The Department of Education (DepEd) being the steward of the basic education is always in the constant quest of determining programs and policies which improve instruction, assessment, measurement and evaluation of the teaching and learning processes. The DepEd believes that education plays vital role in the human development most especially of the millions of the Filipino students. Education also contributes to the economic and political development of the country. In the provision of Article 14 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution, it is clearly stated there that basic education must be free and accessible to all Filipinos.

Recently, the country has been burdened by the threats brought about by the COVID-19 and one sector of the government that was greatly affected is the education sector. In fact, it can be recalled that two weeks before the official ending of the school year the government imposed quarantine procedures to stop the spread of the virus and protect the health of the students. Due to this, schools were forced to close its operations and automatically promote students who have passing grades on their first to third grading periods. School year-end exercises that include graduation and recognition rites were also discouraged if the school cannot comply with the strict health protocols required by the Department of Health (DOH) and of the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases in the Philippines.

The DepEd being an optimistic agency of the government had come up with its Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP) for SY 2020-2021. The BE-LCP was presented by no other than the Education Secretary, Leonor Briones, to the IATF for its approval. It was adopted in the plan that the school year for 2020-2021 shall begin on the 24th of August 2020.
and will end on the 30\textsuperscript{th} of April 2021. Also part of the plan is the adoption of different learning delivery modes such as but not limited to face-to-face, blended learnings, distance learnings, and homeschooling and other modes of delivery shall be allowed subject to the COVID risk severity classification and compliance of the locale to the minimum health standards required by the IATF. Cancellation of different curricular and co-curricular activities that involve mass gathering was also stressed out in the plan. The BE-LCP was also presented in other member agencies for their comments and feedback prior to the approval of President Rodrigo Duterte. On the other hand, the President ordered that traditional face-to-face learning will not be allowed until a vaccine is ready for sale in the market.

It is true that this pandemic taught us lessons in life that preparation and thorough planning are imperatives of the state. Nothing can save us in this kind of uncertainties but a well-defined and constructed plan. The threats of the COVID-19 are still present in our country but this should not be a factor to deprive Filipino students of a quality and accessible education.

References:

https://www.teacherph.com/deped-learning-delivery-modalities/