



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education
REGION III – CENTRAL LUZON
SCHOOLS DIVISION OFFICE - SCIENCE CITY OF MUÑOZ
MUÑOZ CENTRAL SCHOOL

Journey Through the New Normal

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The outbreak of Coronavirus disease in 2019 (COVID-19), has created a primary worldwide health crisis thus, President Rodrigo Duterte declared a lockdown in the entire Luzon on March 15, 2020.

This situation put the world into the “New Normal” setting whereas social distancing and wearing of face mask, and face shield has become a requirement. Churches, movie houses, parks, and different establishments were shut down. Even public transportation was limited; thus, tourism was greatly affected. Such scenarios cause many people to suffer by losing their jobs and opportunities to earn and the economy of every nation collapsed. The number of people affected by this virus was so enormous that the sacrifices made by health care workers were overwhelming and heartbreaking.

At that time, the school year is about to end as stipulated in the DepEd Order No.007 s, 2019, and everyone is supposed to be preparing for the coming graduation and recognition, but all activities were canceled because of the big announcement which was never expected by anyone. For the first time, schools were shut down. People stayed at home to avoid contact with others and only those who will buy essential goods are allowed to go out.

In accordance with the DepEd Order no. 12, Series 2020, the Department of Education decided to adopt the New Normal in Education and implement the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP) which took effect in the School year 2020-2021. In its commitment to ensuring teaching and learning continuity while looking after the health, safety, and wellbeing of its learners, teachers, and personnel, The DepEd, never cease to unpack the most essential learning competencies so as to be suited to the situation and to the changing needs in the educational system, especially in time of the pandemic, this is for the pupils to achieve what is most essential among the learning competencies even if they are studying at home.

Hence, different Learning Modalities were introduced and implemented, Although, learners are accustomed to studying at school with the guidance of their teachers, the turn of events was so sudden that they needed to study while staying at home.

It is hard at first time since the teachers are not familiar with distance learning modality. Also, teachers are required to improve their technical skills in doing paper works and constantly attend webinars to help them carry out their innovative functions as educators in the New Normal. The parents and guardians on the other hand, whether they like it or not, assumed the crucial role in guiding their children in adapting to the changes in the distance learning process.

Who would have taught this generation would experience such a predicament. People were caught in disbelief as if they are going through nightmares or just watching a science fiction movie about an outbreak of a deadly virus. Sometimes, people would think of slapping their cheeks just to wake up from this nightmare. Nevertheless, all of this is real and happening.

Through the able leadership of Dep Ed Secretary Leonor Magtolis Briones, different learning delivery modalities like TV and Radio-Based Instructions, online teaching, provisions of audio-based lessons, recorded video lessons, the use of two-way radios, and other among others were employed to ensure that we can be able to give quality instructions to learners and equip them with essential competencies and skills for lifelong learning despite the prevailing crisis brought about by Covid-19 Pandemic.

These learning delivery modalities bring out the best in many teachers. One thing that can be considered as the silver lining of this unfortunate situation is that it allows some teachers to discover their hidden talents and creativity in delivering learning to the best of their abilities in these not-so-ordinary times and were able to rise above the situation.

As time passed by, medical experts were able to create vaccines that somehow reduce the impact of pandemics. Gradually, after two long years, health and safety protocols and other restrictions became much easier.

Towards the end of 2021, the possibility of reopening face-to-face classes was eyed and later implemented in several areas in the country with low cases of Covid-19. And, fortunately, the year 2022 has become a little kinder thus the expanded limited face-to-face learning modality became possible

No one can ever predict what will happen next and nothing is permanent in this world except change. Life is full of uncertainty which is why everyone should always be ready. And, no matter what happens keep in mind that there is a reason for everything that happens. Whatever the reasons may be, only God can tell. Just always keep the faith to survive and move on.

Hopefully, in the coming days, the situations can gradually return to normal because some of the disadvantages of distance learning as stated by Belgica et al. (2020) are as follows: The lack of face-to-face interaction led to distraction or loss of focus among learners. In addition, students tend to suffer from anxieties that result in a lack of participation, a decrease in motivation and interest in learning, and a decrease in pupils' engagement, that is why we need to ensure that education continues as we journey to the new normal of the educational system and look forward with high hopes that this pandemic will soon be over.
