in the Official Gazette.

These Rules and Regulations shall be registered with the Office of the National Administrative Register at the University of the Philippines Law Center, UP Diliman, Quezon City.

Signed this ____ day of July 2015, Pasig City, Philippines.

BR. ARMIN A. LUISTRO FSC
Secretary
Department of Education