

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS AT WORK: BALANCING RESOURCES AND STAFF MANAGEMENT

by:

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Administrative Officers (AOs), particularly those designated as District Property Custodians, play a pivotal role in ensuring the smooth operation of schools and school districts. Their responsibilities extend beyond routine administrative tasks to encompass the management of resources, coordination of personnel, and facilitation of programs that support teaching and learning. By balancing duties related to property management and personnel administration, AOs help ensure that schools operate efficiently while remaining compliant with government regulations (Department of Education [DepEd], 2019).

A core responsibility of Administrative Officers is the management of school property and resources. This includes receiving, recording, and distributing supplies, equipment, and instructional materials. At the district level, property custodians oversee the receipt, recording, updating, and distribution of learning resources across schools under their supervision. Through proper tagging, inventory updating, and regular physical inspections, AOs ensure that all government property and facilities are accurately accounted for and optimally utilized. Such meticulous oversight aligns with the guidelines of the Commission on Audit (COA) and DepEd property management policies, promoting transparency and accountability in public service (COA, 2020).

In addition to property management, AOs are responsible for consolidating and reviewing critical documents, including reports from school feeding programs, supply utilization logs, learning materials inventories, and other district-wide initiatives. They verify these documents for accuracy before submitting them to higher offices, ensuring

compliance with DepEd standards and auditing regulations. This process facilitates effective program monitoring, timely resource disbursement, and smooth operational reporting, which are essential for proper record-keeping and decision-making (DepEd, 2018).

Staff management and administrative coordination are also significant aspects of an AO's work. They assist in processing personnel-related documents, such as salaries, bonuses, incentives, travel requests, study leave applications, and maternity leave approvals. AOs ensure that all supporting documents comply with Civil Service Commission (CSC) and DepEd regulations, whether for 105-day or 60-day maternity leave or other personnel entitlements. By reviewing, signing, and routing these documents, AOs maintain accurate personnel records while supporting the professional and personal needs of school staff (CSC, 2020).

Strong communication and coordination skills are essential for AOs, as they serve as a link between school heads, personnel, supply officers, district offices, and the division office. They ensure that resources are delivered efficiently, programs are implemented correctly, and staff concerns are appropriately documented and addressed. The dual focus on resource management and personnel coordination requires attention to detail, organizational skills, and the ability to handle multiple responsibilities simultaneously, highlighting the AO's critical role within the educational system (Department of Budget and Management [DBM], 2017).

Ultimately, Administrative Officers function as the backbone of school administration. By balancing property management with personnel coordination, they safeguard educational resources and provide necessary support to staff members. Their work allows teachers to focus on instruction, enables students to benefit from well-managed programs, and ensures schools operate in an accountable, transparent, and efficient manner. The multifaceted role of AOs underscores the indispensable

contribution of administrative personnel to the achievement of the Department of Education's mission and vision (DepEd, 2019).

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