WHEN NUMBERS TALK

by:
Ricer B. Santoyo
Teacher III, Mariveles National High School – Cabcaben

I heartly yearn for the ordinary old time of delivering my lesson. Nonetheless, until there is the presence of peril of the infection that could jeopardize the wellbeing of my pupils just as myself and loved ones, distance learning is the best modality I see the safest.

An underlying principle of physical interaction classes in areas considered generally safe for COVID-19 was agreed upon by President Rodrigo Duterte last December 14. The embraced recommendation set out by the DepEd incorporates the dry run or fundamental realization of face-to-face classes in favored schools in places with negligible hazard towards COVID for the whole month of January 2021.

Nevertheless, a few groups put dismay over the plan, voicing out that at first, school bases in a still untamed pandemic are at stake, given the nonattendance of health facility in schools. In any circumstance, the DOH pounded forward the typical homeroom set-up in spots where the pandemic has leveled out.

More so, the DOH uncovered that the health facility in scholarly institutions should be made accessible in consistence with least health guidelines, which join ceaseless handwashing and physical distancing.

With these in mind, an inquiry begins to bother me, "Are Philippine schools prepared to execute face-to-face classes during pandemic?"

With my personal understanding that to make use of conventional teaching and learning modality should be place on hold not until the state funded schools' health facility are tended accordingly. In accordance to DepEd, there are only 3,657 state supported school medical aids for 21,741,049 state financed pupils this year which implies
one is to more than 5,000 school nurse and student proportion. Also, DepEd exposed that there are just 13,081 academic institution with health facility out of 47,013 (28%). All the more in this way, 2,970 schools have an absence of an essential handwashing area.

Contemplating on these figures, I acknowledge these are signs why up close and personal interaction amidst pandemic is horrendous. In spite of World Health Organization's (WHO) statement that youths below 18 years old include only 8.5% of the recorded positive of COVID-19, which is similarly lower than other age range, they are regularly mild cases. In the Philippines, only 7% of the 449,000 declared cases as of December 13 have a place with 0-19 age range. Regardless, these numbers bank on the welfare and security of students that ought not be underestimated.

I humbly recommend then that fortifying the school health facility should be organized first before commencing the face-to-face classes during pandemic. But after almost two weeks, the President halted his order for face-to-face classes on January due to the new strains of COVID-19.

References: