

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



Regional Order

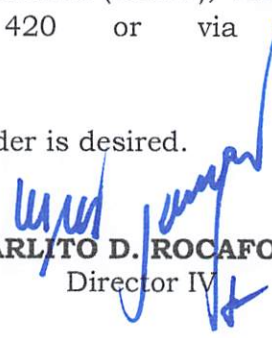
27 April 2026

No. 2 s. 2026

**REGIONAL GUIDELINES ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
HARMONIZED SPECIAL PROGRAM IN SCIENCE,
TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING AND
MATHEMATICS (SPSTEM)**

To **Schools Division Superintendents**

1. Relative to DO 55 s. 2010, DO 57 s. 2011, DO 46 s. 2012, DO 21 s. 2019, and DO 10 s. 2024 with focus on Special Curricular Program in Science Education, this Office, through the Curriculum and Learning Management Division (CLMD), acknowledges the need to strengthen the Science and Mathematics Education in the Region through effective management and harmonization of the enhanced Science and Mathematics and additional subjects offered in the Special Science Elementary Schools (SSES), Legislated Science High School (LSHS), and Science, Technology and Engineering (STE) implementers. In lieu of the preceding statement, this Office provides the **Regional Guidelines on the Implementation of Harmonized Special Program in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (SPSTEM)**.
2. These guidelines will be implemented for Grades 1 to 10 beginning School Year 2026- 2027 in all schools within CALABARZON offering SPSTEM.
3. Attached hereto are the guidelines which will serve as the basis for implementation.
4. For questions and clarifications, please contact **PAUL GENCE L. OCAMPO**, Education Program Supervisor at paul.ocampo@deped.gov.ph or the Chief of the Curriculum and Learning Management Division (CLMD), **VIERNALYN M. NAMA** at (02) 647-7487 loc. 420 or via email @clmd.calabarzon@deped.gov.ph.
5. Immediate dissemination of this Regional Order is desired.


CARLITO D. ROCAFORT
Director IV

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GUIDELINES ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF HARMONIZED SPECIAL PROGRAM IN SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING AND MATHEMATICS (SPSTEM)

I. RATIONALE

1. The Department of Education, Regional Office IV-A adheres to Section 17, Article II of the Philippine Constitution which mandates the State to give priority to Education, Science and Technology to foster patriotism and nationalism, accelerate social programs, and promote total human development. Section 10, Article XIV further states that Science and Technology is essential for nationalism, development, invention, innovation, and their utilization. Providing opportunities for the development of scientific attitudes, technological skills and higher order thinking skills among learners of basic education in the environment of their nurturance is the primary responsibility of the DepEd.
2. Cognizant of the need to strengthen the Science and Mathematics Education in the Region and addressing the need to effectively manage and harmonize the enhanced Science and Math and elective subjects offered in the Special Science Elementary Schools (SSES); Legislated Science High School (LSHS); and Science, Technology and Engineering (STE) implementers, this Office provides the Guidelines on the Implementation Harmonized Special Program in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (SPSTEM).

II. OBJECTIVES

These guidelines aim to:

3. Provide directions to Schools Division Offices and schools in the efficient organization and management of the Special Program in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (SPSTEM)., ensuring consistency and uniformity in their implementation;
4. Provide a harmonized subject offering in the Legislated Science High School (LSHS), and Science, Technology and Engineering (STE) implementers, and the Special Science Elementary Schools (SSES); and
5. Provide an enriched curriculum for Science, Mathematics, Research, and Creative Technologies.

III. SCOPE AND LIMITATION

6. These guidelines cover all schools implementing the Special Program in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (SPSTEM): Special Science Elementary Schools (SSES); Legislated Science High School (LSHS); and Science, Technology and Engineering Implementers.

IV. DEFINITION OF TERMS

7. For purposes of this Order, the following terms are defined as follows:

- a. **Creative Technologies** – these are contextualized TLE subjects for LSHS, and STE implementer.
- b. **Electives** – this refers to subjects added to regular subjects prescribed by the curriculum.
- c. **Enhanced Science** – this refers to the enriched Science subject which covers the contents of the regular elementary and junior high school curriculum and the advanced topics in Science.
- d. **Research** – this refers to the additional subject in schools offering special curricular programs to equip students with enhanced knowledge in conducting science and mathematical research.
- e. **SCP** – this refers to Special Curricular Programs in Science.
- f. **SPSTEM** – this refers to Special Program in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (SPSTEM) covering schools under Special Science Elementary Schools (SSES), Science, Technology, and Engineering (STE) Program and Legislated Science High School (LSHS)

V. COMPONENTS OF THE PROGRAM

A. The SSES

8. Curriculum

The Special Science Elementary School (SSES) program adopts enriched learning competencies in Science and Mathematics designed to cultivate lifelong learning skills and support the holistic development of learners. The program offers Science and Health subjects from Grades 1 to VI. The subjects and corresponding instructional time allocation are guided by DepEd Order No. 57, s. 2011 (Policy Guidelines on the Implementation of the Special Science Elementary Schools Project) and DepEd Order No. 21, s. 2019 (Policy Guidelines on the K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum).

9. Admission Procedure and Requirements

- a. Grade 1 aspirants must satisfy the following criteria:
 - i. Age requirement: Shall follow the existing DepEd Policy on entrance age.
 - ii. Submit Certificate of Early Childhood Checklist Development (ECCD) Test.

- b. Grade 1 aspirants satisfying the criteria shall undergo the final screening consisting of school-based diagnostic test and interview which will be administered during the opening of school year. The development of the interview guide shall be the joint responsibility of the school and the division. The interview should cover competencies in English, Science and Math. Ample provisions toward the determination of whether the applicant possesses the desired character traits should likewise be included in the interview. For profiling pupils, it is recommended that a checklist of character traits be prepared for interviewing individual applicants. Top thirty to thirty-five (30-35) pupils shall be organized as a Grade 1 SSES class.
- c. A Battery of Mental Ability Tests (MAT) shall be administered to the organized SSES Grade 1 class for profiling purposes.
- d. An agreement between the school and the parents shall be drafted and duly – signed for this purpose

SSES PROGRAM TIME ALLOTMENT (IN MINUTES) PER LEARNING AREA

Grade Level	Learning Area	Time Allotment	Supporting Issuances
1	Enhanced Science	350 min/week; 70 min/day	DO 9 s. 2026 DO 21 s. 2019 DO 57 s. 2011
	Enhanced Mathematics	350 min/week; 70 min/day	
	English	240 min/week; 60 min/day	
	MAKABANSA	240 min/week; 60 min/day	
	Good Manners and Right Conduct (GMRC)	240 min/week; 60 min/day	
	Filipino	240 min/week; 60 min/day	
	Homeroom Guidance Program (HGP)	60 min/week	
	ARAL Program	120 min/ week	
	TOTAL	1,840 min/week	

Grade Level	Learning Area	Time Allotment	Supporting Issuances
2	Enhanced Science	350 min/week; 70 min/day	DO 9 s. 2026 DO 21 s. 2019 DO 57 s. 2011
	Enhanced Mathematics	350 min/week; 70 min/day	
	English	240 min/week; 60 min/day	
	MAKABANSA	240 min/week; 60 min/day	
	Good Manners and Right Conduct (GMRC)	240 min/week; 60 min/day	
	Filipino	240 min/week; 60 min/day	
	Homeroom Guidance Program (HGP)	60 min/week	
	ARAL Program	120 min/ week	

	TOTAL	1,840 min/week
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Grade Level	Learning Area	Time Allotment	Supporting Issuances
3	Enhanced Science	350 min/week; 70 min/day	DO 9 s. 2026 DO 21 s. 2019 DO 57 s. 2011
	Enhanced Mathematics	350 min/week; 70 min/day	
	English	240 min/week; 60 min/day	
	MAKABANSA	240 min/week; 60 min/day	
	Good Manners and Right Conduct (GMRC)	240 min/week; 60 min/day	
	Filipino	240 min/week; 60 min/day	
	Homeroom Guidance Program (HGP)	60 min/week	
	ARAL Program	120 min/ week	
	*Suggested Electives (Choose at least 1) - Robotics - ICT - Research	80 min/week; 40 min twice a week	
	TOTAL	1,840 min/week 1,920 min/week (with Elective)	

Grade Level	Learning Area	Time Allotment	Supporting Issuances
4-6	Enhanced Math	400 min/week; 80 min/day	DO 9 s. 2026 DO 21 s. 2019 DO 57 s. 2011
	Enhanced Science	400 min/week; 80 min/day	
	English	240 min/week; 60 min/day	
	Filipino	240 min/week; 60 min/day	
	Araling Panlipunan	240 min/week; 60 min/day	
	Good Manners and Right Conduct (GMRC)	240 min/week; 60 min/day	
	Music, Arts, Physical Education and Health (MAPEH)	240 min/week; 60 min/day	
	Edukasyong Pantahanan at Pangkabuhayan (EPP)	240 min/week; 60 min/day	
	ARAL Program	240 min/ week; 60 min/day	
	Homeroom Guidance Program (HGP)	60 min/ week	
	*Suggested Electives (Choose at least 1) - Robotics - ICT - Research	80 min/week; 40 min twice a week	
	TOTAL	2,540 min/week 2,620 min/week (with Elective)	

