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PRESS BRIEFING OF MS. DAPHNE OSEÑA-PAEZ
WITH DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION USEC. MICHEAL POA
AND USEC. GINA GONONG
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MS. OSEÑA-PAEZ: In this morning's sectoral meeting led by President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., the country's ranking in the OECD's 2022 Program for International Student Assessment or PISA was discussed. The Philippines' performance in PISA from 2018 to 2022 shows that more than 75% of 15-year-old students scored below the minimum level of proficiency in Mathematics, Reading and Science. The factors leading to the low scores include the use of digital devices, language at home, teacher's specialization, and bullying among others. The President has tasked the Department of Education to continue to take the necessary steps to improve the country's ranking.

And now, joining us today in this briefing are DepEd Undersecretaries Michael Poa and Gina Gonong. Good morning.

USEC. POA: Magandang umaga po sa ating mga kaibigan sa Malacañang Press Corps.

So as was mentioned earlier this morning, of course, led by the Vice President, Secretary of Education Sara Duterte, nag-present po tayo sa Pangulo ng ating ways forward because the theme was really how do we improve not only our PISA performance but the overall performance of our learners in basic education.

So doon po, noong hinaylight [highlighted] natin iyong ating National Learning Recovery Program sa ngayon to a National Reading Program, National Math Program, National Science Program, iyong National Learning Camp, pinagbigyang-tuon din natin ng pansin iyong ating Catch up Fridays na sisimulan na natin sa January 12. We issued the guidelines last night.

Pagkatapos po noon, napag-usapan iyong mga sa tingin ng ating Pangulo ay dapat talaga nating pagtuunan ng pansin in the coming years, so in the coming months, weeks, years 'no. At iyon ay, number one, teaching quality, gusto niyang magkaroon talaga ng expertise iyong ating mga teachers, so he emphasized on the necessity of proper training programs for our teachers, of course, hand in hand with teacher's welfare.

Pangalawa po diyan, iyong nutrition aspect dahil alam naman natin na nakakaapekto talaga ang nutrition pagdating sa performance ng ating mga kabataan that's why we looked at different feeding programs of government kasama na siyempre iyong ating school-based feeding program.

At pangatlo, iyong bullying. Na-discuss nga po kanina na kung dati ang bullying stays in school, sa ngayon, because of social media, even when you leave school, puwede pa ring magkaroon ng mga incidence of bullying through the different social media platforms.

So these are the things that we have already started addressing sa Department of Education, but we will continue to strengthen our programs in terms of bullying, of course, in coordination also with other agencies such as the DOH pagdating sa referral system.

And we are here today to answer any of your questions regarding this matter. We would like to thank, of course, the President for the guidance given to the Department of Education. Maraming salamat po.

MS. OSEÑA-PAEZ: Thank you. Okay, we can open the floor to questions. Go ahead, Eden Santos.

EDEN SANTOS/NET25: Good morning po, Usec. Doon po sa guidance ng Pangulo, puwede pong i-elaborate lang po natin kung ano po ang naging guidance niya para sa DepEd.

USEC. POA: Yes, maraming salamat po sa inyong tanong.

Number one, iyon nga po, pagdating sa teachers kasi talagang para sa ating Pangulo, napakaimportante ng ating mga teachers. And we agree, teaching quality will really improve. Sabi nga ng ating Pangulo, he believes around 60% improvement kung mapabuti din natin iyong ating teaching quality.

That's why ngayon, sa DepEd, mayroon naman tayo, iyong ating NEAP 'no. Iyong National Educators Academy of the Philippines which is the training arm of DepEd pagdating sa ating mga teachers. So ang sabi ng ating Pangulo, we really need to update our teachers sa technology. We need to ensure that they have the proper training programs and they have the proper expertise para po magampanan talaga nila iyong kanilang trabaho.

Pangalawa, iyong nutrition nga po. We presented to the President that for the school-based feeding program ay mayroon naman po tayong ugnayan with DSWD, for example. May mga programa kasi sa gobyerno ngayon pagdating sa feeding at hindi naman po sila nag-o-overlap. In fact, they complement each other; mayroon tayong continuity. So it starts with, of course, the food stamps for the families; there's also the first 1,000 days. And then mayroon pong supplementary feeding program, iyong pondo ay nasa DSWD, ito naman po iyong parang nasa daycare. And then after that, pupunta naman po siya sa basic education kasi papasok na sa paaralan iyong ating mga kabataan.

For the school-based feeding program, mayroon po tayong 5.6 billion na budget for 2023. Nataas na po natin iyong budget na iyan this year to 11.7 billion. What does that mean? It means na dahil sa pagtaas ng pondo, kung dati ay nasa 120 days lang ang feeding natin, ngayon po ay masasakop na natin iyon buong taon.

But, of course, the President wants us to still see kung ano pang enhancements ang magagawa natin dahil napakaimportante ng nutrition 'no.

And, of course, pangatlo, iyong nabanggit ko nga po, iyong bullying talaga iyong isang naging focus.

EDEN SANTOS/NET25: Usec., before po na maupo sa DepEd si VP Sara, ano po iyong naging difference ng scores po sa mga previous years? Kasi alam naman natin na lagging talaga at nananatiling kulelat po iyong ating mga estudyante. Doon po sa kaniyang pag-upo, umangat ba nang kaunti iyong score or bumaba pa?

USEC. POA: Actually, I have to clarify that, ma'am. Kasi iyong PISA natin was not taken during the term of the Vice President, Secretary of Education. Ang PISA natin, masasabi nga natin na pandemic PISA siya because this was taken from March to May 2022. So this was prior to this administration and this was prior to the return of in-person classes.

Ngayon, pagdating naman sa resulta, of course, Usec. Gina is here to give you probably the specifics or the details. But the general ... siguro the general notion pagdating sa resulta is wala namang ganoong kalaking difference iyong ating 2018 and 2022; mayroong slight improvements in areas of Math and Reading.

USEC. GONONG: Oo, sa Reading, mayroon tayong 2-point increase in terms of scores; sa Math, seven points; sa Science, bumaba tayo ng one point. Pero hindi significant ang difference na ito. So iyong increase o kaya iyong decrease has nothing to do with performance level.

So tama ang sabi mo kanina, talagang nananatili tayo sa low proficiency level. So 2018 at saka 2022, low performance levels tayo sa PISA.

USEC. POA: Halos hindi po siya nagbago, iyong sinasabi ni Usec. Gina. But again, iyon nga po 'no, we have to be conscious of the dates also that these were taken, that the PISA 2022 was taken prior to the return of in-person classes.

MS. OSEÑA-PAEZ: Okay. Tuesday Niu.

TUESDAY NIU/DZBB: Good morning, sir, ma'ams. Sabi ninyo kanina, Usec., iyong teachers ay kailangan na ring i-upgrade sila para doon sa bagong technology. So far, sir, may data ba kayo kung ilan sa mga teachers na ito iyong maalam na sa mga bagong technology or digitalization para maka-adjust din sila doon sa mode of learning na ginagawa na ngayon? At ilan pa sa kanila iyong hindi maalam masyado sa technology kaya nahuhuli iyong paraan ng pagtuturo nila sa mga bata na alam natin iyong mas maraming mga bata ngayon iyong mas marurunong na sa technology, bagong technology?

USEC. POA: Actually, sa ngayon, wala po akong mabigay sa inyo na data ‘no. But we will be doing a scoping talaga pagdating diyan. In fact, not just that, gusto din naming malaman kung ilang teachers na ang mayroong gadget, for example, that they can use. So these are the things we are doing right now.

But again, iyong training, we won’t just focus on one; we will really train all of our teachers kasi nga marami nang nagbago na technology, even in a span of a year ‘no, maraming nagbabago. Like ngayon, sabi nga natin, mayroon na tayong AI, hindi ba. So that’s something we are looking at. At we will use, of course, the training facility of DepEd to do that.

And then, there’s also, of course, the TEC, iyong ating council na namamahala sa talagang quality of teaching not just in in-service or meaning kapag nasa DepEd na sila, but pati iyong pre-service, meaning, bago sila pumasok sa DepEd. So habang nag-aaral pa lang sila para maging guro ay tinitingnan na kaagad iyon ng TEC. Ito siguro iyong magandang mechanism para talagang makita natin iyong mga paraan paano natin maiangat iyong quality ng ating teachers ‘no. Because, again, as we always say, hindi naman kasalanan ng teachers iyan; it’s never their fault eh. It’s really the system, and that’s why we want to improve not just in-service – but, of course, that’s the responsibility of DepEd, iyong in-service – we also want to improve pre-service, the exam given by PRC and then pagdating sa DepEd, iyong in-service training nila.

USEC. GONONG: Susugan ko iyong sinabi ni Usec. Mike pagdating sa technology in teaching. Tuluy-tuloy naman ang training natin sa teachers. At on top of trainings, we’re providing them modules or learning resources that they can use so that they can adapt to using technology in teaching. Kailangan talaga natin din na mag-link sa mga universities para pagdating naman sa pre-service teacher education, ma-train na ang mga teachers sa paggamit ng technology sa pagtuturo.

MS. OSEÑA-PAEZ: Perhaps, we can also talk about the importance of specialization. The President had emphasized that, the support for teachers to further their education and specialize.

USEC. GONONG: Yes. Kasi ngayon, generalist ang marami nating teachers sa elementary. So kailangan nating pag-isipan, together with universities, paano magkakaroon, paano gagawin na magkaroon ng specialization ang mga teachers natin.

Lumalabas kasi sa survey sa PISA (Program for International Student Assessment) na marami nga ang pumapasa na mga teacher sa atin, sa licensure examination, maraming teachers sa atin ang certified pero compared to OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) countries, mas kaunti ang teachers natin na may specialization o kaya may master’s degrees.

MS. OSEÑA-PAEZ: Okay. Alvin Baltazar...

ALVIN BALTAZAR/RADYO PILIPINAS: Magandang umaga po. Doon po tayo sa bullying. Do we have statistics about sa insidente ng bullying halimbawa, out of ten students, ilan po iyong mga nabu-bully? And just to give us an idea, gaano po kabigat na problema iyong pambu-bully sa mga estudyante?

USEC. POA: Opo. With the data, we'll provide the Malacañang because we have a table on that note. So we do have the data, I just don't have it with me right now. But we'll provide you, sir, para accurate iyong figures natin.

Now, sa bullying, talagang nakakaapekto. Sabi nga doon sa PISA results ay talagang nakakaapekto iyong bullying sa performance nila sa exam. There was really a correlation made by the PISA results 'no. Sa ngayon, what we—and we all know na talagang ganiyan iyong problema, in fact, sa ating Learner Rights and Protection Office na tinayo natin last year, karamihan sa mga complaints are really bullying 'no. Iyong mga natatanggap natin na mga tawag, iyong mga iniimbestigahan natin ay karamihan related to bullying.

So, sa ngayon, ang ginagawa po natin is pinapalakas natin iyong ating mga tinatawag na child protection committees sa mga paaralan; iyong reporting system, we are continuously improving it. Although mayroon na tayong Learner Rights and Protection Office, gusto natin... siguro magkaroon tayo ng hotline na mas madaling matandaan for example para talagang magamit ng mga bata.

So far, ang na-resolve natin na cases sa ating Learner Rights and Protection Office, at least iyong latest report na nakuha ko is around 120 cases na iyong na-resolve natin. But, you know, pagdating kasi sa ganitong reporting system, dalawa iyan eh – puwede kang magsabi na, yes, naka-resolve ka ng 120 cases pero we still don't know if there is underreporting going on. That's why we need to make sure that our system is accessible to everyone, even to anonymous complaints kasi maraming takot na mag-complain to make sure that people are really being encouraged to report.

And then, after that 'no, we are looking at also connected to bullying is the mental health program. Kasi sabi nga po natin, na ang bullying whether doon sa nambu-bully o doon sa nabully ay may mental health aspect kasi siya. So, that is something we are also doing right now at mayroon naman tayong budget na talaga for mental health 'no. So, that is something that our operation's team is crafting together with DOH pagdating sa mental health program – meaning counselling in schools, advocacies and referral naman, to the Department of Health kapag kailangan na talaga ng experts.

But as to the status, sir, we'll send you the status.

MS. OSEÑA-PAEZ: Ace Romero...

ACE ROMERO/PHILIPPINE STAR: Usec. Poa or Usec. Gonong. Ano iyong mga goals natin kasi low status tayo sa PISA ngayon? Mayroon ba tayong goal dapat by this year, tumaas na iyong ating ranking? Mayroon ba tayong mga ganoong immediate targets?

