A CUSTOMIZED CURRICULUM IN TIMES OF CRISIS

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Since the implementation of the K to 12 Basic Education Program upon the enactment of Republic Act 10533 or otherwise known as the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013, our educational system has been using the K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum. This curriculum has remained unchanged though several revisions have been made over the years.

Seven years after, this 2020, the K to 12 Curriculum, using the Curriculum Guides per learning area, has been immensely revised to make it more meaningful and adaptable to the kind of environment and social set up we are all experiencing since the start of the COVID 19 pandemic in the middle of March. The same condition which did not allow year-end rites physically possible depriving graduating learners to march for their graduation and moving-up ceremonies.

The Department of Education has been undertaking a review of the present curriculum in the field and it was mid 2019 when the Bureau of Curriculum Development – Curriculum Standards Development Division with the Assessment Curriculum and Technology Research Centre (ACTRC) under the Department started on the task of identifying the essential learning competencies from the Basic Education Curriculum Guides as part of the on-going review. However, due to the unexpected global pandemic which caught everyone unaware and has already claimed lives and has caused economic recession in almost every part of the world, the identification of the most essential learning competencies from the list of essential learning competencies has become an educational emergency.
The DepEd needed to make this list of the Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs) available to adapt to the shortened school year and the suspension of face-to-face classroom instruction all brought about by the threats of COVID 19 and in adherence to the health and safety protocols enforced by the Department of Health (DOH), the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) and all local government units (LGU’s).

The MELCs were selected after a thorough process of identifying and choosing which competencies to retain, to merge, to drop or to rephrase.

The competencies placed under the MELCs are still conforming to the prescribed content and performance standards which are intended to develop the necessary knowledge, skills and values but further, to hone lifelong and resiliency skills which can be taught and learned even outside the four walls of the classroom.

Education implementers will be using the MELCs specifically for SY 2020-2021 and the review and results of its implementation will form part of the consideration for the on-going curriculum review of the Department.

The MELCs hope to address the tests and trials of this pandemic times and is also a response of the Department in developing resilient learning mechanisms that can be used in times of emergencies.

Teachers and school leaders can and may contextualize the MELCs in order to customize instruction based on the learners’ needs and situation.

Yes, we may have this pandemic up until this time, but our Department has made the necessary adjustment to customize the curriculum so that education will continue, and that no one will be left behind as we adhere to Sulong Edukalidad.

References:

RA 10533 Basic Education Act of 2013
Guidelines on the Use of the Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs)