

# DEPED DAVAO DISPATCH



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About 971 public schools have opened for the progressive expansion of the limited face-to-face classes. This number comprises 44.14 percent of the total number of schools in Davao Region with a recorded 310,776 participating learners.



# A century of service to young learners

BY JANICE C. ABREA

**A**ncient but not outmoded, antiquated but never obsolete.

This would probably be the best way to define the Gabaldon building proudly nestled at the heart of the four-hectare century-old school Tugbok Central Elementary School SPED Center in Tugbok District, Division of Davao City.

As the school celebrated its 100th founding anniversary on August 28, 2021, the Gabaldon building becomes a historic monument of its century-long service to the young learners.

The Gabaldon has been a living witness to a young child's dream and the process by which such dream was finally fulfilled.

As a young child to parents who were both teachers at the school, Geva M. Torejos has played along the halls of the Gabaldon building where her mother was stationed in one of its rooms as its librarian.

Prior to even enrolling in the school, she has been a regular visitor as brought by her mother or father. When she finally became of school age, she spent her entire elementary years in the institution and fondly recalls vivid and unforgettable memories with peers at the Gabaldon building which became her classrooms from grades one to six.

"We would be made to scrub the floor and it has become an enjoyable task for my classmates and I because we would play while scrubbing it to shine. It did not only build our friendships stronger, but it has taught us the value of cleanliness and has made us become physically fit as well," Torejos beamed while recalling her tender years.

Her dream of becoming a teacher like her parents sparked from the halls of the Gabaldon as well.

"There was this room in the Gabaldon building which transforms as a stage when the accordion dividers were opened to make way for school programs. I dreamed that someday when I become a teacher, I will teach in this school and would want such room to be my very own classroom," she added.

She also recalls that the Gabaldon building can attest to how she and her classmates enjoyed playing games like patintero, right under the building. Its wide Capiz windows were also eyewitnesses when they jumped out of it to avoid vaccination and deworming activities in the classroom.

"There were also horror stories surrounding this building, and many of its occupants felt like there are other beings who are 'not-like-ours' that cohabit with the school community," she explained.

Fast forward to her adult life, she has never taken up education as a bachelor's degree but life sure has its wonderful surprises. Torejos has become a teacher at the school following the ranks of her late mother and father. She is serving as the school's teacher's club president and is collaboratively working with its teachers and school head in the continuous delivery of quality educational service to the young learners of its community.

"I have witnessed how this building has withstood the test of time and has physically deteriorated only to rise again when structural rehabilitation programs were granted to the school. Right now, I am just one of the many children during my time, whose dreams started along its sturdy wooden walls," she proudly beamed.

Torejos is now one of the 64 strong faculty and staff of the school who stand by the mission of the Department of Education to mold young learners into headstrong Filipinos that will become contributors to nation building in the future.

The Gabaldon building may be old, but it is never weak, and is in fact a very formidable representation of the hopes of the school for its learners and the future purveyors of its lifelong mission.

# Director's Desk

This is how I can describe our journey since the start of the year. Before the end of 2021, we started the implementation of the limited face-to-face classes with just eight public schools yet. Now, we have 971 participating schools in the progressive expansion of the limited face-to-face classes.

It's amazing to see school heads and teachers so engrossed in the preparation of their school to qualify in all the indicators stipulated in the School Safety Assessment Tool. It's more amazing to see learners so excited to be back in school.

I have roamed around some divisions to personally witness the opening of classes. I can distinctly share the mixed reactions of parents



## Extremely happy!

sending their children to school, teachers facing their learners, and learners seeing their teachers and classmates.

I have talked to some parents and their sharing displays a sense of urgency. They have waited for the day that their children will be back to school again. They admit that learning with teachers is always better than learning at home

by answering modules. Although they are ready to guide them, there is still a big difference when they are completely guided by their teachers.

Our teachers are equally excited too. They miss their learners. They miss the classroom setup where they can all face the learners, and they can give them the best learning

experiences.

