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Kagawaran ng Edukasyon
Tanggapan ng Pangalawang Kalihim

AIDE MEMOIRE

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**INPUTS ON MEASURES FOR DRRM POLICIES, STRUCTURES,
AND PROGRAMS IN THE EDUCATION SECTOR,
AND THE INTEGRATION OF DRRM AND CLIMATE CHANGE
ADAPTATION IN THE K TO 12 CURRICULUM
PROPOSED IN SENATE BILLS 1565, 736, 439, 960, 1140, 1674**

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I. SUMMARY OF DRRMS' POSITION ON THE SENATE BILLS

The Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Service (DRRMS) submits its comments on the following Senate Bills relevant to its mandate: **SB 1565** or the Education in the New Normal Act, **SB 736** or the Disaster Preparedness in Schools Act, **SB 439** or the Mandatory Disaster Relief and Response Inclusion in School Curricula Act of 2019; **SB 960** or the Teaching of Disaster Awareness and Disaster Mitigation; **SB 1140** or the Teaching of Disaster Awareness and Disaster Mitigation; **SB 1674** or the Inclusion of Pandemics Education in the Curriculum.

For the purpose of these comments, the DRRMS clustered the six Senate Bills into two thematic areas: (1) Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) Policies, Structures, and Programs in the education sector and (2) integration of DRRM and Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) core messages and concepts in the K to 12 Curriculum.

While the DRRMS welcomes these proposals to improve the institutional policies and structures on DRRM in the Department, this office believes that most of the measures forwarded in the bills already cover existing policies and systems. The same is also true in terms of the integration of DRRM and CCA in the curriculum, as this is already being done in line with existing laws (e.g. RA 10121 and RA 9729).

Below are the **summaries of specific comments** on the six Senate Bills for consideration:

THEMATIC AREA	DRRMS' POSITION
<p>1. Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) Policies, Structures, and Programs in the education sector</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senate Bill 1565 – Education in the New Normal Act and • Senate Bill 736 – Disaster 	<p>Based on an assessment of current disaster risk reduction and management laws and policies, structures, and operations of the national government and the Department of Education, this Office raises the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The proposed Safe Schools Reopening Task Force duplicates existing institutional arrangements, particularly those operational in the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC). In place of the creation of a Safe Schools Reopening Task Force, the existing NDRRMC apparatus, particularly the



<p>Preparedness in Schools Act</p>	<p>National Education Cluster, led by the Department of Education, may instead be strengthened.</p> <p>b. The contents of a Safe Schools Reopening Plan as discussed in the Bill are reflected and operationalized in current DRRM plans and programs for education and in contingency and response plans, including the <i>Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan for SY 2020-2021 in Light of the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency</i>; for efficiency and noting past investments in capacity building and planning, existing plans and programs should instead be improved rather than replaced.</p> <p>c. Challenges in fully funding prevention and mitigation, preparedness, response, and rehabilitation and recovery interventions for the education sector must be addressed through the allocation of more resources and exploring other fund sources.</p> <p>d. Better support may be given to DRRM in Education service providers through (a) supporting the DRRMS' expansion proposal which notably provides additional plantilla items for DRRM covering the DRRMS at the Central Office, Regional Offices, Schools Division Offices, up to the school-level, and (b) providing hazard pay, insurance, and other related benefits to DepEd DRRM workers.</p> <p>e. The Bill commendably institutionalizes measures for supporting learning continuity through the hybrid learning system, distance learning, and digital transformation under education in the new normal and other emergencies, among others. These would help address existing challenges that the education sector faces.</p>
<p>2. Integration of DRRM and Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) core messages and concepts in the K to 12 Curriculum</p> <p>• Senate Bill 439 – The Mandatory Disaster Relief and</p>	<p>Senate Bills 439, 960, 1140, and 1674 recommends the inclusion of disaster awareness and mitigation in the curricula of primary and secondary schools.</p> <p>As mandated by the Republic Act 9729 or the Climate Change Act of 2009 and the Republic Act 10121 or the Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of 2010, DepEd has already integrated Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) and</p> 

<p>Response Inclusion in School Curricula Act of 2019</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senate Bill 960 – Teaching of Disaster Awareness and Disaster Mitigation • Senate Bill 1140 – Teaching of Disaster Awareness and Disaster Mitigation; • Senate Bill 1674 – Inclusion of Pandemics Education in the Curriculum 	<p>Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) basic principles and concepts in the National K to 12 curriculum. These basic principles and concepts are present in four core learning areas namely Araling Panlipunan, Edukasyon sa Pagpapakatao, Health and Science from Kinder to Grade 10. A special subject in DRRM is offered in Senior High School as part of the General Academic Strand (GAS). Senate Bill 1675 focused on the inclusion of pandemics education in the curriculum. The Health subject taken by Grades 1 to 10 students includes the study of epidemiology. As such, learning competencies on Personal Health and Prevention and Control of Diseases & Disorders are taken by students.</p>
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In terms of curriculum integration on DRRM and CCA in the basic education curriculum, this office defers to the Bureau of Curriculum Development for the Department’s position on the manner and process of integration and educational mainstreaming and assessing its implications on the K to 12 curriculum.

II. DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND MANAGEMENT POLICIES, STRUCTURES, AND PROGRAMS IN THE EDUCATION SECTOR

All efforts which recognize the life-sustaining and life-saving functions of education, and the need to strengthen the institutional resilience of the education sector are welcomed. These premises and goals are shared by existing laws and structures which need to be taken into consideration by Senate Bills 1565 and 736.

EXISTING LAWS, STRUCTURES, AND PLANS

The Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of 2010 (Republic Act 10121), acknowledges the need to adopt a disaster risk reduction and management approach that is holistic, comprehensive, integrated, proactive, and participative. RA 10121 provides a strong legal and institutional basis for disaster risk reduction and management (DRRM) in the country and the development of policies and plans for disaster risk reduction, risk assessment and early warning, knowledge building and awareness raising and preparedness for effective response and recovery.

Strengthening RA 10121, the Children’s Emergency Relief and Protection Act (Republic Act 10821) focuses on providing for children’s needs, before, during and after disasters and emergencies. The Comprehensive Emergency Program for Children (CEPC), crafted in accordance with the said law with DepEd inputs, mandates national and local agencies to execute and maintain a comprehensive emergency program. Recognizing education as among the



rights that need to be protected before, during, and after disasters, the CEPC includes the prompt resumption of educational services for children as one of its components. Stronger measures to ensure the safety and security of affected children; and the delivery of health, medical, and nutrition services are likewise among the eight program components. In addition, it also declares that schools may only be used as evacuation centers only as a last resort and provides guidelines in cases that their use would be required.

Management processes mandated by RA 10121 include analyzing potential events or emerging situations that might threaten society or the environment, and establishing arrangements in advance to enable timely, effective, and appropriate responses. Aside from contingency plans, the said law also brought forth response plans and public service continuity plans from the national to local levels.

To operationalize this, the law established the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (NDRRMC). The NDRRMC is empowered with policymaking, coordination, integration, supervision, monitoring, evaluation, and capacity-building functions relating to DRRM.

While NGAs, including the Department of Education, and representatives of LGUs, CSOs, and the private sector sit in the NDRRMC, heads of the following lead the council:

- a. Department of National Defense and Chair;
- b. Department of the Interior and Local Government as Vice Chairperson for Disaster Preparedness;
- c. Department of Social Welfare and Development as Vice Chairperson for Disaster Response;
- d. Department of Science and Technology as Vice Chairperson for Disaster Prevention and Mitigation; and
- e. National Economic and Development Authority as Vice Chairperson for Disaster Rehabilitation and Recovery.

The Office of Civil Defense (OCD) meanwhile has the primary mission of administering a comprehensive national civil defense and DRRM program, which includes reducing the vulnerabilities and risk to hazards and managing the consequences of disasters. As such, the Administrator of the OCD serves as the Executive Director of the NDRRMC.

This structure is replicated at the regional level (Regional DRRMC) at the provincial, city, and municipal levels (Local DRRMC). At the barangay level, Barangay Development Councils serve as the LDRRMC.

The NDRRMC operates under the framework of the Cluster Approach. Adopted through NDCC Memorandum Circular No. 05, series of 2007, as amended by NDCC MC No. 12, series of 2008, the cluster approach is the aggregation of the response efforts of government agencies, humanitarian organizations, faith-based organizations, private and civil society organizations, and UN agencies.



DEPED INVOLVEMENT IN THE NDRRMC

The NDRRMC operates emergency clusters which are recognized and activated by the Philippine Government in times of disasters. As a member of the NDRRMC, DepEd heads the National Education Cluster¹ under the Response Cluster which contextualizes DRRM for the education sector. In performing its role under the Response Cluster, DepEd also sits in the following:

- a. Camp Coordination and Camp Management Cluster, with schools continuing to be used as evacuation centers subject to RA 10821;
- b. Protection Cluster, for child protection and gender-based violence matters;
- c. Management of the Dead and Missing Cluster, to support the management of the bereaved family for victim/s who are learners or personnel;
- d. Health Cluster, focusing on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support to learners and DepEd personnel, and Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) in Emergencies
- e. International Humanitarian Assistance Cluster, for facilitating the acceptance, processing, and delivery of international assistance such as in-kind and financial donations

Situated within the framework of emergency operations of both the NDRRMC and the Humanitarian Country Team², the Education Cluster is tasked to bring together government agencies, civil society and non-government partners to ensure immediate access of all disaster-affected children to quality education in a safe and secure environment, and to facilitate a return to stability and normalcy through strengthened systems, tools, and effective coordination and partnership. Cluster members, who are guided by Terms and Reference established in 2017, are convened quarterly and activated and mobilized in times of disasters and emergencies. The Cluster remains active in current COVID-19 efforts.

Finally, under the Response Cluster, DepEd is involved in inter-agency measures for preparedness for response (e.g. dissemination of advisories, Pre-Disaster Risk Assessment) and daily monitoring and reporting (e.g. rendering of 24/7 duty in the NDRRMC Operations Center in times of disasters), and immediate response provisions.

Aside from the Response Cluster, DepEd is also a member of the cluster for Preparedness. It provides guidance and necessary technical assistance to regions and divisions in preparing schools for various disasters brought by natural and human-induced hazards (e.g. Contingency Planning for the Big One with regions and divisions and Public Service Continuity Planning).



¹ Current Education Cluster members are: ACCORD Philippines, Center for Disaster Preparedness, Cultural Center of the Philippines, Plan International, Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation, Philippine Red Cross, Save the Children, SEAMEO Innotech, SMART Communication, UNICEF, UNILAB Foundation, and World Vision. Save the Children and UNICEF function as co-leads.

² The Philippine Humanitarian Country Team is composed of representatives from 18 United Nations (UN) Agencies, seven (7) international Non-Government Organizations (NGOs), and 10 observers

The Department is also part of the Prevention and Mitigation Cluster. Here, DepEd provides necessary knowledge and information to all DepEd personnel and learners to prevent and/or reduce the impact of a disaster, emergency, or crisis.

Lastly, under the Rehabilitation and Recovery Cluster, DepEd participates in Post Disaster Needs Assessment/Post Conflict Needs Assessment and crafting and implementation of Comprehensive Rehabilitation and Recovery Plans under specialized Task Forces.

CREATION OF THE DEPED DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND MANAGEMENT SERVICE

RA 10121 mandates all national government agencies to institutionalize policies, structures, coordination mechanisms, and programs with continuing budget appropriation on disaster risk reduction and management from national to local levels.

In line with this, DepEd created the Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office in 2011 (DO No. 50, s. 2011) which was elevated into a Service in 2015 (DM No. 112, s. 2015).

This structure operates across all governance levels of DepEd. At the national level is the Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Service (DRRMS), with its eight (8) plantilla and 31 contract-of-service staff. Given limited plantilla positions, the structure is relatively flat, with the Director IV being supported only by a PDO IV (Assistant Division Chief) and a number of technical and administrative staff.

Each of the 17 Regional Office (RO) meanwhile has a plantilla item for a DRRM Coordinator, and the same exists in the 223 Schools Division Offices (SDO). Finally, at the school level, current policy mandates the creation of a DRRM Team and the designation of a School DRRM Coordinator.

While there is one permanent DRRM Coordinator in every RO and SDO, DRRM Coordinators in schools are usually designated teaching personnel. To strengthen the implementation of school based DRRM efforts, the creation of a non-teaching item for every school for DRRM is advocated under the expansion proposal which will be discussed in the succeeding paragraphs.

DEPED STRUCTURES AND EFFORTS

The Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Service (DRRMS), as stipulated in its Charter, is tasked to empower the DepEd personnel, offices, schools and learners in ensuring safety and learning continuity; institutionalize Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM), Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation (CCAM), and Education in Emergencies (EiE) in Armed Conflict;



and strengthen the resilience of basic education in the context of natural and human-induced hazards.

The implementation of DRRM programs, projects, and activities is guided by the Comprehensive DRRM in Education Framework as prescribed by DepEd Order No. 37, s. 2015 (Please see Figure 1). The framework marries the RA 10121 thematic areas of *prevention and mitigation, preparedness, response, and rehabilitation and recovery*, and the three pillars of the global Comprehensive School Safety Framework namely *safe learning facilities, school disaster management, and DRR in education*. This sets the direction and priority areas for DRRM in DepEd while maintaining the prerogative of field offices to decide on what specific activities to undertake depending on their exposure to hazards, available resources and existing partnerships and linkages.

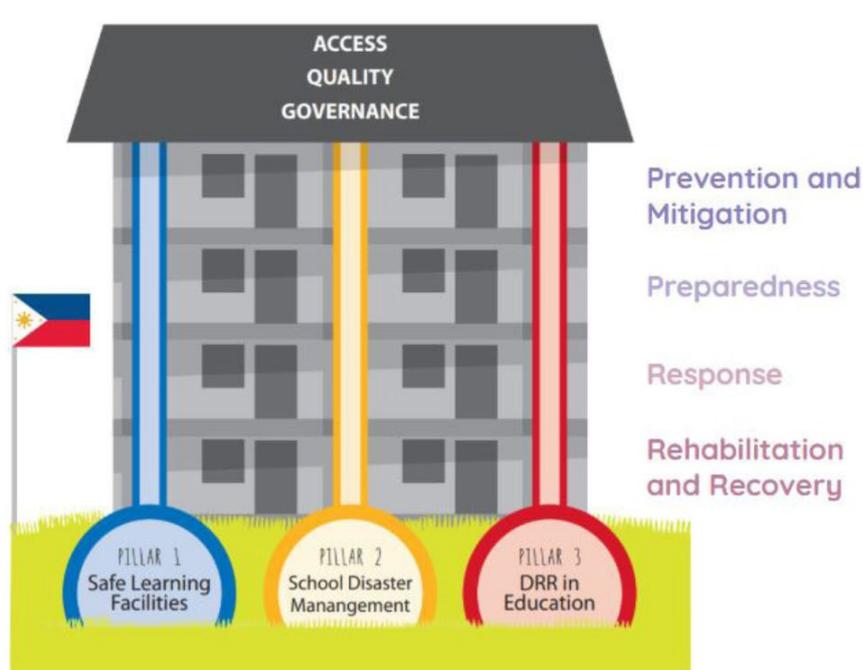


Figure 1. Comprehensive DRRM in Basic Education Framework

In carrying these out, the DRRMS aligns its initiatives according to the following Key Results Areas: (1) Risk-informed Plans, Policies, and Standards, (2) Partnerships for Strengthening Resilience, (3) DRRM Information System and Research, (4) Resilience Education, (5) IEC and Advocacy for Resilience, (6) Learning Continuity and Resilience Interventions, and (7) Monitoring and Evaluation of Comprehensive School Safety Initiatives.

The DRRMS focuses on the creation and implementation of policies, plans, and mechanisms for the strengthening of individual and institutional capacities for learning and public service continuity in the face of disasters and disruptions caused by natural and human-induced hazards, including safe schools reopening.



A number of policies and programs have been institutionalized by the DRRMS to ensure that schools and offices are prepared and capacitated:

- *Disaster Preparedness Measures for Schools (DO 83, s. 2011)* which provides guidelines for mitigation measures for natural disasters, and encourages students to involve their families and communities in preparing for disasters;
- *Student-Led School Watching and Hazard Mapping (DO 23, s. 2015)* which directs the conduct of school-based and student-led hazard mapping every first month of the school year;
- *Conduct of National School-Based Earthquake and Fire Drills (DO 48, s. 2012)* which directs the for the conduct of quarterly earthquake and fire drills;
- *Promoting Family Earthquake Preparedness (DO 27, s. 2015)* which directs the distribution of activity sheets/homework that learners will accomplish with their families; and
- *Strengthening the Fire Safety and Awareness Program (DO 28, s. 2016)* which directs School Fire Safety Plans, Fire Safety Inspection, Fire Drills and Fire Safety Lectures for Personnel, and Quarterly Fire Drills and Fire Safety Lectures for Learners and Personnel.
- *Program Support Funds for Regional Offices, Schools Division Offices, and Schools on the Review and Enhancement of Contingency Plans of Regions, Divisions, and Schools; Capacity Building of Schools on DRRM/CCA/EiE; Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation of DRRM/CCA/EiE Implementation; Training of School DRRM Coordinators on Psychological First Aid; Printing of IEC Materials for Schools*
- *Yearly Contingency Planning at the Regional, Division, and School levels are conducted with support through downloading of funds from the DRRMS since 2018 to prepare for and respond to various emergency scenarios and ensure safety and access to education for all learners in times of crises.*

These preparedness and capacity-building initiatives support the implementation of Education-in-Emergencies during disasters:

- a. *Assessment.* This primarily uses the Rapid Assessment of Damages Report (RADaR), which are SMS reports sent by School DRRM Coordinators to the DRRMS within the first 48-72 hours after a disaster, covering infrastructure and non-infrastructure damages. These damage assessments have been automated through the RADaR Web and Mobile app, which will be rolled-out by end of September 2020.
- b. *Validation.* The RADaRs are consolidated at the national level and referred to the field offices for validation. At the division level, DRRM Coordinators lead their respective DRRM team members (e.g. engineers, IT officers, learning resource coordinators) in validating the reports from the affected schools. Once vetted, these are transmitted back to the DRRMS.
- c. *Provision of Response & Recovery Interventions.* Based on the consolidated vetted RADaR, immediate interventions for affected schools are determined and funded by the Disaster Preparedness and Response Program (DPRP) Funds of the office. These include the following:



- Provision of Temporary Learning Spaces (TLS)³
- School Clean-up and Minor Repair
- Mental Health and Psychological Support Services (MHPSS) and Psychological First Aid (PFA) in Emergencies
- Provision of Learners', Teachers', and/or Hygiene Kits
- Emergency School Feeding
- Alternative Delivery Modes (ADM)
- Deployment of personnel
- Fund support to response, rehabilitation and recovery efforts

Repair and reconstruction of damaged facilities are interventions funded under the Quick Response Fund (QRF), Basic Education Facilities Fund (BEFF) and National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Fund (NDRRMF).

Agency regular budget meanwhile mainly funds the replacement of damaged learning materials, school furniture, and computer sets. NDRRMF and other sources may also be tapped to supplement the agency's budget.

Reports of damages are also shared to the Education Cluster, which are activated in times of disasters, and to other partners for the planning and provision of response interventions. RADaR is used as the basis for allocation of interventions.

d. *Monitoring.* Regional and Division DRRM Coordinators track the provision of interventions, and the DRRMS likewise conducts monitoring visits to recipient schools. Such reports are consolidated by DRRMS for national reporting; and status reports are also forwarded to the government bodies (e.g. NDRRMC, the Office of the President, NEDA and recovery Task Forces created), partners, and donors.

While the listed interventions continue to be functional and generally effective for learning continuity, needing further attention are Alternative Delivery Modes.

Of the various forms of ADM modules, the Instructional Management by Parents, Community and Teachers (IMPACT) developed by SEAMEO INNOTECH, Modified In-School Off-School Approach (MISOSA), and Open High School Program (OHSP) have been used both in regular times, and in disasters.

To address learning continuity in the aftermath of Super Typhoon Yolanda, ADM Coordinators were also trained and deployed to help support the implementation of MISOSA and OHSP.



³ These temporarily replace classrooms that have been damaged and are undergoing repair or reconstruction due to a calamity. In such cases, the TLS are installed within the premises of the affected schools. The TLS are also deployed in temporary resettlement sites to allow the internally displaced learners to continue with their schooling.

In 2018, however, the DRRMS was advised by the Curriculum and Instruction Strand to defer usage of the existing modules as they were to undergo review and alignment with the K-12 Curriculum. The process of developing new ADM modules aligned to the K-12 curriculum got caught up with COVID-19. These now are known as known as the Self-Learning Modules, aligned with the Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs).

From 2018 until 2020, in the aftermath of the Taal Volcano eruption, in the absence of ADM K-12 aligned modules, what were being used are local resources created by the Regional or Schools Division Offices, or the schools; or the old ones. With the exception of the current COVID-19 Pandemic, no recent disaster had impacts so severe that required the wide-scale use of ADMs.

Moving forward and recognizing the need to better engage and institutionalize DRRM in the systems, processes, and policies of the DepEd Central Office to better enable learning and public service continuity in times of disaster and emergencies, a DepEd DRRM Team in the Central Office was formed through DepEd Order No. 44, s. 2018. The CO DRRM Team, which defines the roles and responsibilities of offices in the context of disasters, is composed of a Quick Response and Recovery Team (QRRT), and a Prevention and Mitigation, and Preparedness Team (PMPT). This supplements operational structures in schools (i.e. School DRRM Teams) and in Regional and Division Offices (i.e. permanent DRRM Coordinators).

These DRRM Teams remain central to DepEd's continuing response to the COVID-19 Pandemic through their involvement in the DepEd Task Force COVID-19 (DTFC-19). The DTFC-19, which provides COVID-19 policy support and oversees overall operations, is manned the DepEd CO QRRT. This structure is replicated in the field, where DRRM Teams have been activated and re-organized for COVID-19 (DepEd Memorandum No. 15, s. 2020).

In terms of COVID-19 plans, DepEd Order No. 12, s. 2020 adopts the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan for School Year 2020-2021 in light of the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency.

For other hazards meanwhile, guided by the above discussed laws and coordinating bodies, Response, Contingency, and Public Service Continuity Plans have been developed for DepEd offices and schools. A Response Plan consists of protocols and activities to be taken as immediate, coordinated, timely, and effective reactions and responses to the impacts of a disaster. It is derived from a Contingency Plan which is activated during the response phase and provides for event-specific measures for organizations to address certain and specific risks and/or threats. These differ from a Public Service Continuity Plan, which while also activated during response phase, is used to deal with the consequences of a wider range of non-specific interruptions; it ensures continuous delivery of quality public services during an emergency, disaster and any other disruption by performing the mission essential functions of the organization.



CHALLENGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Senate Bills commendably provide specific and grounded directives informed by current learnings, the following recommendations on aspects related to the discussion above are offered:

Addressing Existing Structures, Frameworks, and Policies

Noting that the bill acknowledges the need to adopt a whole-of-community, and consequently a whole-of-government approach to making education more resilient, engaging existing and operational policies and structures at various levels is needed. No claim is made that what is currently in place are fully sufficient to address emerging realities; rather, there must be continuity in previous efforts and investments that remain relevant.

For this and given the shared goals and strategies, discussions on the proposed SSRP and SSRTF may be framed within the larger context of DRRM, which draws from established and existing international, national, and sub-national frameworks, protocols, and structures.

As a recommendation, **structures in place that would enable a whole-of-government approach for DRRM in the education sector, such as the National Education Cluster within the NDRRMC, already suffice and should instead be maximized.** This notes the similar functions and membership of the NDRRMC and the SSRTF.

The Education Cluster and the existing NDRRMC apparatus is ideally situated to allow for improved disaster response in the form particularly of learning continuity. The existence and operations of the NDRRMC, given its broad membership of government and civil society entities and its specialized clusters for the thematic areas, should be capitalized on. As points for improvement for the Education Cluster in particular:

- a. Government entities which are currently not active (i.e. TESDA and CHED) need to better engaged as the roster of active members are currently composed only of non-government and civil society organizations. It may be noted as well that other agencies listed in SB 1565 are also already engaged through other NDRRMC clusters, where DepEd is able to pursue the Education Cluster's interests;
- b. Education committees in both the Senate and House of Representatives may be included for reporting and coordinative purposes; and
- c. Within DepEd, the DRRMS will continue to engage the Curriculum and Instruction Strand and call on them to represent the Department in NDRRMC meetings to discuss curriculum-related interventions and matters, as necessary.

Likewise needing further assessment is how the SSRP would operate alongside existing response, contingency, and public service continuity plans developed by and for the education sector. It may be noted as well that substantial investments have already been made by government and civil



society institutions and groups to develop capacities for DRRM-related planning in the context of education. **Given possible redundancies between the SSRP and existing DRRM plans for education, building upon the latter is recommended.**

The bill may moreover better consider DepEd frameworks and interventions as discussed in the preceding section, noting the benefits that institutionalization would bring.

A reiteration of the policy declared by RA 10821 on the use of schools as evacuation centers is also recommended. As DepEd schools continue to accommodate displaced families affected by disasters, and in the time of the COVID pandemic house individuals needing quarantine and isolation, the risk of double displacement remains.

Strict adherence to the law, particularly on the treatment of schools as evacuation centers of last resort, and when inevitable keeping their use as brief as possible, is needed. LGUs should also be reminded that the construction and maintenance of evacuation centers and temporary shelters for displaced individuals, and the maintenance and restoration of schools used as evacuation centers, falls within their mandate. This would help facilitate learning continuity and the prompt return to normalcy after disasters.

Funding DRRM in Education

Challenges also remain in fully funding prevention and mitigation, preparedness, response, and rehabilitation and recovery interventions for the education sector.

Despite continued increase of funds under the DPRP-GAA, challenges still remain in fully and adequately equipping 47,188 public schools with preparedness and response equipment. As funds are mostly dedicated to response interventions, additional budget would better support ongoing efforts to improve capacities for disaster preparedness.

Such limitations also impact the office's ability to sufficiently finance measures for emerging and critical issues connected with DRRM, such as climate change and armed conflict and peacebuilding. With the DRRMS shifting its attention more to the emerging fields of climate change adaptation and mitigation and education-in-emergencies in armed conflict, greater investment is needed given that impacts to education are already becoming apparent.

DepEd is allocated with Quick Response Fund (QRF), which is supposed to enable agencies to take immediate response actions to normalize the living conditions of communities affected by calamities. For the Department, this is fund is used for repairs and reconstruction. However, the existing QRF is not sufficient to cover disaster-related damages.



Other modes have been explored by DepEd which may provide more immediate funds and resources for response and early recovery. This includes disaster risk financing for schools vulnerable to natural disasters through parametric insurance which was finalized in 2018 through DOF and DBM Joint Circular 001-2018 (*Guidelines on the Implementation, Monitoring, and Reporting on the use of PhP 2 Billion Allocation under the NDRRMF for the Insurance Coverage of Government Facilities against Natural Calamities*). In spite of there being calamities that are supposed to trigger a payout, such as the April 2019 Zambales Earthquake, none has been released to date.

This office also presents the following general recommendations in aid of legislation: **consider allotting a percentage in the General Appropriations Act for DRRM, much like what is done for Gender and Development; and review guidelines for Local DRRM Fund to allow for its use regarding disaster prevention, mitigation, and preparedness measures. This will be particularly useful for schools requiring resources to fund its DRRM efforts.**

Supporting DRRM in Education Service Providers

Lastly, the structure of the DepEd DRRMS as previously discussed limits its efficiency due to the lack of permanent positions, particularly those for middle management. This leads to, among others, a quick turnover of technical staff in Contract-of-Service positions who manage key programs. Since 2017, the said office has lobbied for an expansion and has submitted a proposal for such. As **additional plantilla items are critical to strengthening the organizational capacity of DRRMS and the continuity of its initiatives, support for this proposal is likewise sought.**

As part of this, a **legal instrument allocating hazard pay, insurance, and other related benefits to all DepEd DRRM Coordinators is likewise sought.** This proposal is congruent with existing state policies and budget allocations for personnel who, over the course of discharging their duties, are exposed to occupational risks and physical hardships.

