



SECOND REGULAR SESSION

RESOLUTION NO. 81

RESOLUTION URGENTLY DIRECTING THE HONORABLE MINISTER MOHAGHER IQBAL, MINISTRY OF BASIC, HIGHER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION (MBHTE), TO RENDER AN ASSESSMENT OR REPORT ON THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS AND HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN THE BANGSAMORO AUTONOMOUS REGION IN MUSLIM MINDANAO (BARMM) AND PRESENT TO THE BANGSAMORO TRANSITION AUTHORITY (BTA) ITS LEARNING CONTINUITY PLAN TOWARDS THE SHIFT TO A NEW NORMAL THIS SCHOOL YEAR 2020-2021

WHEREAS, the novel coronavirus is a new strain of coronavirus that has not been previously identified in humans. The novel coronavirus has caused severe pneumonia in several cases in China and has been exported to a range of countries and cities;

WHEREAS, on December 31, 2019, a clustering of pneumonia cases of unknown etiology in Wuhan, China was reported to the World Health Organization (WHO) Country Office. The outbreak was later determined to be caused by a new coronavirus strain that has not been previously identified in humans;

WHEREAS, last February 12, 2020, the WHO announced that the novel disease is officially called Coronavirus Disease 2019 or COVID-19, and the virus infecting it is referred to as COVID-19 virus;

WHEREAS, on January 30, 2020, the Philippine Department of Health (DOH) reported the first case of COVID-19 in the country with a 38-year-old female Chinese national. On March 7, 2020, the first local transmission of COVID-19 was confirmed. The WHO is working closely with the DOH in responding to the COVID-19 outbreak;

WHEREAS, school opening will be on August 24, 2020 for Basic Education, while Higher Education will open not later than September 1, 2020;

WHEREAS, President Rodrigo R. Duterte and the Department of Education (DepEd) declared that there will be no face-to-face learning until a vaccine against COVID-19 is made available;

WHEREAS, the University of the Philippines (UP) experts also said that the "physical" opening of classes might increase the transmission of COVID-19;

WHEREAS, as provided in Republic Act No. 10533, schools and learning institutions shall continue to deliver education services that are "relevant to the needs of the people, the country and society-at-large" in a manner that is appropriate, feasible and compliant to the minimum health and safety standards and directive from Inter-Agency Task Force on Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID), Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) - IATF, Ministry of Health (MOH) and other proper authorities;

WHEREAS, the Ministry of Basic, Higher and Technical Education (MBHTE) issued Memorandum Order No. 204 on formulation of Technical Working Group and conducted series of meetings and consultations with education officials, partners, learners and parents to formulate adaptive strategies for Basic, Madaris, Higher and Technical Education amidst COVID-19 pandemic;

WHEREAS, the MBHTE issued Memorandum Order No. 205 on the guidelines for education continuity plan for School Year (SY) 2020-2021 stating that; education stakeholders, parents, community leaders, and local government units shall be involved in planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of activities and interventions relative to the continuity of education service delivery and home-based or distance learning shall be preferred modality;

WHEREAS, to ensure that “no Bangsamoro child will be left behind” in transitioning to the ‘new normal’ amid COVID-19, the MBHTE-BARMM will be using multi-platform communication system in implementing its Learning Continuity Plan (LCP). Thus, MBHTE Minister Mohagher Iqbal launched on June 15, 2020 the ministry’s Balik Eskwela Program and LCP for SY 2020-2021;

WHEREAS, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has recommended that countries “adopt a variety of hi-tech, low-tech and no tech solutions to assure the continuity of learning.” Although much focus has turned to online learning platforms, many public schools are not set up to use them or do not have functioning internet access to support this, neither do all students. Many public schools, if not most, of the countries affected by the pandemic, particularly those low-income ones where the bulk of public schools are desperately under-resourced largely operate offline;

WHEREAS, Minister Mohagher Iqbal during Senate hearing on Senate Resolution No. 392 stated that “internet penetration rate in the region comprised of Lanao Del Sur, Maguindanao, Basilan, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi provinces, Cotabato City, and 63 barangays is only 20%;

WHEREAS, Internet and Information and Communications Technology (ICT) rights advocacy organization Democracy.Net.PH founder Pierre Tito Galla said the 20% could even be an optimistic estimate, "our current average estimates of the BARMM [internet] penetration is around 5% to 7% only," Galla said;

WHEREAS, with this grim scenario of lack or no internet connectivity, thousands of learners, parents, teachers and other stakeholders will be affected by the shift to new normal in education and it is but proper to identify the issues and challenges facing the MBHTE and stakeholders as they formulate and implement adaptive policies and strategies towards an educational system that is resilient and responsive to the needs of the learners and teachers;

WHEREAS, now is the time to build back better, to make education systems more inclusive and better prepared to face and overcome possible crisis in the future, including climate-related ones. And more than ever, this is a time to protect education – and education budgets - from the socio-economic fallout of the pandemic.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it

RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved, to urgently direct the Honorable Minister Mohagher Iqbal, Ministry of Basic, Higher and Technical Education (MBHTE) to render an assessment or report on the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on public and private schools and higher educational institutions in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) and present to the Bangsamoro Transition Authority (BTA) its learning continuity plan towards the shift to a new normal this School Year 2020-2021.

RESOLVED, FURTHER, to forward the foregoing Resolution to the Honorable Minister Mohagher Iqbal, MBHTE - BARMM.

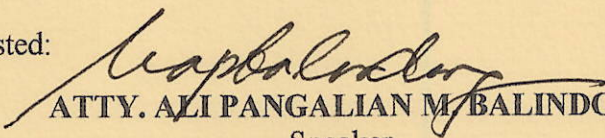
Adopted, July 21, 2020.

Certified Correct:



PROF. RABY B. ANGKAL
Secretary-General

Attested:



ATTY. ALI PANGALIAN M. BALINDONG
Speaker

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