EDUCATION FOR ALL: A CALL FOR FUNCTIONAL LITERACY

by:
Jeanette F. Jimenez
Teacher III, Magsaysay National High School

Literacy of every Filipino learner is the main focus of the educational system. This is in order to ensure that Filipinos after graduation will be a productive human resource or asset of the country. However, in the advent of the drastic changes in our system, Filipino learners must not only gain the basic literacy, but instead develop and possess higher level of literacy.

Today, it is not good enough that students are just proficient in reading and numeracy. Instead, students must possess skills and competencies such as communication skills, critical thinking and problem-solving skills. It only means that functional literacy among individuals goes beyond simple reading, writing, and counting.

The development of a functional literate individual is a challenging task for the Philippine educators. This is because there are lots of external factors that hinder the learners to learn meaningfully. In order to produce functional or productive learners, there is also a need to ensure the facilities, materials and even the competence of teachers. This is in line with the claim that there would be no competent learners if there are no competent teachers.

In 2008, according to the survey of Functional literacy Education and Mass Media (FLEMMS) Philippine Education for All (EFA) recorded 86.4 percent in terms of functional literacy. This data provide that there are 9 million illiterate Filipinos or out-of-school youth and adults. The growing number of out-of-school youth is one of the problems that Department of Education is eagerly addressing.

Since every Filipino has the right for a free and accessible education, the Department of Education started the delivery of alternative Learning system (ALS). ALS is one of the programs of the
DepEd to give assurance for providing education for all that will facilitate functional literacy for all.

This program will surely benefit the school leavers or the drop-outs and even people who does not have accessible schools in their respective communities.

Education is everyone’s right and we need to ensure that no one is being deprive of this right. The government must create more programs in order to ensure that education in the country is truly accessible and with greatest quality.

References: