

EMPOWERING YOUNG LEADERS: THE ROLE OF STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

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Student organizations in elementary schools are essential platforms for fostering leadership, promoting civic engagement, and enhancing the overall development of young learners. Structured groups like the Supreme Elementary Learners Government (SELG), Youth for Environment in Schools Organization (YES-O), and Kids Involved in Delivering Service (KIDS) provide students with opportunities to participate in school governance, environmental protection, and community service. These organizations complement the academic curriculum by instilling values such as responsibility, teamwork, and nationalism, aligning with the Department of Education's (DepEd) goal of nurturing 21st-century skills among learners.

The Supreme Elementary Learners Government (SELG) is one of the most recognized student organizations at the elementary level. It serves as the official governing body for pupils, reflecting democratic principles by allowing students to vote and be elected into leadership positions. This involvement helps students understand participatory governance. The SELG plays a crucial role in school activities, discipline, and peer support programs. DepEd Order No. 47, s. 2014, which institutionalizes the Student Government Program (SGP), strengthens student leadership in basic education and highlights SELG's role in promoting learners' rights and welfare.

Meanwhile, the KIDS organization (Kids Involved in Delivering Service) focuses on encouraging child participation in service-oriented activities. It motivates elementary students to engage in volunteerism, health and safety awareness, and disaster

preparedness activities, fostering a culture of empathy and active citizenship from an early age.

Another important student-led organization is the Youth for Environment in Schools Organization (YES-O), which aims to promote environmental awareness and action. YES-O activities often include tree planting, waste segregation campaigns, and education on climate change, making environmental stewardship a shared responsibility among young learners. In accordance with DepEd Order No. 72, s. 2003, which institutionalizes YES-O in all schools, this organization helps integrate ecological consciousness into the daily lives of students. Furthermore, schools may support organizations like the Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts of the Philippines, which emphasize character building, leadership training, and patriotism. These co-curricular organizations not only develop individual competencies but also foster a sense of national identity and community responsibility.

Overall, elementary student organizations like SELG, KIDS, and YES-O are crucial for nurturing the potential of learners beyond the classroom. These groups allow students to experience leadership, participate in meaningful school and community activities, and practice the values of discipline, cooperation, and service. By institutionalizing these organizations, the Department of Education ensures that leadership and civic engagement begin early, empowering learners to become responsible and productive citizens of the country.

References:

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