



# Davao DISPATCH

Life is education. Education is life.

The official publication of the Department of Education Region XI

“Not for Sale”

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Marcus Gabriel S. Castillo, Grade III learner of San Pedro Elementary School

Rodmar Castillo photo

## Notes from the Regional Director



**L**et no one seek his or her own, but each one the other's well-being.

**W**ith this Biblical message,

I would like to underscore our teachers' passion for teaching and their love to form the character of their learners.

To our teachers who have been in the profession for quite a time and teachers who are new, this is my challenge to you---to teach truly from your heart.

The challenge is for you to learn, unlearn, and relearn.

Let us always remember that change is the only constant thing we can truly rely upon so we learn to navigate and adapt. This is essential for us to thrive in the ever-changing world. Learning to navigate and adapt to change is not just a means to survive, but it's the only way to thrive.

Can you remember what Charles Darwin said? It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent that survives. It is the one that is the most adaptable to change.

From here, we need to understand that teachers have to be versatile, creative, and innovative especially amid this pandemic. If there's one lesson that this pandemic has silently taught us – it is being prepared at all times.

Teachers are the first persons ready to

adjust in case untoward circumstances occur. Teachers need to adopt and adapt to the challenges. In short, the last months have been a test of their ability to embrace change, to adapt, and to advance.

As futurist and philosopher Alvin Toffler once wrote, "The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn."

What does this mean?

We learn new things, but sometimes we do not let go of what we have learned even if we know that something new is better. Let us unlearn what could hinder us to be the best teachers that we could be. We relearn so we could cope with the demands, the challenges, and the new discoveries to help us to teach with better strategies and to teach from the heart.

No one said it's easy to become a teacher, but every teacher would say it's a joy to see every learner grow and ready to cope with life's challenges.

In the celebration of the World Teachers' Day, we are all reminded again of people who make a lot of sacrifices, who see to it that they live the values they teach, who show more love and compassion.

Thank you, teachers! The world is blessed to have human beings called teachers. The Department will always be proud of you. You are heroes. You are beautiful creations of God. If children are the rainbows that color the world, you are the stars that light the way for them.

You don't have to be great to start, but you have to start to be great.

Mabuhay ang ating mga guro! Mabuhay ang DepEd!

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*The wisdom of leadership is in our heart.*

*Leadership means compassion.*

– Assistant Regional Director Maria Ines C. Asuncion





Is UV light effective?

# Module sanitizer An innovative approach

By Lynn H. Pañares

Teacher II of RF Magsaysay ES

As Ramon F. Magsaysay Elementary School (RFMES) in Daliaon District, Davao City Division prepares for distance learning through printed modules, the possibility of these self-learning modules (SLMs) becoming a mode of transmitting the virus is a valid concern for School Principal Bernardo L. Pañares.

Alcohol disinfection will not be a wise move since it damps the supposedly dry material. Fervently seeking to find an efficient and effective way to disinfect the self-

learning modules sent out and retrieved from the pupils living in high risk communities fueled him to look for innovative ways to combat the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace.

Looking for ways to reinvent the workflow in the light of the present health crisis, Pañares pondered outside the proverbial box and resulted to his creation of the Module Sanitizer version 1.0.

Pañares got the idea after the teaching and non-teaching personnel of Daliaon District donated some

stuff to the frontliners of Southern Philippines Medical Center (SPMC) in April 2020. He saw how they used the small amount they donated to build a DIY UV disinfection box for their PPEs and N95 masks. This prompted him to think on the possibility of disinfecting their own learning modules since these would be prone to exposure to the virus.

“I started to do some research on UV light and I was convinced that it could be done in the school context as materials are readily available in the market. After getting all the needed things ready, I started to create some initial designs and finally have it manufactured by a handyman,” he said.

In his research, Pañares discovered that disinfection using UV-C light has been around for decades and has been used by big manufacturing industries, hospitals, laboratories and even malls.

When it comes to the latest outbreak of COVID-19, UV light has been confirmed to be effective in eliminating the virus by Juan Leon, an environmental health scientist at Emory University, and Dr. Lena Ciric, an associate professor at University College London. UV-C treatment is already proven to work on earlier strains of the corona virus like SARS-CoV and MERS-CoV. Therefore, it makes sense for the light to be used against COVID-19.

Not like liquid cleaning agents, no contact with the surface or device is necessary when disinfecting with UV-C light. It does not leave behind a residue or produce discoloration after the procedure. There is no lost time after sterilization and the SLMs can be used immediately after disinfection.

So, he showcased this innovation during the dry-run

and simulation and shared these great ideas to other schools in August in the presence of Dr. Alma C. Cifra, chief of CID.

When this wonderful innovative work came to the knowledge of SDS Reynaldo Guillena, he immediately advised all public schools district supervisors (PSDSs) to benchmark at RFMES for them to implement the technology in their respective districts.

Still committed to his fight against the spread of COVID19, Pañares anticipated the influx of educators coming from different districts in the entire Davao City Division to benchmark the Module Sanitizer. So, he launched another innovative way to conduct benchmark activities with no face-to-face interaction.

On September 21, he launched the Virtual Benchmarking Site for the Module Sanitizer. The site is complete with a registration facility in Realtime, a comprehensive video presentation about the innovation, a fully downloadable set of handouts such as Program of Works, Precautionary Measures, etc., and can be accessed 24/7 without the hassle of travel.

All schools in Daliaon district are armed with their own versions of the Module Sanitizer since this initiative is supported by PSDS Ava Marie P. Santiago. Don Juan dela Cruz Central Elementary School (ES) called theirs as MAC Room or Modified Autoclave Room while Sta. Clara ES named their version the “Covid Oven”.

Today more and more schools are constructing their own UV disinfection box as Pañares encourages the further improvement and modification of his initial design in order to improve its efficiency in terms of the number of learning modules it can hold and still ensure the effectiveness in terms of ability to disinfect.

# Finding ways to love them more

By Mark Fil L. Tagsip

It has been said that teachers are the second parents. Their functions do not isolate only in the four corners of their classroom, but even beyond it. They even spend their time, effort, and money just to provide both their learners' scholastic and personal needs.

Gay D. Galdo, a SpEd teacher of Lambajon Central Elementary School-SpEd Center in the Division of Davao Oriental, is among those teachers who guided her learners at all times. She has learners who are physically challenged like partially blind and those with cleft lip among others.

As a teacher, she never set aside the desire to ameliorate the difficulty of her learners. As an initiative, she sought benefactors and charity foundations in the city which can support her advocacy program. She was lucky to have the positive responses from Free to Smile Foundation, Tebow Cure Hospital of Davao City, Mabuhay Deseret Foundation Incorporated, and MSWDO of Baganga.

Among the beneficiaries of her program is Eron D. Amolo who is now seeing lights and colors after nine years of being partially blind.

"Ma'am, nakita na taka! Ug ang blue nga twalya! (Ma'am, I see you now and the blue towel!)," he said right after his second operation on December 27, 2018 at Tagum Eye Hospital.

Eron's father was hesitant to bring him to the hospital due

to lack of financial resources.

"Wala man mi kwarta nga magasto para kaadto og Tagum sa operasyon ni Eron, pero gihatagan mi og kasiguradohan ni Ma'am Gay nga siya na ang mogasto sa tanan. (We don't have money to spend to go to Tagum for Eron's operation, but Ma'am Gay gave us the assurance that she will shoulder all the expenses)," Rodolfo Amolo, his father, said in an interview.

Another learner who has benefitted from the program initiated by Ma'am Gay is Lucille Limente who has a cleft lip or palate. Because of her situation, she was then bullied by her classmates and schoolmates which was often the reason of her absences. But because of Ma'am Gay, everything that she only dreamed before has come into reality. Lucille said she never thought that she could eat a fried chicken now.

Aside from Eron and Lucille, there were other four learners with cleft lip or palate, and two visually-impaired learners who have become beneficiaries of the program. Some of those scheduled operations and check-ups this year are put on hold due to COVID-19.

"I am thankful to God for choosing me as an instrument to help these children achieve the kind of life they are dreaming and wishing. I would like to extend my gratitude likewise to the charity foundations that have supported me along the way," Ma'am Gay said.

Teachers like Ma'am Gay are rare and should be treasured



for living the mission of uplifting not just the education system in her community, but in alleviating the situation of most of her SpEd learners who need care and love from a parent.