Within the Department, for instance, School Health and Nutrition Personnel and teachers in hardship posts and special circumstances are able to avail of a hazard pay and a hardship allowance, respectively. Other civilian agencies, such as the Department of Social Welfare and Development and Department of Health are likewise able to offer similar benefits due to the threats their personnel face.

Furthermore, Section 13 of RA 10121 instructs government agencies to take full responsibility for the welfare and protection of accredited volunteers who are mobilized to augment their respective personnel tasked with the delivery of DRR programs and activities. Any volunteer who incurs death or injury while engaged in any DRRM activity shall be entitled to compensatory benefits. Staying true to the spirit of this provision, the same protections extended to volunteers must be assured to the state's own personnel and first responders.



It is apparent that the nature of work of the Department's DRRM Coordinators situate them in similar, or even greater levels of risks as the examples listed above. This justifies and warrants the need for a comparable support package composed of additional allowance, accident and health insurance, and other related benefits. In the precedent cases, explicit policies such as Magna Cartas and provisions contained in the General Appropriations Act enabled the operation of safety nets and support systems; this may be considered either in this law or future legislation.

Strengthening the Curriculum for Education-in-Emergencies and the New Normal

Finally, while structures and mechanisms for learning and public service continuity exist and continue to operate, more attention has to be paid to curriculum-based interventions for disasters and emergencies.

As previously discussed, DepEd DRRM interventions no longer included the use of nationally approved Alternative Delivery Modes starting 2018 given that existing modules had to undergo review and alignment with the K-12 curriculum. The COVID-19 pandemic gave impetus to this process of review and alignment, and such modules have now been rebranded as Self-Learning Modules aligned with the MELCs.

To improve DepEd's capacity to facilitate learning continuity in disasters and emergencies, capacities and resources for ADMs should be strengthened and made more readily accessible and available. Special nuancing which would better contextualize the materials, its contents, and processes for different forms of disasters is recommended, given that emergency or post-disaster realities and needs would vary. The profile of the learners and their communities – especially for those belonging to marginalized, vulnerable, and excluded sectors – ought to be duly considered as well. Finally, the Department must continue giving attention to the mental health and psychosocial welfare of learners and personnel following disasters.

It is thus commendable that the bill attempts to institutionalize measures through the sections on learning continuity through the hybrid learning system, distance learning, and digital transformation under education in the new normal and other emergencies. Special focus given on the hiring and training of teachers to better enable the delivery of hybrid learning is likewise appreciated.

The proposed section on responsive services for learners with disabilities and other marginalized students would further support DepEd efforts for inclusivity especially in the context of disasters and emergencies. The whole-of-community approach prescribed by the bill, and the emphasis on the role of the family also reflect key learnings gained by the bureaucracy in responding to the pandemic.



III. INTEGRATION OF DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND MANAGEMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION CORE MESSAGES AND CONCEPTS IN THE K TO 12 CURRICULUM

In line with the Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction Management Act of 2010 (Republic Act 10121), the Department of Education issued Department Order (D.O.) no. 50 series of 2011 which created the Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office. It was elevated into a Service in 2015.

As stipulated in RA 10121, all government agencies are mandated to institutionalize policies, structures, coordination mechanisms, and programs on disaster risk reduction and management (DRRM) from national to local levels. In addition, RA 10121 directs DepEd, CHED, and TESDA, in coordination with relevant government agencies to integrate DRRM education in the curricula. While the DepEd had been implementing DRRM programs, projects, and activities, the comprehensive framework that covers education targets in the context of resilience building was formulated in 2015. The work of the DRRMS is guided by D.O. 37, s. 2015 known as the Comprehensive DRRM in Basic Education Framework.

Based on the framework, DRRMS has three major programs, according to the key thematic areas of RA 10121, namely: Prevention and Mitigation; Preparedness; and Response, Rehabilitation, and Recovery. These programs cover the following three pillars of the global Comprehensive School Safety (CSS) Framework which are aligned with the Sendai Framework for DRR. Critical interventions in line with House Bills Nos. 1674, 1565, 1460, 1140, and 960. Specifically, Pillar III of the CSS focuses on the integration of DRRM/CCA/EiE in the K-12 curriculum, including teacher training. Psychological First Aid modules and capacity building are also part of resilience education.

Senate Bills 439, 960, 1140 recommends the inclusion of disaster awareness and mitigation in the curricula of primary and secondary schools. As mandated by the Republic Act 9729 or the Climate Change Act of 2009 and the Republic Act 10121 or the Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of 2010, the Department of Education (DepEd) has integrated Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) and Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) basic principles and concepts in the National K to 12 curriculum. These basic principles and concepts are present in four core learning areas namely Araling Panlipunan, Edukasyon sa Pagpapakatao, Health and Science from Kinder to Grade 10. A special subject in DRRM is offered in Senior High School as part of the General Academic Strand (GAS).

INTEGRATION OF DRRM AND CCA CONCEPTS IN THE CURRICULUM

As the grade level progresses, the DRRM and CCA principle and concepts that the students learn also develops. In key stages Kinder to Grade 3, the learners are taught on the hazards that they experience at home, in school and in the community, weather, taking care of the surroundings, following safety rules



at home and in school including road safety, precautionary measures in dealing with different types of weather, and prevention and control of diseases and disorders.

Lessons in weather systems, weather disturbances such as monsoon and tropical cyclones, earthquake, volcanic eruption, soil erosion, preparedness measures or what to do before during tropical cyclones, earthquake and volcanic eruption, basic first aid, prevention and control of diseases and disorders, and how to protect and conserve ecosystems are taught to learners in key stages Grade 4 to 6.

While in key stages Grade 7 to 10, the lessons are more focused in the protection and conservation of the environment, human impact to the ecosystem, greenhouse gases, climate change, earthquakes, typhoons, volcanoes and first aid.

Senate Bill 1675 focused on the inclusion of pandemics education in the curriculum. The Health subject taken by Grades 1 to 10 students includes the study of epidemiology. As such, learning competencies on Personal Health and Prevention and Control of Diseases & Disorders are taken by students.

While DRRM/CCA has been integrated in the curriculum, there is a need to strengthen the quality of integration and monitor the learned curriculum. With this, the DRRMS led the creation of core messages for the Disaster Risk Reduction in Education, Climate Change Education, and Peace Education held last February 2020 with curriculum specialists from the Bureau of Curriculum Development, Bureau of Learning Delivery, and Bureau of Learning Resources. The core messages emphasized the interrelation of the three topics and reaffirmed its role as a component on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and Global Citizenship Education (GCED).

Furthermore, the DRRMS is closely coordinating with the BCD for inclusion of the core messages in its GCED Curriculum Development and Integration Project with the Philippine Normal University as supported by UNESCO Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding (APCEIU). In addition, DRRMS hopes to enrich the integration of DRR, CCAM, and Peace Education through the development of learning materials, training of teaching and non-teaching personnel, and organization of co-curricular activities like theater arts and journalism.

DRRM AND CCA IN THE CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

To complement the integration of DRRM and CCA in the curriculum, various activities are done in schools. As part of the climate change adaptation and mitigation, **DepEd implements the National Greening Program (NGP) which directs schools to establish Gulayan sa Paaralan or a vegetable garden, practice ecological solid waste management and conduct tree growing activities.**



On the other hand, every start of the school year, schools organize School Watching and Hazard Mapping Team composed by learners and a teacher-moderator. The school watching team walk around the school, observe and take down notes on the risk factors of every part of the building and facilities using the School Watching Checklist, from **DO 23, s. 2015 or Student-Led School Watching and Hazard Mapping**. Once done, the team makes a hazard map that is reported and submitted to the School Planning Team (SPT) led by the school head. The hazard map is also posted around the school premises.

Also, schools are required to join the **National Simultaneous Earthquake Drill (NSED)** along with other government agencies. The earthquake and fire drills aim to build the capacity of learners, personnel and offices in the emergency.

In addition, the month-long celebration of the **National Disaster Resilience Month (NDRM)** in July supports the promotion of disaster awareness among public. The Office of Civil Defense (OCD) and local DRRM Offices organize DRRM activities/ competitions like poster making, essay writing, and Rescue Olympics, that engage schools and learners.

Since 2017, DRRMS has been organizing the annual **National Climate Change Conference** which provides a platform for learners and teachers to showcase their innovative projects and research on climate change education, adaptation, and mitigation. Attendees are also updated on the latest news and information in climate science and adaptation and mitigation strategies from industry experts. Last year, the 3rd National Climate Change Conference gathered around 900 participants nationwide, provided a platform for 25 students, engaged twenty leading climate change specialists, and offset the carbon footprint relative to the project.

DRRMS also tapped the arts as a way to elevate students' voices in the call for climate action through the Climate Action Advocacy Show with the theme: "A Future Threatened by Climate Change: Voices and Visions of the Youth" on 19 November at Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) in Pasay City. The show was co-created by the 72 learners from the National Capital Region guided by artists from the Cultural Center of the Philippines' Sining Galing Program. It featured different perspectives on climate change based on theater arts performance, ideation, and devising workshop.

For the consideration of Honorable Legislators.


ALAIN DEL B. PASCUA
Undersecretary



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