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**PRESS RELEASE**

**DepEd partners with CloudSwyft, Microsoft for successful pilot of Virtual Labs for SHS**

June 17, 2022— To provide more accessible technology to learners, teachers, and personnel, the Department of Education (DepEd), through the Information and Communications Technology Service (ICTS), partnered with Microsoft Philippines and CloudSwyft Global Systems, Inc. for the launch of the DepEd Computerization Program (DCP) Virtual Labs.

"The Department is always open to technology advancements and digitalization. We aim to contribute and advance to the digital reform in the education sector," Education Secretary Leonor Magtolis Briones shared.

"Our partnership with Microsoft has brought us so many projects such as driving digital literacy, skilling, enhancing accessibility to technology, and much more that our learners and teachers can utilize to advance digital education in our country. We are grateful for this partnership and the opportunity to work with CloudSwyft, and we hope to launch more projects soon," Undersecretary for Administration Alain Del Pascua said.

Virtual labs technology allows Senior High School (SHS) to deliver a broad range of advanced software applications with very high speed and performance on their own devices (be they laptops, tablets, or mobile devices) – anytime, anywhere – regardless of the cost of the device being used, all in a way that is very easy for the SHS to set up and manage and for the students to have access and experience an engaging learning environment.

CloudSwyft, the global leader in virtual lab solutions for the education sector, partnered with Microsoft to deploy the solution, powered by industry-leading cloud infrastructure, Microsoft Azure, to ensure agility, security, and scalability.

CloudSwyft and Microsoft reported that CloudSwyft and Microsoft created over 4,200 virtual labs for DepEd SHS students, teachers, and office employees. The tech companies launched these initial virtual labs across the DepEd pilot schools, including DepEd Bagong Silang High School, Las Piñas City National Science High School, and Las Piñas City National High School.

"While we are a global company and work to provide our proprietary virtual labs solution at scale to leading education customers and governments across all major continents, we are proudly based in the Philippines and privileged to serve our fellow Filipinos and to contribute to a more equal and advanced learning environment for all SHS students," said Dann Angelo De Guzman, CEO of CloudSwyft.

"As we continue to face the realities of this ongoing pandemic, much has changed, and we have plenty to be optimistic about as we all move forward towards rebuilding our way of life. Hybrid is the next normal for all Filipinos. Technology adoption across industries needs to be scaled and accelerated to support the nation's workers and students," said Joanna Velez Rodriguez, Public Sector Director of Microsoft Philippines.

The solution provided flexibility to users to access their learning environment from anywhere. It ensured that all students were given equal opportunity to develop 21st-century digital skills and were not left at a disadvantage due to lack of access to modern laptop computers.



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Teachers, learners, and DepEd personnel can now freely access software applications such as Adobe Photoshop, Adobe After Effects, Adobe Premiere Pro, IBIS Paint, Adobe Illustrator, Adobe Animate, Adobe InDesign, Arduino, FILMORA, SketchUp, GEOMATH, Microsoft Office 365 applications, Audacity, TINKERCAD and more from their laptops, tablets or other mobile devices.

According to Information and Communications Technology Service (ICTS) Director Abram Abanil, the virtual labs will allow the use of heavy-graphics applications such as; Adobe creative applications or Autodesk software tools used by the learners for class activities and outputs, while teachers can utilize these applications in the development of online education materials to support the different learning modalities of the Department.

These efforts are part of the Public Schools of the Future (PSOF) Framework of the Administration Strand led by Undersecretary Alain Del B. Pascua and Assistant Secretary Salvador Malana III, under the leadership of Secretary Leonor Magtolis Briones.

PR 2022-148

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LVV/JVM 03/23/2022