



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education

MAR 24 2026

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 *GA*

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-en.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.

V. ESMLE FRAMEWORK

The Guidelines on ESMLE are guided by a conceptual framework that emphasizes a **whole-of-society approach**, where all sectors – including government offices and agencies, the private sector, and civil society – play a collective role in supporting the DepEd in addressing complex issues such as bullying, violence, health, and environmental changes⁷ (Kjellen and Wong, 2023).

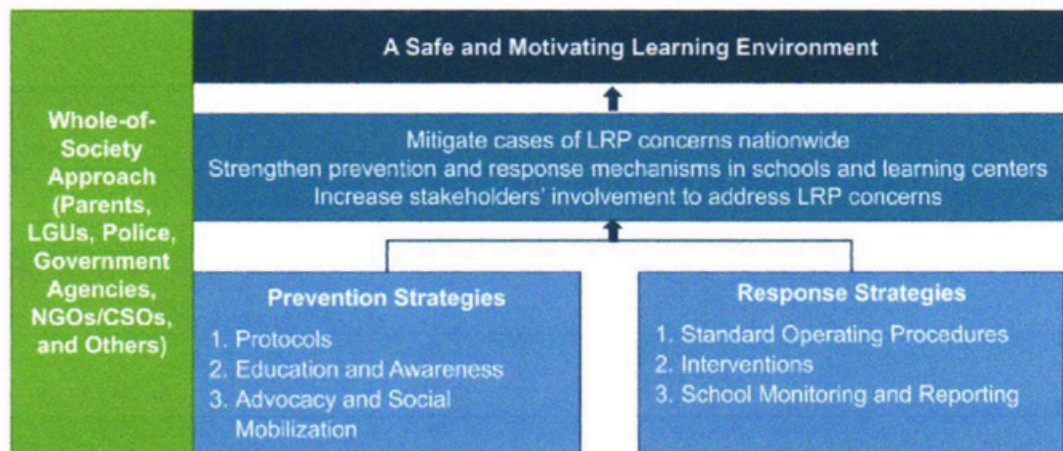


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework: Ensuring a Safe and Learning Environment

Figure 1 illustrates the four interconnected elements of the framework: **(1) the support pillar** composed of initiatives from parents, local government units (LGUs), police, government agencies, non-government agencies (NGOs), and other stakeholders, which provides the foundation for implementing prevention and response strategies while enhancing integration, coordination, and capacity building across sectors; **(2) implementation strategies**, divided into prevention measures to proactively reduce LRP incidents and response measures to address cases that have occurred, including three specific response actions; **(3) policy outcomes**, which aim to mitigate LRP cases nationwide, strengthen prevention and response mechanisms in schools and CLCs, and increase stakeholder participation; and **(4) the overarching policy objective of ensuring a safe and motivating learning environment**. This framework serves as a roadmap for the DepEd, with the help of different sectors of society and all DepEd offices, from regional to school level, in ensuring that cases of LRP concerns are reduced, operations and responses are effective, and all stakeholders or parties involved work together toward building a safer and inclusive learning environment.

VI. PREVENTION STRATEGIES

- A. **Protocols** - Refer to the formulation, dissemination, and regular review of the school's Code of Conduct and Learner Handbook, aligned with DepEd policies.

⁷ Kjellén, M., & Wong, C. (2023, December). ResearchGate. Retrieved from Chapter 13 Governance: A 'whole-of-society' approach:

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/376418936_Governance_A_'whole-of-society'_approach

1. **Learner Handbook**

To promote learner welfare and a safe school environment, the DepEd, through the Bureau of Learner Support Services (BLSS), shall develop a learner handbook that shall serve as the key information, education, and communication (IEC) material that schools and CLCs shall use to orient learners on and educate the learners about their rights, school prevention and response strategies, and protection from incidents related to LRP concerns, including violence, bullying, abuse, and other threats to safety and well-being. The Handbook shall also provide standardized procedures for handling LRP incidents on campus, during online learning, or during school-related activities, covering:

- **Reporting and Response Procedures:** Steps to receive, verify, and respond to reports or disclosures in a timely, sensitive, and trauma-informed manner;
- **Confidentiality Protocols:** Procedures to protect learner identity and privacy of learners and handle information per data privacy laws;
- **Documentation and Recordkeeping:** Guidelines for securely documenting cases and maintaining legal compliance;
- **Referral Mechanisms:** Pathways to escalate cases to relevant agencies, including criteria, documentation, and follow-up;
- **Roles and Responsibilities:** Functions of school leaders, teachers, CPC members, guidance counselors, learners, and parents; and
- **Psychosocial and Mental Health Support:** Immediate emotional support, debriefing by trained professionals, and assurance of learner safety.

The Handbook shall be distributed in digital or printed formats, or both, during enrollment, orientation, or other appropriate times, and posted in at least 3 conspicuous locations within the school or on the school website. Orientation sessions for learners, school personnel, and parents may be conducted to ensure familiarity with its contents.

2. **Standardized Code of Conduct**

The Learner Handbook shall include the Standardized Code of Conduct, developed by BLSS and the Bureau of Human Resource and Organization Development (BHROD) for learners and school personnel (teaching, teaching-related, and non-teaching). Schools may adapt it to local contexts while maintaining alignment with DepEd policies.

- a. **Code of Conduct for Personnel:** Ensures personnel:
- Uphold professionalism and ethics per RA No. 6713 (*Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees*) and DepEd Order No. 49, s. 2022 (*Amendments to DepEd Order No. 47, s. 2022*);
 - Protect learners' rights, autonomy, and personal boundaries;
 - Maintain safe physical and online environments, including proper communication channels and prohibition of cyberbullying or unauthorized sharing of learner images/videos;
 - Treat learners equitably, avoiding favoritism or gender-based discrimination;

- Observe prohibited behaviors, including romantic/sexual relationships with learners, corporal punishment, humiliating discipline, exposure to vices, and posting harmful content; and
 - Supervise learners during school, online, and off-site activities, in coordination with parents/guardians.
- b. **Code of Conduct for Learners:** Outlines expected behaviors in an age-appropriate, child-friendly manner, including:
- Respect for self, others, and the school community;
 - Promote responsible digital and safe online behavior;
 - Roles in preventing LRP incidents;
 - Prohibited behaviors and disciplinary measures;
 - Reporting process and learners' right to be heard; and
 - Application during school, online, and school-related offsite activities.

The Standardized Code of Conduct shall provide interventions and disciplinary measures for violations. It shall be periodically reviewed, and be developed through stakeholder consultation, including learners, personnel, parents, community members, local authorities, and other representatives from relevant agencies and offices.

3. **Localized Anti-Bullying Policy**

In compliance with Section 5 of the Revised IRR of RA No. 10627 (Anti-Bullying Act), all public schools and CLCs shall adopt a localized anti-bullying policy reflecting learners' and community needs, submitted to the Schools Division Office (SDO), and integrated into the Learner Handbook. Private schools are encouraged to do the same, aligned with DepEd issuances.

DepEd schools and CLCs shall refer to the Anti-Bullying Policy Template for Schools (*See Annex D*) and adopt it in full or in part, as appropriate to their operations, ensuring alignment with this Order and other related issuances.

4. **Anti-Hazing and Fraternities/Sororities Prohibition:** All forms of hazing are strictly prohibited under RA No. 11053 (*Anti-Hazing Act of 2018*). Fraternities and sororities are prohibited; learners are encouraged to join school-registered organizations promoting safe space and camaraderie.

5. **Other security measures for safety in schools**

- a. **Security Personnel:** Schools may hire personnel funded through the school's Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE) to maintain safety and enforce LRP protocols.
- b. **Visitor Guidelines:** All visitors are required to present a valid identification card, surrender prohibited items for safekeeping, and ensure that any firearms brought into the premises are unloaded and supported by valid license or permit documents.
- c. **Bag Inspections:** All learners, personnel, and visitors must submit their bags for inspection at the school entrance to maintain a secure

environment. These routine entry inspections must be conducted using authorized non-contact methods, specifically full-body electronic scanners, bag scanners, handheld metal detectors, or search sticks. Under no circumstances shall "stop and frisk" procedures or physical pat-downs be integrated into authorized security protocols. These inspections are primarily the responsibility of licensed security personnel, though in their absence, designated non-teaching staff or authorized School Parent-Teacher Association (SPTA) members may provide assistance. In instances where exterior queuing space is limited, the school head may authorize inspections at building entrances or designated open areas prior to classroom entry.

Beyond routine entry checks, a full bag search may be executed within school premises when there is reasonable suspicion that an individual is in possession of prohibited items. The suspicion must be rooted in observable grounds, such as unusual or nervous behavior suggesting concealment, visible bulges or protruding objects, or credible reports from the school community, rather than discriminatory assumptions based on race, gender, or family history. When a learner is involved, they must be discreetly escorted to the Principal's Office, where the search is conducted in the presence of a Guidance Counselor or designated staff. To ensure the learner feels supported, they shall be asked to open the bag for visual inspection, and personnel should avoid touching personal belongings unless absolutely necessary to clear the view. For personnel or visitors, security shall escort the individual to the guardhouse; any refusal to comply with these safety measures will result in a denial of entry.

To supplement these measures, School Heads are required to implement a monthly random routine bag inspection across all grade levels. This process is governed by a formal Random Routine Bag Inspection School Plan (*see Annex E*), which must be submitted to the Schools Division Superintendent through the SGOD-DRRMO to ensure administrative oversight and consistency.

- d. **Prohibited Items and Confiscation:** Items identified as strictly prohibited include weapons such as firearms, daggers, and brass knuckles; explosives and incendiary devices; hazardous chemicals; and illegal substances. If such items are discovered, they shall be addressed under existing national laws and DepEd guidelines, such as the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act (RA 9165) or the management protocols for Children-at-Risk. In the specific event that illegal drugs are seized, the inspecting official is legally bound to observe the strict Chain of Custody rule under Section 21 of RA 9165 to preserve the integrity of the evidence for judicial proceedings.

Furthermore, items that are irrelevant to learning and capable of causing disruption or harm, including common tools like hammers or razor blades, flammable materials like lighters and vapes, or gambling and adult materials, shall be confiscated using a formal Confiscation Slip (*see Annex F*). An exception may be granted if

these items are explicitly required for science experiments, sports, or other approved school events. Any confiscated item must be turned over to the appropriate authority, with further action taken in accordance with the school's disciplinary measures.

- e. **Vehicle and Item Inspection:** All vehicles and motorcycles entering the campus are subject to a plain view inspection. For four-wheeled vehicles, this requires drivers to roll down all windows and open all compartments, including glove boxes and trunks, while presenting a valid driver's license for documentation. Motorcycle riders must remove helmets and masks and open all onboard compartments for inspection. Any unnecessary or dangerous articles found during this process must be surrendered for safekeeping in a designated school locker or secure location. Licensed firearms, specifically, must be unloaded and surrendered along with valid permits; the owner will be issued a locker key and may reclaim the firearm upon exiting the premises. Visitors who refuse these protocols will be denied entry, while learners and personnel who fail to comply may face applicable administrative penalties.

- f. **Closed-circuit Television (CCTV) and Security Equipment:** To enhance security and monitor activities, schools are encouraged to install CCTV cameras in strategic locations, including entrances, hallways, classrooms, and outdoor spaces. These systems must undergo regular maintenance to ensure they remain fully operational, with footage stored securely for future reference.

The acquisition of CCTVs and related security equipment may be facilitated through the procurement processes of the SDO, or through coordination with the LGUs and other stakeholders. All procurement and installation activities must strictly adhere to existing accounting, auditing, budgeting, and procurement rules and regulations.

- g. **Prohibition of Portable Electronic Devices During Instructional Hours.** Schools and CLCs shall prohibit the use of cellphones and other portable electronic devices by both learners and personnel during instructional periods. This measure is intended to minimize distractions and maintain the integrity of the learning environment.

Exceptions may be granted in meritorious cases, specifically for:

- i. Academic purposes: Accessing educational platforms, digital resources, or participating in authorized online collaborative activities.
- ii. Emergency situations: Facilitating communication during disasters, medical crises, or other immediate safety concerns.

To ensure accountability, any violations of this policy by teaching or non-teaching personnel, as well as learners, shall be subject to administrative sanctions and penalties as outlined in the standardized disciplinary framework (*see Annex G*).

- B. **Education and Awareness** - Refer to strategies that ensure all stakeholders – learners, teachers, parents, and community members – are informed and educated about LRP, including the protocols, procedures, and interventions in handling LRP-related incidents.

All public schools and CLCs shall, and private schools are encouraged to:

1. Integrate LRP initiatives into the curriculum and implement comprehensive training programs to promote learners' safety and well-being;
2. Conduct age-appropriate educational and awareness activities on LRP for learners, school administrators, and personnel;
3. Embed core LRP lessons across all grade levels using teaching manuals collaboratively developed by DepEd and partner stakeholders;
4. Provide mandatory capacity-building for teaching and non-teaching personnel, including school heads and CPC members, covering conflict resolution, alternative dispute resolution, negotiation, cultural and gender sensitivity, LRP case management, and related topics, subject to existing DepEd rules and regulations;
5. Implement digital and multimedia advocacy through social media campaigns, blogs, vlogs, digital posters, audiovisual materials, and/or IEC materials (e.g., FAQs, brochures, creative materials promoting positive conduct and learner empowerment);
6. Organize events that foster collaboration and camaraderie, such as sports competitions and music-based activities; and
7. Encourage guidance counselors and designates to facilitate classroom sessions and activities on conflict resolution, peer mediation, and constructive communication as needed.

- C. **Advocacy and Social Mobilization** - Refer to campaigns, information dissemination, and collaborative partnerships that engage learners, school personnel, parents and community members to promote a culture of safety, respect, and child protection, and to raise awareness of LRP concerns.

All public schools and CLCs shall, and private schools are encouraged to:

1. **Engage the Community** – organize awareness campaigns and activities that involve learners, parents, educators, and community members in understanding and addressing LRP concerns, fostering a sense of collective responsibility. Recommended activities include:
 - a. Student government and organizations' activities with LRP themes;
 - b. Community and PTA orientations on DepEd policies and school initiatives on child protection and anti-bullying;
 - c. Symposiums, forums, or workshops on LRP, responsible digital citizenship, and positive, non-violent discipline;
 - d. Creation and distribution of IEC materials highlighting stakeholder roles in promoting LRP;
 - e. Launching of LRP campaigns during the National Children's Month each November; and
 - f. Community-initiated activities with LRP themes to strengthen safe and supportive learning environments.

2. **Develop Partnerships** – collaborate with LGUs, CSOs, private sectors, and relevant stakeholders to enhance LRP support systems. Schools and offices are encouraged to establish linkages with:
 - i. National government agencies involved in child welfare and protection;
 - ii. Human rights and law enforcement bodies;
 - iii. Local and international NGOs; and
 - iv. Parent-teacher associations and community-based groups.

These partnerships aim to mobilize resources, share technical expertise, and strengthen coordinated responses to ensure learner safety and well-being.

VII. RESPONSE STRATEGIES

- A. **Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)** – Refer to the school-specific procedures based on the general response strategies prescribed by DepEd. SOPs shall define roles, timelines, reporting channels, protective measures, and investigation protocols to address incidents of violence, abuse, bullying, and other threats to learner safety. Schools and CLCs shall base their SOPs on relevant DepEd issuances and refer to *Annexes A, B, and C* for simplified process flows, including adult-to-learner, learner-to-learner, and learner-to-community protection concerns.
 1. **Risk Assessment** - The CPC, through registered guidance counselors, learner formation officers, or school heads, shall accomplish the Initial Risk Assessment Form (*see Annex H*) upon determining a probable LRP-related incident including abuse, violence, exploitation, discrimination, bullying, or gender-based sexual harassment.
 2. **Incident Reporting** – Schools shall maintain a clear, accessible, and confidential reporting system to ensure learner and staff safety. All incidents shall be documented using an Incident Report and Intake Sheet containing at a minimum: identifying information of the victim and alleged respondent, and initial interventions provided. These records shall be confidential and maintained solely by the Registered Guidance Counselor or the designated CPC personnel.
 - a. The school personnel who accomplished the incident report shall refer the said report to the proper Disciplining Authority within 48 hours from its receipt, whether verbally or in writing.
 - b. Fact-Finding Investigations (FFI) shall be conducted for substantiated reports, and a comprehensive report containing the findings and recommendations shall be submitted to the School Head within 10 calendar days.
 - c. The School Head shall submit investigation results to the Schools Division Superintendent (SDS) and the Regional Director (RD) within 30 calendar days from the receipt of the report or complaint.
 - d. Schools shall submit to the SDO, within the first week of each school year, an annual report on bullying cases, interventions undertaken, relevant statistics, and other pertinent information.

- e. The SDO shall compile all incident reports from schools and submit a consolidated statistical report to the RO and LRPD within the first month of each school year.
3. **Referral Protocols** – Schools shall observe established referral protocols by promptly reporting incidents to the designated CPC member and referring them to the appropriate authorities, including the SDO, RO, and relevant government agencies, in accordance with existing laws and policies to ensure the immediate protection and support of the learner involved.
 4. **Investigation Protocols** – Schools shall implement standardized or school-developed procedures for investigating reported LRP incidents. These protocols shall be consistent with existing DepEd issuances, including DepEd Order No. 40, s. 2012 (*DepEd Child Protection Policy*), DepEd Order No. 15, s. 2012 (*DepEd Policy Framework for the Implementation of the Alternative Dispute Resolution System-Mediation*), and DepEd Order No. 49, s. 2006 (*Revised Rules of Procedure of the Department of Education in Administrative Cases*), and shall form part of the school’s Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).
 - a. **Procedural Due Process.** Subject to applicable DepEd issuances, relevant laws, and prescribed SOPs, the following minimum requirements of due process shall be observed in cases where a penalty may be imposed:
 - i. **Written Notice** - The respondent shall be informed in writing of the complaint or offense, together with the supporting evidence;
 - ii. **Right to Answer Complaints** - The respondent shall be given the opportunity to submit a written answer within 10 calendar days, with the assistance of a parent/legal guardian or legal counsel;
 - iii. **Written Decision** - The disciplining body shall issue a written decision stating the facts, issues, and basis of the ruling; and
 - iv. **Appeal** - The decision may be appealed to the immediate higher authority (e.g., SDS or RD) within 15 days from receipt. Failure to file within the prescribed period shall result in dismissal of the appeal in accordance with DepEd Order No. 49, s. 2006 (*Revised Rules of Procedure of the Department of Education in Administrative Cases*). The higher authority may affirm, modify, or remand the decision for further review.

In bullying cases, the decision may be appealed to the Office of the Undersecretary for Legal and Legislative Affairs, by authority of the Secretary of DepEd, within 10 days from receipt of the decision, in accordance with the Revised IRR of the Anti-Bullying Act.

- B. **Interventions** - Refer to programs provided by DepEd as part of the response mechanism for incidents related to LRP concerns. This includes

psychological first aid, guidance and counseling, and mental health and psychosocial support services.

Intervention programs aim to maintain a safe and supportive learning environment and address the following:

- Acts, physical or verbal, that may lead to LRP concerns;
- Determinants influencing learners to commit LRP-related acts;
- Factors affecting a learner that may cause harm to self or others due to personal, family, or social circumstances; and
- Impact of LRP incidents on learners' psychological, virtual, and physical well-being.

Schools are also encouraged to implement additional programs such as counseling, life skills training, and other mental health and psychosocial support activities. These shall engage all parties involved, including perpetrators, victims, bystanders, parents or guardians, school personnel, and other affected individuals.

1. **Positive Discipline** – As defined in DepEd Order No. 40, s. 2012 (*Child Protection Policy*), positive discipline is a holistic, constructive, and proactive approach that helps learners develop appropriate behavior and self-discipline. It focuses on long-term goals, using everyday situations to teach life-long skills and values while respecting learners' rights and dignity.

DepEd allows teachers and school personnel to impose disciplinary measures to correct behavior, provided there are constructive and support the learner's development.

Corporal punishment or any measures that are physically, sexually, or psychologically harmful, degrading, humiliating, abusive, or violent are strictly prohibited. Discipline must uphold the learner's dignity and growth.

The school administration is responsible for maintaining discipline both on campus and during authorized off-campus school activities.

2. **Limitations in Imposing Discipline** – Discipline shall:
 - Prioritize the best interest of the learner;
 - Be proportionate to the nature and gravity of the offense (*see Annex I*), with physically harmful punishment strictly prohibited; and
 - Be applied only for a valid cause, based on observable and reasonable grounds or credible information, in accordance with school rules and due process.

- C. **School Monitoring and Reporting** - Refer to the coordination mechanism across all DepEd's governance levels, from CO to schools and CLCs, to monitor and report the effectiveness of strategies in addressing LRP incidents. This includes identifying challenges and providing policy recommendations through monitoring and evaluation (M&E).

To ensure effective child protection, schools shall implement continuous M&E systems based on the standard framework provided by the CO

through the LRPD. This includes maintaining accurate incident records, tracking interventions, assessing the impact of safety protocols, and gathering feedback from learners, parents, and staff. M&E results shall inform policy adjustments and implementation improvements.

The CO, through the LRPD, shall provide a coordinated M&E system and guidance. Schools and CLCs may customize procedures, but the following guidelines are required:

1. **Incident Tracking** – Schools shall maintain a centralized database recording all reported incidents, actions taken, and outcomes to ensure transparency, timely follow-ups, and accountability. The database shall include:
 - a. Number of incidents;
 - b. Nature of incidents;
 - c. Number of learners involved;
 - d. Setting (time, date, location);
 - e. Actions taken post-incident;
 - f. Preventive measures implemented;
 - g. Learner details (age, grade, address, parents' background); and
 - h. Current case status.
2. **Regular Audits** – Schools and CLCs shall review and audit their protocols and procedures regularly. Feedback from stakeholders shall be integrated into these audits to improve practices.
3. **Feedback Mechanisms** – Schools and CLCs shall establish official channels, physical or online, for learners, parents, and staff to provide feedback – anonymously or named – on M&E, interventions, and protocols. Feedback shall be incorporated into school guidelines and communicated to the SDO.
4. **Documentation and Data Integrity**
 - a. All cases shall be logged in the School Child Protection database for monitoring and follow-up;
 - b. Summary reports shall be submitted to the Division LRP Focal Person; and
 - c. The Division Focal shall forward cases to the LRP Regional Office for technical guidance.

All records, databases, and related processes shall comply with RA No. 10173 (*Data Privacy Act of 2012*).

VIII. EMERGENCY HOTLINES - In urgent situations requiring immediate intervention, schools may coordinate with the following authorized hotlines/helplines:

- 911 - National Emergency Hotline
- 1383 - Mahalin at Kalingain Ating Mga Bata (MAKABATA) Helpline
- 1553 - National Center for Mental Health (NCMH) Crisis Hotline
- (02) 8632-1372 - Learners' Telesafe Contact Center Helpline (LTCCH)
- (02) 8525-6028 - National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) Anti-Violence Against Women and Children Division

Coordination with these emergency services does not exempt the school from submitting a formal incident report, which must be accomplished immediately following the response. The school shall also provide immediate assistance as needed.

IX. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A. **Central Office (CO).** To ensure effective implementation of this Order, the CO, through its offices, shall:

1. Office of the Undersecretary for Legal and Legislative Affairs:
 - a. Decide with finality all appeals on RO decisions by authority of the Secretary, without limiting the Secretary from directly issuing a decision.
2. Bureau of Curriculum Development (BCD):
 - a. Integrate child protection concepts, digital citizenship, and socio-emotional learning (SEL) in the curriculum;
 - b. Ensure curriculum review for inclusivity and cultural responsiveness;
 - c. Support teachers with guides, exemplars, and training for sensitive content;
 - d. Integrate LRP and gender sensitivity in Good Manners and Right Conduct (GMRC) and Values Education, in coordination with LRPD and the Gender and Development (GAD) Secretariat; and
 - e. Enhance learner profiling in the Homeroom Guidance Program at the start of the school year.
3. Bureau of Human Resource and Organizational Development (BHROD):
 - a. Define penalties, roles, and responsibilities of personnel across governance levels;
 - b. Provide guidelines for school discipline officers and coordinators;
 - c. Develop a standardized code of conduct for personnel; and
 - d. Ensure programs addressing gender-based LRP concerns have allocated GAD budget.
4. Bureau of Learner Support Services (BLSS):
 - a. Develop a standardized code of conduct for learners;
 - b. Enrich the Drop-Out Reduction Program to include Children-at-Risk and Children in Conflict with the Law, in coordination with the Bureau of Learning Delivery - Teaching and Learning Division (BLD-TLD) and the Youth Formation Division (YFD); and
 - c. Strengthen CO helplines for learner abuse and mental health, in coordination with the National Center for Mental Health and LGUs.
5. BLSS – Learner Rights and Protection Division (LRPD):
 - a. Lead the M&E of this Order;
 - b. Develop and implement a standardized reporting mechanism and database, in coordination with the Information and Communications Technology Service (ICTS) and Policy and Planning Service - Educational Management Information System Division (PPS-EMISD);
 - c. Prescribe uniform standards for M&E of reported incidents;
 - d. Maintain a centralized repository of regional LRP reports;

- e. Develop the Learner Handbook and Standardized Code of Conduct with the Bureau of Learner Support Services (BLSS);
 - f. Provide guidelines for designating school Learner Formation Officers and coordinators; and
 - g. Engage counterpart agencies and define roles in case referrals through MOAs/MOUs.
6. Finance Service:
- a. Allocate funding for LRP resources, programs, personnel for helplines, and licensed security personnel.
- B. **Regional Offices (ROs)** – To implement this Order, ROs, through their divisions, shall:
1. Learner Rights and Protection Section (LRPS):
 - a. Provide capacity-building and technical support to SDO LRP Focal Persons;
 - b. Facilitate intervention and referral of learner protection concerns;
 - c. Develop, implement, monitor, and sustain regional LRP programs;
 - d. Consolidate SDO reports on LRP incidents, interventions, and resolutions;
 - e. Conduct regular coordination meetings with SDOs;
 - f. Provide policy recommendations to CO; and
Monitor compliance of public schools with Anti-Bullying Policy submission, in coordination with SDOs.
 2. Legal Unit:
 - a. Facilitate investigation, disciplinary action, and implementation of decisions involving personnel;
 - b. Ensure prompt resolution of LRP cases under the RO jurisdiction; and
 - c. Provide legal guidance to RO LRPS, SDO LRP Focal Persons, and Legal Units.
 3. Education Support Services Division (ESSD):
 - a. Implement regional initiatives promoting a safe learning environment with partners;
 - b. Strengthen partnerships and mobilize resources; and
 - c. Assist SDOs in managing learner well-being programs and activities.
 4. Curriculum and Learning Management Division (CLMD): Monitor the curriculum delivery concerning integrating the LRP and gender sensitivity topics in the GMRC and Values Education subjects, as a basis for possible policy recommendations to the CO.
 5. Quality Assurance Division (QAD): Monitor compliance of private schools with Anti-Bullying Policy and reports, coordinating with SDOs.
 6. Finance Division: Support funding for the Regional Learners TeleSafe Contact Center Helpline, including personnel compensation.
 7. Personnel Section: Assist in staffing and HR management for the Regional Learners TeleSafe Contact Center Helpline.

C. Schools Division Offices (SDOs) – Responsible for child-friendly schools and CLCs:

1. Office of the Schools Division Superintendent:
 - a. Facilitate implementation and compliance in schools and CLCs;
 - b. Coordinate with LGUs on Peace and Order Council activation;
 - c. Facilitate investigations and disciplinary actions via SDO Legal Unit; and
 - d. Guide staffing and funding for LRP personnel.
2. School Governance and Operations Division (SGOD):
 - a. Provide capacity-building and technical assistance for Guidance Counselors, Designates, and Advocates;
 - b. Support intervention, referral, monitoring, and evaluation of school-based LRP programs;
 - c. Consolidate school reports on LRP incidents and submit to RO LRPS;
 - d. Facilitate LRP discussions through In-Service Training (INSET)/ Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions; and
 - e. Monitor compliance of schools with the Anti-Bullying Policy and reports.
3. Curriculum Implementation Division (CID):
 - a. Monitor curriculum delivery on LRP and gender sensitivity;
 - b. Provide recommendations to CO via RO; and
 - c. Conduct orientation on Homeroom Guidance Program modules.

D. Schools and Community Learning Centers (CLCs) – Implementers of child protection and empowerment:

1. Enhance administrative and supervisory routines (e.g., visibility of authorities, efficient personnel clustering);
2. Teach child protection and empowerment in values education, GMRC, and Edukasyon sa Pagpapakatao (EsP);
3. Strengthen positive discipline, avoiding corporal or punitive actions;
4. Capacitate personnel through LAC and INSET sessions;
5. Organize parenting seminars with collaboration from parents/guardians;
6. Conduct learner formation activities;
7. Engage learner governments and school organizations to lead protection campaigns;
8. Maintain CCTVs, Public Address (PA) systems, and distribute IEC materials;
9. Empower the School Governance Council and Child Protection Committee;
10. Establish clear incident reporting and referral systems aligned with national policies;
11. Facilitate, in coordination with partners and resources:
 - a. Clinical and aftercare support for victims and perpetrators; and
 - b. Counseling for violators focusing on empathy, accountability, and behavior change.
12. Clearly define the roles of learners, personnel, and stakeholders in child protection initiatives;

13. Conduct regular collaboration with barangay, community, organizations, and parents; and
14. Engage parent associations, alumni, volunteers, and student organizations to support school safety.

X. FUND SOURCE

The funds for the implementation of this Order shall be charged against available and appropriate funding sources, in accordance with existing budgeting, accounting, auditing, and procurement rules, laws, and regulations.

XI. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The CO, through the LRPD, in coordination with the ROs, SDOs, schools, CLCs, and stakeholders, shall be primarily responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of this Order. An M&E plan shall be prepared at each governance level as the basis for the conduct of M&E. A policy evaluation shall be conducted to assess the achievement of its outcome and to further enhance its provisions and effectiveness.

Additionally, the CO, through the LRPD, shall be responsible for the review and update, if necessary, of the attached templates and reporting mechanisms to ensure their relevance and effectiveness. Material revisions/updates affecting regulatory compliance shall be communicated to all relevant offices and stakeholders.

XII. CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information relating to the identity and personal circumstances of all parties involved in an incident covered by this Order shall be treated with the utmost confidentiality by all parties that collected the said data, including but not limited to the school head or school principal, teachers, school counselor or school counselor associate, and parents or parent-substitutes. Furthermore, all personal information, sensitive personal information, and/or privileged information collected shall be subject to the rules and regulations set forth in RA No. 10173, or the *Data Privacy Act of 2012* and its IRR.

Access to the data collected pursuant to this Order shall be strictly limited to the duly authorized school personnel and designated officials within the appropriate and relevant district office, regional office, and central office.

Any personnel who commit a breach of confidentiality shall be subject to appropriate administrative action in accordance with the existing rules and regulations of the DepEd or in the private school, without prejudice to any civil or criminal action.

XIII. SEPARABILITY CLAUSE

If any provision of this Order is hereby declared as 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.

XIV. REPEALING CLAUSE

All other related provisions inconsistent with this Order are hereby repealed, rescinded or modified accordingly. Specifically, this DepEd Order repeals the following policies:

1. DepEd Order No. 6, s. 1954 or the Prohibiting the Practice of Hazing in Schools and Imposes Sanctions for Violations;
2. DepEd Order No. 70, s. 1999 or Prohibiting Students of Elementary and Secondary Schools from Using Cellular Phones and Pagers During Class Hours;
3. DepEd Order No. 26, s. 2000 or Prohibiting Students of Elementary and Secondary Schools from Using Cellular Phones and Pagers During Class Hours; and
4. DepEd Order No. 83, s. 2003 or Reiteration to DECS Orders Nos. 70, s. 1999.

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XVI. EFFECTIVITY AND AMENDMENTS

This Order shall take effect upon its approval, issuance, and fifteen (15) days after its publication on the Official Gazette or a newspaper of general circulation and filing with the Office of the National Administrative Register (ONAR) at the University of the Philippines Law Center (UPLC) UP Diliman, Quezon City.

Revisions to the annexed templates and forms, as necessary, may be issued through a DepEd Memorandum to ensure flexibility and responsiveness to implementation needs, without requiring amendments to this policy.

LIST OF ANNEXES:

ANNEX A: Adult to Learner Protection Concern

Outlines the procedures to be observed in addressing cases involving potential harm, abuse, or rights violations committed by adults against learners.

ANNEX B: Learner to Learner Protection Concern

Outlines the procedures to be observed in addressing cases involving potential harm, abuse, or violations of rights committed by learners against fellow learners.

ANNEX C: Learner to Community Protection Concern

Outlines the procedures to be observed in addressing cases where learners may cause potential harm, abuse, or violations of rights against members of the community, particularly Children at Risk (CAR) and Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL).

ANNEX D: DepEd's Anti-Bullying Policy Template for Schools

The template guides schools in formulating anti-bullying policies consistent with the Republic Act (RA) No. 10627, otherwise known as the "Anti-Bullying Act of 2013" (Anti-Bullying Act), its Revised Implementing Rules and Regulations (Revised IRR) to ensure prevention, proper reporting, implementation of discipline, response, and a safe learning environment.

ANNEX E: Random Routine Bag Inspection Plan

Specifies the school's annual plan for conducting random bag inspections, detailing the grade levels covered, frequency, designated personnel, and required resources.

ANNEX F: Confiscation Slip for Prohibited Items

Serves as a written record issued when a prohibited item/s is/are confiscated due to policy violations, indicating the details of the incident and retrieval procedures.

ANNEX G: Administrative Sanctions and Penalties for Using Portable Electronic Devices During Instructional Hours

Outlines the disciplinary actions for both personnel (teaching and non-teaching) and learners for using portable electronic devices during instructional hours.

ANNEX H: Initial Risk Assessment Form

Serves as a critical diagnostic tool for the CPC, through the Registered Guidance Counselor/Guidance Designate of the school, for early detection and management of cases involving LRP concerns.

ANNEX I: Classification of Offenses and Penalties

Demonstrates the classification of offenses and its corresponding penalties to address non-bullying incidents in consideration of the frequency and severity of the acts committed.

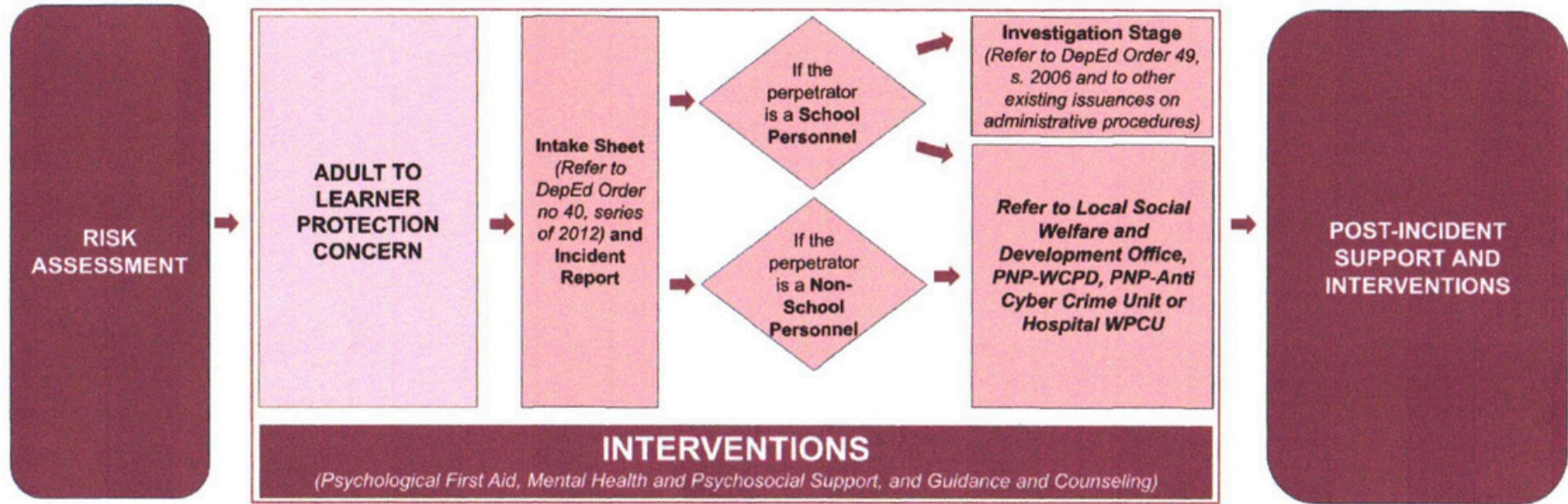
ANNEX J: Confiscation Slip for Violation of Responsible Use of Portable Electronic Device Policy

Serves as a written record issued when a learner's portable electronic device is confiscated due to policy violations, indicating the details of the incident and retrieval procedures.

ANNEX K: Call Slip

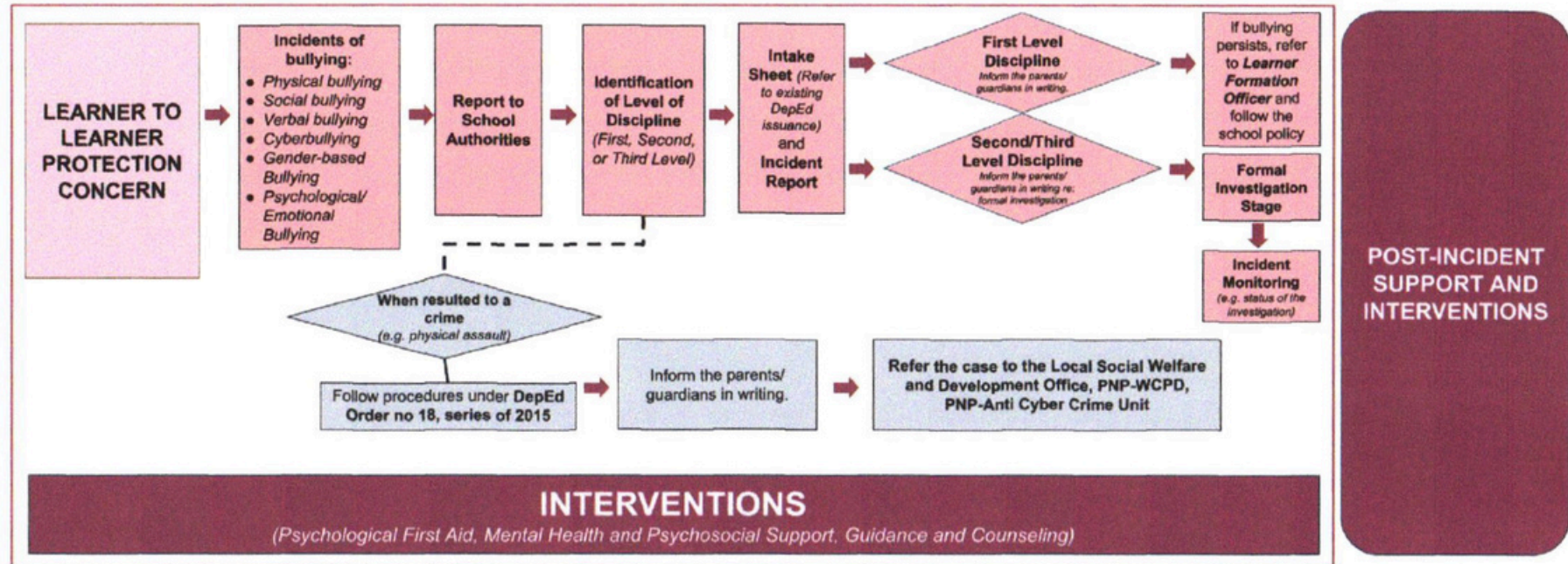
A document issued to parents or guardians inviting them to attend a meeting regarding a learner's concern or case.

ANNEX A - ADULT TO LEARNER PROTECTION CONCERN



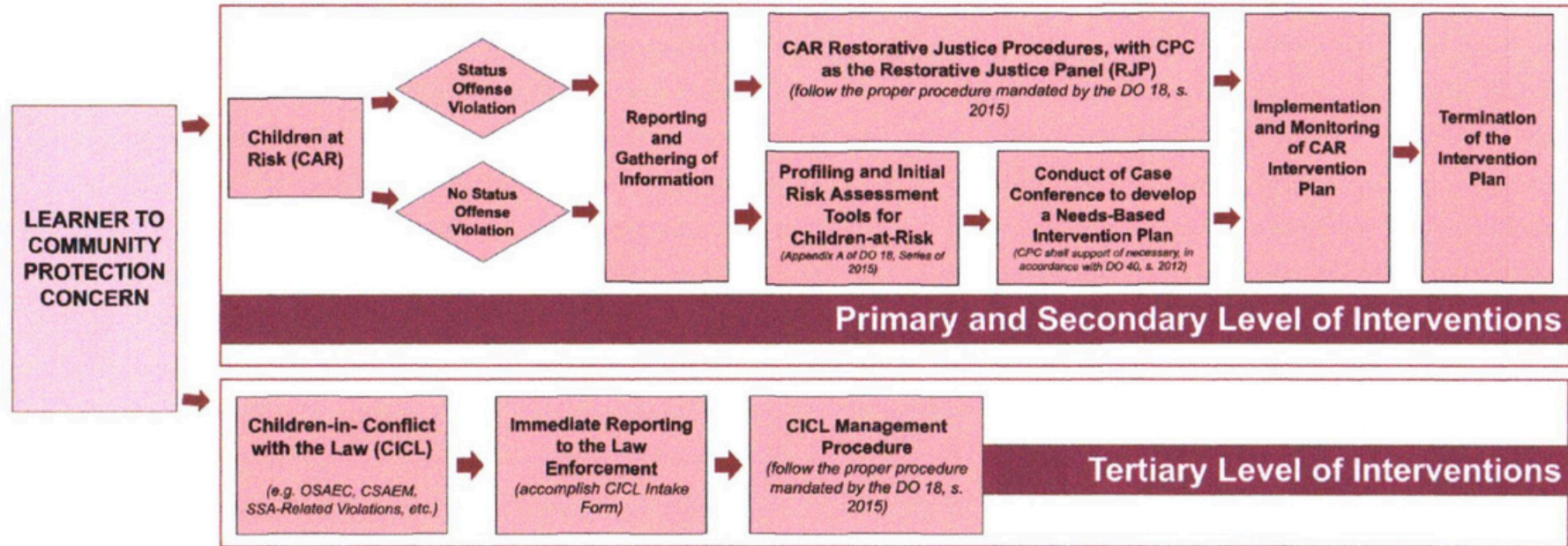
(Concerned Issuances: DO 40, s. 2012, DO 49, s. 2006)

ANNEX B - LEARNER TO LEARNER PROTECTION CONCERN



(Concerned Issuances: RA 11930; DO 18, s. 2015; and the Revised IRR of The Anti-Bullying Act of 2013)

ANNEX C - LEARNER TO COMMUNITY PROTECTION CONCERN



(Concerned Issuances: DO 18, s. 2015)

ANNEX D: DEPED ANTI-BULLYING POLICY TEMPLATE FOR SCHOOLS
(Note: Sections highlighted in yellow shall be completed by the schools.)

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

[Name of the Public or Private school or Community Learning Center] (the "School" or "CLC", as may be applicable) hereby adopts the rules and regulations (the "Policy") provided herein, in compliance with Republic Act (RA) No. 10627, otherwise known as the "Anti-Bullying Act of 2013" (Anti-Bullying Act), its Revised Implementing Rules and Regulations (Revised IRR), other pertinent laws, and rules and regulations of the Department of Education (DepEd).

I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Section 1. Scope and Coverage. The Policy shall apply to all grade levels of the School. For the avoidance of doubt, the Policy shall extend and be applicable to all stakeholders of the School, including but not limited to its Learners, School Personnel, Service Provider, and the Parents or Guardians of said Learners.

Section 2. Declaration of Policy. The School affirms its commitment to providing a safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environment that upholds the dignity and rights of every Learner. To this end, the School shall implement comprehensive anti-bullying measures with the following objectives:

- a. Ensure a learning environment that is free from bullying, harassment, and all forms of violence, and that is conducive to the academic, emotional, and social development of all Learners;
- b. Uphold the rights of children, including their right to express their views freely and to have such views given due weight in all matters affecting them;
- c. Promote the development of moral character, ethical values, and personal discipline by cultivating positive traits such as empathy, kindness, respect, and responsibility, and by strengthening Learners' social and emotional skills for effective relationship-building and conflict resolution; and
- d. Foster a positive school climate by requiring the School to actively maintain a space where Learners feel physically, emotionally, and socially secure, and where respect, empathy, and understanding are consistently modeled and reinforced.

Section 3. Definition of Terms. As used in the Anti-Bullying Act and its Revised IRR, other relevant laws, and issuances of DepEd, the following terms shall mean or be understood as follows:

- a. **"Bully"** refers to any Learner who commits acts of bullying, as defined in Section 4 of this Policy.
- b. **"Bystander"** refers to any person who witnesses or has personal knowledge of any actual or perceived incidents of bullying or retaliation, as defined by this Policy.
- c. **"Disciplining Authority"** refers to either the teacher, Learner Formation Officer, or Principal or School Head who are tasked to act on the bullying incident pursuant to Section 19 of this Policy.

- d. **“Exclusion”** refers to a penalty wherein a learner is immediately dropped from the class list of the school. In such cases, the learner may continue his/her education through appropriate educational interventions in an educational setting other than the school of origin. Such placement shall be based on the learner’s needs and context after a formal assessment and recommendation of the concerned governing agencies.
- e. **“Hostile environment”** refers to a situation where unwelcome or offensive behavior creates an intimidating, unfriendly, aggressive, or abusive atmosphere for the victim and upstander, among others.
- f. **“Learner”** refers to any individual seeking basic literacy skills and functional life skills or support services for the improvement of the quality of his/her life, and who is enrolled either in a school or in a Community Learning Center (CLC), as may be applicable.
- g. **“Non-readmission”** refers to a penalty where a student is no longer allowed to be admitted for the following school year but is allowed to complete his or her current school year.
- h. **“Precursor to Bullying”** refers to acts, whether physical, verbal, or through the use of technology or electronic means, that indicate that bullying may occur or that a Learner is starting to be bullied by fellow Learner/s.
- i. **“Retaliation”** refers to acts which include any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment against a person who reports a bullying incident, who provides information during an investigation of bullying, who is a witness to, or who has reliable information about a bullying incident.
- j. **“School Personnel”** refers to all persons working for the School, which include the following:
 - i. **Teacher** refers to a person who is directly engaged in teaching or in the delivery of instruction in the elementary and secondary levels (junior high school and senior high school), whether full-time or part-time, in the School.
 - ii. **Non-Teaching Personnel** refers to a person whose primary duties and responsibilities contribute to the delivery of basic education services and achievement agency outcomes, but neither involve nor directly support the actual conduct of teaching or delivery of instruction.
 - iii. **Related-Teaching Personnel** refers to a person whose primary duties and responsibilities contribute to the delivery of basic education services and achievement of agency outcomes through the provision of direct support to teaching and the delivery of instruction, such as standard setting, policy and program formulation, research, and sector monitoring and evaluation.

- k. **“Service Provider”** refers to any person who is not a part of the above-enumerated school personnel but who works in the School, such as, but not limited to security guards, canteen personnel, utility workers, and transportation service personnel;
- l. **“Suspension”** refers to a penalty wherein a learner is temporarily disallowed from attending classes for a specified number of days, based on the degree, frequency, and level of commitment involved in LRP-concern incidents. During the period of suspension, the learner shall be considered absent and shall be provided appropriate educational interventions by the school.
- l. **“Upstander”** refers to a person who speaks, acts, or intervenes on behalf of a Learner being bullied, including but not limited to getting help from a trusted adult; and
- m. **“Victim”** refers to any Learner to whom acts of bullying or retaliation, as defined by this Policy, are directed.

II. PROHIBITION ON BULLYING

Section 4. Acts of Bullying. “Bullying” refers to any severe or repeated use by one or more Learners of a written, verbal, or electronic expression; a physical act or gesture; or any combination thereof, directed at another Learner that has the effect of actually causing or placing the latter in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm, or damage to their property; creating a hostile environment at school for the other Learners; infringing on the rights of another student at school; or materially and substantially disrupting the educational process or the orderly operation of a school, such as but not limited to, the following forms:

- a. **Physical Bullying** – refers to any unwanted physical contact between the bully and the victim.
Examples include but are not limited to: punching, pushing, tripping, pinching, spitting, shoving, hitting, kicking, slapping, tickling, head-locking, grappling, inflicting school pranks, teasing, fighting, and the use of any available objects as weapons
- b. **Psychological or Emotional Bullying** – refers to any act that causes damage to a victim’s psyche and/or emotional well-being.
Examples include but are not limited to: name-calling, humiliation, intimidation, circulating malicious rumors, manipulation, coercion, and other circumstances tending to cause dishonor, discredit or expose a person to contempt
- c. **Verbal Bullying** – refers to any slanderous statement or accusation that causes the victim undue emotional distress.
Examples include but are not limited to: directing foul language or profanity at the target, teasing, name-calling, tormenting, taunting, threats, cursing, making offensive jokes, and commenting negatively or inappropriately on victim’s looks, clothes and body; and all forms of aggression involving the use of written or spoken language to demean, harm, or exert power over another Learner

- d. **Cyber-Bullying** – refers to all forms of bullying carried out through the use of technology or any electronic means.
Examples include but are not limited to: sending offensive or harmful messages through text, email, instant messaging, or online chat platforms, posting hurtful, threatening, or inappropriate comments, photos, or videos online, engaging in trolling, spamming, or other disruptive online behavior intended to cause emotional distress, stealing, misusing, or disclosing another person’s personal information without consent, using another person’s name, identity, or online account without authorization to impersonate or cause harm
- e. **Social Bullying** – refers to a form of bullying that aims to damage the social reputation of a Learner or a group of Learners, including but is not limited to relationships affecting the victim’s social standing.
Examples include but are not limited to: deliberate, repetitive, or aggressive social behavior against Learners with disabilities, Learners who are members of indigenous or ethno-linguistic groups, and Learners who are part of religious groups, among others
- f. **Gender-based Bullying** – refers to any act that humiliates, excludes, or targets individuals based on their perceived or actual sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.
Examples include but are not limited to: acts that create an intimidating, hostile, or humiliating environment for the victim, such as unwanted sexual remarks or actions, use of sexist, homophobic, misogynistic, or transphobic remarks, among others
- g. **All other forms of bullying analogous** to those provided under the Policy, the Anti-Bullying Law and its Revised IRR, other pertinent laws, and rules and regulations of DepEd.
Examples include but are not limited to: stealing another person’s property, deliberately destroying, defacing, or damaging another’s property, extorting money, food, or possessions from other Learners

Section 5. Prohibited Acts. The following acts are prohibited under this Policy:

- a. All forms of bullying, as defined and classified in this Policy;
- b. Acts of bullying, committed at the following locations or circumstances:
- i. on School grounds;
 - ii. on properties and establishments immediately adjacent to School grounds, up to a two (2)-kilometer radius from the School;
 - iii. on streets near the School, up to a two (2)-kilometer radius;
 - iv. during School-sponsored or School-related activities, functions, or programs, whether conducted on or off School grounds, as long as an act of bullying is committed before, during, or immediately after the said activities, functions, or programs;
 - v. at School bus stops;
 - vi. at School buses or other vehicles owned, leased or used by the School or privately-owned but accredited by the School; and
 - vii. anywhere through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased, or used by the School;

- c. Acts of bullying committed outside the above-mentioned locations or circumstances, through the use of technology or an electronic device not owned, leased, or used by the School, if such acts create a hostile environment at the School for the victim; infringe on the rights of the victim at the School; or materially and substantially disrupt the educational process or the orderly operation of the School; and
- d. Any act of retaliation, as defined in Section 3 (i) of this Policy, against a person who reports an incident of bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or serves as a witness or has reliable information about a bullying incident.
- e. False Accusation of Bullying - If the learner, after an investigation, is found to have knowingly made a false accusation of bullying, the said learner shall be subjected to disciplinary actions or to appropriate interventions in accordance with the existing rules and regulations of the DepEd.

III. PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS BULLYING

Section 6. Prevention Programs. The School shall implement and maintain a comprehensive program designed to educate all stakeholders and personnel on the harmful effects of bullying and the ways they can safely report or address the same through the following initiatives:

a. School-Wide Initiatives

Initiatives that promote a positive school climate and institutional commitment to bullying prevention, including:

- i. Creating a positive school climate and environment conducive to the attainment of learning objectives, the development of healthy relationships, and the understanding of and respect for individual differences;
- ii. Periodically assessing and monitoring the nature, extent, and perceptions of bullying behaviors and attitudes of Learners;
- iii. Periodically reviewing and enhancing the Learners' and Personnel's manual or code of conduct in relation to bullying;
- iv. Conducting activities for Learners, School Personnel, and Service Providers on how to recognize and respond to bullying;
- v. Continuing personnel development to sustain bullying prevention programs; and
- vi. Coordinating with Local Government Units, barangays (Barangay Council for the Protection of Children), and other stakeholders.

The School shall provide the following programs and initiatives to prevent bullying: [Kindly recommend and enumerate specific programs to be implemented as a School-wide initiative].

b. Classroom-Based Initiatives

Initiatives that empower Teachers and Learners within the classroom setting to recognize, prevent, and address bullying, including:

- i. Reinforcing school-wide rules pertaining to bullying;
- ii. Building a positive sense of self and interpersonal relationships through the development of self-awareness and self-management,

- interpersonal skills and empathy, and responsible decision-making and problem-solving;
- iii. Discussing issues related to bullying and strategies for responding to and reporting incidents of bullying;
- iv. Teaching positive online behavior and safety and how to recognize and report cyberbullying; and
- v. Providing an inclusive and caring learning environment for Learners.

The School shall conduct the following programs to prevent bullying: [Kindly recommend specific programs to be implemented as a classroom-level initiative].

c. Parent and Family Engagement

Programs that actively involve parents and guardians in the School's anti-bullying initiatives, such as:

- i. Discussing the anti-bullying policy of the School, emphasizing bullying prevention during Parents-Teachers Association meetings and seminars; and
- ii. Conducting or sponsoring education sessions for Parents to learn, teach, model, and reinforce positive social and emotional skills to their children.

The School shall conduct the following programs to prevent bullying: [Kindly recommend specific programs in relation to parent involvement].

d. Learner Monitoring and Early Intervention

Monitoring Learners who are vulnerable to committing aggressive bullying acts or who are possible victims, for the purpose of early intervention. This activity shall be conducted with utmost confidentiality and respect for all parties concerned.

The School shall [Kindly recommend the process of monitoring and the corresponding form of early intervention].

e. Other Bullying Prevention Measures

Additional programs or strategies that the School may develop and implement in support of a safe and nurturing learning environment.

The School shall [Kindly specify other relevant bullying prevention initiatives, if any].

Section 7. Intervention Program. The School shall implement intervention programs and strategies to support the enforcement of this Policy. "Intervention" shall refer to activities which are designed to address the causes and effects of bullying. These may include programs such as counseling, life skills training, education, and other mental health and psychosocial support activities that will enhance the psychological, emotional and psycho-social well-being of the victim, the bully, the bystander, the upstander, and the school community, among others.

The intervention programs may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. Activities that will address acts of bullying;

- b. Approaches that emphasize guidance and the promotion of positive behavioral changes, rather than punishment;
- c. Strategies that uphold principles of child protection and promote safe, respectful, and non-violent forms of discipline;
- d. Opportunities for the victim, the bully, the upstander, and the bystanders to understand the bullying incident and its negative consequences;
- e. Programs and initiatives to develop and practice respectful and empathetic behavior; and
- f. Referrals to external services or professionals, especially for concerns that go beyond School's capacity to manage.

Specific intervention programs per stage of the case handling may include the following:

- a. **During Case Handling**
 - i. **For the Victim** – Assessment, provision of mental health and psychosocial support services and any other intervention programs such as [Schools to insert specific intervention programs]. However, should the foregoing intervention programs be insufficient, the victim may be referred to the SDO or established partners/stakeholders.
 - ii. **For the Bully** – Interview, Case Study of Psychological Assessment, Administration of Psychological Test (level 1), Provide Individual Counseling, Development of intervention programs, such as psychological, cognitive, or behavioral programs, among others, based on assessment findings, Implementation of the intervention program with the consent of the learner and the parent/s and or guardian, Post-evaluation of the impact of the intervention program, and refer to relevant partners when necessary (LGU, LSWDO, Psychologists, Mental Health professionals, Guidance Counselors).
- b. **Post-Intervention Process** – the Disciplining Authority may conduct a case conference with the parents/guardians to:
 - i. Discuss the post assessment findings of the intervention program conducted;
 - ii. Recommend further intervention program, if needed; and
 - iii. Make appropriate recommendations as regards the disciplinary procedures before submission to the SDO.
- c. **Aftercare Program Strategies**
 - i. **For the Victim**— Strengthen family support, strengthen coping skills, enhancement of self-concept, emotional check-ins through journal, peer buddy system, participate in School Clubs and Student Groups, boosting self-confidence, and self-concept development activity through [Schools to insert specific efforts or specific school personnel who will handle]
 - ii. **For the Bully** – Strengthen family support, anger management activity, reflection journal, self-discovery activity, peer coaching and mentoring, participate in School Clubs and Student Groups, learn to empathize, and behavior modification through counseling service [Schools to insert specific efforts or specific school personnel who will handle]

IV. JURISDICTION IN BULLYING CASE

Section 8. Jurisdiction. Complaints of bullying and other acts under this Policy shall be within the primary jurisdiction of the School and/or DepEd, which shall ensure appropriate investigations, sanctions, and intervention programs, without prejudice to existing laws, rules and regulations. Complaints for acts not covered by the Anti-Bullying Act of 2013 or the Revised IRR shall be referred to the appropriate authorities that have jurisdiction over such matters. The School shall ensure that these cases are properly endorsed and handled in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

Section 9. Applicability of Republic Act No. 9344, as Amended, and Other Related Laws. If the bullying incident or retaliation results in serious physical injuries or death, the case shall be handled in accordance with the provisions of RA No. 9344, otherwise known as the "Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act," as amended, along with its IRR and other applicable laws, as warranted by the circumstances surrounding the bullying incident.

Criminal and civil liability arising from child abuse, discrimination, exploitation, and other acts constituting a crime or offense are separate and distinct and shall not be a bar to the filing of an administrative case under this Policy. Accordingly, the School shall refer the case to the appropriate government institution for purposes of instituting the applicable criminal and/or civil actions.

V. MECHANISMS AND PROCEDURES IN HANDLING BULLYING INCIDENTS IN SCHOOLS

Section 10. Immediate Response to On-Going Bullying. Any victim, bystander, or individual who witnesses or has direct knowledge of a bullying incident that is actively taking place or requiring urgent attention, shall promptly report the matter to any available School Personnel.

Upon being notified thereof, said School Personnel shall take immediate and appropriate action to ensure the safety and well-being of the individuals involved. The Personnel shall undertake the following measures:

- a. Immediately stopping the bullying or retaliatory act;
- b. Safely separating the Learners involved to prevent further conflict or harm;
- c. Removing the victim or, where appropriate, the alleged bully from the scene of the incident to ensure their safety;
- d. Assessing and addressing the immediate safety needs of the victim, which shall include:
 - i. determining any urgent protective measures required; and
 - ii. providing or facilitating prompt medical attention where necessary, and securing a medical certificate in cases involving physical injury; and
- e. Escort the alleged bully to the Disciplining Authority depending on the level of disciplinary intervention, for further assessment and appropriate action.

Section 11. Reporting of Bullying Incidents. Any victim, bystander, or individual who witnesses or has personal knowledge of an incident of bullying, retaliation, or any precursor to bullying that is not actively taking place or does not require urgent

attention, shall immediately report the same, whether verbally or in writing, to the Disciplining Authority depending on the level of disciplinary intervention.

Section 12. Anonymous Reports. Reports of incidents initiated by persons who prefer to remain anonymous shall be entertained and afforded protection from possible retaliation. Nevertheless, no sanction shall be taken against an alleged bully solely based on an anonymous report and without any evidence to substantiate the allegation of bullying.

In this regard, the channel for anonymous reporting of bullying can be accessed through _____.

[School shall establish and maintain secure channels for anonymous reporting, including but not limited to, a designated reporting box placed in accessible areas within the school premises, or a secure online reporting platform administered and monitored by the designated school authorities. Kindly specify which is applicable for the School].

Section 13. Commencing Actions in Cases of Bullying. In cases of bullying incidents, an action may be commenced by the Learner, his/her representative, or any School Personnel through the filing of a complaint before the Disciplining Authority exercising jurisdiction over the matter pursuant to Section 19 of this Policy.

Section 14. Referral of Reports of Complaints. Reports of bullying incidents, anonymous reports, and complaints should be filed with the appropriate Disciplining Authority pursuant to Section 19 of this Policy. However, should the Disciplining Authority determine that the incident does not fall within his or her jurisdiction, he or she shall refer the same to the proper Disciplining Authority within forty-eight (48) hours from the receipt of the report or complaint.

Section 15. Conduct of a Fact-Finding Investigation. If the report or Complaint is deemed sufficient in substance, the Disciplining Authority shall immediately initiate the conduct of a Fact-Finding Investigation (FFI) to determine the veracity of the allegations and circumstances surrounding the bullying incident. The Disciplining Authority shall use the report as a result of the FFI as basis for his or her decision and shall promptly undertake to do the following:

- a. Conduct separate interviews or consultations with the parties involved;
- b. Assess the level of threat and develop appropriate intervention strategies;
- c. Inform the victim and their parents or guardians of the steps to be taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation; and
- d. Submit a complete written report to the Principal/School Head, for his or her information, containing their findings and recommendations within ten (10) calendar days from their designation.

The Disciplining Authority may also conduct an FFI *motu proprio* (on his/her own initiative) when he/she has well-founded belief or reasonable ground to suspect that any prohibited act under Section 5 of this Policy has been committed.

Section 16. Due Process. In all cases where a penalty is to be imposed on the bully, the following minimum requirements of due process shall be complied with:

- a. **Written Notice.** The Learner complained of and his or her parents or guardians shall be informed of the nature of the complaint or offense committed in writing together with the supporting pieces of evidence;
- b. **Right to Answer Complaints.** The Learner complained of shall be given the opportunity to answer the complaint in writing within five (5) school days from receipt of the Complaint, with the assistance of his or her parents or the parent-substitute; and
- c. **Written Decision.** The decision of the Disciplining Authority shall be in writing, stating clearly the facts and the reasons for the decision.
- d. **Appeal.** The decision of the Disciplining Authority may be appealed pursuant to **Section 18** of this Policy.

Section 17. Period to Render Decision. The Disciplining Authority must provide his/her decision within thirty (30) calendar days from the receipt of the report or Complaint, unless there is a valid reason for the postponement of the proceedings.

Section 18. Procedure of Appeal. Any party adversely affected by the Decision of the Disciplining Authority may appeal the same pursuant to Rule V of the Revised IRR.

Section 19. Levels of Discipline in Anti-Bullying Cases. The specific procedure to address bullying incidents shall consider the frequency and severity of the bullying acts committed. Each level is designed to ensure effective discipline, intervention, and support for all Learners involved, with distinct protocols and designated school officials responsible for managing each level.

- a. **First Level of Disciplinary Intervention including Precursors to Bullying.** This level of discipline applies to precursors to bullying or bullying behaviors that can be classified as “minor bullying acts.”

Minor bullying acts involve less severe actions that do not pose immediate physical, psychological, or emotional harm but still disrupt the learning environment and these behaviors can often be handled through direct intervention and guidance from teachers.

Upon observing or being informed of a minor bullying incident, the teacher shall immediately conduct an initial assessment and implement appropriate intervention measures. Such incidents must still be properly documented and reported in accordance with school protocols.

In cases where minor bullying behaviors persist despite intervention or escalate into more serious incidents of bullying, teachers shall refer these cases to the Learner Formation Officer or the Principal/School Head for further action in accordance with Section 19 of this policy.

- b. **Second Level of Disciplinary Intervention.** This level of discipline applies to bullying behaviors that can be classified as “serious bullying acts.”

Serious bullying acts are severe or repeated behaviors that go beyond minor offenses which necessitate a formal proceeding intervention by the Learner Formation Officer.

[For schools to input how a Learner Formation Officer will handle bullying complaints or cases ensuring that the rights of the victim, the bully, the

upstander, and the bystander are protected and upheld during the conduct of the investigation while maintaining confidentiality throughout the process.]

- c. **Third Level of Disciplinary Intervention.** This level of discipline applies to acts of bullying that cannot be resolved by the teacher at the classroom level or by the Learner Formation Officer. These include more severe or complex situations as these incidents require a higher level of intervention due to their potential impact on student safety and well-being.

In these cases, the Principal/School Head shall conduct thorough investigations, notify parents or parent-substitutes, implement safety plans for affected Learners, and coordinate with law enforcement, as necessary.

[For schools to input step by step process for the implementation of safety plans or coordination with law enforcement, as necessary]

Section 20. School Counselor or School Counselor Associate Intervention. The intervention of the School Counselor or School Counselor Associate can be at any level of the disciplinary interventions as provided in Section 21 of this Policy. The School Counselor or School Counselor Associate shall work closely with teachers, the Learner Formation Officer, and the Principal/School Head to create a comprehensive approach to bullying prevention and intervention.

Such interventions shall, in no case, substitute disciplinary measures to be carried out by the School. They shall be implemented alongside or in support of the disciplinary process during the initial reports of bullying, the provision of emotional support for victims, the implementation of interventions for bullies, follow-up support for affected Learners, emergency situations, and other similar circumstances.

Section 21. Disciplinary Administrative Action. Bullying incidents shall be treated according to their nature, gravity, severity, and attending circumstances.

Depending on the levels of discipline as indicated in Section 19 of this Policy, the teacher, Learner Formation Officer, or Principal/School Head may impose reasonable disciplinary measures, such as but not limited to written reprimand, suspension, non-readmission, or expulsion, provided that the requirements of due process mentioned above are complied with. Further, the bully, joined by his/her parents, shall also be required to undergo an intervention program to be implemented by the School Counselor or School Counselor Associate.

The following disciplinary administrative actions that may be taken against the bully, depending on the severity and circumstances of the case:

Levels of Disciplinary Intervention	Penalties	
<p>First Level of Disciplinary Intervention including Precursors to Bullying.</p> <p>This level of discipline applies to precursors to bullying or bullying behaviors that can be classified as</p>	<p>First Offense</p>	<p>Written reprimand and Summon of Parents</p>

Levels of Disciplinary Intervention	Penalties	
<p>“minor bullying acts” such as, but not limited to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Uttering profanities / swearwords against a learner; 2. Disruptive behavior and/ or pranks against a learner; 3. Grabbing belongings of another learner without permission; 4. Punching, pinching another learner which does not result in physical injuries; and 5. Fighting a learner which does not result in physical injuries. 	Second Offense	Suspension from classes for three (3) days
	Third or subsequent offense	Suspension from classes for five (5) days
<p>Second Level of Disciplinary Intervention</p> <p>This level of discipline applies to bullying behaviors that can be classified as “serious bullying acts” such as, but not limited to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stalking; 2. Catcalling, wolf-whistling, unwanted invitations, misogynistic, transphobic, homophobic and sexist slurs, persistent uninvited comments or gestures on a person’s appearance, relentless requests for personal details, statement of sexual comments and suggestions against a learner 3. Assaulting or inflicting slight physical injuries to another learner; 4. Theft or stealing learner’s belongings; and 5. Intimidating or threatening a learner. 	First Offense	Suspension from classes for five (5) days, Summon of Parents, and referral to the Social Welfare Development Office
	Second Offense	Non-readmission
	Third or subsequent offense	Exclusion

Levels of Disciplinary Intervention	Penalties	
<p>Third Level of Disciplinary Intervention</p> <p>This level of discipline applies to acts of bullying that cannot be resolved by the teacher at the classroom level or by the Learner Formation Officer, such as, but not limited to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Inflicting physical injuries to another learner when the victim is incapacitated or requires medical intervention for 10 days or more; <li>2. Offensive physical or body gestures at someone, and exposing private parts for the sexual gratification of the respondent with the effect of demeaning, harassing, threatening or intimidating the offended party, including flashing of private parts, public masturbation, groping, and similar lewd sexual actions; <li>3. Uploading and sharing recorded or live videos which degrades, demeans or shames other learners; and <li>4. Uploading and sharing one's or another student's recorded/live video, photo, or voice with sexual content in the social media or to any person willing to pay for purposes of gain or profit. 	<p>First Offense</p>	<p>Exclusion</p>

A learner under investigation of a case involving the penalty of expulsion may be preventively suspended for thirty (30) days from entering the school premises if the evidence of guilt is strong and the school head is morally convinced that the continued stay of the pupil or student during the period of the investigation constitutes a distraction to the normal operations of the school or poses a risk or danger to the life of persons and property in the school.

In addition to the foregoing, the school may implement other reasonable measures or arrangements to ensure the safety of all individuals concerned.

VI. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF SCHOOL PERSONNEL, LEARNERS, AND EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS

Section 22. School. The School shall have the primary duty of protecting its Learners from all forms of violence and bullying, taking a proactive approach in

responding to behavior exhibited by Learners officially enrolled in their respective institutions. The minimum roles and responsibilities of the members of the school community in handling and resolving bullying cases, which includes all School Personnel, Learners, parents, and parent-substitutes are as follows:

- a. Adopt and implement policies to address bullying;
- b. Educate Learners on the dynamics of bullying, the anti-bullying policies of the School, and the mechanisms for the anonymous reporting of acts of bullying or retaliation;
- c. Educate parents and guardians on the dynamics of bullying, the anti-bullying policies of the Schools, and how parents and guardians can provide support and reinforce the policies at home;
- d. Maintain a public record of relevant information and statistics on acts of bullying or retaliation, *Provided*, that the names of Learners who committed acts of bullying or retaliation shall be kept strictly confidential and only made available to the DepEd, school administration, teachers directly responsible for the said Learners, and parents or guardians of Learners who are or have been victims of acts of bullying or retaliation;
- e. Adopt comprehensive and multi-faceted bullying prevention programs applicable to all Learners regardless of risk or vulnerability to bullying;
- f. Monitor Learners who are vulnerable towards committing aggressive acts or possible targets or victims for the purpose of early intervention;
- g. Develop and implement programs to promote the continuity of comprehensive anti-bullying policies, designed to address issues that influence the Learner to commit bullying, factors that make a Learner a target of bullying, and the effects of bullying;
- h. Develop intervention strategies involving all parties, such as bullies, victims, bystanders, parents, School Personnel, Service Providers and all other persons who may be affected by the bullying incident; and
- i. Provide Learners and their parents or guardians with a copy of the anti-bullying policies being adopted by the School, include such policies to the School's student and/or employee's handbook, and post the same on conspicuous areas within the Schools and its website.

Section 23. Principal/School Head. The Principal/ School Head shall:

- a. Designate a Learner Formation Officer to handle the bullying incidents, taking into consideration the population of the School and the historical data on the prevalence of bullying. In no case shall the School Counselor and School Counselor Associate be designated as a Learner Formation Officer;
- b. Adopt, implement, and oversee the effective implementation of this Policy in accordance with the Anti-Bullying Act and the Revised IRR;
- c. Coordinate with the concerned local government units (LGUs) for aid in the implementation of this Policy and the School's other anti-bullying programs, if any;
- d. Take primary responsibility for ensuring that the contact details of the Learner Formation Officer (LFO) and the Child Protection Committee (CPC) are prominently displayed within each classroom. The contact information for the LFO shall be posted to enable prompt follow-up on any matters related to bullying incidents, while the CPC contact details shall serve as the communication channel for receiving and managing reports of bullying;

- e. Ensure that the parents or guardians of the Learners involved in any incident of bullying or retaliation are promptly and appropriately informed of the situation, including relevant details and any corresponding actions taken by the school;
- f. Report, refer, and monitor all cases or incidents related to bullying and ensure that bullying incidents are investigated and resolved within the period indicated in this Policy;
- g. Monitor, evaluate, and assess the implemented plans, programs, and policies;
- h. Spearhead advocacy activities or orientations on anti-bullying programs and procedures for reporting bullying cases for Learners, school personnel, parents or guardian;
- i. Lead the consolidation and maintenance of a public record of relevant information and statistics on acts of bullying and retaliation in the school; and
 - i. If it is determined that bullying or retaliation, including precursors to bullying, has occurred:
 - a. Notify law enforcement should they believe that criminal charges under the Revised Penal Code may be pursued against the bully;
 - b. Take appropriate disciplinary administrative action;
 - c. Notify the parents or guardians of the bully;
 - d. Notify the parents or guardians of the victim of the incident and of the action/s taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation; and
 - e. Should the incident involve students from more than one school, the school first informed of the bullying or retaliation shall promptly notify the appropriate administrator of the other school so that both may take appropriate action.

Section 24. School Counselor. The School Counselor or School Counselor Associate shall support all Learners through the following:

- a. Conduct learning sessions or activities for teachers and other school personnel in handling bullying cases;
- b. Conduct regular awareness-raising programs, at least annually, with School stakeholders, including but not limited to parents or parent-substitutes, Learners and School Personnel, in order to prevent and address bullying incidents;
- c. Ensure the safety and well-being of the victim of bullying, the bully, upstander and the bystander;
- d. Determine their needs for protection and appropriate intervention, and ensure these are provided to them;
- e. Refer cases to the appropriate offices and other agencies or instrumentalities or non-government organizations for appropriate assistance and intervention, as required by the circumstances;
- f. Monitor Learners who have gone through third-party intervention to ensure their continuous improvement and attendance in the intervention program; and
- g. Attend and participate in capacity building and seminars relevant to counseling.

Section 25. Learner Formation Officer. The Learner Formation Officer shall also be referred to as the Discipline Officer. It shall be responsible for maintaining a safe

and respectful learning environment by enforcing school policies and managing student behavior. It shall be their duty to:

- a. Provide Learners and their parents or guardians with a copy of this Policy;
- b. Enable Learners to anonymously report bullying or retaliation and provide clear instructions on how to make an anonymous report;
- c. Handle and resolve bullying complaints and cases, and ensure that the rights of the victim, the bully, and the bystander are protected and upheld during the conduct of the investigation while maintaining confidentiality throughout the process;
- d. Maintain a public record of relevant information and statistics on acts of bullying and retaliation in school, subject to the conditions stipulated under Section 23 (d) of this Policy; and
- e. Render desk duty for at least two (2) hours per day for sessions or consultations with Learners, school personnel, and parents or parent-substitutes for purposes of reporting and inquiries.

Section 26. Teaching and Non-Teaching Personnel. All teaching and non-teaching personnel shall work together to immediately address and respond to all cases of bullying.

Further, it shall be their duty to execute the following:

- a. Support and take part in the School's bullying prevention and response programs, including training on how to handle reports of bullying;
- b. Provide assistance to victims or those who are experiencing precursors to bullying;
- c. Report any incidents of bullying or any of the precursors to bullying that may be taking place to the designated school authorities, ensuring that such instances are still reported even when immediately resolved by the teacher or school personnel involved;
- d. Create and maintain a positive classroom environment, allowing for Learners to safely report incidents of bullying by regularly monitoring student interactions and identifying bullying behaviors; and
- e. Establish and maintain teacher-parent collaboration to prevent and address bullying concerns.

Section 27. Learners. Learners shall actively participate in any and all measures to prevent bullying. It shall be their duty and responsibility to do the following:

- a. Participate in and cooperate with all prevention, intervention, and related measures implemented by the school to address bullying and its precursors;
- b. Familiarize themselves with the relevant anti-bullying policies as established by the School;
- c. Refrain from engaging in any conduct that may be classified as bullying or that may contribute to an environment conducive to bullying;
- d. Render aid or support to any individual who is a victim of bullying or who is experiencing precursors to bullying, when it is reasonably safe for them to do so and without compromising their own safety and well-being; and
- e. Promptly report any and all incidents of bullying or precursors to bullying that comes to their attention.

Section 28. Parents and Guardians. Parents and guardians shall be encouraged to:

- a. Actively participate and cooperate with all prevention, intervention, and related measures concerning anti-bullying initiatives implemented by the School;
- b. Familiarize themselves with the relevant school plans, programs, and policies related to anti-bullying;
- c. Cooperate with School authorities in managing incidents of bullying that involve their child/children; and
- d. Adopt positive discipline strategies when addressing behavioral issues with their child/children.

VII. MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

Section 29. Confidentiality. Any information relating to the identity and personal circumstances of all parties involved in a bullying or retaliatory incident shall be treated with the utmost confidentiality by all parties that collected the said data, including but not limited to the Principal/School Head, teachers, School Counselor or School Counselor Associate, Learner Formation Officer, and parents or guardians.

The names of the Learners involved may be disclosed to DepEd and its respective Offices, the Principal/School Head, teachers, School Counselor or School Counselor Associate, Learner Formation Officer and parents or parent-substitutes of Learners who are the victims of bullying or retaliation.

Further, all personal information, sensitive personal information, and/or privileged information collected shall be subject to the rules and regulations set forth in Republic Act No. 10173, or the Data Privacy Act of 2012 and its IRR. Disclosure to other persons shall be strictly limited to those authorized by law and this Policy, and only for lawful and legitimate purposes.

Any school personnel who breaches the duty of confidentiality shall be subject to appropriate administrative action in accordance with the existing rules and regulations of DepEd or in the private school, without prejudice to any civil or criminal action under existing laws.

Section 30. Separability Clause. If any provision of the Policy is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder thereof not otherwise affected shall remain in full force and effect.

Section 31. Repealing Clause. All prior policies, rules, and guidelines issued by the School that are inconsistent with the provisions of this Policy are hereby repealed, revised, or modified accordingly.

Section 32. Effectivity. This Policy shall take effect immediately after it is posted in three (3) conspicuous places within the school premises and its publication on the official school website or social media page, if any.

ANNEX E: RANDOM ROUTINE BAG SEARCH SCHOOL PLAN

RANDOM ROUTINE BAG SEARCH SCHOOL PLAN
SCHOOL YEAR _____

GRADE LEVEL	FREQUENCY	PERSONS RESPONSIBLE	RESOURCES

Prepared by:

CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE

Approved by:

SCHOOL HEAD

ANNEX F: CONFISCATION SLIP FOR PROHIBITED ITEMS

<<<< insert school letter head >>>>

DOCUMENT NO. _____

CONFISCATION SLIP

NAME OF LEARNER:	DATE:
GRADE & SECTION:	TEACHER-IN-CHARGE:

ITEM/S CONFISCATED:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Pornographic Materials Pls. specify: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cigarettes, Vape
<input type="checkbox"/>	Unnecessary items that may cause harm Pls. specify: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	Gambling Paraphernalia Pls. specify: _____
<input type="checkbox"/>	Flammable & hazardous chemicals Pls. specify: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	Others Pls. specify: _____
<input type="checkbox"/>	Deadly Weapon/s Pls. specify: _____		

Confiscated by:

Noted by:

TEACHER-IN-CHARGE

GUIDANCE TEACHER/DESIGNATE

To be accomplished upon claiming the confiscated item.

DOCUMENT NO. _____

CLAIM SLIP

I, (name of parent/guardian), parent/guardian of (name of learner), acknowledge receipt of the item that was confiscated from my child within the school premises.

I fully understand the reason for its confiscation and commit to providing proper guidance to my child to prevent the recurrence of bringing items that do not contribute to the learning process or to his/her studies.

PARENT'S SIGNATURE OVER PRINTED NAME

DATE OF CLAIM

ANNEX G: ADMINISTRATIVE SANCTIONS AND PENALTIES FOR USING PORTABLE ELECTRONIC DEVICES DURING INSTRUCTIONAL HOURS

- A. **For Learners** - the sanctions subject to the minimum requirement of due process are as follows:
1. **1st Offense**
 - a. Temporary confiscation of the portable electronic devices and return at the end of the subject period (specific designated time allocated for a particular subject)
 - b. Documentation using the Confiscation Slip (*see Annex J*)
 2. **2nd Offense**
 - a. Temporary confiscation of the portable electronic devices and return at the end of the class hours (total time allocated for instruction within a school day)
 - b. Documentation using the Confiscation Slip (*see Annex J*)
 - c. Parental notice, through formal communication, to inform the parent/guardian of the incident
 3. **3rd and Succeeding Offense**
 - a. Confiscation of portable electronic devices that will be deposited at the Office of the School Head/Administrator
 - b. Documentation using Confiscation Slip and Call Slip (*see Annex J and K*)
 - c. Return of the portable electronic devices until the parent/guardian retrieves the same
 - d. Imposition of proper Disciplinary action
- B. **For Teaching, Teaching-related, and Non-Teaching Personnel** - Violations shall be a ground for administrative disciplinary action, which the disciplining authorities can initiate. Schools and CLCs shall be responsible for the following:
1. Inform the learners and parents, guardians of this Order at the beginning of every school year through orientation, advisories, and conferences; and
 2. Implement suitable technical and organizational measures to ensure the security and confidentiality of the learners' Personally Identifiable Information (PII); prevent unauthorized use, access, or disclosure; and ensure that the PII is used solely for the stated purpose and not disclosed to any party or public forum (e.g., social media) without the explicit consent of the learner and their parent/legal guardian, unless such disclosure is legally mandated or essential for the school to perform its essential functions.

Further, schools and CLCs shall encourage the parents/legal guardians to manage the learner's responsible use of portable electronic devices and to support the implementation of this Order.

ANNEX H: INITIAL RISK ASSESSMENT FORM

INITIAL RISK ASSESSMENT FORM

Note: This tool shall be used by the Registered Guidance Counselor/Guidance Designate of the school.

Use the following questions to complete the matrix below:

- **IDENTIFY** - What are the activities in school and at home which present a risk to children?
- **RISK** - What could go wrong?
- **PROBABILITY** - What is the likelihood of something going wrong?
- **IMPACT** - What would be the consequences to the child?
- **ACTION** - Identify ways to reduce these risks, and resources required to reduce the risks.

Name of Learner-Victim:

Context:

Identified Risk to Child	Analysis of Risk Factors	Probability			Impact	Action(s) to be Taken	By Whom	By When
		High	Medium	Low				

Prepared by:

SIGNATURE OVER PRINTED NAME OF THE REGISTERED GUIDANCE COUNSELOR/GUIDANCE DESIGNATE

ANNEX I: CLASSIFICATION OF OFFENSES AND PENALTIES FOR NON-BULLYING RELATED INCIDENTS

The following are the classification of non-bullying related offenses and their corresponding penalties, within the jurisdiction of the Department of Education, without prejudice to any civil or criminal action:

Offense	Penalty
<p>First Level These acts involve <u>less severe actions that do not pose immediate physical, psychological, or emotional harm</u> but still disrupt the learning environment and these behaviors can often be handled through direct intervention and guidance from teachers/authorities.</p> <p>This level of discipline applies to precursor behaviors or acts that can be classified as "minor offenses" such as, but not limited to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Uttering profanities/swearwords inside the school premises, or through online platforms, or during school sanctioned activities whether inside or outside the school; Sharing fake news or false information that can create confusion or commotion in the school; Disruptive behavior and/or pranks in class or within the school premises or during school-sanctioned activities, whether inside or outside the school; Grabbing other's belongings (e.g., toys, things, food, etc.) inside the classroom, school premises or during school-sanctioned activities whether inside or outside the school; Simple vandalism inside the classroom or school premises, involving damage valued at not more than Php 500.00. Vandalism is marking or damaging school property; Punching, pinching another learner which does not result to physical injuries, inside the classroom, school premises or during school-sanctioned activities; Fighting in class/school premises or during school-sanctioned activities which does not result to physical injuries; Carrying, concealing, liquor, toxic substances, cigarettes/e-cigarettes/vapes, and pornographic materials inside the classroom, school premises or during school-sanctioned activities whether inside or outside the school; 	<p>For Learners:</p> <p>1st offense: Written reprimand and parental notice (through formal communication).</p> <p>2nd offense: Written reprimand and summon of parents through Call Slip (See Annex K).</p> <p>3rd offense: Suspension not exceeding five (5) days, with provision of alternative learning modalities.</p> <hr/> <p>For School Personnel:</p> <p>Any personnel who commits the aforementioned acts shall be subject to appropriate administrative actions and/or sanctions in accordance with the existing rules and regulations of the Department of Education or in the private school, without prejudice to any civil or criminal action.</p>
<p>Second Level</p>	<p>For Learners:</p> <p>1st offense:</p>

Offense	Penalty
<p>These acts are <u>severe or repeated behaviors that go beyond minor offenses</u> which necessitate a formal proceeding intervention by the Learner Formation Officer or other relevant authorities.</p> <p>This level of discipline applies to behaviors or acts that can be classified as “serious offenses” such as, but not limited to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stalking inside the classroom, school premises or during school-sanctioned activities whether inside or outside the school; 2. Assaulting or inflicting slight physical injuries to another learner or teacher or school personnel, whether inside or outside the school. Slight physical injuries are those that require medical intervention for 1–9 days; 3. Theft or stealing other’s belongings inside the classroom, school premises or during school-sanctioned activities whether inside or outside the school; 4. Intimidating or threatening school personnel or learners whether inside or outside the school. This includes threat or intimidation done electronically or using social media platforms; 5. Gambling or possession of gambling materials inside the classroom, school premises or during school-sanctioned activities whether inside or outside the school; 6. Smoking cigarettes/e-cigarettes/vapes, inside the school premises or during school-sanctioned activities whether inside or outside the school; 7. Serious vandalism inside the classroom or school premises involving damaged valued at more than Php500.00 Vandalism is marking or damaging school property; 8. Offensive physical or body gestures at someone, and exposing private parts for the sexual gratification of the respondent with the effect of demeaning, harassing, threatening or intimidating the offended party, including flashing of private parts, public masturbation, groping, and similar lewd sexual actions committed inside the classroom, school premises or school-sanctioned activities whether inside or outside the school. 	<p>Suspension not exceeding five (5) days, with provision of alternative learning modalities, and referral to the Social Welfare Development Office.</p> <p>2nd offense: Non-readmission and referral to the Social Welfare Development Office.</p> <p>3rd offense: Exclusion and referral to the Social Welfare Development Office.</p> <p>For School Personnel:</p> <p>Any personnel who commits the aforementioned acts shall be subject to appropriate administrative actions and/or sanctions in accordance with the existing rules and regulations of the Department of Education or in the private school, without prejudice to any civil or criminal action.</p>
<p>Third Level These include <u>more severe or complex situations as these incidents require a higher level of intervention</u> due to their potential impact on learner safety and well-being.</p>	<p>For Learners:</p> <p>1st offense: Non-readmission and referral to the appropriate office (e.g. PNP, Social</p>

Offense	Penalty
<p>This level of discipline applies to offenses that cannot be resolved at the school level, such as, but not limited to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Joining, organizing and/or recruiting learners to fraternities, sororities, street gangs, and similar organizations; 2. Cheating/dishonesty during class assessment/exams; or allowing another student to copy one's answer in exams or assigned homework or similar assessment whether for personal reasons, profit or gain (<i>sagot for sale</i>); 3. Making bomb threats/jokes; 4. Inflicting serious physical injuries to another learner or personnel, whether inside or outside the school. Serious physical injuries occur when the victim requires medical intervention for 10 days or more; 5. Use, possession, or sale of prohibited drugs or substances inside the school premises or during school-sanctioned activities whether inside or outside the school; 6. Drinking liquor inside the school or during school-sanctioned activities whether inside or outside the school or coming to the school intoxicated; 7. Acts of lasciviousness, offensive physical or body gestures at someone, and exposing private parts for the sexual gratification of the offender with the effect of demeaning, harassing, threatening or intimidating the offended party including flashing of private parts, public masturbation, groping, and similar lewd sexual actions committed inside the classroom, school premises or school-sanctioned activities whether inside or outside the school; 8. Sexual exploitation, sexual assault or rape committed whether inside or outside the school; 9. Carrying and concealing deadly weapons, such as firearms, ammunitions, explosives, bladed/pointed/blunt weapons inside the school premises or during school-sanctioned activities whether inside or outside the school; 10. Homicide or murder committed whether inside or outside the school; Hazing in any form inside or outside the school premises; 11. Uploading and sharing recorded or live videos which degrades, demeans, or shames other learners and school personnel; 12. Uploading and sharing one's or another student's recorded/live video, photo, or voice with sexual content in the social media or to 	<p>Welfare Development Office).</p> <p>2nd offense: Exclusion and referral to the appropriate office (e.g. PNP, Social Welfare Development Office).</p> <hr/> <p>For School Personnel:</p> <p>Any personnel who commits the aforementioned acts shall be subject to appropriate administrative actions and/or sanctions in accordance with the existing rules and regulations of the Department of Education or in the private school, without prejudice to any civil or criminal action.</p>

Offense	Penalty
any person willing to pay for purposes of gain or profit (online sex for sale).	

ANNEX J: CONFISCATION SLIP FOR VIOLATION OF RESPONSIBLE USE OF PORTABLE ELECTRONIC DEVICE POLICY

CONFISCATION SLIP

(For Violation of Responsible Use of Portable Electronic Device Policy)

School: _____ Date: _____

Time: _____

Student Name: _____

Grade/Section: _____

Adviser/Class Teacher: _____

***Reason for Confiscation**

- Unauthorized use of portable electronic device during class hours
- Uploading/sharing photos, videos, or audio recordings of others during class hours
- Unauthorized social media access during class hours
- Others (specify): _____

***Offense Level**

- First Offense
- Second Offense
- Third Offense

***Action Taken**

- Device temporarily confiscated *(First/Second Offense)*
- Device deposited in the Office of the School Head *(Third Offense)*
- Return of device at the end class/day *(First/Second Offense)*
- Return of device only to parent/guardian *(Third Offense)*
- Parental notice issued
- Disciplinary action recommended *(for Third Offense)*

***Device Details**

*Brand/Model: _____

*Serial Number *(if available)*: _____

*Description/Color: _____

Teacher/Personnel Confiscating

Signature over Printed Name

I acknowledge that my portable electronic device was confiscated in accordance with school policy.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Acknowledgment *(for 3rd Offense of Retrieval)

I acknowledge receipt of my child's device and understand the policy.

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Notes/Remarks:

ANNEX K: CALL SLIP

CALL SLIP

Petsa: _____

Magandang Araw!

Inaanyayahan po namin kayo sa Guidance Office ng paaralan sa darating na _____ *araw at petsa* _____, sa oras na _____, upang dumalo para sa isang pag-uusap na may kinalaman sa inyong anak.

Inaasahan namin ang inyong kooperasyon at positibong pagtugon.

Gumagalang,

Guidance Designate

Class Adviser

Natanggap ni:

Pangalan at Lagda ng Magulang

Petsa