ARE WE READY FOR FACE-TO-FACE LEARNING?

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As the school year, 2020 – 2021 came to its close, there have been so many questions left unanswered in the minds of the education sector. This sector is not only exclusive to teachers and school administrators but, it also involves students themselves, parents and even the community. Many have said that they miss going to school and sitting in their armchairs and listening to the teacher, rushing to the canteen during recess and running towards the school gates during the afternoon going home. All of these are just memories for now. Even the teachers wanted to have the old style of teaching back. They have gone too tired of dealing with poor internet connections, collecting learning outputs and chatting with students for monitoring learning.

There was a proposal that face-to-face learning will be brought back but on a limited number only. But this was not approved by the President in the risk of compromising the health, safety and lives of the students and the school personnel (Perez, 2021). The education secretary once reported that the Philippines is the only Asian country that has not yet re-opened the schools for face-to-face classes. Yet as seen in the results of the neighboring countries, it was a good decision made. The sudden surge and high rates of COVID-19 cases in the countries that re-opened, not to mention the evolution of the virus to a more potent and resilient type, were the consequences (Malipot, 2021). Though there are countries that were able to contain the virus, it seems that our country is not yet at par with the rest of the world in combating the viral dilemma.

But there is still hope in reopening the schools during the pandemic crisis. Three considerations and protocols must be strictly observed and followed. These would include stringent implementation of sanitation. Strict obedience to health and safety
protocols, facility preparedness and completeness and constant reminders of rules are needed in this category. Consider the local health status of the community. This will give a clear idea if reopening schools will be feasible or will only contribute to the worsening situation of the community in terms of ballooning COVID positive patients. And lastly, strengthening of remote learning options. This will require less physical attendance yet not abolishing it all throughout and less risk of contagion on school grounds (Calsyn, 2020).

If ever that these basic factors are taken very seriously sooner or later we will all be able to come back to school and relieve the ideas of teaching and learning inside the classrooms.

References: