

Press Releases

DepEd Set to Roll Out EskweLA BAN sa Sigarilyo Nationwide

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PASIG CITY, April 5, 2018 — Beginning next school year, all schools nationwide are expected to be part of *EskweLA BAN sa Sigarilyo*, an initiative that aims to strengthen the implementation of the Department of Education's (DepEd) tobacco control policy.

As the current school year draws to a close, DepEd is also culminating its *EskweLA BAN sa Sigarilyo Project*, a three-year project in partnership with the Tobacco-Free Kids Action Fund. Implemented in select schools in the cities of Pasig and Makati, and the provinces of Batangas, Bulacan, Bataan, and Pampanga, the project developed and pilot-tested implementation mechanisms aimed to build the capacity of DepEd personnel in effectively carrying out the Department's tobacco control policy.

"The *EskweLA BAN sa Sigarilyo Project* ends in its pilot-testing phase, and its components will be adapted by DepEd for roll-out nationwide," Undersecretary for Legal Affairs Alberto Muyot, who has also served as the director of the project, shared.

Muyot is pertaining to the monitoring and reporting tools, training manuals, and school-based campaign materials which were developed by the project to support schools in their implementation of the comprehensive tobacco control policy.

A ceremonial turnover of these materials was held on March 23, 2018 at DepEd Central Office, Pasig City.

The project brand *EskweLA BAN sa Sigarilyo* is a play on the Filipino words *eskwela*, *laban*, and *eskwela* ban to communicate that schools (*eskwela*), through the school's bans (*eskwela* ban), are on a collective fight (*laban*) against tobacco (*sigarilyo*). Intended to carry two meanings – the school's bans on cigarettes or the school's fight against tobacco – *EskweLA BAN sa Sigarilyo* aims to increase public awareness of the bans stipulated in DepEd Order No. 48, s. 2016 (DO 48, s. 2016) or the Policy and Guidelines on Comprehensive Tobacco Control, and to build the capacity of schools, through their respective Child Protection Committees, to effectively take a stand against tobacco by implementing the strategies enumerated in the Order.

DO 48, s. 2016 mandates the Child Protection Committee, which has already been set up in all schools since 2012 and chaired by the Principal, to monitor compliance with and report violations of various tobacco control policies such as (1) bans on smoking in schools; (2) bans on the sale and advertisement of tobacco products within the 100-meter perimeter of schools, and (3) bans on receiving sponsorships from the tobacco industry and other unnecessary interactions with the tobacco industry.

The same DO further identified strategies for the effective implementation of the policy including: (1) information, education, and communication, (2) cessation interventions, (3) collaborations, partnerships and linkages, (4) capacity building, and (5) reporting and monitoring.

More information about the project and the comprehensive tobacco control policy may be accessed through its Facebook page: *EskweLA BAN sa Sigarilyo* (@tobaccofreedeped) or its website: <http://tobaccofreedeped.org/>.

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