

BACK TO SCHOOL: THE REALITY OF FACE-TO-FACE CLASSES IN THE PHILIPPINES

by:

Gemma T. Gallor

Teacher III, San Benito Elementary School

After years of distance learning brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, students across the Philippines have returned to their classrooms, backpacks slung over their shoulders and faces filled with a mix of excitement and anxiety. Face-to-face classes are back but they're not quite the same as before.

For many learners, especially those in public schools, the return to in-person classes is a chance to reconnect not just with their classmates, but with a sense of routine, structure, and belonging. Children who once struggled to attend online classes due to lack of gadgets, stable internet, or a quiet place to study now find comfort in the physical classroom, where the teacher is not just a voice behind a screen, but a real person guiding them every step of the way. And to the printed modules they answer at home.

Teachers, too, feel the shift. Although the return means more energy spent managing classrooms and adjusting to health protocols, it also brings joy. Seeing students respond, participate, and laugh together again is a refreshing change from the silence of online platforms. The face-to-face setup allows educators to better observe student needs, offer immediate feedback, and nurture both academic growth and emotional well-being.

However, challenges remain. Many schools still face overcrowded classrooms, limited resources, and the need for repairs. Some students still walk long distances to school, and others still lack the proper materials. But despite these, the return to face-to-face learning has been embraced with resilience and hope.

Face-to-face classes remind us that education is not just about lessons on the board. It's about human connection. In every classroom, in every province, you'll find stories of perseverance: of teachers going the extra mile, of students eager to learn, and of communities working together to support their schools.

It's not a perfect return but it's a meaningful one. And for many Filipino learners, it's a step closer to dreams that were once paused by the pandemic

References:

<https://pinaywise.com/philippines-facts/philippines-face-to-face-classes-reopening-guide/>