SPECIAL SCIENCE CURRICULUM IN THE PANDEMIC TIMES

by: Misty B. Dela Cruz  
Teacher I, Orani National High School

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19). Pandemic. Vaccine. Scary right? As long as the name of the virus that brought chaos in humans since the latter part of 2019, it affected even the educational system that led to the question, where is the stand of the educational system now? With schools offering special science curriculum, what is the quality of education being offered to the students at the moment? Let me take you a short tour of my simple assessment.

It is stipulated under Department Order 46, s. 2012 on Policy Guidelines on the Implementation of the Special Curricular Programs at the Secondary Level which aims to correspond with the standards that the other countries are already offering to be at paced with the global needs in education. It was created as a career pathway, and as what the main objective of the Special Curricular Programs stated on the onset of its approval, it will take the place of Technology and Livelihood Education (TLE) of the core curriculum in the Junior High School. All the other subjects of the core curriculum shall be adopted, including the time allocation as stipulated in DepEd Order No. 31, s. 2012 and should be followed accordingly. The add-ons to the core curriculum shall be the advance subjects of the Special Programs in Science like Environmental Science, Biotechnology, Consumer Chemistry, Research 1, Research 2, and Robotics. Likewise, the schools have the option to further enrich the curriculum, provided that the requirements of the core curriculum and the special curricular programs have been met and it is aligned with the vision and mission of the Department of Education. Having the policy stated above, it is but imperative and the desire of the educational system to offer quality education at its best with the DepEd atop of all its undertakings. A different twist was made as the school year
2020-2021 opened last October. To ensure health protocols and combat the spread of the infectious virus, different modalities were offered to students suiting their needs and applicable to what the school can offer and extend. With that, education continues. And it prosper as scheduled monitoring of modules were done. Yes, it made students learn while staying at home and be promoted on the next year level while waiting for the pandemic to ease. But the real question is, is it enough? In the case of those students enrolled under the special science curriculum, face to face learning definitely have a bigger impact to inculcate knowledge for lifelong learning. Now, are they really learning the art of specialized subjects they must take this school year? Got some feedback from both parents and students thru online platforms and they cry about not being able to understand everything as they have to learn from their own or use the different mechanism engines online. Really far from 100% transfer of knowledge, having the teacher-student interaction is the best key to ensure that students learn and understand the concepts involved in the most essential learning competencies. No matter how we try to do it now, it’s outlandish. With the vaccine waiting for initiation in our country, we can say that it’s almost there. We can almost see the silver lining. And until that time comes, the special science curriculum will still wait for approval for face to face learning. By then, quality learning is achievable.

In spite of the different hindrances in the educational system, we managed. We find ways and we deliver. I guess that’s better rather than not being able to do anything at all. It’s hard, really hard, but we will just keep on hoping that one day, when this pandemic ends, everything that was laid in the annual implementation plan of the school will be carried out for the benefit of both the administration, the faculty, the students and other stakeholders. And while we wait for that, students, please sit back, relax, answer your module and wait for this pandemic to fold. Hang in there. We got your back!
References: