

RECLASSIFICATION DILEMMA: PROMOTION OR PRESSURE FOR TEACHERS?

by:

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The prospect of reclassification in the Department of Education (DepEd) presents a compelling but dualistic challenge for Filipino teachers: the undeniable promise of professional promotion and the insidious weight of excessive pressure. On one hand, the process, often tied to upward movement from one position level to another, such as Teacher I to Teacher III or to Master Teacher positions, provides a necessary career pathway. The recent issuance of the Expanded Career Progression System for Public School Teachers, mandated by Executive Order (EO) No. 174, s. 2022, aims to boost morale, enhance professional development, and ensure adequate remuneration for qualifications and competencies. This system, which includes the eventual creation of new higher teaching ranks (Teacher IV to VII, and Master Teacher V), clearly frames reclassification as a reward for dedication, competence, and service, aligning with the spirit of the Magna Carta for Public School Teachers. For many, it's the beacon of better compensation and recognition, affirming their years of hard work in the classroom.

However, the path to reclassification is laden with procedural hurdles and demands that often translate into immense pressure on educators. The administrative and documentary requirements, as frequently outlined in DepEd Memoranda (like those calling for the submission of documents for reclassification, such as DM No. 52, s. 2023), mandate a complex portfolio of evidence. Teachers must typically demonstrate Very Satisfactory performance ratings for the last three consecutive years, present completed graduate units or degrees, and meticulously compile certificates of training and outstanding accomplishments, all within strict, often brief, submission deadlines. This

requirement to generate and compile extensive non-classroom observable indicators (NCOI) and other voluminous documentation often forces teachers to divert significant time and energy away from their primary duty: teaching.

Ultimately, the reclassification system, while intended as a promotion, often feels like an added burden for teachers already struggling with heavy workloads and a need for improved working conditions. The pursuit of higher pay grade, a critical concern given the cost of living, turns into a stressful competition where success hinges not just on excellent teaching, but also on administrative acumen and the capacity to generate documentary proof. DepEd must continuously refine and streamline the procedures – as is the intent behind new policies like DO No. 024, s. 2025, which details the guidelines for the Expanded Career Progression System – to genuinely make reclassification a merit-based opportunity rather than a high-stakes paper chase. The goal should be a system where the professional growth of teachers is supported, not simply measured by the volume of their compliance portfolio, ensuring that quality classroom performance remains the paramount factor for advancement.

References:

DepEd Order No. 30, s. 2017: Mandates the initial 80 hours of Work Immersion for Senior High School students.

Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS): Cited for a study highlighting the perception among companies that Senior High School graduates are not yet work-ready, and a study on SHS graduates' employment advantage.

Republic Act No. 11510: Institutionalized the Alternative Learning System (ALS), providing flexible pathways for out-of-school youth and adults to complete basic education.

Executive Order (EO) No. 174, s. 2022: Mandated the issuance of the Expanded Career Progression System for Public School Teachers to boost morale and enhance professional development.

DepEd Memorandum No. 048, s. 2025: Outlines the pilot implementation of the Strengthened Senior High School (SHS) Curriculum for Grade 11, set for School Year 2025–2026.

DepEd Order No. 83, s. 2003: An issuance that explicitly prohibited students in elementary and secondary schools from using cellular phones and pagers during class, which represents the Department of Education's long-standing effort to manage digital device intrusion.