F o r  
Ma'am Gay  
who always

finds a way, you are truly a hero. (With reports from Joyces Mae T. Arlalejo, & Marilou P. Masunag)



# What the pandemic can't stop

By Ronel N. Lupiba

It is 6:30 and the sun amplifies the green colors of pineapple fields and banana farms surrounding the place. The breeze is still cold yet the team sweats while pushing a colorful cart. Adults look out their windows while the young ones get out to check who sells 'sorbetes' so early. However, it is not an ice cream for sale. It is the reading materials for free.

The Basahon sa Kariton moves around the community every week from 6:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. to share level-appropriate reading materials to Emilio J. Estipona National High School students.

"Teachers from Grade 7 to Grade 12 provide copies of reading passages with comprehension questions. The topics are related to the contents of their learning materials," Filipino reading coordinator Niño M. Ombrete said in an interview.

The materials are designed to develop reading skills of students even when students are staying at home.

"We retrieve the answered reading materials, sort them, and hand them to the assigned teachers. Then, they check the answers, provide feedback, and return them to students during the next distribution," Ombrete continued.

This collaborative effort of the school, Manuel Guianga Barangay Council, and Sangguniang Kabataan is another answer to the challenge of Bawat Bata Bumabasa (3Bs Initiative) in creating a community of readers.

"Providing financial assistance



and volunteers to this literacy program of the school where I graduated are just two ways to fulfill my sworn duty," alumnus and SK Chairperson Jayson Onggona said during the launching program.

With the health crisis and alternative work arrangement, the program is in dire need of volunteers to man the distribution and retrieval of learning resources. Onggona assured they would aid the teachers in pushing the cart from one destination to another.

With the challenging tasks this program entails and the stakeholders' involvement, the school considers this as a noble one.

"This is another reading intervention we consider good and effective in helping students improve their reading proficiency level and reading habit while they are not

coming to school yet," School Principal Rodrigo J. Cayanong explained.

Dr. Emy B. Goc-ong, cluster reading consultant, also emphasized the importance of sustaining reading skill despite the movement restrictions.

"Reading is life. It is vital and essential in the lives of the students. It does not only concern English subject. Subjects like Mathematics still require the skill even it deals mostly with numbers," she said.

She challenged everyone to innovate and sustain any intervention. Goc-ong said since there are identified students with reading difficulties, schools should never stop from its regular duties like addressing reading problems. Any action should be sustained to see its expected results.

"As parents, we have to support our students in their studies so we can reach the zero percent drop-out

rate and out-of-school youth rate in our place. Let us never get tired with our parental duties so that we will all see them as successful professionals just like the teachers of this school," Education Committee Chairperson Vanessa S. Ayog addressed the parents.

At present, the team is conducting its first quarterly evaluation to appraise the effectiveness of the program and address what needs improvement.

"Mas nahanas akong pagbasa. Sulod sa pila ka bulan nga wala ko nakaskwela, panagsa na lang ko magbasabasa. Tungod sa Basahon sa Kariton, nafeel nako nga mura na pud ko ug nakasulod sa eskwelahan. Ang akong pagbasa mas napaayo ug nagpasalamat ko ani (I was more trained to read. I rarely read during those months that I was not in school. Because of Basahon sa Kariton, I feel like I am back in school. My reading ability has improved and I am grateful)," Grade 7 student Charmae T. Banguis wrote in the evaluation tool.

As the Center of Excellence in Stakeholders' Engagement in Cluster 6, Dr. Johnito O. Galan also provided an advice.

"Convince all your stakeholders to support your program so you can upgrade your 'kariton' to a mobile library using a four-wheeled vehicle," Dr. Galan advised.

Truly, in this time of pandemic the world does not only need highly knowledgeable medical practitioners to fight the virus, but also extremely brave teachers to combat illiteracy.



# Kwentong Modyul: Kwento ng pangunahing tagapagturo

Isinulat ni Kaye P. Omapas

Ang Magugpo Pilot Central Elementary School, isa sa pinakamalaking mababang paaralan ng Tagum City, ay may samot-saring mga reaksyon at kwento mula sa mga magulang at mag-aaral sa paggamit ng kanilang modyul kung saan dalawang linggo na ang nakalipas mula ng magsimula ang pasukan.

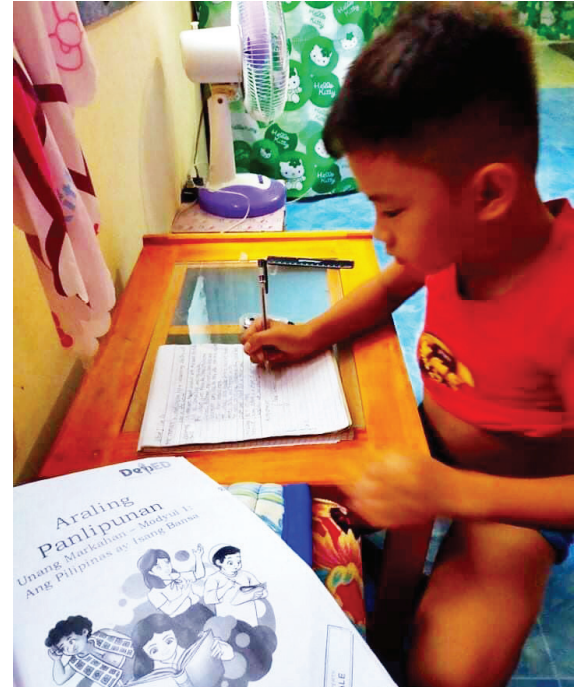
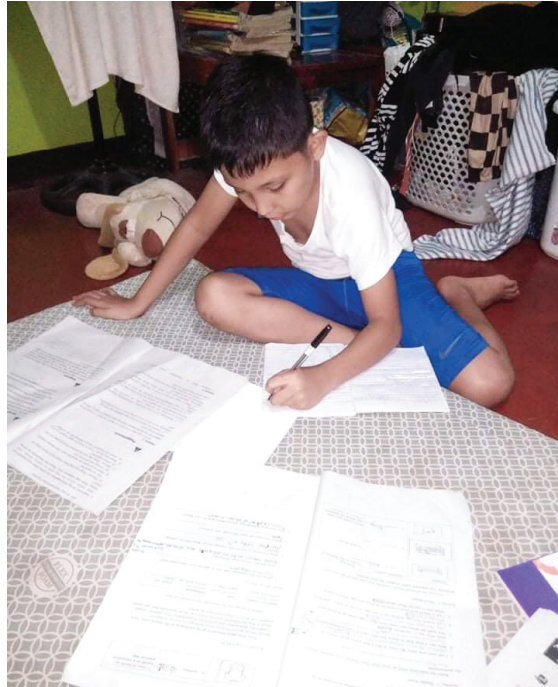
Isa si Malou Estillore na may anak sa ika-apat at unang baitang mula sa nasabing paaralan ang naglabas ng kanyang saloobin tungkol sa kanyang karanasan sa pagtuturo gamit ang modyul. Ayon sa kanya, hindi madali at kailangan ng mahabang pasensya ang magturo.

May mga panahon na kailangan niyang pagalitan at bigyan muna ng snacks ang kanyang anak para lang sumunod at sumagot sa mga aralin. Bilang isang magulang na hindi nakapagtapos ng pag-aaral ay nahihirapan siyang intindihin at kung paano ipa-abot sa kanyang mga anak ang mga leksyon.

Minsan pa nga ay humihingi siya ng tulong sa kanilang kamag-anak para lang mas maintindihan at maipaliwanag sa anak ang nakasulat sa modyul. Nahihirapan din siyang pagtimbangin ang kanyang oras. Bukod sa kanyang trabaho ay kailangan pa niyang turuan ang kanyang isang anak na nasa unang baitang.

Ngunit sa kabila ng mga hinaing ni Malou ay lubos ang kanyang paghanga sa mga guro sa walang humpay na pasensya, dedikasyon, at karunungan taglay para maimulat ang isipan at linangin ang kahusayan ng kanilang mga anak.

Saludo rin siya sa mga guro ngayon dahil sa kabila ng pandemya ay puspusan ang kanilang paghahanda at paghihirap sa paggawa ng modyul upang maipagpatuloy pa rin ang pag-



aaral ng mga kabataan.

Nahinuha rin niya na ang pagtuturo ay pangunahing responsibilidad ng isang magulang. Ayon sa kanya, dali-dali siyang umuuwi galing trabaho para lang maturuan ang kanyang mga anak.

