EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION

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Education succeeds in an atmosphere of excellence. It is an incomparable blessing if the school is gifted with passionate teachers. Teachers who are willing and able to realize the DepEd’s vision and inspirit the DepEd’s mission.

According to the Individual Performance Commitment and Review Form (IPCRF) Template (2015), the description meaning of outstanding is that the employee’s performance represents an extraordinary level of achievement and commitment in terms of quality and time, technical skills and knowledge, ingenuity, creativity and initiative. Further, it says that employees at this level should have demonstrated exceptional job mastery in all areas of responsibility. Employment achievement and contributions to the organizations are marked excellence.

Teachers, being the front liners and the primary agents of change, shoulder a great responsibility in building the nation’s future. The level of their commitment shall determine the quality of education the school can offer. According to Pitino, excellence is the unlimited ability to improve the quality of what you have to offer. Unlimited ability may refer to the immensurable enthusiasm that fires from true love for the teaching profession.

Allow me to concretize this concept of excellence through sharing the names of these great teachers whose overflowing desire and persistence made them transform typical classrooms into 21st century education- filled learning environment.

Aimee Marie Gragasin, Ph.D., Special Science Teacher V, Philippine Science High School-Cagayan Valley Campus (Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya), 2018 Metrobank Foundation Outstanding Filipino awardee, is a testament of excellence. She is a dedicated mentor for 25 years and known as Nueva Vizcaya’s science education innovator. She
initiated the annual Summer Internship Program, which gives junior students a preview of the research field and exposes them to the realities and intricacies of science application in the country. She also devised a series of year-round educational sessions for her co-faculty members.

Jennifer M. Rojo, currently a Master Teacher II at Neogan Elementary School, Tagaytay City was a 2017 Metrobank Foundation Outstanding Filipino awardee. She concretizes excellence by working with her inspiring and out-of-the-box ideas. She authored a JenSci-Voc (Joyful Enrichment in Science Vocabulary) in 2015. It was a compilation of scientific vocabulary worksheets in the form of puzzles and games. She also developed the Mobile Sci-Hub/Lab, a house-inspired foldable instructional material that has concept maps of plants and animals as walls and materials for a mini-science laboratory inside.

Another clear picture of excellence is the 2016 Metrobank Foundation Outstanding Filipino awardee, Dr. Katherine Faith M. Bustos, a high school English teacher in Nueva Vizcaya General Comprehensive High School (NVGCHS) in the town of Bayombong. Her creativity and initiative proved that technology can be capitalized in the teaching-learning process. She pioneered the development of the NVGCHS's English Facebook page, which became an online venue where the teachers and kids continue subject topic discussions outside the four walls of a classroom. She also programmed the Tuesday Reading Clinic which used a collaboration approach. Dr. Bustos has also been spearheading the Mini English Language Clinic in eight sites across Nueva Vizcaya, wherein 20 grade school students receive remedial tutorials each year since 2010. The said classes also come with noblest intentions of providing medical assistance, feeding programs and giving school supplies for kids.

Teaching is a vocation. One should have his heart into it to achieve excellence. It requires an investment of time and potential to create effect and offer a legacy. Excellence is working beyond one’s comfort zone, consistently striving to be better each day to
deliver quality education. It is a commitment to come up with big and unique ideas to address different learning styles to discover and develop full potentials.

As Robert John Meehan says, “Excellence in teaching is achieved by caring more, risking more, envisioning more and expecting more than others.”

However, a teacher does not need to aim for a national and prestigious award to attain excellence. The genuine love for the profession is enough to bring out the best within oneself. The teacher should simply begin with thoughtful planning and execution of his daily lessons, careful selection of teaching strategy and creative designing of instructional materials. He should be willing to invest unlimited time unconditionally because teaching requires devotion. Time spent with the students should be valued to assure maximization and productivity of the teaching-learning process.

A teacher must not be afraid to go on trial and error to discover which approach best suits his target learners. He should learn to explore variety of ICT tools to deliver experiential learning. He must capitalize the power of technology to advance the education process. He should conceptualize unique and genuine ideas to level up teaching standards and magnify students’ development. But all to this point, excellence does not end within the four walls of the classroom or the teaching duties. It should embrace the system and help envision for its success.

Excellence is achievable. It does not have to start big. It is like a process to perfection. One must be consistent, persevering and determined to effect change and hone better Filipinos.

A great teacher Aristotle once said, “Excellence is never an accident. It is always the result of high intention, sincere effort and intelligent execution; it represents the wise choice of many alternatives- choice not chance, determines your destiny.”
References:


