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PRESS RELEASE

DepEd: Schools are last resort facilities for vaccination drive

March 28, 2021 – As the government continues its inoculation rollout, the Department of Education (DepEd) said public schools should only be used as last option for vaccination sites.

“Under our current policy, school buildings should only be used as a last resort if there is no other place. Existing policies with regard to use of DepEd facilities still apply to vaccination centers,” Education Secretary Leonor Magtolis Briones noted.

In a memorandum on the use of DepEd schools and other facilities sent to officials and school heads, Secretary Briones enumerated the following general guidelines: (1) schools shall be the final option as vaccination sites; (2) it should pass the requirements of the DOH and the IATF, and (3) no other COVID-related activities must be conducted in the selected venues.

This echoes the proposition of President Rodrigo Roa Duterte and the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) to only utilize schools should there be no other available space in the locality.

The Department’s policy in the implementation of the Philippine National Deployment and Vaccination Plan (NDVP) for COVID-19 noted that schools selected as last resort should be in a strategic location with sufficient space, facilities, and human resources, among the other requirements set by the DOH.

“We are ceaselessly attuning with the DOH and the local government units (LGUs) in determining the schools that are capable to meet their standards because we know that not all schools have the facilities needed for an immunization activity,” Secretary Briones said.

Putting first the safety and welfare of DepEd personnel reporting onsite and the learners, the Education chief stressed that pilot schools identified for face-to-face learning and schools with ongoing health-related projects are excluded from being a possible vaccination center.

“Since last year until now that we are edging closer to the long-term solution to this crisis, we [are] ensuring the delivery of education to our learners. With the administration’s vaccination efforts in place, the Department will make sure that no learning continuity operations in schools will be interrupted by this,” she said.

The Regional Offices have the power to allow the use of schools as vaccination centers based on the endorsement of the Schools Division Offices (SDO).

Moreover, LGU and health officials will decide whether to use schools as an isolation or immunization site since utilizing it for both purposes at the same time is discouraged.

DepEd’s role in promoting informed decisions on COVID-19 vaccination



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Acknowledging its crucial role in promoting government projects, DepEd also maintained its commitment to educate the public and the learners amidst the pandemic and help them make informed decisions regarding the COVID-19 vaccination program.

"DepEd role is and has always been education. And education—having access to correct information, and having the ability to make correct decisions based on those available information—is as relevant as ever," Sec. Briones noted.

To augment the education campaign on COVID-19 vaccination drive, DepEd will utilize its multi-media platforms such as DepEd TV, DepEd Commons, DepEd social media pages, learning modules and activities, and learning action cell (LAC) sessions to disseminate integrated information about the benefits, risks, and other matters related to vaccines.

"Everyone is enjoined to constantly seek opportunities to obtain correct information about the vaccines and vaccination, and about the government's plan and efforts related to COVID-19 Vaccination," Briones said.

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About the Department of Education

The Department of Education (DepEd) formulates, implements, and coordinates policies, plans, programs, and projects in the areas of formal and non-formal basic education. It supervises all elementary and secondary education institutions, including alternative learning systems, both public and private; and provides for the establishment and maintenance of a complete, adequate, and integrated system of basic education relevant to the goals of national development.

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