Bukod sa marunong na siyang paghatiin ang kanyang oras ay natutuwa rin siya sa mga bagong kaalamang napupulot mula sa modyul sa pamamagitan ng pagtuturo. Bagkus ay nagsilbi itong bonding ng mag-ina na kalimitan nilang nagagawa bago ang pandemya.

Iminungkahi niya sa ibang magulang na nawa'y huwag sisihin ang mga guro o ang Kagawaran ng Edukasyon sa pagbibigay pasanin sa kanila sa pagtuturo ng kanilang mga anak at gawin ang kanilang obligasyon. Gawin din nilang inspirasyon ang mga paghihirap ng mga kaguruan at lubusin ang panahong ito upang matuto, mas mapalapit sa kanilang mga anak, at bigyan ng pagpapahalaga ang edukasyon.

Ayon kay DepEd Undersecretary,

Diosdado M. San Antonio, inasahan na nilang ang modular instruction ay magdudulot ng kalituhan o reklamo sa mga kabataan lalung-lalo na sa mga magulang. Walang dapat ikabahala dahil nandiyan pa rin ang mga guro na handang tumulong at ipa-unawa ang mga leksyon.

Sa kabila ng panawagan na "academic freeze" ng ilang sector dahil sa kasalukuyang kalagayan ng ating bansa dulot ng Covid-19, nanatiling matatag at matagumpay ang Department of Education na ipagpatuloy ang pagbubukas ng klase nito lamang Oktubre 05, 2020.

Mariing sinabi ng Kalihim ng Kagawaran, Dr. Leonor M. Briones, na sa pagpapatupad ng "blended" at "distance learning approach" sa pamamagitan ng "online classes, printed and digitized learning modules", telebisyon at radyo, ay maibabahagi ang mga asignatura na kailangang matutuhan ng mga mag-aaral anuman ang estado sa buhay.

Ayon sa datos ng Deped, nasa mahigit 25 milyong mag-aaral na ang

nakapag-enrol sa mga pambupliko at pribadong paaralan ngayong taunang pasukan kung saan nasa 59% mag-aaral ang gagamit ng printed module, 20% ang online, at 20% din ang offline digital samantalang ang telebisyon at radyo ay magiging pandagdag lamang.

Ang Modular Learning ay ang backbone ng Deped sa pagsasagawa ng distance learning program dahil problema ng nakararaming kabataan ang pagkamit ng teknolohiya gaya ng kawalan ng gadgets at internet connection. Isa rin itong mabisang paraan sa pagpaliban ng face-to-face classes hanggang magkaroon ng bakuna kontra Covid-19.

Gayunpaman, maraming agam-agam, mga tanong at reaksyon lalo na sa mga magulang kung saan sila ang pangunahing tagapagturo sa kanilang mga anak ng mga leksyon gamit ang mga modyul.

Positibo man o negatibo ang iyong maririning mula sa kanila ay mananaig pa rin ang nais ng mga magulang na matuto at makapag-aral ang kanilang mga anak sa kabila ng pandemya upang makamit ang kanilang pangarap sa buhay.

## Bringing education to the last mile schools

# Modules to the mountains

By Neil Edward D. Diaz

Sitting atop the mountains and bordered by Davao del Norte, Bukidnon and Agusan del Sur, there is this community of Indigenous People with around 140 families who lived in total seclusion deep in the jungles and has never known anything beyond their isolated realm. No knowledge of the government, technology, and even school. This was until the establishment of Tapayanon Elementary School in their community in Tapayanon, Gupitan, Kapalong, Davao del Norte.

They were highlighted in news outlets when the Philippine Army found the IP settlement in February 2019. This quaint Ata-Manobo community lived isolated deep in the forests surviving on the seasonal Ata rice, cassava and camote. They lived in little huts made from forest trees. Accessible by helicopters, Sec. Leonor Briones herself flew to the area to ensure that government assistance is given to the community especially in the establishment of schools.

The establishment of Tapayanon Elementary School addresses Education For All (EFA) goals as it encourages greater participation and access to free and complete elementary education. The discovery of this Sitio Tapayanon by the 60IB of the Armed Forces of the Philippines had opened the eyes and heart of the government which led to initiative of opening an elementary school to cater Indigenous People in the locality, which is also in consonance to the directive of the Department of Education (DepEd) Order No. 40, series 2014.



