

FREEING TEACHERS TO TEACH: CUTTING THE ADMINISTRATIVE CLUTTER

by:

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The heart of education lies in the classroom dynamic—the vital interaction between a teacher and their students. Unfortunately, for public school teachers across the Philippines, this core mission is increasingly buried under an avalanche of non-teaching administrative duties. We are mandated to excel in instruction, but find ourselves acting as clerks, accountants, and event coordinators, meticulously documenting everything from school disaster risk reduction plans to the minutiae required for professional promotion (e.g., the complexities of the old Performance Review and Appraisal System). This relentless administrative burden, often composed of repetitive, time-consuming compliance forms and reports, directly erodes our time for lesson planning, giving personalized feedback, and attending to the varied socio-emotional needs of our learners. This is not just an inefficiency; it's a root cause of teacher burnout and a systemic compromise on the quality of learning delivered to our students.

Fortunately, the tide is beginning to turn, evidenced by the Department of Education's recent policy initiatives, such as DepEd Order No. 002, s. 2024. This landmark policy officially mandates the immediate removal of administrative tasks from teachers to ensure we maximize time for actual classroom teaching. This is a powerful acknowledgment from the highest levels that our expertise is needed for pedagogy, not paperwork. The initiative identifies specific non-teaching duties—like personnel administration, property custodianship, financial management, and feeding program reports—that must now be delegated to school heads, non-teaching personnel, and newly-hired administrative support staff. To make this work, the DepEd is committing

to deploying more Administrative Officer II (AO II) and other support positions, a crucial move to ensure the burden is truly transferred and doesn't simply cycle back to the teacher.

This structural shift represents more than just a reduction in workload; it is an act of professional empowerment. By creating clear boundaries between teaching and clerical duties, the DepEd is allowing teachers to fully dedicate their energy to innovative teaching strategies, professional development, and focused student support. When teachers feel respected and are given the necessary time to prepare and reflect, their morale and effectiveness soar. The ultimate beneficiaries are, of course, the students. A teacher who is well-rested, thoroughly prepared, and focused solely on instruction is a far more effective agent of learning than one overwhelmed by bureaucracy. Our shared goal now is to ensure the consistent and effective implementation of this policy across every school, truly delivering on the promise of freeing teachers to teach.

References:

DepEd Order No. 002, s. 2024: Immediate Removal of Administrative Tasks of Public School Teachers

Link: <https://www.deped.gov.ph/2024/01/26/january-26-2024-do-002-s-2024-immediate-removal-of-administrative-tasks-of-public-school-teachers/>

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