



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education
REGION IV-A CALABARZON
SCHOOLS DIVISION OF BATANGAS

6 Apr 2026

UNNUMBERED MEMEORANDUM

**GUIDELINES ON ENSURING A SAFE AND MOTIVATING
LEARNING ENVIROMENT**

TO: Assistant Schools Division Superintendents
Chief - Curriculum Implementation Division (CID)
Chief - School Governance and operation Division (SGOD)
Public Schools District Supervisors
Public and Private School Heads
All Others Concerned

1. Attached herewith is the DepEd Order No. 006 s. 2026 dated March 24, 2026 entitled, Guidelines on Ensuring A Safe and Motivating Learning Environment.
2. For your information, guidance, and immediate dissemination.

MARITES A. IBAÑEZ, CESO V
Schools Division Superintendent

RJG/ Guidelines on Ensuring a Safe and Motivating Learning Environment / S2-114191 / 4-6-2026



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education

DepEd-Division
of Batangas

ICT SECTION

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DepEd ORDER
No. **006**, s. 2026

**GUIDELINES ON ENSURING A SAFE AND MOTIVATING
LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

To: Undersecretaries
Assistant Secretaries
Minister, Basic, Higher and Technical Education, BARMM
Bureau and Service Directors
Regional Directors
Schools Division Superintendents
Public and Private Elementary and Secondary School Heads
All Others Concerned

1. The Department of Education (DepEd) is mandated to protect and promote the right of every Filipino to quality, equitable, culture-based, and complete basic education, which includes creating an enabling and supporting learning environment where learners are protected and secured from any form of harm, abuse, and violence within and under its jurisdiction. Consistent with the DepEd's principle of promoting the welfare, safety, and security of learners, the **Guidelines on Ensuring a Safe and Motivating Learning Environment** is hereby adopted. This Order harmonizes all DepEd issuances with the common goal of ensuring a safe learning environment.

2. This Order consolidates various guidelines from all DepEd issuances that aimed to protect learners from any incident related to learner rights protection (LRP) concerns. These concerns include incidents such as bullying and gender-based violence, among others. This Order provides simplified, more coherent guidelines from prevention to response measures that covers common security protocols, consistent procedures for incident reporting, and the provision of mental health and psychosocial support for victims.

3. This Order expressly repeals the following:

- a. DepEd Order (DO) No. 6, s. 1954 – Prohibiting the Practice of Hazing in Schools and Imposes Sanctions for Violations;
- b. DO 70, s. 1999 - Prohibiting Students of Elementary and Secondary Schools from Using Cellular Phones and Pagers During Class Hours;
- c. DO 26, s. 2000 - Prohibiting Students of Elementary and Secondary Schools from Using Cellular Phones and Pagers During Class Hours;
- d. DO 83, s. 2003 - Reiteration to DECS Orders Nos. 70, s. 1999 and 26, s. 2000 (Prohibiting Students of Elementary and Secondary Schools from Using Cellular Phones and Pagers During Class Hours; and

e. Other issuances that are inconsistent with this Order.

4. This Order shall take effect upon its approval, issuance, and 15 days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation and after its publication on the DepEd website. Certified copies of this Order shall be registered with the Office of the National Administrative Register (ONAR) at the University of the Philippines Law Center (UP LC), UP Diliman, Quezon City.

5. If any provision of this Order is declared invalid and/or unconstitutional by a court of competent authority, the remaining provisions thereof not otherwise affected shall remain valid and in full force and effect.

6. For more information, please contact the following:

a. **Office of the Assistant Secretary for Governance and Operations**, through email at asec.ops@deped.gov.ph or at landline number (02) 8633-7242.

b. **Learner Rights and Protection Division**, through email at weprotectlearners@deped.gov.ph or at landline number (02) 8632-1372.

7. Immediate dissemination of and strict compliance with this Order is directed.



SONNY ANGARA
Secretary

Encl.:

As stated

References:

DepEd Order (Nos.: 83, s. 2003; 26, s. 2000; DO 70, s. 1999; and 6, s. 1954)

To be indicated in the Perpetual Index
under the following subjects:

BUREAUS AND OFFICES
LEARNERS
POLICY
RIGHTS
SCHOOLS
TEACHERS

GUIDELINES ON ENSURING A SAFE AND MOTIVATING LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

I. RATIONALE

Consistent with the Philippines' commitment to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Declaration on the Elimination of Bullying of Children¹, which seeks to strengthen the protection of children from learner rights protection (LRP) concerns within ASEAN, the Department of Education (DepEd) continues to prioritize the safety and welfare of the Filipino learners. As a member state affirming the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Children (ACWC) Workplan 2021-2025, the DepEd adheres to the principles and strategies set forth in the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on Elimination of Violence against Children (ASEAN RPA on EVAC)², which emphasize educational interventions, community engagement, and strengthened collaboration with relevant stakeholders.

To support effective prevention and response strategies, the DepEd grounds its approach in an understanding of the social and emotional characteristics of Filipino learners. These traits are shaped by Filipino cultural values such as *masigasig*, *magiliw*, *maalalahanin*, *malikhain*, *may malasakit*, *magalang*, and *matatag*, among others. As learners mature, their cognitive abilities become more refined, while their emotional development progresses from expressing personal emotions to understanding the emotions of others. Socially, learners advance from recognizing basic social roles to defining and establishing their place within the broader society (Rungduin and Reyes, 2015)³.

As the primary government agency mandated "to protect and promote the right of every Filipino to quality, equitable, culture-based, and complete basic education"⁴, the DepEd is responsible for ensuring an enabling learning environment where learners are motivated to learn and protected from abuse, violence, and harm. Consistent with existing child protection laws and its mandate to promote the welfare, safety, and security of learners, the DepEd adopts policies and programs that safeguard learners and all education stakeholders, including teaching, teaching-related and non-teaching personnel, and ensure that schools, Community Learning Centers (CLCs), and all DepEd offices remain safe and supportive environments. In line with this mandate, the DepEd has issued several policies, including DepEd Order No.

¹ Association of Southeast Asian Nations (2021). Declaration on the Elimination of Bullying of Children in ASEAN. Accessed through: <https://asean.org/declaration-on-the-elimination-of-bullying-of-children-in-asean/>

² Association of Southeast Asian Nations (2017). ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on the Elimination of Violence against Children (ASEAN RPA on EVAC). Accessed through: <https://asean.org/book/asean-regional-plan-of-action-on-the-elimination-of-violence-against-children-asean-rpa-on-evac/>

³ Rungduin, T., & Reyes, Z. (2015). The Filipino Learner: A Socioemotional Perspective. Retrieved from Research Gate: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/285202735_The_Filipino_learner_A_socioemotional_perspective

⁴ DepEd website. Accessed on April 15, 2025, through: <https://www.deped.gov.ph/about-deped/vision-mission-core-values-and-mandate/>

40, s. 2012 (Child Protection Policy)⁵ and OM-OUOPS-2024-05-01115 (Guidelines on the Implementation of the Safe Spaces Act in Basic Education), among others.

Despite these policy measures and the establishment of the Learner Rights Protection Office (LRPO) to operationalize child protection initiatives, reports indicate the continued prevalence of LRP incidents. The 2018 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) reported that 65% of Filipino learners experienced bullying-related incidents several times a month, including those involving physical harm.⁶ However, LRP concerns extend beyond bullying and may also include discrimination, cyber harassment, sexual violence, and other forms of abuse. In response to increasing LRP cases, particularly bullying, the Second Congressional Commission on Education (EDCOM 2) Year Two Report recommended several measures, including the amendment of DepEd Order No. 55, s. 2013, or the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of the Anti-Bullying Act of 2013.

While the EDCOM 2 recommendations largely focus on bullying, the report also identifies broader gaps affecting the implementation of related DepEd policies aimed at ensuring a safe learning environment. In particular, the lack of coherence and coordination among existing policies has resulted in fragmented efforts, overlapping initiatives, and insufficient alignment across governance levels, thereby diminishing their overall effectiveness.

Hence, the DepEd adopts this Order that harmonizes all DepEd issuances that shall mitigate cases of LRP concerns, strengthen prevention and response mechanisms in schools and CLCs, and increase the stakeholders' involvement to address LRP concerns to ensure a safe and motivating learning environment.

II. POLICY STATEMENT

The DepEd hereby adopts the Guidelines on Ensuring a Safe and Motivating Learning Environment (ESMLE), which harmonize all DepEd issuances aimed at ensuring a safe learning environment by providing coherent instructions on security measures, incident reporting procedures, and the provision of mental health and psychosocial support. This Order reflects the DepEd's commitment to promoting the welfare, safety and security of learners through child-friendly, gender-sensitive, safe, and motivating environment, with particular focus on mitigating cases of LRP concerns nationwide, strengthening prevention and response mechanisms in schools and CLCs, and increasing stakeholder involvement in addressing LRP concerns.

III. SCOPE

This Order establishes the prevention and response strategies to address incidents related to LRP concerns in both physical and virtual settings, including, but not limited to, school grounds, activities, and off-campus environments. It governs the following DepEd Orders, amendments, and other

⁵ Department of Education (2012). DepEd Child Protection Policy. DepEd Order No. 40, s. 2012. Accessed through: https://www.deped.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/DO_s2012_40.pdf

⁶ OECD (2018). PISA 2018 Results (Volume III). Chapter 2 Bullying. Accessed through: https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/pisa-2018-results-volume-iii_acd78851-cn.html

relevant issuances that provide interventions and protocols addressing the same concerns:

- A. DepEd Order No. 40, s. 2012 – Child Protection Policy
- B. DepEd Order No. 18, s. 2015 – Guidelines and Procedures on the Management of Children-at-Risk (CAR) and Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL)
- C. DepEd Order No. 32, s. 2017 – Gender-Responsive Basic Education Policy
- D. DepEd Order No. 57, s. 2017 – Policy on the Protection of Children in Armed Conflict
- E. DepEd Order No. 32, s. 2019 – National Policy Framework on Learners and Schools as Zones of Peace
- F. DepEd Order No. 47, s. 2022 – Promotion of Professionalism in the Implementation and Delivery of Basic Education Program and Services
- G. DepEd Order No. 49, s. 2022 – Amendments to DepEd Order No. 47, s. 2022
- H. DM-OUOPS-2024-05-01167 – Guidelines on the Protocols on the Handling of Children in Situations of Armed Conflict (CSAC) Learners in the Department of Education
- I. DM-OUOPS-2024-05-07998 – Supplemental Guidelines for the Implementation of DepEd Order No. 40, s. 2012
- J. IRR of Republic Act (RA) No. 10627 Otherwise Known as The Anti-Bullying Act of 2013

This Order serves as a general guideline and does not amend or repeal the above issuances. Its purpose is to supplement, harmonize, and clarify existing instructions and procedures. It applies to all public schools and CLCs.

Private schools, State and Local Universities and Colleges (SUCs/LUCs), and Philippine Schools Overseas (PSOs) are highly encouraged to adopt this Order.

IV. DEFINITION OF TERMS

For purposes of this Order, the following terms are defined:

- A. **Child Protection Committee (CPC)** sets up mechanisms to protect learners from all forms of LRP incidents. The CPC is composed of the school head/administrator, guidance counselor/teacher, representative of the teachers, representative of the parents, representative of the learners, and representative of the community, which shall have the responsibility to protect learners from all forms of abuse, exploitation, and neglect by ensuring that preventive and responsive mechanisms are in place.
- B. **General Operating Procedure** is the general response strategy prescribed by DepEd where schools can pattern their context-appropriate standard operating procedures. It captures stages of the response mechanisms addressing incidents related to LRP concerning Adult to Learner, Learner to Learner, and Learner to Community (*see diagram in Annex A-C*).
- C. **Interventions** refer to the programs provided by DepEd throughout the course of response mechanism to intervene in incidents related to LRP concerns. This includes psychological first aid, guidance and counseling, and mental health and psychosocial support services.

- D. **Learner Formation Officer** is a designated personnel by the school head/principal who shall be responsible for maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment by enforcing school policies and managing learner behavior.
- E. **LRP Concerns** is an umbrella term that refers to all types of LRP concerns or cases involving child abuse, violence, exploitation, discrimination, bullying, gender-based sexual harassment, or any other conditions and circumstances prejudicial to the development of learners based on any ground, such as age, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation and gender identity, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, being infected or affected by Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), being pregnant, being a child in conflict with the law, being a child with disability, or other status or condition, and which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by all persons, on an equal footing, of all rights and freedom.
- F. **Protocols** refer to the established rules and regulations, such as the code of conduct, learner handbook, and other security measures that guide the schools in ensuring the prevention or reduction of harm or threat in the school community.
- G. **Safe and Motivating Learning Environment** is a state of the school community where a safe environment triggers the learner's innate drives to participate in the learning process. It encompasses the shared responsibility of the "whole-of-society" in ensuring that all learners, regardless of their background and identities, feel safe, belong, and supported; enabling the learners to fully engage in the learning environment without fear and threat.
- H. **School Code of Conduct** refers to a set of rules and guidelines formulated by individual schools and CLCs, based on the Standardized Code of Conduct. It serves as a framework for establishing clear expectations for behavior and ethical standards for both learners and personnel within the school community. The code ensures that schools adhere to consistent protocols that promote a safe, respectful, and motivating learning environment.
- I. **Standard Operating Procedures** refer to the school's context-appropriate standard operating procedures patterned based on the general response strategy prescribed by DepEd. It captures stages of response to incidents related to LRP concerns, which involves risk assessment, incident reporting, referral protocols, and investigation protocols.
- J. **Standardized Code of Conduct** refers to a set of guidelines and expectations prescribed by DepEd that govern the behaviors, actions, and responsibilities of learners and teaching and non-teaching personnel consistent with the DepEd's existing policies in ethical standards for personnel. It aims to create a positive and respectful atmosphere within the school community, promoting the welfare and safety of all individuals while upholding the values of respect, discipline, and accountability.