Now, merely a year after its establishment, Tapayanon Elementary School faces a new challenge: adapting to the new normal education due to the pandemic.

Without electricity to power TV and Radio, the only feasible learning delivery modality to be used is modular.

Teachers take around an eight-hour hike after stopping where the road ends. From there they would have to cross rivers, climb steep hills, and tiptoe through ravines to be able to reach the school while ensuring that the modules shall be safely delivered to every household in the area. They personally hand over these modules to the families while observing proper health protocols.

Fortunately for our teachers, most of their students already know basic reading since it was their paramount goal last year - to make every pupil a reader. Without textbooks, the modules serve as the primary reading material for the pupils.

The regular visits by the teachers to retrieve and hand over new modules are used as opportunities by teachers to provide feedback to pupils for their modular work.

Without the regular classes where the pupils sit inside the four walls made of amakan and a roof of nipa as a makeshift classroom, the modules serve as a package of hope to every Tapayanon household that the government cares about them and their future. They are not quarantined in their bubble of isolation and they are part of the nation. This is a testament to the Department's battlecry of Sulung Edukalidad. Bringing education even to the last mile schools.

# Preparing the environment

By Kristian Anhara L. Martesio

The Schools Division Office of Davao de Oro took part in the world's largest volunteer effort for the environment during the last International Coastal Clean Up Drive on October 23.

The personnel, in partnership with the Provincial Local Government Unit (PLGU) and the Tibagon Barangay Council, participated in the Mangrove Tree Planting and Tree Growing activity held at Bgy. Tibagon in Pantukan. This was conducted with observance of the IATF health and safety protocols.

The high tide did not hinder the determination of the participants to plant the 3,000 mangrove seedlings provided by the PLGU Davao de Oro through the PAGRO. After which, the coastal cleanup was done together with the Barangay Tibagon Council.

Schools Division Superintendent Eufemia T. Gamutin, in her message, reminded all the participants that they are part of the implementation of environmental programs which become part of every human being's responsibility.

"One of the responsibilities and accountabilities of each individual is to prepare the environment that it would be ready to be handed over to the next generation," she stressed.

Assistant Schools Division Superintendent Rommel R. Jandayan, also expressed his view about thinking globally but acting locally.

"Reviving the beauty of the environment may not be done for the whole world, but it can be done by sharing in a little way. If these acts will be accumulated, then there is a contribution to the world-wide effort," Jandayan shared.

For Eric Jay M. Mascariñas, Administrative Assistant II of SDO



Records Section, the experience was so motivating that it encouraged him to be more concerned with the environment. His involvement during this activity opened his eyes for a better outlook on communing with nature.

"The experience I had planting mangroves along with my SDO family is overwhelming since it is my first time to do such," Marnelyjane A. Bernal, Senior Education Program Specialist

fruitful day for me. Meeting and uniting with other stakeholders for the good of our mother earth was truly a rewarding experience," Bernal expressed.

Hon. Lucille Yugo Elisan, Sangguniang Bayan Member of the Municipality of Pantukan representing Mayor Robert Yugo, expressed her gratitude for the help extended during the clean-up drive. Hon. Cathy Uy Pangay, also a Sangguniang Bayan Member, Municipality of Pantukan representing Gov. Jayvee Tyron Uy, encouraged everyone to sustain the activity for nature, not only for oneself but for the entire community to help protect the environment.

The activity was organized in line with Proclamation No. 470, declaring the third Saturday of September of each year as the international coastal clean-up (ICC) day in observance of the global coastal clean-up celebrations. Proclaimed by then President of the Philippines, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, on September 15, 2003, the International Coastal Clean-up Day is consistent with Presidential Proclamation No. 244 declaring September as National Clean-up Month.

– Monitoring and Evaluation, said.

She also mentioned that knowing the purpose behind the activity was very fulfilling.

"It was really a meaningful and





# Like *a seed*

The true evidence of having lived well is to live on purpose and for a purpose. Establishing a clear plan helps us to have a sense of direction, to be a contributor of good things to our family, our community, and the world even after our existence cease. This is the inspiration of Panabo City Senior High School's (PCSHS) partners and linkages that marked in the hearts of its students, teachers, and the administration.

