

COPING STRATEGIES IN TEACHING IN A FLOOD-PRONE SCHOOL

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The COVID-19 pandemic has brought a serious threat to every educational institution. Though it had brought a lot of challenges to teachers in ensuring the delivery of quality education, the schools had managed to deal with this struggle successfully. But even though this pandemic situation was over, to Almacen Elementary School's teaching force, there is this one constant barrier that hinders the delivery of education and this is the threat of flooding which the school is experiencing during rainy and habagat season. This destructive flood became a common scenario that affected the school community

Being the major catch basin of flood water from the entire municipalities of Hermosa and Dinalupihan, our school always finds itself in deep flood which caused a lot of class suspensions because of the risk it may pose to the school personnel and schoolchildren.

Being a part of the Almacen ES teaching force for more than a decade now, here are some of the tips/suggestions , and experiences that I can share with those who will be assigned in flood-prone school zones:

Be alert during rainy days.

This came naturally to us teachers. If there is an anticipated typhoon or monsoon rain, we automatically secure our classrooms and raise our school furniture for safety.

Be brave.

If the flood came unexpectedly, we even crossed it bravely just to ensure the safety of our classroom and school belongings including textbooks and modules which are important properties of the school. Oftentimes, we ride on bancas to reach the school and we are very much willing to do it at the expense of our safety for the sake of the school.

Have your prepared alternative teaching plan ready at all times.

To ensure the continuity of learning of our dear learners, we have our prepared teaching plan during class suspensions. We are always ready and equipped with our modular lessons if needed. Teachers are also trained in conducting remediation classes, revising long teaching schedules, and drafting additional take-home activities to cope with the day classes were suspended.

Be physically and emotionally ready for the aftermath.

The hardships do not end after the flood but its aftermath is even more challenging and very tiring. Once the flood subsided, be ready for your battle with the thick mud trapped on the classroom flooring and even on windows. It is a tough job cleaning and restoring the room requiring us one whole day to finish scrubbing. There are even instances where we experienced accidents such as slipping on the floors while cleaning. Parent volunteers in cleaning are also of great help during this situation which is why having a smooth relationship with them is a must for you.

Be an instrument in developing and implementing emergency preparedness plans within the school community.

As an educator, it is our role to disseminate the protocols and procedures to ensure the safety of everyone during flood events. We need to teach not only the learners but also their parents the strategies for managing and minimizing the risks. We also have to be advocates for the whole community to surpass and recover after the flooding. We

should contribute to the overall resilience and well-being of individuals affected by the disasters.

With these mentioned struggles in being assigned to a flood-prone school, we as teachers should commit to doing our job wholeheartedly with smiles on our faces and be stronger amidst the hardships. As the popular meme says, "Baha ka lang... GURO Kami!".

References:

Bakhsh, A. K. (2023, December). ResearchGate. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/379898564_Enhancing_Teacher_Resilience_Innovative_Coping_Strategies_for_Flood_Vulnerabilities