K-12 CURRICULUM AFTER SEVEN YEARS

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The K-12 curriculum has become a household word to the masses, most especially for those involved in the educational sector. It has split the opinion of the public since the very day that it was conceptualize. People believed that the Philippine educational system was not ready for such a change and that the facilities were already scares and problematic at that time and adding two years to the curriculum will only serve to destabilize the already fragile structure. But regardless, the then administration still pushed through all the negative backlash.

It all began with the lesser known Universal Kindergarten Implementation which was launched in the school year 2011-2012. It is the baseline program which gave birth to the now known K-12 curriculum. This program was enhanced and by 2013 it was enacted to into a full pledge law the, Republic Act 10533 also known as the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013. This law encompasses Kindergarten, Elementary, High School, and the Senior High School. Every Public high school was anticipated to offer Senior High school while each Regional Office of the Department of Education sent out list of private schools and Higher Educational Institutions that are eligible to Senior High school through a Regional Memorandum.

The year 2020 marks the seventh-year milestone of the K-12 curriculum. So, did it really accomplish anything?

During its pilot years, the implementation of the curriculum prompted the establishment of new buildings and facilities. Equipment and machineries were also bought to accommodate the technical vocational strands to be offered. DepEd also hired
additional manpower that specialized on teaching specific strands. Although the program did not go as smoothly as they want, with the new resources having difficulties reaching remote areas and the sheer number of personnel needed, the program was up and running by 2016 and the first batch of Senior High School students were enrolled to the system.

The K-12 curriculum aimed to produce life ready students. It is a program in which students are equipped with adequate skills in order for them to be ready for either college or for applying jobs. K-12 wanted to make sure that even the underprivileged has chance to obtain proper jobs after they graduate. K-12 is also a way to ensure that our students are globally competitive since the curriculum employs the Global standards in terms of the number of years of education.

In March 2018 the first ever batch of students that fully went through the K-12 curriculum graduated Senior High School, and right off the bat the differences were apparent. In relation to the changes that the K-12 curriculum brought, the Higher Education also made adjustments to facilitate the domino effect that came about. Universities and Colleges implemented a system in which students are only allowed to enroll on course that are aligned with the strand that the students took in Senior High. This rule gave limitation for students’ choices and option when it comes to the course they want to take up. But should’ve not been a surprise since the it was presumed from the very beginning.

The real problem did not come from the students that wanted to enroll for higher education. The true dilemma is for those who wish to apply for jobs after they finished Senior High. Although there are companies that welcomed the newly graduated individuals, it was not the case for all. The industries it seemed are not ready for these new implementations and are still preferring the college graduates over the Senior high. This left many graduates unemployed which defies the purpose of senior High school.
When this issue came to light however, many companies pledged to accept Senior high graduates and will give equal opportunities thereafter.

As a sum up, the Department of Education did what it could to make sure that the implementation of the K-12 curriculum will be up to standards. They made great adjustments to accommodate the students. But like any other programs, it is hard to ensure an absolutely smooth out come because there are several factors that are not within their control.

Did it work? Probably. Do we need to abort the program? Definitely not. The government already put too much resources to the program for us to just shut it down in the middle of the road. Innovation does not work overnight. There are flaws, admittedly, but it doesn’t mean that the program failed. The flaws are indication for improvement not a reason to stop.

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