USEC. GONONG: Yes. Siyempre ang immediate target natin, kung hindi man tumaas na tayo kaagad in terms of proficiency level, tumaas pa iyong scores natin, okay – hanggang maabot natin iyong minimum level of proficiency. Alam naman natin na hindi ganoon kabilis ang pag-increase ng proficiency level – it takes years bago talagang ma-develop ang mga estudyante natin. So, we'll just have to continue doing the reforms that we have started in this administration.

ACE ROMERO/PHILIPPINE STAR: So, kailan po iyong next assessment ng PISA?

USEC. GONONG: Iyong next assessment ay sa 2025 na, sa March 2025.

ACE ROMERO/PHILIPPINE STAR: So, by that time—What do we hope to achieve by the time na mag-assess na iyong PSA, ano po iyong nakikita ninyong immediate doables?

USEC. GONONG: Oo. Katulad ng sinabi ko, at least increase in terms of scores – na mas mapalapit tayo doon sa minimum proficiency level, okay, which is Level 2. So, ngayon ay nasa Level 1-A/1-B tayo.

ACE ROMERO/PHILIPPINE STAR: Pero, low pa rin po ba iyon?

USEC. GONONG: Low pa rin kasi iyong sa scores pero ang long term natin ay increase in proficiency levels.

ACE ROMERO/PHILIPPINE STAR: Tapos iyong nabanggit po kanina medyo hindi lang na-highlight. Some aspect 'no, one of the aspects that affect performance is the use of gadgets.

USEC. GONONG: Oo.

ACE ROMERO/PHILIPPINE STAR: Can you elaborate on that and what are we doing considering na sa bahay na po ito, hindi na natin ito mamonitor eh, iyong use of gadgets?

USEC. GONONG: Oo. Ang sinasabi sa PISA, kapag iyong gadget ay ginamit sa pag-aaral, nag-i-increase ang performance ng bata – may tendency mag-increase ang performance ng bata. Pero kapag iyong gadget ay ginagamit for leisure, hindi siya nakakatulong sa performance ng bata.

ACE ROMERO/PHILIPPINE STAR: So, paano po natin address—?

USEC. GONONG: Oo. Kailangan nating turuan ang mga bata na gumagamit ng gadget sa kanilang pag-aaral.

ACE ROMERO/PHILIPPINE STAR: Last na lang po. Iyong hotline, mayroon na po? Iyong anti-bullying hotline?

USEC. POA: Yes. Iyong hotline po natin ay pinu-post namin for... I think since last year pa ‘no, last schoolyear pa weekly sa ating Facebook page. So ang hotline ay mayroon pong cellphone number diyan, tingnan ninyo lang po sa ating Facebook page, every week nating pinaparepost iyan – may cellphone number diyan, may landline, mayroon din tayong email at kahit iyong ating Facebook page doon sa Messenger ay puwede rin po silang mag-access.

Of course, let me just clarify. Siyempre po iyong bullying, ang first line of reporting niyan is really at the school level kasi ‘no. So, mayroon naman tayong guidelines regarding that – meaning puwede kang magsumbong sa teacher, sa adviser o kahit sinong school official tapos nae-elevate iyan sa kanilang child protection committees.

But kaya din tayo naglagay ng hotline na, kasi karamihan naman talaga ng ating mga learners lalo na pagdating sa bullying, takot silang magsumbong kaagad kasi nandiyan iyong nam-bully sa kanila or pagdating naman sa abuses in our schools, takot sila na baka kampihan ng school authorities iyong teacher. These are very natural ano, the reluctance is quite natural so that’s why we had a hotline para mayroon silang—kung takot silang magsumbong sa kanilang school or sa kanilang division office man lang ay puwede silang dumiretso sa central office through our hotlines at kami na po iyong nagpa-facilitate. And we monitor these cases from the time it’s reported to the time it’s resolved.

MS. OSEÑA-PAEZ: Okay. Kenneth Paciente...

KENNETH PACIENTE/PTV-4: Hi, sir, good morning and Ma’am Gonong po. The Bureau of Learners Support Services is pushing to train parents to spot red flags of bullying among their kids. Ano pong update po dito sa programang ito?

USEC. POA: Yes. I was told by Asec. Galvan ‘no, ng operations na mayroon na silang mga pina-pilot na areas dito. I don’t have the exact areas ‘no but they are already starting to pilot. I’m not sure if they started with the parents already but what I was told was they started with teachers – training teachers to spot red flags.

Kasi ang mental health, actually number one is, you have to be able to determine ‘di ba, to identify learners that need intervention. At ang isang project ng DepEd ngayon is actually come up with the more effective screening system. So alongside iyong screening system, gusto din nating mag-train ng teachers and parents to spot red flags para sila iyong magsabi sa atin na kailangan ng intervention ng kanilang mga anak.

So as to the teachers, nag-start na iyong ating pilot in certain areas lang. And then as to the parents, I will let you know kung nag-start na kasi wala pang na-report sa akin na nag-start na iyong sa parents.

MS. OSEÑA-PAEZ: Okay. Jean Mangaluz...

JEAN MANGALUZ/INQUIRER.NET: Hi, Usec. This goes to anyone but the PISA results coincided with the establishment of the new MATATAG Curriculum which decongests the subjects. So, timely po ba na magbabawas tayo ng subjects na marami palang lacking sa proficiencies natin?

USEC. POA: Well, maybe I can start and Usec. Gina can follow. Well, iyong MATATAG Curriculum, iyong pag-decongest natin ng mga learning competencies ‘no, is really the result of the review that happened doon sa K-12 curriculum. Kasi napansin talaga noong mga experts that napaka-congested or highly congested iyong ating curriculum, making it really difficult for: Number one, the teachers to teach everything and for learners to actually master these subjects. So there was a need to really go back to the basics and focus on the fundamental subjects such as Math, Science, Reading which is exactly what’s being tested pagdating sa PISA.

So, iyong MATATAG Curriculum, although hindi naman iyong PISA talaga iyong nag-trigger sa kaniya – there was really a need to review our curriculum. Of course, we are expecting that the MATATAG Curriculum also helps improve our performance in international assessments, not just the PISA and of course, overall performance of our learners. But again, we have to remind the public that these changes, you know, seeing the results of learning outcomes takes time – it’s not as if we change the curriculum now and we’re expecting better results by next year. So, it will really take time - for example, phase implementation pa lang iyong ating MATATAG Curriculum.

But for the details, perhaps if Usec. Gina would like to add anything.

USEC. GONONG: Oo. Iyong tanong mo, kung timely. Yes, timely. Actually kung tutuusin, dapat matagal na nating ginawa iyong decongestion ng curriculum. Kasi hindi naman iyon sa dami ng competencies kung hindi kung ano iyong mga competencies na mahalagang matutunan ng mga bata.

So ngayon, kung nagra-rush ang teacher sa pagtuturo dahil sobrang dami ng competencies – hindi rin matuto iyong mga bata. So, iyong mga skills na dapat na-develop sa kanila, hindi ma-develop. So, pagdating sa mga assessments hindi nila mapakita na kaya nila iyong mga international at saka national assessments natin.

Tulad noong sabi ni Usec. Mike, matagal pa, kasi 12 years ‘di ba? So, mag-i-implement tayo ng MATATAG Curriculum beginning 2024 – Phase implementation ito; so, mag-count tayo ng 12 years – iyan ang unang graduates natin ng MATATAG Curriculum. So, ang impact niyan ay nasa 2037 or 2038 PISA.

JEAN MANGALUZ/INQUIRER.NET: Follow up lang po, so you don’t expect na ma-impact ng PISA results natin ng MATATAG Curriculum by 2025?

USEC. GONONG: Hindi, kasi ang una nating i-implement is K-1-4-7 (Kinder-Grade 1-Grade 4-grade 7). Ang mga magpi-PISA na mga estudyante natin sa 2025 karamihan diyan ay galing sa Grades 9 and 10 who are using the current curriculum.

MS. OSEÑA-PAEZ: Okay. Eden Santos.

EDEN SANTOS/NET 25: Doon po sa mga nabanggit na dahilan kanina ni Miss Daphne ‘no, iyong bullying, tapos iyong gadgets, iyon pong language at home, puwede po bang pakipaliwanag lang paano nakadagdag iyon doon o naging dahilan sa mababang scores po ng ating mga estudyante?

