PROVIDING EQUITY AND INCLUSION IN EDUCATION

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A lot of things happened in the past, and they happened so fast. The pandemic has curtailed our ways and means to access quality education. It hinders the banner program of the Department of Education (DepEd) on Sulong EduKalidad, which establishes equity and access to quality education because of the community restrictions and strict health protocols.

Amidst this crisis, DepEd, from the national down to school levels, have done its initiatives and innovative efforts to make learning continuity happen despite the pandemic and global disruptions. But the steps made mostly entail digital capacities and capabilities. It becomes a conflict and challenge then to achieve equity in accessing quality education, because of the status of the country, and of the schools to adapt to virtual educational setting, when many families can even afford a single cellphone for use of the whole family.

Schools may devise a framework for contextual analysis in relation to inclusion and equity in education (Springer Link, 2020). This is also what the school administrators, together with the internal and external stakeholders of the school, considered in the crafting of Basic Education Learning Continuity Operational Plan (BE-LCOP). There should be an area in the framework that ensures that the target programs, projects, and activities of the school are anchored to the important operational plans of the school – the School Improvement Plan (SIP) and Annual Implementation Plan (AIP).

Here are few tips for teachers to promote equity and inclusion in their teaching. (DiFranza, 2019)
1. Always listen to each learner. Identify situations that may be biased, let the learners speak and be heard. Process the situation and let them learn from it right away.

2. Establish classroom standards. To promote equity, make sure that we set standards at the very beginning so that these standards will guide everyone in the class, and teachers don’t have to be stressed in thinking of every single recipe to each learner. Make the standards clear to the learners.

3. Build an atmosphere of respect. Let the students know that they are free to voice out their feelings, emotions, and opinions, but these should be positively addressed and constructively delivered.

4. Set personal teaching standards. It is not only the class who must set standards, but also the teacher. A teacher should take time to practice and live out his or her personal teaching standards.

Alongside these suggestions, it is the responsibility of the teachers to always make sure that the teaching and learning endeavors are one for all and all for one.

References: