

## PROPERTY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM AND EFFICIENCY IN SCHOOLS

by:

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An organized and reliable property management system is vital in public schools, especially those under the Department of Education (DepEd). With schools handling government-owned buildings, furniture, equipment, textbooks, and various supplies, proper record-keeping and accountability ensure that public funds are protected, and school resources remain available and functional. For school property custodians, this responsibility means following clear procedures for documentation, inventory, maintenance, and regular physical checks of all items entrusted to the school.

DepEd has established several policies to guide schools in managing their properties efficiently. One of these is DepEd Order No. 004, s. 2024, which provides guidelines on the procurement, supply, delivery, and contract implementation of goods. Under this issuance, once supplies or equipment are delivered and accepted, the designated school property custodian must immediately update stock cards or property cards and classify the items properly whether they fall under Property, Plant, and Equipment (PPE), semi-expendable property, or inventory items. This ensures consistency in records and accountability.

Schools also handle various donations, which must be recorded correctly. DepEd Order No. 82, s. 2011, or the “Guidelines on the Proper Recording of All Donated Properties,” outlines the procedures for documenting items acquired through donation.

This policy helps ensure that all donated assets from learning materials to large equipment are accounted for and traceable from the moment they are received.

At the school level, property management becomes the responsibility of the designated School Property Custodian (SPC). In many schools, the SPC is the Administrative Officer II or Supply Officer. Their duties include receiving deliveries, inspecting and accepting items, maintaining records, and ensuring the safekeeping and proper use of all school properties. When new items arrive, the SPC must check if the goods match the specifications, assess their condition, flag any issues or incomplete deliveries, and only then accept and record them.

Another essential component of property management is conducting periodic physical inventory. Many Schools Division Offices issue annual or semi-annual directives requiring schools to conduct a physical count of Property, Plant, and Equipment (PPE), semi-expendable items, and consumable supplies. These inventories help confirm the presence and condition of assets, identify shortages or overages, and ensure that records match actual items on hand. Schools typically use standardized forms such as the Report on the Physical Count of Inventories (RPCI) to submit to the SDO. This practice strengthens accountability and ensures readiness for audits.

Proper classification of property is equally important. Schools must distinguish between non-expendable items (such as ICT equipment, furniture, or laboratory tools), semi-expendable property (such as textbooks and certain instructional materials), and consumables. Correct classification determines which forms to use, how the items are maintained, and how they are reported during inventory or turnover.

When items become unusable or beyond repair, they cannot simply be discarded. Disposal of government property requires documentation and must follow procedures outlined in property and audit regulations. The school must prepare reports, request inspection, and follow the proper disposal process to ensure transparency and compliance with audit rules.

By implementing a systematic property management system, school property custodians strengthen both efficiency and accountability. Updated and organized inventory records allow schools to track all property accurately, reducing the risk of loss or misplacement. Regular physical inventories help identify damaged or missing items early, making it possible to repair or replace them before they affect school operations. Reliable documentation also ensures that procurement, donations, and disposals follow clear audit trails, reinforcing public trust.

A well-managed property system also helps schools maximize the use of their resources. Supplies and equipment are maintained in good condition, instructional materials such as textbooks are properly monitored, and unnecessary reordering is avoided because inventory levels are clear. For learning resources in particular, proper tracking from logging issuance to marking property codes helps prevent loss and extends their usability.

Ultimately, efficient property management supports a school's ability to deliver quality education. When assets are properly cared for, accurately recorded, and

responsibly used, schools are better equipped to provide safe, functional, and well-resourced learning environments for their students.

## *References:*

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