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Learners' vax card not required for in-person classes: DepEd

By Stephanie Sevillano March 23, 2022, 6:53 pm

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LEARNER'S OPPORTUNITY. Department of Education (DepEd) Secretary Leonor Briones assures the public that learners will be provided with equal opportunity for the progressive expansion of face-to-face classes at a press briefing held in Baguio City Wednesday (March 22, 2022). The DepEd reiterated that vaccination cards will not be required for children attending in-person classes, provided they secure a written parental consent. (*Screengrab*)

MANILA – The Department of Education (DepEd) on Wednesday reiterated that students are not required to have a coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) vaccination card before they are allowed to join the progressive expansion of the limited face-to-face classes in the country.

At a Facebook livestream on Wednesday, DepEd Secretary Leonor Briones, however, clarified that instead of a vaccination card, students will have to bring a written consent from their parents.

“It is not necessary and we don’t want to deprive children of this opportunity, pero (but) the teachers, we prefer them to be fully vaccinated... or undergo the usual tests to make sure our children will not be exposed,” she said.

Briones said they are also in constant coordination with the Department of Health and local government units for any developments on the alert status of different areas in the country.

Moreover, DepEd Assistant Secretary Malcolm Garma stressed that although they are in full support of pediatric vaccination, they do not want to force it to students given the limited supply of vaccines for children.

“We are campaigning of course, but we are not insisting on it,” Garma said.

The DepEd noted that physical distancing, wearing of face masks, and access to proper sanitation play vital roles to ensure a safe learning space amid the transition to the new normal.

Briones urged parents and students to be prepared for the expected global shift in learning methodologies, saying that the progressive expansion of limited face-to-face classes under the new normal will be different from pre-pandemic.

“The face-to-face that we are implementing is not going to be like the face-to-face that you are used to, where you are with the teacher, where the children move around as they please. The world will be different, much how the world operates including the Philippines will be online, will use a very high level of technology, so our children have to be prepared, not only by face-to-face but also they have to prepare for online, for technology, for the advances in science and technology,” she added.

Meanwhile, 14,396 public and private schools -- that will be home to 2,600,773 learners -- have been nominated for inclusion in the progressive expansion, as of March 22.

Currently, a total of 10,196 (9,994 public; 212 private) schools are already conducting limited face-to-face classes. *(PNA)*

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