EDUCATION AFTER THE PANDEMIC

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The pandemic transformed the education sector drastically. Due to the persistence of the virus, schools all over the world resorted to distance and online education. About 94% of children across the world have been learning or studying at home due to the closure of schools. Some students are left behind by education systems due to learning losses and inequities. The hybrid format of education such as distance learning, online learning and combinations of remote learning approaches makes a radical transformation on the learning experience of millions of children (Floreta & Bhula, 2020). Groups of parents and teachers are now urging the Department of Education (DepEd) to reopen schools so that the system can transition into face-to-face classes. The availability of vaccines boosts the confidence of the groups to make face-to-face classes possible in the Philippines. But the vaccine is not the sole solution to the problem. Factors such as school facilities, preparedness of stakeholders, policies and protocols should be considered.

Parents show gratitude to the efforts of teachers especially in basic education as they experience the hardships of teaching their own children. The skills of teachers and their role in student well-being has risen and highlighted. Many parents are now raising the issue with regards to the effectiveness of remote learning. Both parents and students are struggling to learn from home. The community also encounters difficulties in taking care of the vulnerable children and youth. Therefore, policy makers together with the DepEd should devise new mechanisms in delivering quality education for every Filipino student. It is critical to look beyond the immediate concerns to what possibilities are there for education at the other side of the pandemic (Vegas & Winthrop, 2020). Let us remember that education has a central role in the economic, political, and social
prosperity and stability of every nation which is why the DepEd has the highest allocated budget every year. To prevent further educational loss, shifting to face-to-face classes should be prioritized.

In the Philippines, most learners in the basic education system are enrolled in public school. Strong and inclusive public education system are critical for short-term and long-term recovery in the country. Public schools must be at the center of education systems since it plays a crucial role in reducing inequality which provides opportunity across various dimensions of society. This will also increase social cohesion and the private sector has a key role in education. In transitioning to face-to-face learning, stakeholders must focus on the improvement of the instructional core which is the heart of teaching and learning. Curriculum designers and implementers must ground their actions from rigorous and reviewed evidence to improve student accomplishment as well as how schools adapt to change. Even the pandemic is over, technology will continue to exist in the teaching and leaning process. Take note that schools must find the balance in using technology and ensure that the needs for teaching and learning of students and teachers are met. The pandemic increased the engagement of parents in the teaching and learning process. The school must forge a stronger and more trusting bond between parents and teachers. This will create a powerful support in children’s learning (Vegas & Winthrop, 2020).

A stronger public education system must emerge from this pandemic to avoid any negative long-term effects. Every Filipino deserves inclusive, quality, and accessible education. This vision is possible if all stakeholders can collaboratively work together to collect and provide opportunities from this crisis to make education move forward as soon as possible.

References: