

## RESUMPTION OF CLASSES IN THE MIDST OF PANDEMIC

by:

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Lockdown has been in place for an extended period of time. Children have been absent from school for nearly two years. However, schools have recently reopened and some students are enrolling in limited face-to-face classes.

In low-risk areas, face-to-face classes are now being held. These locations have a lower prevalence of COVID-19. Schools that have reopened continue to take precautionary measures to avoid endangering the health of teachers and students.

Although students have been using online and modular learning in recent months, it is well established that these methods are not a substitute for face-to-face or in-classroom learning. According to a UNICEF-SWS survey conducted in May 2021, the majority of parents (84 percent) observed that, despite spending more time guiding them, their children learned less through distance education than they did through traditional in-person education.

Prolonged school closures have a number of negative consequences for students. The absence of interaction between teachers, students, and peers has a significant impact on students' emotional and cognitive development. This impairs the children's ability to learn. The skills that students must acquire, particularly 21st century skills, are becoming less acquired. Additionally, students face a high risk of child labor, teenage pregnancy, and early marriage. The longer students remain at home and are exposed to online environments, the more vulnerable they are to online violence and abuse. Schools provide mental health, psychosocial support, as well as health and nutrition services to students. And, more often than not, these services are not provided at the client's residence.

As a result of the desire to reopen classes, there are numerous tasks that must be completed. Teachers and students must be vaccinated prior to attending school. Priority is given to the safety of children and teachers. Facemasks and other personal protective equipment are required. Additionally, there are hygiene and cleaning measures in place within the classrooms. Physical distancing is also a technique used. Additionally, classrooms require adequate ventilation.

Due to the fact that face-to-face classes are restricted to those who have been vaccinated, some students will continue with modular learning through online classes.

There will be no students left behind. Each student has a right to education. While the pandemic continues, teachers will continue to teach students. Regardless of the pandemic, education will continue.

*References:*

<https://www.unicef.org/philippines/reopening-schools-safely>

The Official Website of DepED Division of Bataan