NO TO GIFTS AND TOKENS

by:
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Just a few days ago, while browsing the DepEd Bataan Website to keep myself updated, I came across reading Division Memorandum No. 21 s. 2017 Re: Discouraging asking and/or giving gifts and tokens, as well as the instruction that all school offices need to put in conspicuous places a frame bearing this mandate:

While this Office highly appreciates thoughtful gestures, the giving of gifts and tokens to this Office is strongly discouraged.

I felt that it is really high time that all DepEd offices, officials and employees start rebuilding the imagery of integrity and unbiased service to all the stakeholders and clients of the Department.

Every DepEd official – from the grassroots ranks of the teachers up to the department heads and administrators including administrative and management staff – needs to dispense of his/her duties and responsibilities without the need for any gifts, tokens, money or donation of whatever sort and for whatever reason.

It may sound hypocrite if we say we do not need any of them. Such gifts and tokens may all look very appealing. We may look pretentious if we say that such gracious acts do not make us feel important, cared for and respected. Such gifts may boost our ego and self-gratification.
However, while receiving such gifts provide us with material satisfaction, without us knowing it (or at least not being conscious about it) it somehow puts our position and its integrity on the line.

Such acts may somehow jeopardize our aspiration to do our work to the best of our ability - in a fair and just manner and without any colour of bias and favouritism.

We cannot avoid the fact that at times, those who give tokens and gifts may somehow feel that our actions and decisions may be influenced by the kind of token and gift they offer and give us.

This now, may somehow create some kind of “awkwardness” with the way we will have to undertake our duties and responsibilities.

Without us knowing it, those people who indulge us with gifts or tokens may somehow have the feeling or thought that they can always have the easy way in and out for whatever favour they might need from us. It would all depend on the kind or worth of the gift or token, thus, demeaning our positions and our personal integrity.

I am pretty sure that we have all worked hard to get to the position we are now serving at. In addition, we may also be very eager to get the respect and admiration of the community for the work we are doing. Human as we are, it boosts our morale knowing that other people – the school stakeholders – have high regards for us and the work that we do.

If receiving of gifts and tokens would trigger disrespect and would give other people the chance to look down on us and put our positions and work in contempt, we better start avoiding them.

After all, as we work hard and live within our means, we can always buy and get whatever tokens people may shower us with.
What’s more important is that we have our positions and personal integrity intact

References:
DepEd order no 2 s 1995. Prohibiting DECS officials from receiving gifts, share percentage or benefits issued on Jan 12, 1995

Section 7 of the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees