

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education
REGION IV-A CALABARZON

DepEd-Division
of Batangas

ICT SECTION

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Regional Memorandum
No. 635, s. 2025

24 August 2025

**INSTITUTING THE CAPACITY-BUILDING FOR CAMPUS
JOURNALISTS AND RECONFIGURED REGIONAL
SCHOOLS PRESS CONFERENCE (RSPC)
DESIGN FRAMEWORK**

To **Schools Division Superintendents**
School Heads of Public and Private Schools

1. To strengthen the implementation of Republic Act No. 7079 or the Campus Journalism Act of 1991 by balancing competition with developmental capacity-building for campus journalists, the Department of Education (DepEd) Region IV-A CALABARZON hereby institutes the Capacity-Building for Campus Journalists and Reconfigured Regional Schools Press Conference Design Framework beginning SY 2025–2026.
2. The reconfigured mechanism aims to:
 - a. equip learners with advanced journalistic knowledge and technical skills through journalism camps, mentoring, and workshops;
 - b. ensure equitable participation of all 24 Schools Division Offices (SDOs) through dual qualification (automatic and merit-based);
 - c. adopt fair and transparent judging using NSPC-aligned rubrics and blinded evaluation;
 - d. reinforce media ethics, responsible communication, and values formation in journalism practice; and
 - e. promote campus journalism as an advocacy for empowerment, nation-building, and civic responsibility beyond competition.
3. This mechanism covers all learners in private and public schools, school paper advisers, and officials participating in the Regional Schools Press Conference (RSPC) 2026 onwards, including both individual and group events.
4. Expenses for regional-level activities shall be charged against Regional Funds and the Development and Promotion of Campus Journalism (DCPJ) Funds. Meanwhile, food, travel, and incidental expenses of participants may be charged against School/District/Division Maintenance and Other Operating



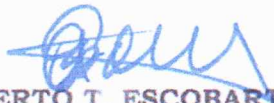
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Expenses (MOOE), Special Education Fund (SEF), or other local funds, subject to accounting and auditing rules.

5. For questions and clarifications, you may contact Eugene Ray F. Santos, Education Program Supervisor in-charge of Campus Journalism, Curriculum and Learning Management Division (CLMD), via email at eugeneray.santos@deped.gov.ph.
6. Immediate dissemination of this Memorandum is desired.


ATTY. ALBERTO T. ESCOBARTE, CESO II
Regional Director



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education
REGION IV-A CALABARZON

**CAPACITY-BUILDING FOR CAMPUS JOURNALISTS AND
RECONFIGURED REGIONAL SCHOOLS PRESS
CONFERENCE DESIGN FRAMEWORK**

I. Introduction

The Regional Schools Press Conference (RSPC) remains a flagship program of the Department of Education through the Regional Offices in promoting campus journalism among learners, as mandated under Republic Act No. 7079, also known as the Campus Journalism Act of 1991. This law upholds the freedom of the press at the campus level and provides an avenue for students to develop journalistic skills essential in nation-building, responsible citizenship, and ethical expression of thoughts and ideas.

In line with this mandate and in response to pressing implementation concerns from the field, the Curriculum and Learning Management Division (CLMD) introduces a revised competition design framework. Unlike previous years, this year's RSPC adopts a purely competitive format, yet integrated with a developmental component through a journalism camp. The new framework balances high-stakes performance with meaningful learning by combining intensive workshops with rigorous assessment processes. This change underscores a merit-based and inclusive approach that ensures fair representation across all Schools Division Offices (SDOs) while reinforcing journalistic excellence at the regional and national levels.

II. Rationale

The changes in the RSPC structure are informed by five critical issues and concerns consistently raised by SDOs and stakeholders:

1. *Limited Access to Regional Expertise.* Many SDOs encounter challenges in accessing journalism experts during lower-level trainings. The revised RSPC addresses this gap by embedding a capacity-building camp prior to the competition, ensuring all participants receive equal exposure to expert mentorship regardless of their division.
2. *Overwhelming Volume of Contest Entries.* The previous format allowed up to 69 entries per category, making the judging process prone to delays and possible inconsistencies. The new design introduces a screening and elimination mechanism that limits entries without reducing learner engagement, thus improving efficiency and fairness in judging.
3. *Need for Higher-Level Validation.* To enhance competitiveness at the national level, the revised framework includes pre-assessment workshops and validation activities to better prepare learners before the actual contests, ensuring quality and readiness of outputs.
4. *Redundancy of Topics Used in Contests.* Concerns have been raised about the repeated use of topics previously tackled in lower-level trainings. The updated structure ensures contest topics and materials are exclusive and directly provided by the Regional Office, ensuring relevance and integrity.
5. *Perception of RSPC as Merely a Contest.* The previous implementation was viewed as being overly focused on competition. The restructured RSPC restores the spirit of campus journalism as advocacy, highlighting its role in values formation, ethical communication, and learner development—beyond just winning.

By addressing these concerns, the RSPC 2026 framework offers a more equitable, competitive, and purpose-driven experience, aligned with DepEd's thrust to produce competent, ethical, and empowered young journalists.

III. Objective

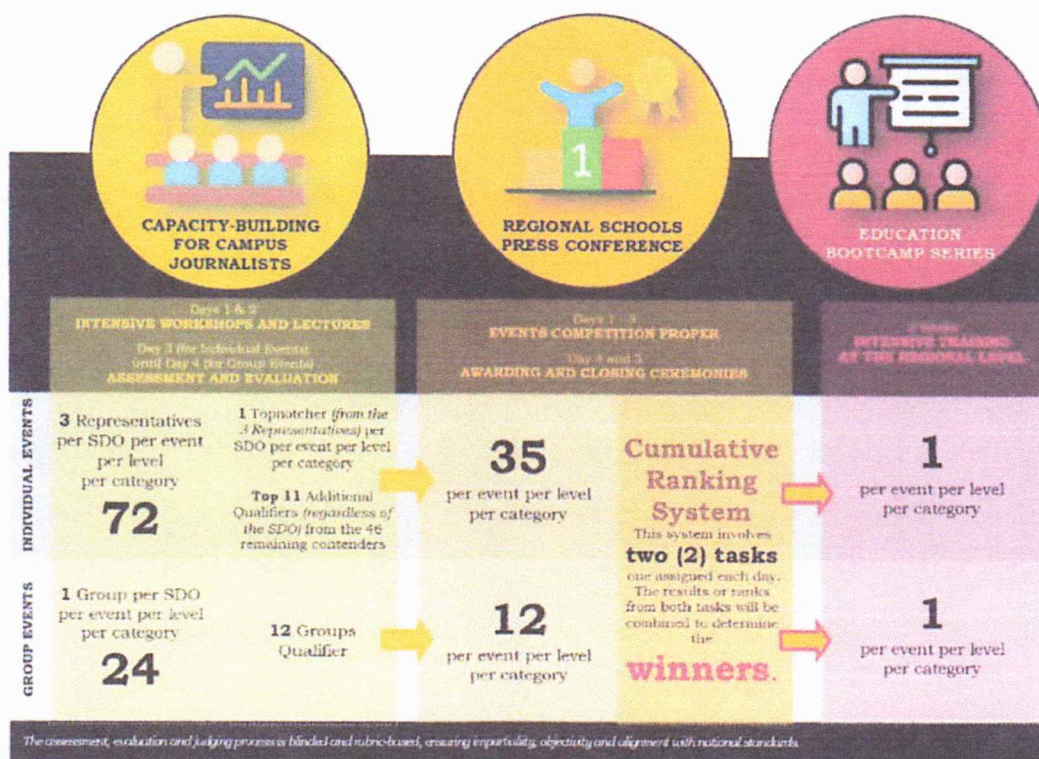
At the end of the Regional Schools Press Conference, all participants shall demonstrate enhanced journalistic competencies, ethical standards, and a deeper appreciation of campus journalism through active engagement in both capacity-building activities and merit-based competitions, in preparation for higher-level (national) participation and lifelong responsible media practice. Specifically, it aims to:

- A. equip participants with advanced journalistic knowledge and technical skills through expert-led workshops and mentoring sessions in various platforms of journalism (print, radio, online, photo, and broadcast);
- B. fairly evaluate participants' outputs using standardized NSPC-aligned rubrics and a blinded judging process that ensures objectivity and integrity in the selection of RSPC qualifiers;
- C. ensure equitable representation of all 24 SDOs in the regional competition while also recognizing high-performing learners across divisions through a dual qualification system (automatic and merit-based);
- D. reinforce the values of truth, fairness, accountability, and civic responsibility in journalism through dedicated sessions on media ethics and responsible communication; and
- E. revive and sustain the advocacy for campus journalism as a transformative force for student empowerment, community awareness, and nation-building—not just as a contest.

IV. Capacity-Building and Competition Design Framework

The RSPC introduces a restructured competition design that shifts from a purely contest-oriented model to a hybrid developmental-competitive approach. This design integrates a 3-day (for individual events) and 4-day (for group events) Campus Journalism Camp with the actual assessment phase, ensuring that learners are not only tested for their journalistic skills but also trained and mentored before competing.

The new framework is guided by principles of meritocracy, fairness, capacity-building, and values formation. Here are the Key Features of the New Framework:



A. Phase 1.1 – Campus Journalism Camp (Days 1–2)

This is also the *Elimination Phase* where participants undergo intensive workshops and lectures led by journalism experts. Topics may include ethics, platform-genre-specific writing, technical skills and real-world media practices.

For the Individual Events, the participants are Top 3 winners in the Division Schools Press Conference or other mechanisms designed by the SDO for the purpose of impartial and unbiased selection. For the Group Events, meanwhile, only one group shall represent each division.

B. Phase 1.2 – Assessment and Evaluation (Days 3–4)

Learners then compete under strict contest conditions using topics provided by the Regional Office through the Regional Technical Working Group. The judging process is blinded and rubric-based, ensuring objectivity and alignment with national standards.

Meanwhile, participants in the Collaborative Desktop Publishing and Online Publishing events will be assessed

individually based on their specific roles—news writing, editorial writing, feature writing, sports writing, editorial cartooning, photojournalism, and layout design—to ensure that both the content creation and layout aspects meet high standards of quality. All roles will undergo assessment similar to the individual events. However, since these events require a higher number of output, writers and cartoonists will be tasked to produce at least three outputs within a three-hour period. Meanwhile, the layout artist will be provided with a complete package of articles, photos, and graphics to design a 4-page layout. For these events, one judge will evaluate the layout, while the content will be judged by the panel assigned in the individual writing categories.

Furthermore, in TV Scriptwriting and Broadcasting, there will be one judge for scriptwriting, one judge for delivery, and one judge for technical aspects. In Radio Scriptwriting and Broadcasting, the same judging scheme will be followed, with one judge each for scriptwriting, delivery, and technical.

After the assessment and evaluation, the following shall be identified and announced through a Regional Memorandum:

1. Individual Events (35 qualifiers)

- a. *Automatic Qualifiers*: The top-performing learner from each SDO (24 in total) to ensure representation.
- b. *Additional Qualifiers*: The top 11 scorers from the remaining 48 contenders based on total assessment score.

2. Group Events (12 qualifiers)

- a. All 24 groups undergo the same 4-day camp and assessment process.
- b. The top 12 groups based on assessment scores will proceed to the RSPC.

C. Phase 2 – Regional Schools Press Conference

The second phase marks the culmination, the *Final Phase* – the actual RSPC — the contest proper, where participants put into practice the skills and insights gained during the journalism

camp. This phase involves the 2 rounds of actual writing (*one task each in 2 days*), production, and performance-based competitions across individual and group events.

This format provides equal training opportunities for all, strengthens contest integrity, and restores the advocacy dimension of campus journalism by emphasizing both excellence and ethics. It addresses long-standing issues in implementation and sets the tone for a more purposeful and efficient RSPC.

In determining the winners in the actual RSPC for both individual and group events, each participant will submit two outputs in total (*one each contest day*) during the contest proper. Judges will independently rank each output from 1 to 35, based on the quality and adherence to the contest criteria. The sum of the two ranks will serve as the basis for the participant's final overall ranking. The lower the total score, the higher the participant's final placement. This method ensures a balanced and fair assessment that reflects consistent performance across both tasks. Please refer to the example below for clarity.

Participant Code	Rank in Output 1	Rank in Output 2	Sum of Rank	Final Placement
A	1	2	3	1
B	2	4	6	3
C	4	1	5	2
D	5	3	8	4.5
E	3	5	8	4.5

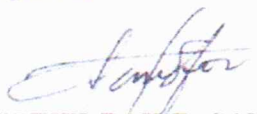
D. Phase 3 – Education Bootcamp Series

The Education Bootcamp Series is a special training program conducted after the Regional Schools Press Conference (RSPC) and before the National Schools Press Conference (NSPC), designed exclusively for the regional winners (qualifiers) who will represent CALABARZON at the national level. It aims to strengthen the readiness of qualifiers by providing specialized coaching and mentoring from journalism experts, while ensuring that learners uphold journalistic excellence, ethics, and values as they prepare to compete nationally.

V. Fairness and Integrity Measures

The RSPC ensures a fair and objective evaluation process through the implementation of a blinded judging system designed to eliminate bias or favoritism. All entries will be assigned pre-determined codes, preventing judges from knowing the participants' names, schools, or Schools Division Offices (SDOs). To maintain consistency and alignment with national benchmarks, the evaluation will utilize standardized rubrics based on NSPC and DepEd standards. Furthermore, the entire evaluation team will undergo orientation on assessment integrity protocols, ensuring that judging practices are transparent, professional, and rooted in merit.

Prepared:



EUGENE RAY F. SANTOS
Education Program Supervisor



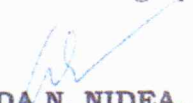
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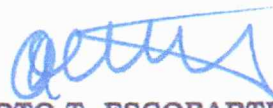
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