

## VALUES VOYAGE: NAVIGATING CATCH-UP FRIDAYS FOR ENRICHING READS

*by:*

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According to the recently released 2022 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), the Philippines has landed in the bottom, ten countries out of 81 in reading comprehension, mathematics, and science for the second time. Despite a slightly higher ranking compared to the previous PISA, the test indicators revealed that the performance of Filipino students has shown minimal improvement.

To address this issue, the Department of Education has implemented Catch-up Fridays as a mechanism to bridge the reading gap among students. This learning initiative aims to enhance and strengthen foundational, social, and other relevant skills necessary to realize the objectives of the basic education curriculum. Catch-up Fridays are an integral component of the National Reading and Mathematics Programs, which are critical subprograms of the National Literacy Program outlined in Department Order No. 13, series of 2023.

The DepEd has released a memorandum, numbered 001, dated January 12, 2024, which designates all Fridays throughout the school year as "Catch-up Fridays." During these Fridays, the focus of the first half of the day's schedule will be on operationalizing the National Reading Program (NRP), which aims to improve the reading proficiency of learners across the country. The second half of the day's schedule will be devoted to fostering Values, Health, and Peace Education. Additionally, the teaching of the Homeroom Guidance Program (HGP) will also be included in the Catch-up Fridays.

The justification for these initiatives is based on the results of national and international large-scale assessments, which have identified low proficiency levels in reading among learners. The Department recognizes the importance of addressing these learning gaps as quickly as possible and is committed to enhancing the academic performance of every learner. By dedicating specific days to catch up, the department hopes to provide learners with the support they need to succeed.

*References:*

Department of Education (2024). Implementation of Catch-up Fridays. Retrieved from: <https://www.deped.gov.ph/2024/01/10/january-10-2024-dm-001-s-2024-implementation-of-catch-up-fridays/>