USEC. GONONG: Oo. Ang sinasabi doon sa PISA, iyong mga batang nagsasalita mostly ng English sa bahay ay mas mababa ang performance nila sa PISA. Pero ang resulta na ito... we cannot really make... how do you call that – hard conclusions at this point kasi sabi ko nga dalawang PISA pa lang ang nasasalihan natin, 2018 at saka 2022. So, noong 2018 walang difference ang performance ng mga bata na nag-i-English sa bahay at hindi nag-i-English sa bahay. Ngayong 2022, may difference ang performance nila – iyong mga laging nag-i-English sa bahay, mababa ang kanilang performance sa PISA. But let’s not make abrupt conclusion at this point kasi ang data natin ay 2019 at saka 222 pa lang, we still need to interrogate the data.

EDEN SANTOS/NET 25: Ayun. Buti natuto po ng Tagalog iyong anak ko kasi kaklase niya ni Peppa Pig iyon eh ‘no. Gaano po ba kahalaga na tayo ay pumasok doon sa criteria po ng PISA? Gaano po kahalaga na tayo ay pumasa o pumasok doon sa criteria ng PISA para iyong kailangan nating tumaas iyong scores, ano po ba iyong kahalagahan noong PISA?

USEC. GONONG: Ang ipinapakita kasi, ang tini-test ng PISA iyong mga knowledge and skills na natututunan niya sa school ay kaya niyang gamitin sa totoong buhay, like he can use the knowledge and skills... students can use the knowledge ang skills that they learn from school in real-life situations.

So, kapag tumataas ang performance natin sa PISA, ibig sabihin mas handa ang mga estudyante natin para sa real-life situations.

MS. OSEÑA-PAEZ: Alvin Baltazar.

ALVIN BALTAZAR/RADYO PILIPINAS: Good morning uli. Usec, just going back doon sa bullying, doon sa mga problemang hinawakan ninyo tungkol sa bullying, ano ba iyong sinasabing pangkaraniwan ng mga bully kung bakit sila nambu-bully?

USEC. POA: I’m sorry ‘no, I do not actually know if we could disclose that information but siguro I’ll talk to you na lang, sir, at a separate time as to the data that you need.

MS. OSEÑA-PAEZ: Okay. Pia Gutierrez.

PIA GUTIERREZ/ABS-CBN: Doon po sa meeting, did the President express disappointment doon sa mababang score natin sa PISA and how soon does he want to see results from all our efforts po?

USEC. GONONG: Actually, hindi naman disappointment kundi iyong push na we need to keep working hard so that we improve our performance in PISA, pero hindi nga lang PISA kundi performance talaga ng mga estudyante natin as a whole. Kaya talagang si President ang instruction niya ay tutukan natin iyong teacher support and teacher quality, iyong bullying sa school at saka iyong nutrition. So, it's more about what we can do moving forward so we can improve the performance of our students.

PIA GUTIERREZ/ABS-CBN: Iyong results po, how soon does he want to see results? May nabanggit po ba siya, does he want it next year ganiyan, mag-reflect na sa proficiency level ng estudyante?

USEC. GONONG: In terms of what needs to be done ay immediately like kailangang mag-usap ang mga agencies halimbawa sa nutrition, iyong National Recovery Learning Program, iyong teacher welfare – lahat iyan kailangan na naming gawin ngayon.

PIA GUTIERREZ/ABS-CBN: At doon po sa program natin against bullying, kasama din po ba doon iyong cyberbullying or bullying that happens online? How do we address that po?

USEC. POA: Kasama po iyon doon 'no that's why this is something that we are doing also with the DOH kasi nga po 'no sabi nga natin this is really a mental health issue so we are—when you talk about bullying you have to talk about mental health issues.

Pagdating sa cyberbullying we also want to see if we need to... dito sa ating curriculum to put in iyong responsible use of internet and all that – so, that is something we are looking at.

As an advocacy naman, marami tayong mga projects or advocacies na ginagawa at the school level just to educate our learners pagdating sa use of the internet and of course iyong cyberbullying. So it's really number one creating awareness and then number two, how do you respond once there is bullying.

So, doon sa awareness part diyan pumapasok iyong advocacy, diyan pumapasok iyong pagpapasok sa curriculum, mayroon din kaming mga values education that we are pushing for right now. Hopefully, pati po iyong cyber aspect ay masama natin doon; and then there's the response. Sa response side doon pumapasok iyong Learners' Rights and Protection Office, doon pumapasok iyong to ensure that at the school level talagang may reporting system kasi it's easy to say that we have child protection committees but it's another thing to know if they're really functional at the school level. So, that's what our operations team is doing right now together with the curriculum team pagdating naman sa ating curriculum side.

As you know, doon sa Catch-Up Fridays na sinisimulan natin – it's focused on Reading but it's not just Reading – it will be Reading and then there will also be Values Ed and Peace competencies and as well as Health. So, doon papasok iyong puwede nating mga...well, lessons na puwede nating maituro sa ating mga learners pagdating sa mental health at pagdating na rin sa bullying.

MS. OSEÑA-PAEZ: Ivan Mayrina.

IVAN MAYRINA: I just got an information na ang average ng Pilipinas sa bullying is double the global average. Correct me if I'm wrong, pero umabot na ho tayo sa punto na ang problema sa bullying ka-level na siya noong specialization ng teachers, ng paggamit ng technology. I mean, what led us to this? Anu-ano ho kayang analysis natin bakit tayo umabot sa ganito in terms of bullying?

USEC. POA: Actually, pagdating sa bullying when we talk about the PISA numbers, since we're talking about PISA right now – from 2018 to 2022 ang nakasulat sa report bumaba iyong number but again it's not accurate, why, kasi nagpandemya tayo eh, galing tayo sa pandemia, nawala sa school iyong mga bata. So, now that it's here, we're back in school, everyone is back to in-person classes talagang nakikita natin na talamak pa rin ang bullying.

Bakit tayo dumating sa level na iyon? Perhaps the analysis kanina iyong napag-usapan was iyon nga iyong nabanggit ko sa opening statement was iyong social media aspect. Kasi kung dati iyong bullying, pag-alis mo ng eskuwela eh you're away from your bully 'no; pero ngayon kahit wala ka na sa eskuwela ay puwedeng mag-continue iyong bullying through social media platforms.

So, that's why we are very concerned not just on iyong level ng concern natin pagdating sa ano iyong mga kailangang ayusin natin para mapabuti iyong performance is really ang hirap sagutin kung ano iyong number priority mo kasi nga you have to do things simultaneously.

So, kasama doon sa nutrisyon is also mental health and kaakibat ng mental health is the bullying aspect.

So, all these things we really have to address altogether but hindi naman po tayo magsisimula ngayon pa lang – we already started with that in 2022 pa lang. So, hopefully we can see improvements. But we will continue not only to improve our advocacy side on bullying; we will continue to improve our reporting side on bullying. Kasi katulad nga kanina natanong po tayo kung mayroon ba tayong hotline so that makes me feel that the department is not doing enough to really push itong hotline issue natin/reporting system natin – so, that is something you can expect DepEd to improve on.

USEC. GONONG: Oo. Can I just add to that? Addressing bullying can't just be DepEd's responsibility so we're reviewing mechanisms to address bullying in schools pero we'll have to remember na kailangan ng parental support at nakita rin naman sa results sa PISA 'di ba

kung gaano kahalaga iyong parental support sa performance ng bata. So, we need to engage our parents and the communities to reduce if not to eliminate bullying in schools.

MS. OSEÑA-PAEZ: Okay. Kenneth Paciente.

KENNETH PACIENTE: Sir, may update po ba tayo sa K-to-12? Kumusta po, sir, iyong pag-review natin sa Grades 11 and 12 curriculum kung mayroon po?

USEC. POA: Yes. Tuluy-tuloy pa rin naman po iyong ating senior high school review 'no, ang target date po natin para matapos iyan is May 2024. I will confirm with... Ang review pero hindi iyong revised curriculum ha. So, ang review is May 2024, so after the review bibigay sa atin, ipiprisinta sa kung ano iyong mga napansin nila and then we will start with the revision process. That's what happens.

MS. OSEÑA-PAEZ: Okay. Thank you. I believe this concludes our press briefing. Thank you so much, Malacañang Press Corps and thank you, Undersecretary Gonong and Undersecretary Poa.

Magandang tanghali sa inyong lahat.

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