## LEARNINGS FROM THE PANDEMIC: VIEWPOINT FROM THE PUBLIC SCHOOL

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On March 15, 2020, the world was halted by the global Covid19 pandemic. No one has ever expected that we will all experience a pandemic in our lifetime. The last pandemic was the Spanish Flu more than one hundred years ago. Despite the advancements in public health and medicine, we were all caught red-handed. All aspects of our lives have been changed forever, including the way we do our education.

In the Philippines, our education system and modes of delivery were challenged. UNICEF Philippines (2021) reported that throughout the world in 2020, schools were closed for a total of 79 instructional days, with the Philippines being shuttered for almost a year and sending its pupils into the realm of remote education. Many children, particularly the youngest students at crucial developmental stages, would feel the effects of school closures, including learning loss, emotional discomfort, missed vaccines, an increased risk of dropping out, child labor, and child marriage.

Even if the pandemic has brought negative impacts, it has taught us many valuable lessons as educators. First, educators were given no choice but to be flexible, and for us, that is a very good thing. Educators were challenged to think of ways how to teach their students. Differentiated learning and blended learning have come to the fore and if these things will be continued, we are actually giving a better learning environment to our students. Another lesson is the value of project-based learning. All throughout the pandemic, because of our issues with cheating among students especially multiple-choice exams, project-based evaluations became the way to measure authentic learning. Lastly, despite of the numerous grumblings on the modes of delivery during the pandemic, these

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challenges are actually helping build more autonomous or independent learners. That is actually one of the beauties of the setup during the pandemic. We were able to engage our students to become independent as well as to engage parental involvement in the education of their children.

I believe the pandemic has taught us more about how we provide education to our pupils. Nevertheless, we never gave up on pursuing only the best education for our beloved pupils and students. As we always say, there is always that silver lining in every dark cloud.

## References:

United Nations International Children's Education Fund UNICEF. (2021). Filipino children continue missing education opportunities in another year of school closure. Retrieved on December 4, 2022, via https://www.unicef.org/philippines/pressreleases/filipino-children-continue-missing-education-opportunities-another-yearschool

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