



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education

13 SEP 2021

DepEd MEMORANDUM
No. **061**, s. 2021

OBSERVANCE OF THE NATIONAL INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DAY, INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE WORLD'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLES, AND NATIONAL INDIGENOUS PEOPLES MONTH 2021

To: Undersecretaries
Assistant Secretaries
Minister, Basic, Higher, and Technical Education, BARMM
Bureau and Service Directors
Regional Directors
Schools Division Superintendents
Public and Private Elementary and Secondary School Heads
All Others Concerned

1. The Department of Education (DepEd) announces the **Observance of the National Indigenous Peoples Day, International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples, and National Indigenous Peoples Month 2021.**

2. As the primary government agency mandated to protect and promote the right of every Filipino learner to basic education, including the inculcation of values that promote recognition of the nation's cultural diversity, DepEd intends to substantially contribute to the objectives of the said observances through the extensive network of schools, field offices, and various learning programs. This is consistent with the aims of the K to 12 Basic Education Program and the National Indigenous Peoples Education (IPEd) Policy Framework contained in DepEd Order No. 62, s. 2011, which stipulates that **within the framework of maintaining inclusive and effective learning environments, DepEd shall nurture among all learners and DepEd teaching and nonteaching personnel, respect for human rights and cultural diversity, and that DepEd shall promote greater awareness and appreciation of the Indigenous Peoples' cultural heritage and history—an integral, yet often neglected, part of the Philippine nation's cultural heritage and history** (Section 15-g).

3. The regional offices (ROs), schools division offices (SDOs), and schools are enjoined to observe the following celebrations through various commemorative and advocacy activities:

- a. National Indigenous Peoples Day pursuant to Republic Act No. 10689 titled **An Act Declaring August 9 as National Indigenous Peoples Day and Mandating the Meaningful Observance Thereof**; and
- b. National Indigenous Peoples Month as stipulated in Presidential Proclamation No. 1906, s. 2009 titled **Declaring the Month of October of Every Year as National Indigenous Peoples Month.**

4. For this year's observances, DepEd shall be guided by the theme, *Karunungan ng mga Katutubong Pamayanan: Limang Daang Taon ng Pagtatanggol at Pagpapayabong, Ipagpatuloy sa Pangalawang Dekada ng Katutubong Edukasyon.*

5. This 2021, the nation celebrates the Quincentennial Commemorations in the Philippines, highlighting the courage towards self-determination, humanity and ingenuity of the nation's ancestors. The contributions of our ancestors to the journey of

national and global development are further emphasized by Presidential Proclamation No. 1128, s. 2021, which also declares 2021 as the *Year of Filipino Pre-Colonial Ancestors*.

6. For the Department and the IP Educators Program, 2021 is also a milestone year as it commemorates ten years of DepEd Order No. 62, s. 2011, which lays down the policy convictions and commitments of the Department that guide the implementation of the Indigenous Peoples Education Program. The said policy concretized DepEd's commitment to this reform popularly called IP Education (IPEd), another major step towards inclusive education in the country.

7. In the international arena, this year's International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples has its theme *Leaving no one behind: Indigenous peoples and the call for a new social contract*. It recognizes the inequities that challenge IP communities from exercising their rights to self-determination and reiterates the call to all nations to respect the rights, dignity, and freedom of all Indigenous Cultural Communities (ICCs) worldwide. Governments are also enjoined to ensure the meaningful participation in decision-making of ICCs for their development especially during this pandemic. This same theme is being adopted in the Philippines this year.

8. This dovetail of celebrations in the middle of the pandemic is an auspicious moment to recognize and commemorate the inter-generational and steadfast conviction of ICCs to protect and nurture their respective community's Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices (IKSPs) – their collective *karunungan* – over the past 500 years, making it possible for IKSPs to be one of our nation's foundations for our collective sense of identity, tangible and intangible cultural heritage, and sustainable development into the future.

9. The country's ICCs are the continuing embodiment of the collective sense of committed self-determination and courage of Lapu-lapu and his community, expressed in the advocacy for IP rights, sustainable development, and social justice including IP Education, in the contemporary times.

10. The steadfast conviction of IP communities to pass on, live out, and develop their collective wisdom or *karunungan*, and protect it from being totally eradicated by the acts of exclusion and marginalization through the centuries invites each Filipino to also grow in the same conviction, thereby contributing to the continuity of our nation's cultural heritage into the next 500 years.

11. Since August 8, 2011, the Department has committed to advocate for the recognition of ICCs and IPs, including the protection and development of their collective *karunungan*. As the Department celebrates its first decade of this commitment and enters into its second decade, DepEd enjoins ROs and SDOs, and schools to support the celebration of the National IP Day **from August 9 to 13, 2021** and IP Month from **October 1 to 31, 2021** by undertaking appropriate and relevant activities while observing necessary health protocols. These activities may include but are not limited to the following:

- a. In dialogue with partner IP communities at the school, schools division and/or regional level, participate in culturally appropriate activities aligned with the key messages discussed;
- b. In partnerships with parents and community learning facilitators, conduct culturally appropriate psychosocial support sessions that nurture and cultivate in IP learners their learning about and/or remembering of their community's wisdom-practices and wellsprings of courage and conviction in the face of grave threats like the pandemic (an electronic file of psychosocial support materials shall be provided);
- c. For ROs and SDOs, conduct advocacy activities for teaching and nonteaching personnel, and other stakeholders;

- d. Hang of streamers/banners in strategic places in the vicinity of DepEd offices only (an electronic file of the standard layout shall be provided to ROs by DepEd-Indigenous Peoples Education Office (IPsEO); and
- e. Feature the event and other IPed-related activities on the website and other communications media of the ROs and SDOs, and schools.

12. For DepEd personnel, it is highly encouraged that the said observance be maximized as an opportunity to deepen their knowledge and understanding of key DepEd policies on IPed, such as the IPed Curriculum Framework (DO No. 32, s. 2015), the implementation of the IPED Program, as well as the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (online resources are available at <http://www.un.org/en/events/indigenousday/resources.shtml>), and the National Quincentennial celebration.

13. All activities and initiatives related to the National IP Day and IP Month celebration shall adhere to both IP community and national protocols for well-being and safety. It is also reiterated that the planning and conduct of activities are to be guided by the Department's Guidelines on the Conduct of Activities and Use of Materials Involving Aspects of Indigenous Peoples Culture (DO No. 51, s. 2014), which 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. Likewise, field offices and schools are enjoined to consult and collaborate with indigenous community elders and other culture bearers as appropriate in the conduct of activities.

14. Relative to the challenge of the times, this year's theme shall guide other initiatives that may commence during the National IP Day but shall continue into the coming months of the School Year.

15. Regional and schools division offices, through the IPed Focal Persons, shall ensure the proper coordination of activities and compliance with the guidance provided in this Memorandum. Expenses incurred relative to the conduct of activities shall be charged to IPed PSF/local funds, subject to the usual accounting and auditing rules and regulations.

16. Immediate dissemination of this Memorandum is desired.



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LEONOR MAGTOLIS BRIONES
Secretary

References:

- DepEd Order Nos.: (32, s. 2015; 51, s. 2014; and 62, s. 2011)
- DepEd Memorandum Nos.: 112 and 148, s. 2016; 115, s. 2017
128, s. 2018; and 100, s. 2019

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

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