The PCSHS's designed scheme for delivering learning materials to students for the new normal education - the school learning hubs and the module panda - have not just given opportunities for learners to have easy access on getting their modules but have also invited generous sponsors to fulfil the purpose of the school's learning continuity plan (LCP).

Sponsors include Agricultural Training Institute, 2nd District Congressional Office headed by Honorable Congressman Allan Dujali, PCSHS' immersion partners such as the PERA MPC, Barangay New Visayas, and Barangay Salvacion.

Perhaps many of us are not familiar with the Agricultural Training Institute (ATI) and more surprisingly not everyone knows that it is located in Panabo City, specifically at Barangay Datu Abdul.

Being an agri-industrial city, Panabo aims to improve the life of Panaboan farmers, hence this institute was built to provide training to those who desire to go into farming or agricultural business. It also produces variety of seeds and distributes them to the farmers.

Timely it is for PCSHS to have partnered with the ATI because, with the effects of this pandemic, the Department of Education gives emphasis on the psychosocial development of the learners thereby introducing programs that uplift their well-being.

As the students receive their modules, they will also receive seeds of the "pinakbet" vegetable ingredients such as squash, string beans, eggplant, ladies' finger or okra, bitter gourd (ampalaya), among others.

Those seeds are for free according to ATI Head Dante Esguerra so that they must not go



to waste. With every seed the ATI is giving to students, their time on gadgets for gaming and trivial stuff is minimized shifting their attention to growing and looking after the seeds to be ready for harvest and enjoy their produce.

In the process, there will also be monitoring and assessment of the seeds given to be facilitated by the Gulayan sa Paaralan coordinator, Ma. Theresa A. Tano, and the advisers as well.

Moreover, living on one of its objectives in support to their education program, the 2nd District Congressional office under the leadership of Hon. Congressman Alan R. Dujali offered his big heart to help in the printing and production of the modules as well as making the office the main learning hub of PCSHS.

He has also set aside a space right inside the congressional office for comfort and ease of sorting, binding, and other production works of the teachers assigned for this job. By lending their risograph machine, module printing has been faster and easier, thus the school is more than grateful and happy

for such altruism and willingness to fulfil its commitment to public service.

PCSHS is also appreciative to its consistent work immersion partners - the PERA MPC, Barangay New Visayas headed by Captain Mark Eduard Penas - for being the school's other learning hubs. The students do not need to go to the school for their modules instead they will simply proceed to the nearest learning hubs assigned to them for pick up and retrieval of their learning modules. This also prevents them from getting in contact with a larger crowd minimizing and avoiding the spread of the virus.

School Principal Myrna E. Purificacion is indebted to these institutions who remain true to their objectives. This inspired her to work even harder to live up to the expectations of the community and to the school she serves, as well as to its partners and stakeholders.

Surely, if a genuine purpose is geared for a purpose, greater things are achieved not just for ourselves, but to an even larger community the hands can reach. Like a seed, when planted well grows well and will benefit many.



# Lady Solon renews commitment to quality education

By Doris Amabelle Emperador



Certainly, she had painted the picture of the perfect schools in her dreams for the Division of Davao Occidental. In her own words she professed, “For once a teacher, I will remain a teacher.” Yes, she is a teacher by profession. Yet, she disembarked to the realm of politics and fortunately became the first elected Representative of Davao Occidental dubbed as the Province of Endless Possibilities.

Inspired by her great visionary father, Assemblyman Benjamin Velasco Bautista Sr., the man who first conceived the existence of Davao Occidental, she opted for public service for her father’s vision to come to its full realization. Today, she carries on the vision. Yet now, for one of the country’s youngest provinces

and it’s for the sake of pushing the quality of education.

“I pledge support to quality education.” This was her most precious pronouncement during her inaugural discourse and uttered this back on October 16 when she discussed with key DepEd officials of the Division regarding its response and action to education in the new normal.

This signifies her desire to better the quality of school life of the teachers and students including the parents in every school in the province. These, she swears, are the services she ought to complete in her term.

As the mother of the province, being its Representative, she felt the birth pains of the department. She

saw the Schools Division Office (SDO) needed her support for it to function normally like the other divisions in Region XI. So, with her capacity, she provided the most needed facilities for the office.

First, the creation of the SDO building equipped with furniture and fixtures, covered court, and quarter for the Schools Division Superintendent. This has become operational since 2017.

Second, the provision of division vehicles: a Starex Van for the division personnel’s mobility, a Canter for supplies and equipment conveyance, a Coaster for teachers’ and learners’ service vehicle, and 10 motorcycle for the Public Schools Division Supervisors’ easy conduct of monitoring and evaluation to the

different schools especially to the last mile schools.

Indeed, it will be awe-inspiring to soon be in fully-fenced schools, where children are united in the noble cause of back to gardening crusade to fight hunger and poverty with the sustainable food production through ‘earn and learn’ program.

It is a dream come true for the parents and teachers to work hand in hand to better their children’s education for a brighter future through Parents-Teachers Associations (PTAs) being transformed into cooperatives. Parents and Teachers are given livelihood programs as added source of income while guarding the school sites and serving foods to the learners from their very own produce.

As a start for the realization of this dream, she supported the fencing of schools in the province through the PTA as their project in support also to the Gulayan sa Paaralan which sustained the School Feeding Program of every school which caused the creation of the school feeding centers.

The indigenous communities in the upland areas, the underprivileged, and the underserved benefited. The provision of facilities that hardly were seen in the hinterlands were the primary delivery she extended, which includes the establishments of additional classrooms, computer laboratories, and audiovisual facilities along with the electrification.

Nothing could ever be more pleasing for the teachers than to be in a school where faculty buildings equipped with facilities are present aside from the teachers' cottages, the mini-gyms designed with toilets and canteens, and the waiting sheds planted along the paved roads to schools. These are the school amenities that she had started to dispense in the neediest areas in the province. While on the areas which are blessed with the supply of electricity, some 1,700 units of television sets were afforded to schools to animate lessons for Kindergarten to Grade 3 learners for a more engaging teaching and

learning encounters.

The burdens that used to chastise teachers assigned to the far-flung areas were lightened through road widening and road construction.

It's funny to note that teachers' prime duty - the preparation of daily lesson plans has been part of her blueprint of unloading the teachers' encumbrances to enjoy life to the fullest. Her realization of a more effective way of lesson preparation other than the usual tedious way of writing and rewriting them daily were altered with the modern alternative mode for the common interest of the teachers and school heads.

The good solon said, "I know the feeling because I was once a classroom teacher too. And my journey as a Representative will not be complete if our youth will not acquire opportunities for better funds and, in return, be able to give back services to the communities and become important instruments to countryside development."

And so, the provision of scholarship to underprivileged and deserving students and the binding up with TESDA were her topmost expectations aside from the support to the welfare of the children; where sustainable and effective feeding program shall be initiated especially in the primary and intermediate level.



As a former teacher before, I know how difficult your life is especially during this pandemic.

To DepEd Davao Occidental, goodluck to you, i will just pray na maging successful ang atong program because this is not an easy job, my heart belongs to you always, always.

**HON. LORNA B. BANDIGAN**  
Congresswoman  
Province of Davao Occidental

Discussion of the  
New Normal Opening of Classes  
Oct. 16, 2020  
Division Multi-Purpose Hall



Furthermore, there's nothing nobler than her aspiration for the preservation of the culture and heritage of the Province of Davao Occidental. Thus, a unique school of living tradition shall soon be established for the tribes of Tagacaulos, Manobos, B'laan and even to the community of Muslims; social awareness of the lumads.

With the little time she had spent in her position, she believed

she has done her best to extend her services to her constituents. However, with her great desire to walk the extra mile, she feels she still can do more to better the quality of services of the Division.

This, she intends to procure more budget to sustain the needs particularly for the 20 items of nurses to be deployed to the 10 districts, 4 items for the security guards, and 2 items for the driver of SDO, more teaching and non-teaching items and additional school buildings for the different schools in need, increase the budget for the division operations, training center, and SDO Personnel's cottage. These are the top priority needs of the SDO of Davao Occidental.

Her heart sees education as the prime root of success and progress of her province. This is the reason why she has all her support programmed for DepEd Division of Davao Occidental.



*No hills, no mountains,  
no pandemic can stop  
teachers from reaching  
out to their learners.*

*Walking extra miles,  
teachers discover  
and appreciate their  
calling more, following  
the Great Teacher who  
gave His life so others  
may live.*

*I'm proud and happy  
I am a teacher.*