The small children especially those in Kindergarten and Grade 1 may find it strange to be in the classroom for the first time after learning at home through the self-learning modules. But we can see the delight in their faces. They look at their teachers in awe.

The older ones have always expressed their desire to be back to

school except for those few who are working and who intend to continue working while giving time at night to answer the modules. I understand their plight. Life is hard these days. But I am happy that they always show interest to learn and finish every school year.

I am happy to see teachers strive more so they can provide something better for the learners. The school heads show initiatives to ensure safety and sustain the interest of the learners. The supervisors find ways to monitor schools and give technical assistance to what must be done.

All our leaders and the Regional Office team are planning and finding effective mechanisms to make all these experiences worthy of our time and action. Indeed, we have started the year right.

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Steadfast to DepEd Davao del Norte's mantra "Excellence is the Core", the Division adds another feather to its cap by being conferred with PRIME HRM (Program to Institutionalize Meritocracy and Excellence in Human Resource Management) Maturity Level II (Bronze Award) by the Civil Service Commission (CSC) on March 18.

Donning their best Filipiniana attires, the program was attended by all personnel of the Division, which makes it more special as it was the first time since the pandemic for all of them to be gathered in a single venue for an event.

In attendance from the Civil Service Commission Regional Office were Cyril Nathan SM. Eamiguel, Acting Director IV; Danilo



# DavNor achieves PRIME HRM level 2 accreditation

By NEIL EDWARD D. DIAZ AND GRACE SANTA DACLAN

PHOTOS BY CHERWEL JAKE MAQUE, ALLEN KIRK VELOSO & DEXTER MARIVELES

Being awarded with a Maturity Level II Accreditation means that DepEd Davao del Norte has established a set of defined and documented Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) responsive to the agency's unique needs, and automation is being used to a certain extent.

The four-core human resource (HR) areas which were evaluated and deemed compliant to Maturity Level 2 are recruitment, selection, and placement (RSP); performance management (PM); learning and development (L&D); and rewards and recognition (R&R). These core HR areas are evaluated through the systems lens, practice lens, and competency lens.

Jessie B. Dumandagan, Chief Human Resource Specialist; Suzanne S. Misagal, Human Resource Specialist II; Nathan James A. Hierro, PRIME HRM Assessor, Reilee Jill Renee M. Villanueva, Senior Human Resource Specialist of the CSC Davao del Norte Field Office also graced the event.

The Division also recognized the efforts of the key personnel in the four pillars of PRIME HRM: Assistant Schools Division Superintendent Rebecca C. Sagot, Allen T. Guilaran, Marvin I. Gozon, and Evelyn Grace Labasan for Performance Management; Rosalinda N. Dionio and Relyn B. Gallardo for Recruitment Selection

and Placement; Ramel M. Pilo, Gay P. Taguiran, and Romela T. Pangandoyon for Learning and Development; and Eduard C. Amoguis, Mercy M. Dela Cruz, Irene Grace I. Dayot, Danilo Jr. Q. Lumayno, and Jocelyn Fernandez for Rewards and Recognition.

Acting Director Eamiguel, who awarded DepEd Davao del Norte's Plaque of Recognition, said that the Division has obtained ML II in all four core HR areas because of its determination to promote people excellence, for efficient and effective delivery of public service. He also mentioned the perks that come with the Bronze Award.

This includes authority

to approve appointments, subject to post audit; exemption from Section 96 of the 2017 ORAOHRA (Omnibus Rules on Appointment and Other Human Resource Actions), as amended, among others.

"This award not only carries with it the glory and distinction of our excellence in our work, but this also serves as a challenge and a responsibility for us to uphold the standards and do better for the next goal," SDS Dee D. Silva said.

PRIME-HRM is a mechanism that aims to continuously capacitate agencies in the performance of their human resource management, recognize best practices and serve as a venue for exchange and development of expertise.



# MOBILE E-LEARNING HUB FOR IP LEARNERS

By **RAYMOND S. AQUINO**

Children living in the rural and far-flung areas of Davao Occidental are just some of the millions of children who live without access to a basic human right: the right to education. These are children whose parents need to be aware of the educational opportunities that these children could avail themselves of.

Lucky as they are, Jhoniel S. Razonable, a senior education program specialist of the Division of Davao Occidental, has seen inclusive education as a strategy for increasing the participation rate of children that they had been learning through the fruit of his ingenuity – the ALS Bahay Kar-BihASNAN

It is the Mobile E-Learning Hub--a solar-powered learning device, one of the laudable innovations of the Alternative Learning System (ALS) for the out-of-school IP children in the province.

This project caters to

the unheeded children who become street wanderers. They are those abandoned by their parents, and access to education may have been elusive for them due to the harsh onslaught of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The ALS Bahay Kar-BihASNAN was fashioned to educate these vagrants by showing pre-recorded video episodes from Solar Learnings ALS video lessons, DepEd TV, and RBI (radio-based instruction) broadcast lessons in ALS.

This state-of-the-art E-Learning Hub is equipped with high-technology paraphernalia which is powered by solar panels. It is fortified with 12V-100ah solar gel batteries with Soler Intelligent Power inverter, HDMI splitter, 4 sets of 12-inch television, Cignal TV Box which has a total of 138 digital channels plus 17 audio channels, and an additional DepEd TV channel which offers a free subscription to viewers.

Though this ALS



project has already been functional in serving the IP communities, the feature of its information and communication technology equipment mounted on this Mobile-E-Learning Hub has been undergoing continuous enhancement to make learning interactive and fun.

Here, in the uniquely tailored teaching-learning encounters, the Instructional Managers employed Sinugbuanong Binisaya, Filipino, and English as the medium of instruction. However, contextualization plays a vital role in varying communities where Tagacaulo, Manobo, and BLaan are predominant.

The DepEd Davao Occidental, responsive

to the call of times, has organized the urgency to address the need for children to receive appropriate education within the regular or inclusive classroom setting. It has embraced the philosophy of inclusive education of accepting all children regardless of race, size, shape, color, ability, or disability with support from school staff, students, parents, and the community.

It further undergoes curriculum modifications by implementing in the forms of adaptations and accommodations to foster optimum learning as it involved ways of thinking and developing teaching-learning practices through this ALS Bahay-Kar-BihASNAN.

# Katigkanayan

## The beginning of something



**I**t started with a simple observation about the IPs in the community.

The Indigenous Peoples (IPs) play an important role in the community. They have different cultures, traditions, and beliefs from the rest of the world, and they deserve to be recognized and respected. For this reason, a barangay resolution from Daliaon Plantation in Davao City has been put in place to show support to the IPs of the community through teaching the Bagobo-Tagabawa dialect.

Given the fact that the barangay has an Indigenous Person Mandatory Representative (IPMR) means a big part of the population encompasses IPs and most of them belong to the Bagobo-Tagabawa tribe. Clearly, the tribe is there but the culture, values, and beliefs seem to be gradually diminishing.

In 2019, Quezon Elementary School (ES), in cooperation with the Daliaon Barangay Council, came up with the program “Pagtinuro Ka, Kinagayen Ka Bagobo Tagabawa” (Teaching Bagobo-Tagabawa Dialect). The objective of this program is for

the learners to embrace their roots by developing the learners’ literacy towards their own dialect, practicing their traditions, and making their own ethnic costumes.

At the start of their class, 100 percent of the learners from grades 3 to 6 cannot understand and speak any Bagobo word. The program started with 40 learners and in a matter of one month the number of learners steadily increased to 70 continuous classes during remedial classes done every Tuesday and Thursday.

The effect brought by Covid-19 virus did not just affect the regular classes but as well as the IP classes. But this did not stop the pursuit of education even to the IP learners.

When the regular classes were taught in different modalities, something can also be done for them. That is when Armando N. Blando, the school head of Quezon Elementary School, tapped the IP leaders and their elders to come up with a good alternative form of education. Thus, the idea of an IP module was born.

From a simple draft of different Bagobo-Tagabawa words, it evolved to a hard copy filled with hope and faith that these learners will slowly embrace their IP roots.

Another plan was realized when the third



part of the project started even with the restraint of pandemic. Just as soon as the government announced the approval of limited face-to-face classes, Sir Armando invited the group of IPs who were well-trained in beads-designing.

IP learners diligently participated the activity on Fridays up to the second week of May 2022. This beads-designing project would not be successful without the financial support of the Gulayan sa Paaralan and the Gulayan sa Tahanan project of the school.

Now, we can say that the learners really appreciate, practice, and live in the traditional way.

## Gulayan sa Tahanan, Gulayan ng Kinabukasan

For the past years, Quezon ES has always been known for its vigorous Gulayan sa Paaralan. This time, it has extended to the community to reach out to the families affected by this pandemic – from Gulayan sa Paaralan to Gulayan sa Tahanan.

It started in every purok of Brgy. Daliaon

Plantatio; the first recipients were mostly the IP of Purok 1. Seedlings of different vegetables and crops were given to each family from the generous stakeholders, Department of Agriculture (DA) and City Agriculturist Office (CAO). The Revitalized Pulis sa Barangay (RPsB) of Cluster 3 Toril also took part on this project and donated sprinklers and gardening tools.

“Sa kadaghan namo na projects, this is the first time that we were tapped to help the IP community. It’s a very unique project and nalipay mi na nakatabang mi ug apil,” Jefferson G. Escasinas of the RPsB said.

After almost a month, the families had tasted the fruit of their labor. The income from the Gulayan sa Tahanan were turned into gardening tools, additional seedlings, and food on their plates.

“Karon akoang kauban akong anak sa pagtanom ani ug nalipay ko kay human ug answer namo sa module, diretso mi sa among area para magtanom sa likod mura na sad mi ug nag bonding,” Gaga, one of the beneficiaries, happily

said.

Since the first wave of the Gulayan sa Tahanan was a success, it’s time to move to another destination. The next target was the IP youth of Purok 10, the farthest and the end of Brgy. Daliaon Plantation. Who would have thought that the school could reach this remote area and be welcomed by youths filled with ambitions?

The youth of this purok were children of Quezon Elementary School’s alumni like Gerylle, who was once an LSB LSA teacher of Quezon ES. They also belong to the small community of an IP area who needs attention.

When asked about the things they lacked and they really want to have, most of them answered materials for the Bagobo-Tagabawa clothing.

“Gusto unta mi nga naa sad mi mga IP na masuot para sa among sarili kay dili gyud namo kaya nga mupalit niini. Bagobo mi pero wala mi sanina sa Bagobo,” Gerylle said with a faint smile.

## Turning Dreams into Reality

Finally, the school and IP leaders’ efforts had paid off witnessing the endeavors and the innocent smiles of the youth at the tribal hall in beads-designing activity.

“Kami nalipay nga ang kaniadtong panganduy, nahimong katumanan. Ang pagtagad sa among tribo usa ka kalampusan nga dili namo malimtan,” Gerylle said.

Presently, putting the beads on the IP clothes is on the process. Everyone is expecting its output after a month or two.



# The Brgy. Captain learns and leads

By **STEPANE H. POLVOROSA**

Being a good example to the young is the best method to teach them and offering the best version of oneself is the finest way to lead a community. Hence, Brgy. Capt. Diosdado R. Pahid of Brgy. Sanghay in Mati City keeps learning to continue thriving.

Situated in the south of the city, Sanghay is a representation of a humble community

whose livelihood is through farming. Despite being focused on the sustainability and progress of his community, Diosdado has never neglected to work on his personal development and learning.

It took years for Diosdado to complete his secondary education because he needed to work day and night to support his family. He had always put his family first before him. True to his selfless nature is the fact that he was able to send all six of his kids to school.

He shared that he started schooling in 1995 through the Alternative Learning System (ALS) but eventually stopped due to difficult circumstances. Two years later, he came back to school and asked his ALS teacher to help him by providing him with modules so he could keep up with his studies even

while working, but he still failed to complete them.

It was 2016 when he decided to enroll again with the hope of finally completing his secondary education. One of his teachers was his own child, who made Diosdado even more motivated to learn.

He told his son to treat him as if he were his actual student and to tell him about his flaws as a student for him to understand what it is like to be a student trying his hardest to learn and succeed in academic matters.

With pure hard work and determination, Diosdado was finally able to finish his secondary studies through the Alternative Learning System (ALS) while blossoming into a competent and compassionate leader in his community. He plans to further his ability and is currently enrolled at Davao Oriental State University, San Isidro Campus, taking Bachelor of Science major in Agriculture.

On why he chose to continue learning, he said being a Kagawad is never easy. He considers the people in his barangay as his family.

“I saw a lot of youngsters engaging in drugs, wasting the prime years of their lives and not understanding the importance

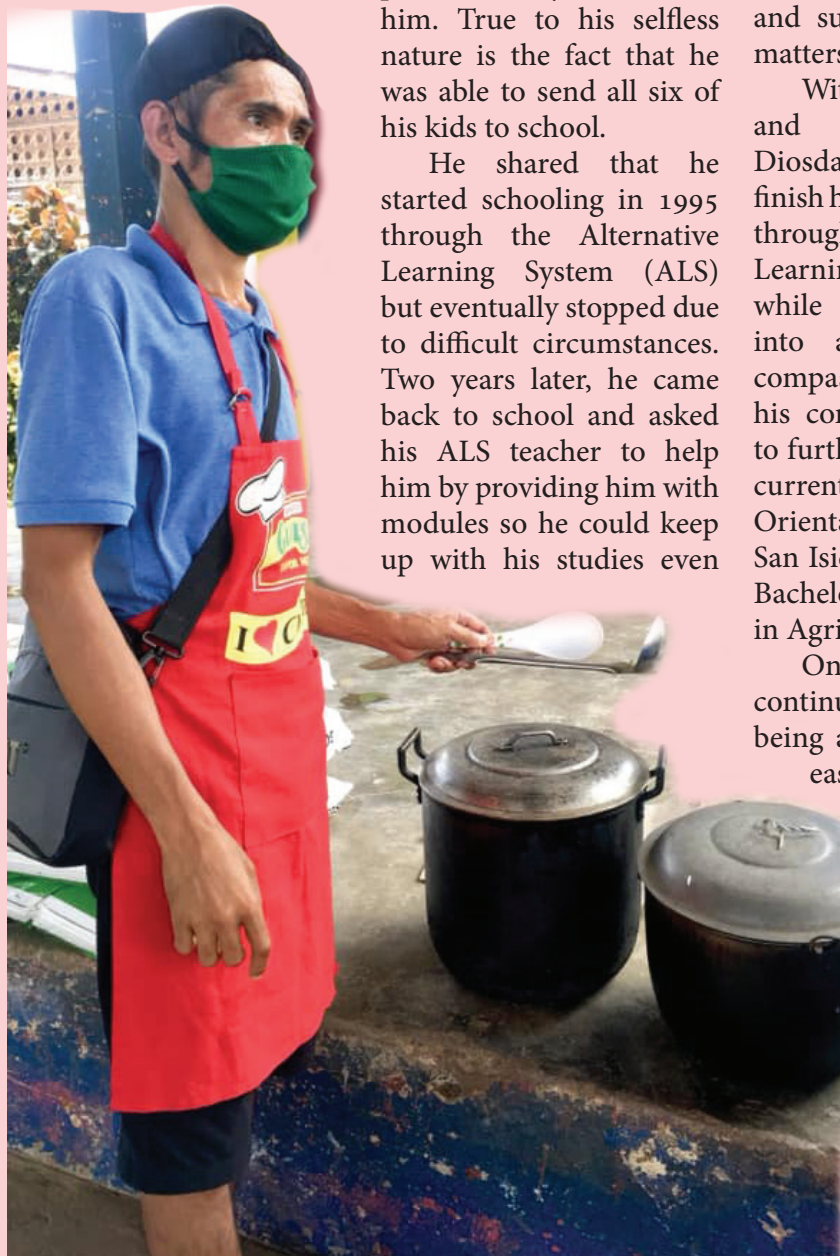


of education. I want to tell these kids the importance of education, but I cannot because I, too, have not been a full-fledged graduate. Thus, I want to finish high school and be able to become someone worthy to give them advice on continuing their studies,” he said in the dialect.

He also advised the younger generation not to rush and get married at a young age.

“Prioritize education. As the world evolves and becomes more complex, we must evolve as well, particularly in terms of technology. Being educated is our ticket to a decent or well-paying job, so we might as well make it a goal. To the parents, instill in them the value of hard work and never be discouraged if life is difficult,” Diosdado shared.

He used to be proud of his children’s triumphs, but now it is his children who are proud of him. Brgy. Capt. Diosdado is a true embodiment of a humble man, a good father, and a compassionate leader.





The Davao del Sur Division adopts the modular learning delivery modality both printed and digitized materials.

The Division launched Project VERT (Virtual Educational Resources Technology) which aims to assist schools in providing learning while considering the cost of module printing and environment preservation.

The Peer-to-Peer Model used by the VERT System offers remote learning via offline platform using smart phones, tablets, and personal computers. This is a paperless and cost-efficient offline learning delivery method that eliminates the need for parents to pay for internet access.

This will lower printing module costs and relieve the school of the burden of weekly distribution of printed materials. This will also reduce face-to-face interaction with parents or guardians in accordance with the health protocols.

Both teachers and students can use the VERT System. Students can access the system, download, and upload files using their Learners Reference Number (LRN) while teachers enrolled in the system can upload learning materials, check outputs, and get access to wide array of learning resources. The school must have an administrator of the system, preferably an ICT (Information and Communications Technology) Coordinator, who is responsible in enrolling teachers in the system.

The necessity for continued learning assembled the ICT experts in the division on July



# The birth of VERT

BY JOEISA PRESBITERO

from Matanao NHS.

On August 6, 2020, the regional evaluators examined the viability of the project at Matanao NHS. The 40 participants in the test, all of whom had access to the VERT Hotspot, were able to download modules and upload their responses.

Several areas for improvement were identified during the pilot test. VERT was rolled out in San Guillermo Elementary School on March 19, 2021 after a seven-month development period. For 2021, five schools embarked on the system to seamlessly blend the modalities of printed and electronic modules.

Recently, a remote school in Tudaya, Sta. Cruz was visited by the team. The community could hardly connect to Internet due to its distance and geographic location

which consequently stole the opportunities of the learners to have e-learning and easy access to modules. Teachers could not send e-files to their learners using online platforms due to lack of internet connectivity.

But with the installation of VERT in Tudaya Elementary School, learners can get access to learning modules and send their outputs to their teachers using the same offline system. Teachers can upload learning materials in the system as well and check outputs of the learners with the tip of their fingers.

For 2022, about a hundred of schools in the Division subscribed to the installation of the offline learning. The team is still improving the system to radically innovate better system.



# A promise fulfilled

BY NEIL MICHAEL DE ASIS

“Gituman jud nila ang ila gisaad (They fulfilled their promise),” a voice softly said when Panabo City Division turned over the proceeds of their virtual concert titled Rise Surigao: Virtual Concert for a Cause to Serna Elementary School in Surigao City on March 28.

During the onslaught of typhoon Odette that created havoc in many parts of Mindanao on December 16, 2021, Serna Elementary School was one of the most affected. The school was wrecked beyond imagination.

According to the teachers and residents, although Surigao is frequently visited by typhoons, Odette was the strongest they have ever experienced. What was left standing after Odette’s landfall were buildings with no roofs, shattered windows, and debris created by strong wind up to 160 mph and heavy downfall.

Dr. Karen Galanida, Surigao City Division



Schools Division Superintendent, said the reported damage to schools amounted to about one billion pesos.

On February 14, almost two months after, the PanaboOne Team composed of expert teacher-volunteers went to Serna, the partner school of Panabo City Division, to repair the damages as part of the flagship program of DepEd Region XI, Onse Cares.

The team brought construction materials, self-learning modules (SLMs) for the learners, food packs, personal protective equipment, supplies, and some clothing. The team was able to successfully repair two classroom buildings before they went home.

Considering that there are more things to be done and there are still buildings that are damaged and need repair, Schools Division Superintendent (SDS) Reynante A. Solitario thought of raising funds for Serna Elementary School through a virtual concert with talented teachers and Division Office key personnel as performers. It was successfully held on February 28 using Facebook and Youtube live.

During the event, SDS Solitario explained his motivation to help Serna by sharing his experience when he was the SDS of Davao de Oro. According to him, ComVal Province (now Davao de Oro) was also devastated by typhoon Pablo which greatly damaged the province and left more than a thousand dead and missing.

He said he feels what the people of Surigao feel and it is not easy. However, during that time, he said, he also felt the love and concern as aid poured and many helped in the rehabilitation of schools.

In a Facebook post, teacher Maricel Cavite expressed her gratitude to Panabo City Division by posting “Thank you Panabo City Division. Grabi gjod an amo kalipay y kabutangan. Salamat, Salamat, Salamat”.

The PanaboOne Team composed of SDS Solitario, Assistant SDS Phoebe Gay L. Refamonte, chiefs of divisions Ailene B. Anonuevo and Janwarrio E. Yamota, and key Division personnel handed over 166,000 cash to the school principal, Sylvia Torrecampo, and goodies for teachers, and 3rd and 4th quarter SLMs in a simple ceremony attended by key officials of Surigao City Division headed by SDS Galanida, ASDS Laila F. Danaque, Public Schools Division Supervisor Atty. Salvador Acedilla, and their staff.

The partnership of Panabo City Division and Serna Elementary School did not stop there as more donors and sponsors from Panabo pour out their love for their brothers in Serna, Surigao. Indeed, it is a fulfillment of a promise to a brother in need. We rise by lifting others.

The Division of Davao Oriental kicked off its expanded limited face-to-face classes in 35 schools on March 1 and followed by another 219 schools in early part of April.

Schools Division Superintendent (SDS) Reynaldo B. Mellorida encouraged everyone to intensify the campaign for face-to-face classes because the current scenario suggests that there is a need to teach learners in school.

“Our learners who have been stuck for more than two years learning the modules at home should now be released from the typical confines for them to enjoy the learning environment in school,” he said.

In the Kick-Off Ceremony with teachers, parents, and stakeholders, Mellorida emphasized that there is no substitute for face-to-face classes.

“It is an ideal medium of instruction wherein teachers get chances to interact and learn better from the actual teaching-learning process.

# GOING BACK TO SCHOOL

TEXTS BY LUIS G. CULABA, JR.  
PHOTOS BY ELVIN S. BULALONG



So, I congratulate all the school personnel for the great efforts you have exerted just to make it happen,” he added.

Meanwhile, in the school visits of Assistant SDS Maria Genevieve T. Francisquete, she always reiterated that the essence of learners’ learning in the classroom is inspired

by the presence of teachers.

“It’s very timely to welcome back our dear learners to school. It’s where they belong. As teachers, we give them the best moments so they can perform well in their comfort zones,” Francisquete said.

ASDS Francisquete also observed how parents and

learners were delighted to attend the first day of onsite classes and how their teachers enthusiastically welcomed them to school.

A Grade IV learner from Boston said being in school is so inspiring because she is able to read books and do storytelling in front of her classmates.

“Happy kaayo ko nga magklase na sa eskwelahan. Maka-perform nako kauban akong mga classmate,” Kaye Dela Cruz shared upon entering the school gate while holding an umbrella with a bag on her back.

To ensure physical and instructional readiness, as well as compliance of health and safety requirements, the Division Monitoring Task Force in tandem with the Regional Monitoring Team has been deployed to conduct a series of monitoring and validation of schools.

It is projected that before the end of April, the Division of Davao Oriental will have all schools on full implementation of the progressive limited face-to-face classes.

