RED ALERT: STRENGTHENING SCHOOL’S DISASTER AWARENESS AND PREPAREDNESS

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Geographically, Philippine Archipelago is prone to many destructive phenomena such as typhoon, earthquake, tsunami, fire, flooding, storm surge and alike. These phenomena would lead to great human catastrophe if not been properly prepared and responded. Therefore, there is a need for us to be always in full red alert even to the very insignificant day of the year that we thought that these kinds of calamities would not happen. This kind of issue is a social problem. Thus, immediate measures should be taken to prepare for and reduce the effects of disaster (International Federation, 2018). This involves not only those who are assigned by the government to safeguard and respond to these kinds of misfortunes but also each individuals. With this mandate, all schools throughout the country need to be sober and alert on the possible calamities that may happen. Therefore, there is a need for strengthening school’s disaster awareness and preparedness program.

Strong communication can help in an effective dissemination of information to the student. The traditional way of information in school is done through brochures, pamphlets, decoration and stickers. To strengthen this kind of communication, incorporation of mass media (Adjusters International Corporate, 2018) is indeed a good help. This can be in a form of chatroom wherein each member has the freedom of expressing their thoughts about disaster preparedness and awareness. Likewise, to come up with videos, layout, pictures about disaster preparedness and shoutouts that are related to calamity awareness. In this way, information will be easily cascaded on the manner that young generation wanted it to be.
The conduct of quarterly earthquake and fire drill, is indeed a help to come up with a realistic way of confronting those disasters. However, commonly, the student just take it for granted even though teachers let them to realize its value. Experts in the field of fire and earthquake should be invited to fortify on what the teachers are teaching the students. They can be personalities from the Provincial or Municipal Risk Reduction Office or Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP). Likewise, there should be hands on practice to the students on how to handle such kind of natural phenomenon. Students are more motivated if they would experience the concepts presented by themselves.

An intensified Disaster and Risk Reduction month (Disaster Risk Management System, 2017) will also strengthen the knowledge of the students about Disaster Management. Programs like parade, contest and symposium would empower the students to engage and showcase their talents related to disaster management. This program will be about earthquake response, fire management, typhoon preparedness and other responses to natural calamities. Moreover, this will encourage other students to learn and be experts on disaster management skills. Symposium would also help the students through conceptual and theoretical understanding about the different calamities. Through the personal experiences of the experts they would have a broader knowledge about disaster managements.

Last is a strong commitment of the school personnel to school disaster management. This work is not just a task given to school disaster risk reduction coordinator but a concern of all the employees of the school. Though our perseverance, commitment, and collaboration will help to have a more prepared school towards natural calamities. With these, if disasters come, we are prepared to respond, collaborate to help and competent to react. Hence, we should always be in red alert and to have a strengthened disaster preparedness and awareness.
References:

