

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education
REGION IV-A CALABARZON

14 July 2023


Regional Memorandum

No.439 s.2023

**POLICY GUIDELINES ON THE ESTABLISHMENT AND
IMPLEMENTATION OF RURAL FARM SCHOOL (RFS)
IN CALABARZON**

To: **Schools Division Superintendents
Public Secondary School Principals**

1. Pursuant to DepEd Order No. 36, s. 2015 also known as the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act No. 10618, An Act Establishing Rural Farm Schools as Alternative Delivery Mode of Secondary Education and Appropriating Funds Therefor, otherwise Known as Rural Farm School Act, this Office issues the policy guidelines on the establishment and implementation of RFS in CALABARZON.
2. The objectives of the establishment and implementation of the RFS are to provide Alternative Delivery Mode to learners, improve the food safety and security in the field of Agriculture and Fishery Sector, and to alleviate the climate change effects in the country.
3. The policy guidelines cover the requirements in establishing the RFS, Staffing, Eligible Students, Curriculum and Teaching, Capacity Building, Monitoring and Evaluation, and Duties and Responsibilities of various Level of Governance.
4. For clarification and queries, contact **VIRGLIO O. GUEVARRA, Jr.**, Education Program Supervisor / Regional RFS Focal Person at virgilio.guevarra@deped.gov.ph or **VIERNALYN MATEO NAMA**, Chief, CLMD at (02) 8681-7249 loc. 420.
5. Immediate and widest dissemination of this Memorandum is enjoined.


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Regional Director

Cc: 02/ROC05



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GUIDELINES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF RFS

I. Rationale:

A review of the agricultural sector in CALABARZON by the Philippine Statistics Office in November 2004, the decrease in agricultural lands in Region IV-A could be attributed to the conversion of these lands to residential or commercial lands to cope up with the increasing population in the region at an annual growth rate of 4.1 percent. The decrease was observed in all provinces in the region, both in terms of the area and number of farms.

In line with this, DepEd Region IV-A supports the implementation of DepEd Order No. 36 s. 2015 titled Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act No. 10618, An Act Establishing Rural Farm Schools as Alternative Delivery Mode of Secondary Education and Appropriating Funds Therefor. Specifically, under Section 2 which declares the policy of the State to protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels and take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all. Furthermore, the State shall establish, maintain and support a complete, adequate and integrated system of education relevant to the needs of the people and society and encourage non-formal, informal and indigenous learning systems, as well as self-learning, independent and out-of-school study programs particularly those that respond to community needs.

Likewise, the State shall promote sustainable agricultural productivity and rural development by empowering the human capital in the countryside through access to avenues of learning suited to the needs and realities of the rural agricultural communities. This shall also help the urban areas to increase food production and alleviate the effects of climate change.

As mentioned by Odhiambo (2020) that in America, school gardens have been associated with Agriculture teaching in schools since the late 1800s. Teachers using school gardens in a more specific subject-based approach have helped their students to improve science and math scores and have helped students develop positive attitudes toward the subjects and the environment (Childs, 2011).

School leaders, teachers, and learners that care about the environment and the welfare of their community and health are interested in integrating farm school into their present TVL curricula because they are aware that schools around the nation and the world are succeeding with gardening especially during the Covid 19 pandemic.

Establishment and implementation of RFS is also anchored on MATATAG agenda to ensure promotion of learners' well-being, inclusive education, and positive learning environment.

II. Objectives:

The objectives of the establishment and implementation of the RFS are to provide an Alternative Delivery Mode to learners, improve the food safety and security in the field of Agriculture and Fishery Sector, and to alleviate the climate change effects in the country.

III. Definition of Terms:

The following terms shall mean or be understood as follows:

- a) **Alternative Delivery Mode** refers to the non-traditional education program recognized by the Department which applies a flexible learning philosophy and a curricular delivery program that includes non-formal and informal sources of knowledge and skills.

Alternative Delivery Modes also refer to tried and tested alternative modalities of education delivery within the confines of the formal system that allow schools to deliver quality education to marginalized students and those at risk of dropping out in order to help them overcome personal, social and economic constraints in their schooling.

An alternative delivery mode may include the use of facilitator-aided and interactive self-instructional print and audio-based learning materials, video tapes, face-to-face structured learning groups, semi-structured and unstructured discussions, one-on-one tutorials, study groups and self-learning groups, demonstration sessions.

- b) **Rural Farm School** refers to a parallel learning system and an alternative delivery mode of secondary education. It provides for facilitative and experiential learning on the core subjects of the secondary education curriculum with focus on agri-fisheries, designed to address the needs of children in rural, agricultural, fishing communities, and in the urban areas. The classification of RFS are Public Rural Farm School and Private Rural Farm School.
- c) **Family Enterprise Project** refers to a study or research submitted by the student during grade 10 to improve the family enterprise and/or family income. It is presented by the student and his/her family to a panel of experts to further improve the project. This is implemented afterwards by the student's family.
- d) **School Governing Council** refers to a committee composed of the school head or his/her representative, parents, teachers, and representatives of other government agencies.

IV. REQUIREMENTS IN ESTABLISHING RFS

The following are documentary requirements for the application of RFS Program:

1. Certification that the school is outside thirty-kilometer radius of an existing RFS;
2. Must have qualified teachers with relevant National Certificate II/III issued by TESDA and list of Faculty, with available support staff, instructional classrooms, and laboratories;

3. Must have a memorandum of agreement with the local government unit (LGU) and other existing partners;
4. Must have an established school governing council;
5. Letter of request addressed to the Regional Director (Attention: Chief of CLMD);
6. Indorsement from Schools Division Superintendent;
7. AFA Curriculum Guides for Grade 7 (Exploratory);
8. Class Program;
9. Executive Curriculum Matrix/Summary;
10. Action plan to secure the participation of community and devise a tool for home-schooling collaboration for grade 10.
11. Feasibility Study;
12. Division inspection report signed by inspectorate team;
13. List of qualified enrollees; and
14. Inventory of relevant learning resources for RFS Program prepared by the school property custodian, noted by the school LR Coordinator, and validated by the School Head.

The following are the steps in processing the documents:

1. The Curriculum and Learning Management Division (CLMD) through the regional focal person of RFS and the CLMD Chief shall assess all the documentary requirements submitted by the school using the CLMD form.
2. The signed CLMD form and the evaluated folders shall be forwarded to the Quality Assurance Division (QAD) for further assessment of QAD RFS focal and the QAD Chief.
3. The QAD RFS focal person shall coordinate with the RFS coordinator at the Division level and the School Head to inform the status of application.
4. The Regional Office shall conduct an on-site inspection and validation of documents to assess the readiness of the school.
5. After meeting all the documentary requirements and passing the ocular inspection, the QAD shall recommend a Special Order to be approved by the Regional Director.

V. STAFFING

The following shall be the staffing in Public RFS:

- a) **School Head/Principal.** Every rural farm school shall have a school head/principal to oversee its operations, management and school-community coordination. The school head shall be tasked to implement action plans to secure the participation of the community and devise a tool for home-school collaboration.
- b) **Teachers/tutors.** The teachers/tutors of the rural farm school are specialists in their fields of study and have undergone appropriate training. They shall act as teachers, technical staff, guidance counselors, mentors, rural developers, livelihood project proponents (Farm Enterprise Project), marketing specialists and/or project consultants, as the case may be. They shall establish a working partnership with the parents by conducting parent-tutor dialogues, mentoring and parent workshops. Teachers are required to have a relevant National Certification level II and/or III from TESDA.

VI. FOUR PILLARS OF FORMATION

The following are the four (4) pillars of formation: Alternance System, Responsible Association, Integral Formation, and Community Development. These pillars shall be integrated in the Grades 8 to 10 curriculum guides and printed learning resources.

Alternance System refers to a system of formation wherein students have periods of learning in both the school and the family enterprise.