## Serving with passion

By MA. REGINA E. ROBANTE

As a Grade 1 teacher-adviser and a school reading coordinator of Aplaya

Elementary School in Digos City Division, Cherrie G. Malaga proves the teacher-versus-parent dynamics is real and is manageable.

Teacher Cherrie succeeded in her quest to combat illiteracy through Project IROG (Increase Reader’s reading Optimal Growth). The school was

able to make 70 readers under the Frustration Level move to Instructional Level after its summer reading camp despite the stringent implementation of safe and health protocols.

Now, as the school responsively opens its gates for the progressive expansion of limited face-to-face classes, Teacher Cherrie caters 12 learners present from Monday to Thursday and 24 more learners under blended learning, modular, and TV and radio-based instruction modalities.

This is not enough yet for Teacher Cherrie. She has the indomitable spirit to juggle the responsibilities of raising her own children while nurturing other children.

After her half-day in person class, she takes time calling and assisting

her eldest child, Princess Eleen Gale in answering the learning activity sheets along with the self-learning modules while busily printing for the next week’s self-learning modules and even doing her instructional materials for the next day’s class. At nighttime, she spends time with her other two younger daughters.

“Being a teacher and a parent is very challenging because of the expectations of the community from me. Because of faith, time management, dedication, and commitment to teach the learners, including my own children, I feel I can overcome all challenge,” the 34-year-old multifaceted member of the Division Technical Working Group producing TV and radio-based instructional materials shared.





# Queen of hearts

Picking the cards of labor, luck, and love

By ALLAN BATALUNA

the most unfortunate set of cards during that time. Heart and her siblings could not even provide three complete meals a day. They would divide everything into 10 to have something to eat.

Eventually, Heart decided to stop schooling and took abode with her relatives. She became a nomad after settling in different places in Manila. Unbothered by the blunt remarks of her relatives, Heart persevered by entering multiple jobs such as being a washer, cashier, and housemaid just to acquire her daily necessities.

With the perfect timing, when Heart thought that she would settle holding cards of struggle and pain, she drew out the best pair she

side, from being a washer, she became a business owner of more than 30 laundry shops. They also are a shareholder of Sabon Depot and a supplier of heavy-duty washing machines.

However, despite her wealthy financial standing, Heart never turned her back to her simplest dream – education. She continued chasing her dream of diploma by enrolling herself to the ALS which became her full house of knowledge, practice, and education.

Through her ALS teacher, Nover Cesar L. Escabarte, Heart pursued her education in the Division of Tagum City through online and modular modality. Still, she believed that education is the greatest riches in this life. Heart started to be a dreamer and became a millionaire. Yet, she looked back on what had motivated her to continue gambling with life.

In the end, Heart carried on in her quest for the best combinations in life. She already had the three of a kind fortune that brought her from the cellar to the pinnacle – labor, luck, and love. All she needs is another card that would complete a four of a kind which will make her story a life worth gambling and living. It is when she would draw out the card of complete education – the card she yearned for so long.

Life is like a card game. It is a constant shuffling of the deck of luck, misfortune, joy, pain, gratitude, and envy. But what keeps us going is the dream of having the best combination in life – labor and love.

In the same table, an Alternative Learning System (ALS) learner, Teresa Cabutad, also known as Heart, is the royal definition of a perfect gamble that can result in a jackpot. From rags to riches, her story exemplifies how sweat and tears can become your

capital in dealing with the erratic course of life.

Just like most dwellers, Heart started out with nothing in her pocket but her dreams of becoming successful someday. She was the youngest of the 10 siblings. At a young age, she started playing it hard due to poverty. Her family could not afford food for all of them which left most of her siblings hungry.

When she was just six years old, Heart lost her parents. When she thought life was hard, it shuffled

could ever imagine – luck and love. She met the love of her life who brought all the fortunes she had today. He was the missing king that Heart needs to pair with to win life.

From that moment on, Heart turned the table and started earning her riches. She started her family with his king and began to have a business that turned out to be their aces.

After all, Heart had just been facing with the wrong side of her cards. On the flip