

## TEACHERS NEED PROTECTION, TOO

*by:*

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Teachers in the past used to receive and enjoy the highest regard and respect from different members of the community.

Back then, if a teacher was seen walking on the road, people from all walks of life would stop for a while to greet the teacher and exchange a few lines of conversation. Parents had the best courtesy for teachers, and if pupils came across their teacher unexpectedly, they would not know what to do because they felt so shy and restless.

That was because teachers in previous years exemplified the best character and worker-leaders in the community. Their personalities would already demand respect and courtesy.

However, such esteem and pride for teachers seem to have changed over time. It seems that many parents would easily go to the teacher and post their protest or disagreement, which sometimes would reach the point where parents raised their voices at the teacher.

Some people in the community become judgmental at times about what teachers do or what they hear teachers do. They are not afraid to spread rumors, even if they are about the teacher.

When members of the community see teachers, they sometimes appear to ignore them and do not care to greet them formally.

It seems that people could easily pass judgment on teachers when, at times, some of them do something wrong, may be said to be doing something wrong, or commit mistakes as other people do.

People could easily say: Why did he/she do that? Teacher pa naman siya. Anong klase yan? Kaka-teacher pa naman niya?

It seems like teachers do not have the right to make mistakes. It seems like when others make mistakes, it looks just fine, but when teachers commit mistakes, it seems like they have already committed a mortal sin.

Teachers do not demand excessive respect. All teachers want is to be treated with the respect they deserve from everyone – respect as human beings.

According to Republic Act No. 4670 which is the Magna Carta for Public School Teachers, Article IV, Health Measures, and Injury benefits, Section 3 states that teachers shall be protected against the consequences of employment injuries in accordance with existing laws. The effects of the physical and nervous strain on the teacher's health shall be recognized as a compensable occupational disease in accordance with existing laws, yet how are teachers going to be protected from social and somehow professional discrimination? How are teachers protected from those haters and bashers who easily post rants and comments on social media platforms magnifying the slightest mistakes of teachers? This happened greatly during the start of the modular print instruction where mistakes in the self-learning modules were even posted on social media putting down teachers in the process.

Teachers are also humans with their own flaws and shortcomings. Teachers also need some understanding and space to correct errors and mistakes.

Teachers also need other people's consideration when they commit shortcomings and fall short of the expectations of others.

If children have protection based on the Child Protection Policy, like protection against bullying, teachers also need to be protected. Teachers should be given some protection against bullying. Teachers need protection, too, just like everyone else!

*References:*

Republic Act No. 4670

Magna Carta for Public School Teachers