Responsible Association or Family Farm Association refers to an organization composed of families, institutions and professionals of the rural area. Its task is to be the frontline in the development of the community through youth and community formations.

Integral Formation refers to a comprehensive formation plan for the professional, intellectual, human, social, and moral development of the individual learner.

Community Development is the long term goal of the rural farm schools. There is development when people are formed in the human values and virtues of cooperation, hard work and judicious use of natural resources. Socio-economic development is seen when their source of income is improved and civic consciousness is strengthened.

VII. ELIGIBLE STUDENTS

Eligible students are graduates of elementary school basic education, regardless of age shall be eligible to enroll in the RFS program for their secondary education. Priority learners are relatives of CARP beneficiaries up to the third degree of consanguinity in the descending line. Children of farmers and fisher folk identified and recognized by accredited farmers and fisher folk in the locality.

VIII. CURRICULUM AND TEACHING

The curriculum of the RFS program shall follow the core secondary curriculum of the Department with an integration of four pillars of formation and incorporation of themes duly identified by the Schools Division Superintendent in consultation with local family farm/rural association focused on community needs. There will be an emphasis on Agri-fishery, forestry, farm entrepreneurship, community development, education for sustainable development, climate change alleviation, food safety and security, and other community-specific topics.

The last two (2) academic years in the rural farm school educational system shall focus on integrative learning across all subject disciplines in the curriculum, with emphasis on farm entrepreneurship theory and practice and its promotion as a tool in cultivating local entrepreneurs.

Farm Entrepreneurship or Agricultural Entrepreneurship refers to the systematic integration of finance, business and agriculture to facilitate community-based business ventures across the value chain of agricultural commodities or enterprises. It is a process of identifying, starting and managing a farm business or enterprise, sourcing and organizing the required resources. In this type of entrepreneurship, the farm is considered as a means of generating additional income to support decently the family.

For the assessment of student's learning in the RFS program, the school shall follow DepEd Order No. 8. S. 2015 also known as Policy Guidelines on Classroom Assessment for the K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum.

For School Year 2023-2024, RFS program shall offer only Grade 7 and will follow the Exploratory format.

For TLE Grade 7, learners shall have four (4) exploratory subjects in Agriculture, Fisheries, or in combination depending on the development goals of the community and the existing Agri-Fishery Organization in the community. The exploratory courses should be aligned with the specialization to be offered in Grades 8-10.

Specializations in Agri-Fishery Arts shall start in Grade 8 and ends in Grade 10. Grade 8 specialization shall be offered in School Year 2024-2025 and the succeeding Grade levels shall be offered in the succeeding School Years. Additional subjects in research shall be offered in grades 8 and 9, and for Grade 10, learners shall have the development and implementation of Farm Enterprise Project.

Below is a table that shows the Learning Areas, Grade Level and Number of Minutes per week.

Learning Area	Grade Level	Number of minutes per week
English	Grades 7-10	240
Filipino	Grades 7-10	240
Mathematics	Grades 7-10	240
Science	Grades 7-10	240
Araling Panlipunan	Grades 7-10	180
Music, Arts, Physical Education, and Health (MAPEH)	Grades 7-10	240
Home Guidance	Grade 7-10	60
Technology and Livelihood Education (TLE)	Grade 7 Exploratory Grades 8-10 Specialization	240 600
Research 1	Grade 8	240
Research 2	Grade 9	240
Research-based Farm Enterprise Project Development and Implementation	Grade 10	240

IX. CAPACITY BUILDING AND EXTENSION SUPPORT

Schools Division Office (SDOs) shall initiate collaboration with Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) and Agriculture Training Institute (ATI) as to capacity building / skills enhancement and certification of RFS Teachers/Tutor.

X. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Curriculum and Learning Management Division (CLMD), QAD, and the Curriculum Implementation Division shall develop and finalize a monitoring and evaluation tool.

The Regional Office through CLMD and the Division Office through the CID shall conduct a semestral joint monitoring and evaluation of public RFS to determine continuing compliance to guidelines and standards.

XI. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Regional Level

- a. Lead the contextualization of curriculum guide in all Agri-fishery courses.
- b. Lead the orientation and implementation of RFS.
- c. Assess RFS Application and issuance of Special Order.
- d. Provide technical assistance to SDOs.
- e. Quality assure learning resources related to RFS
- f. Monitor and Evaluate the implementation of RFS Program.

Division Level

- a. Lead the development of contextualized learning resources in Agri-fishery courses underscoring the four pillars of formation.
- b. Lead in formulating the themes of the month.
- c. Quality assure learning resources related to RFS.
- d. Monitor and Evaluate the implementation of RFS.
- e. Provide technical assistance to Schools.
- f. Organize a professional learning community/capacity building to enhance the skills of RFS teachers.

School Level

- a. Prepare class schedule.
- b. Stablish and Improve farm and agricultural practices
- c. Collaborate with community member in improving farming system.
- d. Apply different strategies in teaching agri-fishery subjects.
- e. Conduct an assessment to identify learners' progress.
- f. Prepare and develop learning resources.
- g. Prepare an action plan to secure the participation of community and devise a tool for home-schooling collaboration during grades 8-10.

XII. EFFECTIVITY:

The policy guidelines on the establishment and implementation of RFS shall take effect upon posting of this Memorandum in the Official Website of DepEd CALABAZON.

Enclosure 1: Feasibility Study Format

**ITEMS TO BE INCLUDED IN THE FEASIBILITY STUDY
OF A FARM SCHOOL**

The Rural Farm School feasibility study is a detailed analysis that considers all the critical aspects of the program to determine the possibility of achieving its goal. The following items are to be considered in crafting a feasibility study of a Rural Farm School:

1. Justification for the need to establish a farm school.
2. Proposed school development plan.
3. Proposed budgetary requirements for 5 years.
4. List of prospective and qualified/eligible enrollees. Learners enrolled per AFA area (E.g. Agri-crop Production, Fishery Arts, Animal Production / husbandry, or Fish Processing) prepared by the School Herad and noted by the PSDS.
5. Justification in case the required size of the school site (5,000 sq. m. for rural areas and 2,500 sq. m. for urban areas) cannot be met.
6. Updated Personnel Services Itemization and Plantilla of Personnel (PSIPOP) of the concerned school.
7. List of teaching and non-teaching personnel to be borrowed from existing nearby school if there is any.
8. Recommendation for continuous improvement of RFS program.

Prepared by:

Signature Over Printed Name
Position

Approved:

Signature Over Printed Name
Position

Enclosure 2: Curriculum Matrix Format

CURRICULUM MATRIX

Grade Level: _____

Course Offering: _____

School Year: _____

Learning Competency	Suggested Learning Activities	Strategy / Approach	Learning Resources (Printed materials, Tools, Equipment)	Assessment

Prepared by:

Signature Over Printed Name
Position

Approved:

Signature Over Printed Name
Position

Enclosure 3: Processing Sheet

**Processing Sheet on the Establishment of Rural Farm School
for Public Schools**

(Pursuant to Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR) of Republic Act. No. 10618
(DepEd Order 36 series 2015))

Name of School: _____

Address of School: _____

Type of Application: _____

School Year: _____ **Date of Submission:** _____

- _____ 1. Letter request to open a rural farm school addressed to the Regional Director.
- _____ 2. Feasibility Study duly recommended/endorsed by the SDS.
- _____ 3. Division Inspection Report signed by the Inspectorate Team with SDS certification.
- _____ 4. Memorandum of Agreement with the local government. Unit (LGU) and other existing partners.
- _____ 5. Sangguniang Bayan/Panglungsod Resolution Supporting the establishment of farm school duly approved by the Municipal/City Mayor.
- _____ 6. Justification from SDS in case the required size of the school site (5,000 sq. m. for rural areas and 2,500 sq. m. for urban areas) cannot be met.
- _____ 7. Clearance/Permit from Provincial Mines and Geoscience Bureau and Regional Office of the Department of Environment and Resources (DENR) stating that the proposed school site is not situated in high risk.