



Overworking public school teachers can erode teaching quality — state think tank

By Ian Nicolas Cigaral - May 2, 2019

<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2019/05/02/1914414/overworking-public-school-teachers-can-erode-teaching-quality-state-think-tank>

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Education should review its policy concerning public school teachers' workload, as actual teaching is increasingly being sidelined by non-teaching duties that teachers have to perform, a state think tank said.

A study by Philippine Institute for Development Studies titled "Pressures on Public School Teachers and Implications on Quality" cautioned that giving public school teachers administrative tasks and other duties may distract them from their core function of effective teaching.

PIDS said most private schools employ administrative staff while public school teachers have insufficient support.

Under the Magna Carta for Public School Teachers, teachers are required to devote up to six hours of actual teaching per day.

On top of this, teachers are given administrative or student support roles, which include, among others, paperwork on seminars and training workshops they are required to attend, as well as tasks related to student guidance, budget, disaster response and health.

"Teachers are likewise expected to participate in the implementation of various government programs, such as mass immunizations, community mapping, conditional cash transfer, deworming, feeding, population census, antidrug, and election," the PIDS study said.

To address the human resource shortage, PIDS called on DepED to ask support from the Department of Budget and Management in hiring additional administrative staff.

"These posts will fill in for administrative tasks, such as registration and records keeping, secretarial work for the principal's office, financial reporting, guidance counseling, and other additional assignments that are normally distributed among regular teaching faculty," the authors of the PIDS study explained.

PIDS also suggested that public schools accept undergraduate students pursuing primary and secondary education programs to assist in administrative tasks as part of their on-the-job training.

Another way to reduce the workload of teachers, according to the PIDS study, is to hire qualified full-time counselors.

"Training is supposed to address gaps in skills and competencies. While various international and nongovernment organizations want to offer trainings, it is unclear if DepEd has a system for rationalizing and systematizing all teacher trainings, especially the massive ones. After all, there may be already too many of them," the study said.