SPECIAL SCIENCE EDUCATION: PREPARING AND INVOLVING STUDENTS INTO DIGITAL AND MODERN ERA

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In today’s generation, learners are already introduced to digital and modern era. From using gadgets as their past time at home to using digital educational tools at classrooms and from dissecting a frog to a more advanced scientific experiments, these can clearly show that Science has already invaded the educational system as well as the daily living of people. These not only manifest in terms of technology but also in agriculture, environment, chemistry, and other disciplines and practices wherein Science is involved, and these call for the Department of Education to include Special Science Education in different public schools in the Philippines.

In order to meet the challenges of a fast changing world, DepEd implemented the “Policy Guidelines in the Implementation of the Special Science Elementary Schools (SSES) Project” under DepEd Order No. 52, s. 2011 which aims “to give priority to Education, Science and Technology to foster patriotism and nationalism, accelerate social programs and promote total human development.” According to a press release published on DepEd website, it is a research and development project designed to develop Filipino children who are equipped with scientific and technological knowledge, skills and attitudes; creative and have positive values; and lifelong learning skills to become productive partners in the development of the community and the society.

This mandate could be life-changing because whether we admit it or not, regular Science classes in a normal classroom setting are not enough to holistically develop the students to be equipped with scientific skills. This is the reason why SSES is needed in
order to prioritize and centralize the learning of qualified students in the field of Science. The skills and practices that they can learn from the special class can be used for them to contribute to the modernization of the different sectors in the country such as education, economics, transportation, technology, environment, agriculture and many other disciplines in which Science is involved.

Further, the Special Science Education is not only exclusive for elementary schools but to secondary schools as well. According to Deped (2013), they are already providing financial support to 198 public schools nationwide implementing the Science, Technology and Engineering (STE) program. The fund will be used for supplies and materials for science investigatory projects and laboratory needs. Under DepEd Order No. 38, series of 2013, it was stated that the department shall support to public secondary schools implementing the STE program, which used to be known as Engineering and Science Education Program (ESEP) when it was piloted in 1994 by the Department of Science & Technology (DOST).

Since it has a legal basis, it is important to continuously support performing schools when it comes to having investigatory projects, scientific experiments and innovations in order to achieve the DepEd’s goal to prepare Filipino students to be globally competitive and to possess advanced skills concerning science and technology. Aside from the equipment, materials and facilities, it is also important to provide trainings and seminars for Science and Mathematics teachers who are teaching and supervising students in this endeavor.

Also, as a payback, elementary and secondary schools should perform well, strive to create more innovation and experiments and contribute to the community and society in order to compensate the resources given to them by DepEd. The contributions they are making must not be for themselves but rather for the development of our country because the main goal of this special education is for the national development through innovations and advancements being created by those qualified students.
Hopefully, the DepEd will be able to fund more schools in the near future in order to equip more students in scientific and technological knowledge so that there will be no more learners who will be left behind when it comes to these disciplines. It is understandable that budget is the main issue here that is why as of now, only selected schools were provided by this special education. The best thing that DepEd can do is to provide even school-based trainings and seminars regarding science and technology which may involve simple hands-on experimentation so that students can at least have more advanced knowledge that are not taught in their Science classes in a normal classroom setting.

References:
