IT TAKES TWO TO TANGO: EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE COMPONENTS ON STUDENTS’ HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT

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The Department of Education (DepEd) emphasized the importance of extracurricular activities as part of the development of every student. In fact, it is strongly stipulated on the recently released DepEd Order No. 36 series 2016 also known as Policy Guidelines on Awards and Recognition for the K to 12 Basic Education Program. The said order is in line with the implementation of Republic Act No. 10533, otherwise known as Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013 (K to 12 Law). The department strongly believe that both extracurricular activities and academic performance of every student can make them equipped and ready once they are graduated.

Different interpretation of the said order had made every parent and student confused of what will be the role of the extracurricular activities on the academic achievement. The exclusion of the extracurricular activities on the computation of the academic achievement misled everyone on the importance of the two.

Academic subjects and extra-curricular activities complement each other and develop a well-rounded, socially skilled, and healthier student. There are so many possible extra-curricular activities that each student can choose one that appeals to him or her personally. Activities range from athletics, various sports, scouts, girl guides, debating, music and chess to paramilitary groups like the cadets. This list is not even exhaustive. Some students choose more than one pursuit.
Numerous studies have been conducted concerning the relationship between extracurricular activities and academic performance. Total extracurricular activity participation (TEAP), or participation in extracurricular activities in general, is associated with an improved grade point average, higher educational aspirations, increased college attendance, and reduced absenteeism” (Broh, 2002, para. 8).

Fujita cited in his study that many extracurricular activities have proven to be beneficial in building and strengthening academic achievement, even if the activities are not obviously related to academic subjects (Marsh & Kleitman, 2002, para. 9). “A number of studies revealed that students participating in extracurricular activities did better academically than students who did not participate” (Marsh & Kleitman, 2002, para. 7). Researchers have particularly studied the relationship between extracurricular activities and academic performance in adolescents. One study found that “adolescents who participated in extracurricular activities reported higher grades, more positive attitudes toward school, and higher academic aspirations” (Darling, Caldwell, & Smith, 2005, para. 1). Darling, Caldwell, and Smith (2005) conducted a longitudinal study concerning extracurricular activities and their effect on various aspects of development, including academic performance.

O’Dea (1994) also explains in his research that activities allow students to develop skills such as leadership, sportsmanship, self-discipline, self-confidence, and the ability to handle competitive situations. Extracurricular activities offer an opportunity to interact in ways that allow the previously mentioned skills to blossom. The developmental minded believe that many of these skills would be impossible or very difficult to develop in a classroom setting.

The given discussions had brought to light the importance of the extracurricular activities to the academic performance of the students. Generally, extracurricular activities have a great impact on the development of a child. It is believed that it is another avenue for a child to explore and learn a new that could be significant in their
development. Needless to say, it takes two to tango, both are complimentary to each other. Students are free to explore their individuality while they are learning holistically. Since holistic development is being manifested in the department’s mission and vision, it is deemed to live on its battle cry for the future heroes of our nation.

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