DIVISION MEMORANDUM
No. 40s. 2016

BARANGAY LITERACY WORKER (BLW) PROGRAM OF
THE ALTERNATIVE LEARNING SYSTEM (ALS) OF CAMARINES SUR

To: Assistant Schools Division Superintendents
   Education Program Supervisors
   Public Schools District Supervisors
   Education Program Specialists -ALS
   Heads of Public and Private Schools
   District Alternative Learning System Coordinators
   District Mobile Teachers

1. The Department of Education, Camarines Sur is committed to the implementation of the Alternative Learning System within the Camarines Sur Schools Division. The Alternative Learning System provides non-formal education to out of school youth and adults.

2. The Department of Education, Camarines Sur has sought to increase the literacy rate, increase Accreditation & Equivalency passer rates and to reach the remotely located learners of ALS. The piloted Barangay Literacy Worker (BLW) Program has proven successful in several districts of Camarines Sur in achieving the above goals and the Department of Education, Camarines Sur now seeks to implement and institutionalize the BLW Program throughout the province.

3. The passing of the Provincial Ordinance, No. 56 of 2015 series entitled "An ordinance institutionalizing the Alternative Learning System (ALS) in the barangays of the province of Camarines Sur; prescribing guidelines in the establishment of the respective local literacy coordinating councils for the province, the component municipalities, the City of Iriga, and the barangays; mandating the appointment of the Barangay Literacy Worker in the barangays; providing funds for their implementation and for other purposes" is a landmark ordinance that creates the position of "Barangay Literacy Worker" in every barangay of Camarines Sur. The Ordinance serves to strengthen the existing workforce and enhance the capacity of ALS to reach out-of-school youth and adults (OSYAs).

4. The aforementioned Ordinance also establishes the Provincial Literacy Coordinating Council (PLCC), Municipal and City Literacy Coordinating Councils (M/CLCCs), and Barangay Literacy Coordinating Councils (BLCCs). These bodies represent a partnership between DepEd and the LGUs, and are responsible for overseeing the operation of the Barangay Literacy Worker (BLW) Program and support its implementation across the Province.

5. To standardize BLW program operations and ensure increased access, efficiency, and effectiveness of program delivery, the Alternative Learning System (ALS) of Camarines Sur has developed a Barangay Literacy Worker (BLW) Program Manual and Toolkit for ALS Implementers. This can be accessed online via http://www.depedcamarines.com/als.

6. DepEd District Offices, with the leadership of the PSDSs and with the support of ALS Implementers should identify Barangay Literacy Worker (BLW) per barangay in cooperation with the Municipal and Barangay Local Government Units who will cater the identified out-of-school youths and adults to avail educational services of the Department.

7. Immediate dissemination of this Memorandum is desired.

ARNULFO M. BALANE, CESO V
School Divisions Superintendent
1.0 Background and Rationale

1.1 Statistics show that a significant number of youth and adults in the Province of Camarines Sur possess inadequate literacy skills having dropped out of the formal school system; and knowing that these individuals face many disadvantages and obstacles in their personal lives, particularly with regard to gainful employment.

1.2 The Regional DepEd office has issued a goal to reach 50% of A&E Test Takers to be passers of the A&E Exam. DepEd CamSur last year achieved a 30% passing rate.

1.3 The Province of Camarines Sur is relatively large with many far flung barangays, some without an elementary school or high school. Geographical distances make it difficult to facilitate lessons with the limited number of teaching staff available to teach ALS. Many ALS enrollees in far flung areas are often financially disadvantaged and do not have the financial means to pay for transport to a central learning center.

1.4 The Department of Education (DepEd), through its Bureau of Alternative Learning System (BALS), is currently facilitating the implementation of an Alternative Learning System at the community level pursuant to Executive Order No 117, DepEd Order No. 32, series of 1972, Proclamation No. 480, DECS Memorandum No. 204, series of 1998, and DECS Order Nos. 22 and 28, series of 1999.

2.0 Program Vision

2.1 DepEd CamSur ALS envisions the BLW Program as a means of ensuring that:

“Every person, in every barangay, has knowledge of, access to, and the opportunity to participate in educational programs that will allow them to reach their own personal learning goals and therefore their own unique potential.”

2.2 The long-term vision for the BLW Program is that every barangay in the Philippines will have its own literacy worker who will assist eligible residents – Out-of-School, illiterate, and neo-literate youth and adults – to achieve their personal learning goals and, therefore, their unique potential. Barangay Literacy Workers are tasked with the coordination and delivery of flexible, community-based education programs that focus predominantly on developing the literacy and livelihood skills of learners.

3.0 Benefits

3.1 The overarching goals of the BLW program are to increase the literacy rates for Out-Of-School Youth & Adults and to increase the number of Accreditation & Equivalency Test Takers and Passers.

3.2 As a result of the successful implementation of the BLW Program, a range of benefits are expected to materialize such as: the establishment of a positive working partnership between DepEd and the barangay, municipal, and provincial levels of government; an increase in the number of people accessing ALS Programs; improved access to ALS for remote and disadvantaged learners; improved awareness of ALS and the BLW Program in the community; and documented effectiveness and impact of the BLW Program.
4.0 Literacy Coordinating Councils and DepEd Representation

4.1 The Barangay Literacy Worker program strengthens the relationship between various levels of local government and ALS. Literacy Coordinating Councils (LCCs) form the connection between the local and provincial government units and DepEd CamSur. DepEd CamSur is responsible for the day-to-day operations of ALS, and local government units are responsible for governing in the best interests of their respective constituents.

4.2 The Provincial Literacy Coordinating Council (PLCC) is composed of representatives of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan and DepEd, and is chaired by the Governor. The Superintendent represents DepEd as the Co-Chair. The ALS Division Supervisor acts as the PLCC Secretariat Head, and the BLW Program Coordinator is a key member of the PLCC Secretariat.

4.3 The Municipal Literacy Coordinating Council (MLCC) is composed of representatives of DepEd and the Sangguniang Bayan, and is chaired by the Municipal Mayor. The Municipal BLW Focal Person is the Head Secretariat of the MLCC, and the DALSCs, MTs and EPSAs associated with that municipality are key members of the MLCC Secretariat. An MLCC should be established in each Municipality.

4.4 The Barangay Literacy Coordinating Council (BLCC) is composed of representatives of DepEd and the Sangguniang Barangay, and is chaired by the Barangay Captain. The School ALS Coordinator is the Head Secretariat of the BLCC and the Barangay Literacy Worker is a key member of the BLCC Secretariat. A BLCC should be established in every Barangay.

5.0 DepEd CamSur Responsibilities

5.1 Within DepEd CamSur, the ALS team is managed by the ALS Division Supervisor who reports to the Superintendent, Camarines Sur. The ALS Division Supervisor is supported by nine Education Program Specialists for ALS (EPSAs) whose currently responsibilities include providing technical support and monitoring and reporting on their assigned districts. Each EPSA is assigned four or five districts each. One District ALS Coordinator (DALSC) and Mobile Teacher (MT) is assigned per school district. Both report to the ALS Division Supervisor for matters related to ALS, and on site are supervised by the Public Schools District Supervisor (PSDS) in their district.

5.2 The following stakeholders are responsible for the implementation and oversight of the BLW program.

(a) The Camarines Sur Schools’ Division Superintendent

The Camarines Sur School’s Division Superintendent is responsible for the BLW Program at the provincial level, which entails co-chairing PLCC sessions and ensuring the BLW Program aligns with broader DepEd policy and objectives.

(b) ALS Division Supervisor

The strategic direction of the BLW Program is in the hands of the ALS Division Supervisor. The ALS Division Supervisor is responsible for overseeing the implementation of ALS programs and projects at the provincial level of Camarines Sur. The ALS Division Supervisor is responsible for coordinating with the PLCC, and promoting the BLW Program to all ALS staff.
The BLW Coordinator

The BLW Coordinator is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the BLW Program at the provincial level of Camarines Sur. The position involves provincial level management, coordination, monitoring and evaluation, annual planning, and improving the quality and reach of the program. The BLW Coordinator provides support to other EPSAS and BLW Focal Persons in the implementation of the BLW program.

Education Specialists for ALS (EPSAs)

The EPSA are responsible for a range of key activities such as research, monitoring, evaluation, reporting, and coordination of ALS programs and projects. In the context of the BLW Program, they are responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of the program in their respective districts, providing technical support in the implementation of the program to BLW Focal Persons, District ALS Coordinators (DALSCs), and Mobile Teachers (MTs).

BLW Focal Person (BLWFP)

Either the DALSC or MT will take on the role of the BLW Focal Person. The BLWFP is nominated by the Division ALS Supervisor and is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the BLW Program at the district level. The position involves recruiting and training BLWs, improving awareness and advocacy of the program, and conducting monitoring and evaluation activities within their district. The BLWFP can request additional assistance from the BLW Coordinator and EPSAs to help them implement the BLW Program. The BLWFP provides support to BLWs and builds the capacity of their fellow DALSC or MT to oversee the BLW program.

District ALS Coordinator (DALSC) and Mobile Teacher (MT)

The DALSC/MT not designated as the BLWFP is responsible for supporting the implementation of the BLW Program at the district level. The position involves recruiting and training of BLWs, improving awareness and advocacy, securing funding for the program, and undertaking monitoring and evaluation activities at the district level. The DALSC/MT can request additional assistance from the BLW Coordinator and EPSAs to help them implement the program.

6.0 Policy Statements

6.1 To realize the range of benefits associated with the successful implementation of the Barangay Literacy Worker Program, DepEd hereby commits to uphold and promote all aspects of the Provincial BLW Ordinance (No. 056 s. 2015). This commitment, enshrined in the present policy, is consistent with DepEd’s mandate to provide inclusive basic education for all, and is further buttressed by DepEd Memo No. 217 s. 2006, which outlines the educational responsibilities of barangays. The long term goal of the BLW Program is to have every barangay serviced by a BLW, thus improving accessibility to primary and secondary education. To reach these goals, DepEd Camarines Sur shall:

a) Institutionalize the BLW program throughout the municipalities of Camarines Sur.

DepEd Camarines Sur is responsible for supporting its frontline staff – particularly the BLW Coordinator, BLW Focal Person and EPSAs – to engage with local government units, including barangay councils, to pass BLW-related legislation. While the Provincial BLW Ordinance exists, locally sponsored legislation enables municipalities and barangays to have a better understanding of, and investment in, the BLW Program. Local legislation also helps ensure that local literacy coordinating councils will convene, and that they will take on their respective responsibilities for funding and management of the BLW Program.
b) Provide human investment in the BLW Program all levels of the DepEd, Camarines Sur.

The success and sustainability of the BLW Program depends upon the investment of human capital within the DepEd. DepEd therefore undertakes to revise the Key Responsibility Areas (KRAs) of all personnel involved in the implementation of the BLW Program. Updated KRAs will include new BLW Program-related responsibilities, and will be outlined in detail in a series of revised Memoranda of Agreements (MoAs). These MoAs are to be signed by the Division ALS Supervisor, the BLW Coordinator, the Education Specialists for ALS, the BLW Focal Persons, and the DALSCs and MTs. Annual competency profile reports will be compiled to ensure DepEd personnel are honoring their new responsibilities.

c) Ensure that information relating to the BLW program is available to all relevant stakeholders.

To facilitate the successful implementation of the BLW Program across the province and ensure its sustainability, stakeholders must have access to quality, standardized information about it. To this end, the Alternative Learning System of Camarines Sur will develop a BLW Manual and Toolkit. The BLW Manual and Toolkit is intended for use by the Division ALS Supervisor, EPSAs, BLWFPs, DALSCs, and MTs. It will contain best practice guidelines for organizing funding, undertaking recruitment and training activities, and performing monitoring and evaluation duties. It will also include information about the legal bases of the program, advocacy and awareness frameworks, management responsibilities, and planning cycles. The BLW Manual and Toolkit is to be distributed to all relevant stakeholders, including DepEd ALS staff, BALS headquarters, and all literacy coordinating councils. The BLW Coordinator is responsible for updating the BLW Manual and Toolkit on a yearly basis (or when the need arises), and other ALS staff are encouraged to provide feedback to improve it.

d) Ensure that the objectives, outcomes, and impacts of the BLW Program are monitored and evaluated.

DepEd has responsibility for determining whether the BLW Program is serving its intended purposes and meeting its goals. Monitoring and evaluation of the BLW Program must be completed at the barangay, district, municipal, and provincial levels. The KRAs and MoAs of all key personnel have been amended to reflect these new duties. DepEd Camarines Sur shall also be responsible for keeping DepEd Philippines and the Bureau of Alternative Learning System up-to-date about the progress and performance of the BLW Program.

e) Engage with local and provincial government partners to implement the BLW Program.

The success of the BLW Program depends on the creation and maintenance of fruitful relationships between DepEd and local and provincial government partners. Local literacy coordinating councils are responsible for submitting budget proposals to their corresponding level of government to secure funds necessary for the operation of the BLW Program. DepEd pledges to engage regularly with the PLCC, the M/CLCCs, and the BLCCs; bodies that, in turn, will advocate for the BLW Program and mobilize funds. The ALS Division Supervisor and the BLW Coordinator are DepEd’s representative in the PLCC, while the BLW Focal Person is DepEd’s representative in the MLCC. At the Barangay level, the Barangay Literacy Worker will represent DepEd. All the aforementioned ALS staff are required to maintain amicable working relationships with local government units and coordinating councils so that they may effectively fulfill their BLW-related duties.

f) Actively support provincial awareness and advocacy events.

DepEd shall be involved in involved in the dissemination of information relating to BLW awareness and advocacy events. DepEd shall also exploit their relationships with all level of governments, to further raise awareness of this landmark program. The DepEd is responsible for providing necessary auxiliary resources such as venue space, snacks, and materials for BLW related awareness and advocacy events, as well as workshops and training sessions.
7.0 Effective Date

This memorandum will take effect immediately upon approval by the Superintendent. This memorandum will be reviewed in the event that there is a change.