



Republic of the Philippines  
**Department of Education**  
CARAGA REGION



March 11, 2021

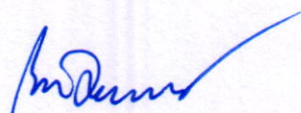
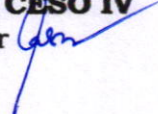
**REGIONAL MEMORANDUM**

No. 155, s. 2021

To: **SCHOOLS DIVISION SUPERINTENDENTS**  
**This Region**

**POSITION ON THE USE OF SCHOOL CLINICS AND OTHER  
AREAS IN THE SCHOOL AS VACCINATION CENTERS**

1. The Office the Undersecretary for Administration (OUA) Memorandum No. 00-0321-0096 dated March 10, 2021 outlines the position of the Department of Education on the use of school clinics and other identified areas in school premises as vaccination centers.
2. Attached is the copy of the said memorandum and the Aide Memoire on the role of DepEd in the implementation of the Philippine National Deployment and Vaccination Plan for COVID-19 vaccines for your reference.
3. For your information and guidance.

  
**EVELYN R. FETALVERO, CESO IV**  
Regional Director 

Encls.: OUA MEMO No. 00-0321-0096, AIDE MEMOIRE

Reference: NONE

To be indicated in the Perpetual Index  
under the following subjects:

COVID-19

SCHOOL CLINICS

VACCINATION CENTERS

ESS/jcc  
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Republika ng Pilipinas  
**Kagawaran ng Edukasyon**  
Tanggapan ng Pangalawang Kalihim

**OUA MEMO 00-0321-0096**

**MEMORANDUM**

**10 March 2021**

**For: Leonor Magtolis Briones**  
Secretary

**ATTN: Atty. Revsee A. Escobedo**  
Undersecretary for Field Operations, *Palarong Pambansa Secretariat* and DEACO

**Tolentino G. Aquino**  
Regional Director, Region I

**Wilfredo E. Cabral**  
Regional Director, Region IV-A

**Subject: POSITION ON THE USE OF SCHOOL CLINICS AND OTHER AREAS IN THE SCHOOL AS VACCINATION CENTERS**

The Office of the Undersecretary for Administration (OUA) relays the following position regarding the request of Vigan City Mayor Juan Carlo Medina to utilize schools within their jurisdiction as vaccination points of COVID-19 AZD1222 for their age-qualified population.

Quoting from the attached *Aide Memoire on the role of DepEd in the implementation of the Philippine National Deployment and Vaccination Plan for COVID-19 vaccines*, specifically:

**Coordination for the Use of School Clinics and Other Identified Areas in the School Premises:**

On the use of school clinics and/or other identified areas in the school (e.g., covered courts, makeshift tents set up in open areas, multipurpose halls/rooms, large offices in the school) as vaccination centers **for implementing units based on the Plan, the same process that applies on the use of schools as quarantine or isolation facilities shall be retained.**



**Office of the Undersecretary for Administration (OUA)**

[Administrative Service (AS), Information and Communications Technology Service (ICTS), Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Service (DRRMS), Bureau of Learner Support Services (BLSS), Baguio Teachers Camp (BTC), Central Security & Safety Office (CSSO)]

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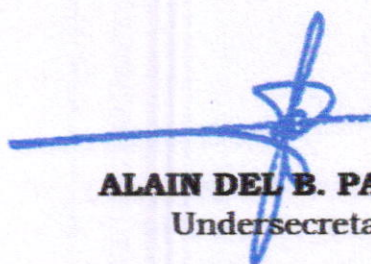


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- a. With existing policy delegating the assessment, approval, and coordination on the use of schools as quarantine or isolation facilities to Regional Directors, the same shall be maintained especially as the existing system highlights close coordination between DepEd, the LGU, and health authorities. The same Terms and Conditions (TAC) to be entered into by DepEd and LGUs, as attached to OM-OSec-2020-004 (Guidance to Regional Directors for Action on Requests by Local Government Units to Use DepEd Schools and Engage DepEd Personnel in Activities Related to COVID-19) shall be adopted by field offices for the use of schools for vaccination purposes. For local governments with whom there are already existing TAC or memoranda of agreement (MOA), the use of schools as vaccination sites may be treated as an addendum to the TAC/MOA.
- b. This high level of coordination would facilitate the selection of schools in strategic locations and with sufficient capacity and human resources especially in referring Adverse Event Following Immunization, Adverse Event of Special Interest cases. This is consistent with the NDVP which stipulates that LGUs shall ensure that all implementing units adhere to the protocols required for an implementing unit/vaccination post/site.
- c. With the reality that a number of schools already serve as quarantine or isolation facilities, health and LGU authorities must select between using schools for quarantine/isolation or for vaccination purposes. The simultaneous use of schools for both purposes is not recommended.
- d. Consistent with the pronouncement of the President, the use of schools for vaccination activities shall be the last resort. This is also consistent with the spirit of RA 10821 which instructs that schools can only be used as an evacuation center as a last resort to allow for learning continuity and the displacement of learners and personnel from schools in times of emergencies, and which likewise guided the use of schools for quarantine/isolation facilities.
- e. DepEd's position on the limited use of schools for vaccination is also informed by plans for the resumption of face-to-face and school-based engagements. Schools in areas which are candidates for the resumption of feasible limited face-to-face learning shall explicitly be excluded as possible vaccination sites.
- f. The safety of the school personnel reporting onsite in schools and the uninterrupted operations of the school for learning continuity shall be the top most consideration.

For the Secretary's information.

  
**ALAIN DEL B. PASCUA**  
Undersecretary



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Republika ng Pilipinas  
**Kagawaran ng Edukasyon**  
Tanggapan ng Pangalawang Kalihim

**AIDE MEMOIRE**  
19 February 2021

**THE ROLE OF DEPED IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE  
PHILIPPINE NATIONAL DEPLOYMENT AND VACCINATION PLAN  
FOR COVID-19 VACCINES**

The Department of Education Task Force COVID-19 (DTFC) provides the following updates to the Secretary on matters relating to the **Philippine National Deployment and Vaccination Plan for COVID-19 Vaccines (NDVP)**, what transpired as part of and as a result of its ratification, and key issues and decision points.

**I. Philippine National Deployment and Vaccination Plan for COVID-19 Vaccines**

The Philippine National Deployment and Vaccination Plan for COVID-19 Vaccines was approved and ratified by the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF) through **Resolution No. 95** dated **21 January 2021**.

Following this, the National Task Force (NTF) Against COVID-19 in **Memorandum Circular No. 5, s. 2021** dated **26 January 2021** directed **all implementing agencies**, Regional and Local COVID-19 Task Forces, and all Regional and Local COVID-19 Vaccination Operations Centers, Local Task Forces, and Local COVID-19 Vaccination Operations Centers **to implement and adopt the same**.

The acknowledgement section of the NDVP notes that **agencies under the COVID-19 Vaccine Cluster**, which includes the Department of Education (DepEd), have contributed to the development of the plan.

**A. Salient Features**

1. Based on the NDVP, the following roles shall be played by different levels of governance:

- a. **Local government units (LGUs)** are the lead in the implementation of the program



**Office of the Undersecretary for Administration (OUA)**

*[Administrative Service (AS), Information and Communications Technology Service (ICTS), Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Service (DRMMS), Bureau of Learner Support Services (BLSS), Baguio Teachers Camp (BTC), Central Security & Safety Office (CSSO)]*

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- b. **National government agencies and regional counterparts** shall provide strategic directions and technical and logistical assistance, cascade policies and guidelines, and capacitate implementers.
2. The approved Philippine NDVP for COVID-19 Vaccines details the national structures, coordination mechanisms, and plan for vaccination, covering seven phases:
- Phase 1: Scientific Evaluation and Selection
  - Phase 2: Access and Acquisition
  - Phase 3: Procurement and Financing
  - Phase 4: Shipment and Storage
  - Phase 5: Distribution and Deployment
  - Phase 6: Implementation of Nationwide Vaccination
  - Phase 7: Assessment, Monitoring, and Evaluation
3. The Department of Health (DOH) will provide a Department Memorandum detailing the operational guidelines on vaccine distribution (e.g., vaccine storage and cold chain requirements, delivery and deployment mechanisms for each specific vaccine.)
4. All vaccination activities, whether the COVID-19 vaccines to be administered have been procured by the National Government, the private sector, or the LGU, shall be closely coordinated with DOH and shall follow DOH policies and guidelines. **No vaccination activity shall be conducted without the guidance and the knowledge of DOH.**

## B. NDVP Features Which Have Implications on DepEd

Features of the NDVP which have implications on the Department as one of the implementing agencies of the plan, include the following:

- (1) Governance: the COVID-19 Vaccine Cluster;
- (2) Vaccine Distribution and Deployment; and
- (3) Implementation of a Nationwide Vaccination.

### 1. Governance: The COVID-19 Vaccine Cluster

| CLUSTER                  | TASK GROUPS                                                                                                  | SUB TASK GROUPS                                                                                                                                      |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| COVID-19 Vaccine Cluster | <b>TG Vaccine Evaluation and Selection</b><br>Lead: DOST<br>Members: DOH, FDA, RITM, Vaccine Experts         | <b>STG Planning, Policy &amp; Technical Support</b><br>Lead: DOH<br>Member: DOJ, DCPLC, <u>DepEd</u> , DILG<br>STG Sec                               |
|                          | <b>TG Cold Chain and Logistics Management</b><br>Lead: DOH, TGRM<br>Members: DBM, DILG (PNP), DND (AFP, OCD) | <b>STG Registry, Data Management &amp; MIS</b><br>Lead: DOH<br>Member: DICT, DSWD, <u>DepEd</u><br>STG Sec                                           |
|                          | <b>TG Diplomatic Engagement and Negotiations</b><br>Lead: DFA<br>Members: DOF, DOH, NTF, DOST                | <b>STG Program Implementation</b><br>Lead: DOH<br>Members: DILG (BFP, PNP, BJMP), DSWD, <u>DepEd</u> , DND (AFP), DOJ (BuCar), DOTr (PCG)<br>STG Sec |
|                          | <b>TG Immunization Program</b><br>Lead: DOH<br>Members: DOJ, FDA, DILG, DSWD, <u>DepEd</u> , AFP, DOTr, DICT | <b>STG Safety Surveillance &amp; Response</b><br>Lead: FDA<br>Member: DOH (EB, DPCB, FICT)<br>STG Sec                                                |
|                          | <b>TG Procurement and Finance</b><br>Lead: DOF<br>Members: DOH, DBM                                          |                                                                                                                                                      |
|                          | <b>TG Demand Generation &amp; Communications</b><br>Lead: PCOO<br>Members: DOH, NTC, PIA                     |                                                                                                                                                      |



The COVID-19 Vaccine Cluster is composed of six Task Groups (TG), including the **TG Immunization Program** of which **DepEd is part of**. Led by the DOH, the TG Immunization Program is tasked to:

- i. Plan and craft policies, guidelines and standard operating procedures related to the COVID-19 vaccine deployment and program implementation;
- ii. Estimate potential numbers of target populations that will be prioritized for access to vaccines stratified by target group and geographic location;
- iii. Identify potential COVID-19 vaccine delivery strategies;
- iv. Create a data information system for all vaccine recipients;
- v. Provide capacity building and trainings to implementers;
- vi. Develop or adopt existing policies and implement AEFI/Post-marketing surveillance and monitoring framework; and
- vii. Ensure or craft guidelines, procedures and tools for planning and conducting vaccine pharmacovigilance activities.

Under the TG Immunization Program are four **Sub-Task Groups (STGs)**, **three of which DepEd is part of** namely:

- (1) STG Planning, Policy & Technical Support
- (2) STG Program Implementation
- (3) STG Registry, Data Management & M&E

The national organization structure of the COVID-19 Vaccine Cluster is complemented with the activation of a **COVID-19 Vaccine Operations Center (VOC)** at the **national, regional, and local levels**. VOCs support the Incident Command Systems of the COVID-19 Vaccine Cluster.

|                       |                                                                                                                                             |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| National COVID-19 VOC | headed by the COVID-19 Vaccine Cluster Chair                                                                                                |
| Regional VOC          | led by the Centers for Health Development with the participation of other government agencies and the Regional Task Forces Against COVID-19 |
| Local VOCs            | led by LGUs                                                                                                                                 |



The national government enjoins all regional offices and LGUs to establish their own VOCs as soon as possible. The implementing units such as government hospitals are tasked to forward all concerns and reports to the City/Municipal Health Offices, which in turn report these to the VOC.

Three months prior to the vaccination activity, the VOCs are required to conduct regular meetings and to submit readiness assessments on a regular basis to the overseeing VOC.

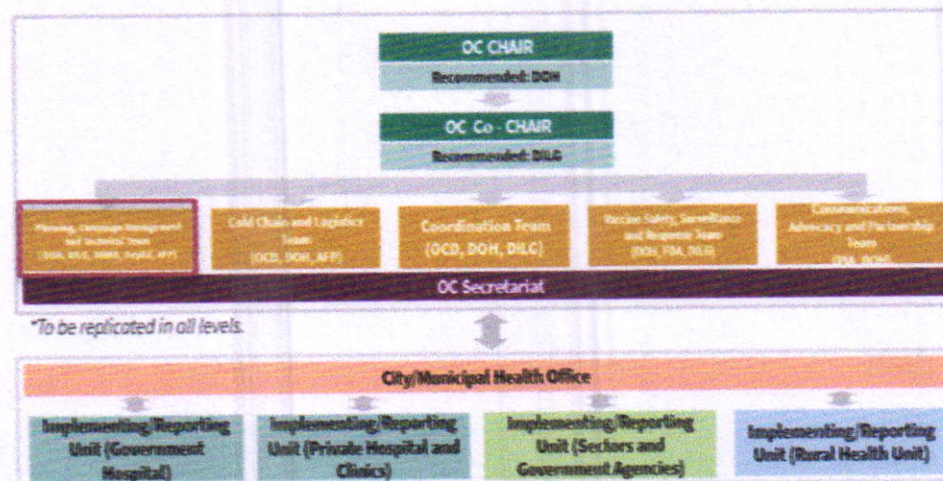
During the campaign period (as determined by DOH), all VOCs are required to operate for 24 hours in a week and to submit daily bulletin detailing coverage, refusals and deferrals, and Adverse Event Following Immunization, and Adverse Event of Special Interest monitored.

After the campaign period, all VOCs are required to conduct a program implementation review and submit the final coverage report.

The VOCs are further comprised of teams. **DepEd is involved in the Planning, Campaign Management, and Technical Team** which focuses on:

- policy development
- information campaigns
- capacity building
- setting-up of VOCs

### COVID-19 Vaccination Operations Center



## 2. Vaccine Distribution and Deployment

The identification of eligible populations is guided by the WHO Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on Immunization Values Framework for the Allocation and Prioritization of COVID-19 Vaccination, and the recommendations of the National Immunization Technical Advisory Group (NITAG.)

The Plan has identified Priority Eligible Groups 1 to 12. Below are items pertinent to the Department:

- **School Health and Nutrition Personnel**, along with other medical frontliners from other government agencies, will be part of the **Priority Group No. 1** for vaccination.

Per discussion during the TOT, school health personnel are being prioritized because it is anticipated that for the vaccination of **teachers**, categorized under **Priority Group No. 6**, DepEd's school health personnel augmented by other local health professionals, if needed, will do the inoculation.

- **Non-teaching personnel** are under **Priority Group No. 7** (all government workers), while eligible **students** (i.e., students in primary, secondary, and tertiary levels and in vocational institutions) are listed under **Priority Group No. 9**.

The Plan notes that the vaccination of **students below 18 years** will depend on the recommendations of WHO and NITAG, with the concurrence of the COVID-19 Vaccine Cluster.

## 3. Implementation of a Nationwide Vaccination Plan

The vaccination program shall be implemented in phases, taking into consideration the availability of vaccines, logistics, and cases in geographical areas.

The implementation is divided into three phases:

**Phase 1: Pre-implementation Phase** - where preparations for the actual vaccination activity are carried out;

**Phase 2: Implementation Phase** - the actual vaccine administration schedule; and

**Phase 3: Post-implementation Phase** - where all activities and reports to conclude a certain round are completed.



It is reiterated that the implementation of the program shall be led by the LGU, guided by the policies of the Vaccine Cluster and the DOH, while NGAs and its regional counterparts shall provide strategic direction, technical, and logistical assistance.

The workforce for the vaccination campaign shall engage a diverse set of professionals. These include **teachers, counsellors, pharmacists, medical and allied health professionals** and interns.

The recommended composition of vaccination teams includes **DepEd personnel** who may play the **role of a health educator<sup>1</sup> or documenter/recorder and vital signs-taker<sup>2</sup>** who support medical practitioners.

Mentions of **teachers** however qualify them as **“volunteers from partner agencies”**, along with social workers and medical students.

Those involved in the vaccination program shall be targeted by a **national training plan**. Medical staff from national government implementing agencies such as DepEd are listed as the participants in the following trainings:

| Date                | Training                               |
|---------------------|----------------------------------------|
| 29-30 December 2020 | Core of Trainer's Training             |
| 12-13 January 2021  | NCR and Luzon cluster trainings        |
| 14-15 January 2021  | Visayas and Mindanao cluster trainings |
| 20-21 January 2021  | BARRM cluster training                 |

In terms of facilities, **DepEd clinics – which are considered health facilities of government agencies – are listed as among the implementing units or establishments authorized to conduct the vaccination activity**. DepEd shall work with LGUs to ensure that all implementing units adhere to proper protocols.

It shall also be noted that upon the initial field implementation of the plan and based on reports received by the BLSS-SHD, **some areas in the school other than the clinic (e.g., covered courts,**



<sup>1</sup> Tasked to man the health education area; ensure that equipment and IEC materials are available in the vaccination post/area; provide information to vaccines, particularly on the benefits of vaccination, the possible adverse reactions, and how to seek help if there is adverse reaction either by answering their queries or providing them with IEC materials; facilitate the signing of informed consent; coordinate with social mobilizers and navigators for those who are deferred and those who refuse on-site.

<sup>2</sup> Tasked to man the registration area; ensure that documents and identification presented by the vaccine are valid; ensure that all information and data are encoded in the data management system; assist other team members, especially on vital signs taking; submit daily coverage, refusals, and deferrals to the C/MHO.

multipurpose halls/rooms, large offices in the school) have also been identified as venues for vaccination activities.

## **II. DepEd Engagement and Activities for the NDVP**

The organizational structure of the COVID-19 Vaccine Cluster was approved during the 82nd Meeting of the IATF held on 29 October 2020, where DepEd was represented by its Undersecretary for Legal Affairs.

Following the agreements in the said meeting, **the Undersecretary for Legal Affairs recommended to the Secretary the designation of focal persons from the DTFC and/or the Bureau of Learner Support Services-School Health Division (BLSS-SHD) as representatives to the Task Group.** Designation letter dated 05 November 2020 was thereafter sent to the Secretary of Health. A similar letter dated 04 January 2021 was likewise sent to the Chief Implementer of the NTF. The DTFC on 02 February 2021 however further proposed to the Secretary the updating of DepEd's roster of representatives. In particular, the BHROD and ICTS were added for registry, data management, and M&E matters. The proposal of the DTFC has been approved by the Secretary and new correspondence to the NTF and the DOH has been signed.

Immediately after the 05 November 2020 designation, **DepEd's designated representatives to the Vaccine Cluster, through the BLSS-SHD and their field counterparts, have attended Cluster-initiated activities through the DOH.**

The most essential activities with the involvement of DepEd health and nutrition personnel include the national (Core of Trainer's Training) and regional trainings described above. School health and nutrition personnel have participated in the trainings, specifically five from the Central Office and at least three from each Region.

| <b>Date</b>    | <b>Activity</b>                                                                                                                          |
|----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 29-30 Dec 2020 | COVID-19 Vaccine Core of Training of Trainers (TOT)                                                                                      |
| 11 Jan 2021    | Dry Run of the TOT on COVID-19 Vaccination                                                                                               |
| 12-13 Jan 2021 | Regional TOT on COVID-19 Vaccination- Luzon Cluster (Participated in by regional school health personnel representatives)                |
| 14-15 Jan 2021 | Regional TOT on COVID-19 Vaccination- Visayas and Mindanao Cluster (Participated in by regional school health personnel representatives) |



|             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 21 Jan 2021 | Coordination Meeting for Training and Implementation Arrangement of the COVID19 Immunization Program Implementation                                                                                                                                |
| 01 Feb 2021 | DOH-DepEd Coordination Meeting for COVID-19 Immunization Program Implementation (Convened by the BLSS; attended by the Disaster Risk Reduction Management Service [DRRMS] and the Bureau of Human Resource and Organizational Development [BHROD]) |

It was emphasized during the discussions that **formal communications must be made by the DOH and that official agreements must be reached before any role of DepEd is finalized**, any information is cascaded to the field through official issuances, or DepEd personnel further involved in future trainings. **Thus far, no such formal communication has been received.**

Moreover, DepEd attendance to the following has also been registered by the Central Office:

| Date        | Activity                                                                      |
|-------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 23 Nov 2020 | 3 <sup>rd</sup> Task Group COVID-19 Immunization Program Meeting              |
| 02 Dec 2020 | Meeting on the Proposed Program Implementation Plan for COVID Vaccine         |
| 16 Dec 2020 | Vaccine Logistics Summit                                                      |
| 22 Dec 2020 | Consultation on the Proposed Program Implementation Plan for COVID Vaccine    |
| 08 Jan 2021 | Coordination Meeting for COVID-19 Immunization Program Implementation         |
| 27 Jan 2021 | TG Immunization Program - COVID-19 Sub Task Group Planning and Policy Meeting |

A bulk of the activities have been completed after the IATF's approval of the Vaccine Cluster on 29 October 2020, and before the 21 January 2021 ratification of the NDVP. DepEd participants note **the approved Vaccine Cluster structure and that framework of the NDVP guided the conduct and contents of the completed trainings and meetings.**

DepEd school health and nutrition personnel likewise continue to be engaged and invited by their Regional DOH offices and local government units to participate in their activities.



School health and nutrition personnel have expressed to the BLSS-SHD that **they need guidance from the Central Office, through an official issuance and an orientation internal to DepEd**, before they can proceed and fully participate in the initiatives led by their respective DOH offices and LGUs.

### III. Participation in the **AKAP Guro CONNECTed's COVID-19 Vaccines Education Campaign**

On 12 February 2021, the BLSS-SHD, through Dr. Maria Corazon Dumlao, received communications from the Office of the Secretary (OSec) about a request from the DOH for DepEd to support **AKAP Guro CONNECTed**, an education campaign of UNILAB that seeks to contribute to the DOH's efforts on COVID-19 vaccine demand generation.

The campaign, which will be **launched on 20 February 2021**, intends to organize a series of orientations with teachers and principals all over the country in order to equip them with the correct and timely information about the COVID-19 vaccines straight from the country's medical and scientific experts. The schedule of the webinar series is as follows:

| Schedule                       | Target Participants    |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| 27 February 2021               | NCR and Northern Luzon |
| 06 March 2021                  | Southern Luzon         |
| 12 March 2021, 9:00-11:00 a.m. | Visayas                |
| 12 March 2021 2:00-4:00 p.m.   | Mindanao               |

Dr. Dumlao specifically received instruction from the Secretary, to attend the preparatory meeting on 15 February 2021 and to address items 1 and 2 in the request of the DOH, namely:

- (1) the issuance of a memorandum to Schools Division Offices to invite schools to attend the launch of the campaign on 20 February 2021, and
- (2) the provision of a 3-minute video of a Solidarity Message from the Secretary.

The third item, which is to provide the Secretary's signature for certificates of participation, will be handled by OSec.

The BLSS-SHD has prepared a separate Complete Staff Work providing the details for this assignment and the necessary follow-through activities as Annex C of this AM.



#### IV. Recommendations

The DTFC requests for the Secretary's guidance on how to proceed in light of the inclusion of DepEd in the approved plan, the NTF's directive to implement the same, and the Secretary's recent instruction to Dr. Dumlao to attend to the DOH's request for support for the AKAP Guro CONNECTed program.

##### A. Support to the NDVP and Promoting Informed Decision

DepEd, as a member of the IATF and as a contributing party to the NDVP based on the acknowledgement section of the document, shall support its implementation, while also **remaining circumspect and exercising due diligence** in all its functions, particularly with regards to the dissemination of materials and conduct of information and education advocacy campaigns.

DepEd's membership in the Planning, Campaign Management, and Technical Teams of the VOCs at various levels is **proposed to focus on promoting informed decisions** on vaccination, within government's massive information campaign on the benefits, risks, and other matters associated with vaccines (e.g., strengthening health/immune system to minimize possible side effects).

This emphasis on promoting informed decisions shall **guide DepEd's efforts to adopt/align with the government's BIDA Solusyon Plus sa COVID-19 campaign**, through the amendment of the DepEd Required Health Standards, and the development of a comprehensive communication plan in DepEd, as earlier communicated to the Secretary and the ExeCom through DTFC Memo No. 327 dated 02 February 2021.

The updated and unified nationwide behavioral change campaign—which the NTF requested DepEd to fully adopt—aims to align national efforts and messaging on COVID-19 vaccine advocacy.

All IEC initiatives, including those proposed by partners such as the AKAP Guro CONNECTed Vaccine Education Campaign, shall be aligned with the DepEd-contextualized BIDA Plus campaign.

Operationally, the information campaign shall be implemented by the DepEd Public Affairs Service, with technical inputs and clearance from the DTFC-19. It is emphasized that DepEd messaging shall remain focused on building capacities for informed decision on vaccination.



## **B. Voluntary Involvement of DepEd Personnel in Vaccination Teams and Ensuring Provision of Necessary Support**

1. **DepEd school health and nutrition personnel** as medical frontliners are among the top priorities among the eligible groups because they may be tapped for actual vaccinations. **It is recommended that their involvement in actual vaccination remain voluntary**, similar to the current arrangement in other DOH-led immunization programs implemented in DepEd.

It is further recommended that a consultative discussion be conducted with school health and nutrition personnel to identify possible issues and concerns encountered in their initial participation in DOH-/LGU-led activities and as follow-through activity to their participation in the regional TOTs and local roll-out of training-orientations.

2. **Teachers**, who based on the plan, may be tapped on a voluntary basis as health educators or documenters/recorders, and vital signs-takers. Consistent with the Secretary's pronouncement that teachers are trained to teach rather than administer vaccines, **DepEd may encourage willing teachers to volunteer only as health educators**. Among the efforts that DepEd can undertake to encourage such participation is supporting the AKAP Guro CONNECTed program endorsed by the DOH.

The engagement of teachers as volunteers must further be compliant with DepEd's no disruption of classes policy. Teachers may volunteer as long as no classes are disrupted and clearance is given by DepEd leadership (e.g., school head or Schools Division Superintendent.)

3. Similar to health personnel and teachers, **involvement of any guidance counselor for the provision of counseling and psychosocial support shall likewise be voluntary**. It is underscored that the specialized practice of the guidance and counseling shall be limited to Registered Guidance Counselors.
4. Aligned with existing DepEd policy on the engagement of its personnel for LGU-initiated COVID-19 activities, DepEd volunteers should be granted by the NTF, through the LGUs, proper trainings, personal protective equipment, sanitation resources, and applicable remuneration or allowances. The **Schools Division Superintendent** shall ensure proper coordination with the LGU for such necessary arrangements including the schedule of deployment.



5. The **safety** of DepEd personnel shall be the utmost consideration in their participation in the program in whatever capacity. Participating remotely or virtually whenever possible shall be the top option. **Participation of DepEd personnel in face-to-face/onsite vaccination activities, especially prior to their turn to receive the vaccine, is highly discouraged.**

DepEd shall explore the feasibility of additional monetary and/or non-monetary support for these concerned personnel, subject to availability of funds and existing rules and regulations. Relevant provisions in existing issuances on employee welfare and allowable remunerations shall be reiterated.

#### **C. Coordination for the Use of School Clinics and Other Identified Areas in the School Premises**

On the use of school clinics and/or other identified areas in the school (e.g., covered courts, makeshift tents set up in open areas, multipurpose halls/rooms, large offices in the school) as vaccination centers or implementing units based on the Plan, **the same process that applies on the use of schools as quarantine or isolation facilities may be retained.**

With existing policy delegating the assessment, approval, and coordination on the use of schools as quarantine or isolation facilities to Regional Directors, the same may be maintained especially as the existing system highlights close coordination between DepEd, the LGU, and health authorities. Like what has been done with the use of schools for quarantine or isolation, a framework Terms and Conditions to be entered into by DepEd and LGUs for the use of schools for vaccination purposes may be provided by the Central Office for the adoption of field offices.

This high level of coordination would facilitate the selection of school-based health facilities with sufficient capacity and equipment to respond and refer to Adverse Event Following Immunization, Adverse Event of Special Interest cases, and sufficient human resources. The Plan likewise stipulates that LGUs shall ensure that all implementing units adhere to the protocols required for an implementing unit/vaccination post/site.

With the reality that a number of schools already serve as quarantine or isolation facilities, health and LGU authorities must select between using schools for quarantine/isolation or for vaccination purposes as **the simultaneous use of schools for both should not be recommended.**



**Consistent with the pronouncement of the President**—“If there is no *malaking mga coliseum o gym*, then we will utilize the schools. *Kung maaari lang huwag muna... Kulang talaga*, then my order is to utilize the public school. *Wala pa namang klase*. Public school buildings, *kung wala*,”<sup>3</sup> —the **use of schools for vaccination activities shall be the last resort**. This is also consistent with the spirit of RA 10821 which instructs that schools can only be used as an evacuation center as a last resort to allow for learning continuity and the displacement of learners and personnel from schools in times of emergencies, and which likewise guided the use of schools for quarantine/isolation facilities.

In addition, DepEd’s position on the limited use of schools for vaccination should also be informed by plans for the resumption of face-to-face and school-based engagements. **It is ideal that the finalization of the policy on face-to-face engagement precede the formalization of DepEd’s commitment and action plan on the implementation of the NDVP**, so that the Department may better actively define and proceed with how it intends to pursue learning continuity for the coming school year. Schools in areas which are candidates for the resumption of feasible limited face-to-face learning should explicitly be excluded as possible vaccination sites.

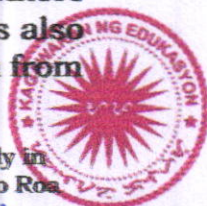
**The safety of the school personnel reporting onsite in schools and the uninterrupted operations of the school for learning continuity, shall be the top most consideration.**

#### **D. Database and Monitoring System on Vaccination, Engagement of DepEd Volunteers, and the use of DepEd Schools**

It is recommended that DepEd creates its own database system of employees who register for vaccination in their LGUs. The database can be linked or drawn from the existing database of the LGUs, if feasible. In addition, the database will cover the status of the teachers, i.e., whether they have already received vaccination and other related details on this matter. Another database shall be developed to monitor the use of schools as vaccination centers. The same can be linked with or drawn from the database of the LGUs, if feasible.

With regards to teachers who will volunteer as health educators or documenters as part of the vaccination team, a database is also suggested for the ICTS to develop. This can be linked or drawn from

<sup>3</sup> “The government may use public schools as vaccination centers if there’s no available space especially in the urban areas as the government gears towards COVID-19 mass vaccination drive, President Rodrigo Duterte said on Monday,” PCOO, [https://pcoo.gov.ph/news\\_releases/aside-from-camps-schools-may-be-used-as-vaccination-centers-president-duterte/](https://pcoo.gov.ph/news_releases/aside-from-camps-schools-may-be-used-as-vaccination-centers-president-duterte/)



the database of the DOH. To guide the ICTS, these planned database systems shall be discussed with the DOH and the National Task Force through the Vaccine Cluster – Sub-Task Group Registry, Data Management and M&E. The DepEd database systems can be accessed and managed at the regional, division, and school levels.

#### **E. Responsibility of Governance Levels**

DepEd must further define the roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities of each governance level in the implementation of DepEd's action plan for the NDVP. As a guiding principle, the next higher governance level shall be responsible for providing policy, strategic, and technical oversight to offices and personnel under its jurisdiction (e.g., matters that cannot be resolved at the school level shall be elevated to the Division; Division-level matters shall be elevated to the Region; etc.)

A separate monitoring and feedback system dedicated to compliance with DepEd guidelines and DepEd-specific concerns (e.g., experience of personnel on volunteering, use of school facilities and resources for NDVP implementation) may also be set-up.

The Honorable Secretary is requested to approve the urgent drafting and release of appropriate correspondences and issuances for the abovementioned recommendations.



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