Sample Class Program for Grades 1 to 6

Grade Level	Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1 and 2	7:00 - 8:10	Enhanced Science	Enhanced Science	Enhanced Science	Enhanced Science	Enhanced Science
	8:10 - 9:20	Enhanced Mathematics	Enhanced Mathematics	Enhanced Mathematics	Enhanced Mathematics	Enhanced Mathematics
	9:20 - 9:40	Break Time				
	9:40 - 10:40	English	English	English	English	MAKABANSA
	10:40 - 11:40	Filipino	Filipino	Filipino	Filipino	GMRC
	11:40 - 12:40	Lunch Break				
	12:40 - 1:40	MAKABANSA	MAKABANSA	ARAL Program	MAKABANSA	ARAL Program
	1:40 - 2:40	HGP	GMRC	GMRC	GMRC	

Grade Level	Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
3	7:00 - 8:10	Enhanced Science	Enhanced Science	Enhanced Science	Enhanced Science	Enhanced Science
	8:10 - 9:20	Enhanced Math	Enhanced Math	Enhanced Math	Enhanced Math	Enhanced Math
	9:20 - 9:40	Break Time				
	9:40-10:40	English	English	English	English	GMRC
	10:40-11:40	GMRC	GMRC	GMRC	Filipino	Filipino
	11:40-12:40	Lunch Break				
	12:40-1:40	Filipino	Filipino	MAKABANSA	MAKABANSA	Elective (40mins. only)
	1:40-2:40	MAKABANSA	MAKABANSA	ARAL Program	Elective (40mins. only)	ARAL Program

Grade Level	Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
4-6	6:00 - 7:00	HGP				
	7:00 - 8:20	Enhanced Math	Enhanced Math	Enhanced Math	Enhanced Math	Enhanced Math
	8:20 - 9:40	Enhanced Science	Enhanced Science	Enhanced Science	Enhanced Science	Enhanced Science
	9:40 - 10:00	Break Time				
	10:00 - 11:00	English	English	English	English	Filipino
	11:00 - 12:00	Filipino	Filipino	Filipino	Araling Panlipunan	Araling Panlipunan
	12:00 - 12:40	Lunch Break				
	12:40 - 1:40	Araling Panlipunan	Araling Panlipunan	MAPEH	MAPEH	MAPEH
	1:40 - 2:40	GMRC	MAPEH	GMRC	GMRC	GMRC
	2:40 - 3:00	Break Time				
	3:00 - 4:00	EPP/TLE	EPP/TLE	EPP/TLE	EPP/TLE	Elective (40 Mins Only)
	4:00 - 5:00	Elective (40 Mins Only)	ARAL Program	ARAL Program	ARAL Program	ARAL Program

B. The LSHS, and STE Program**10. Curriculum**

The curriculum covers the core subjects of the regular Junior High School with enhancement in Science and Mathematics, Creative Technologies in lieu of TLE, and Research as an additional subject. The curricular offerings of LSHS and STE Implementers shall be unified to cater students who will transfer to other schools offering the same curriculum.

STE PROGRAM TIME ALLOTMENT (IN MINUTES) PER LEARNING AREA

Grade Level	Learning Area	Time Allotment	Supporting Issuances
7-10	Enhanced Math	400 min/week; 80 min/day	DO 9 s. 2026 DO 55 s. 2010 DO 21 s. 2019
	Enhanced Science	400 min/week; 80 min/day	
	English	240 min/week; 60 min/day	
	Filipino	240 min/week; 60 min/day	
	Araling Panlipunan	240 min/week; 60 min/day	
	Values Education	240 min/week; 60 min/day	
	Music, Arts, Physical Education and Health (MAPEH)	240 min/week; 60 min/day	
	Technology and Livelihood Education (TLE)	240 min/week; 60 min/day	
	Suggested Electives- (choose 1 per grade level) - Biotechnology - Applied Consumer Chemistry - Applied Physics - Electronics and Robotics - Programming I - Programming II - Environmental Science	(120 min/week; contextualized with TLE)	
	ARAL Program	240 min/week; 60 min/day	
	Homeroom Guidance Program (HGP)	60 min/week	
	Additional Subjects Grade 7 Research 1 Grade 8 Research 2 Grade 9 Research 3 Grade 10 Research 4	240 min/week; 60 min/day	
	TOTAL	2,540 min/week with Elective contextualized with TLE 2,780 min including additional subjects	

Sample Class Program for Grades 7 to 10

Grade Level	Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
7-10	6:00 - 7:20	Enhanced Math	Enhanced Math	Enhanced Math	Enhanced Math	Enhanced Math
	7:20 - 8:40	Enhanced Science	Enhanced Science	Enhanced Science	Enhanced Science	Enhanced Science
	8:40 - 8:55	Break Time				
	8:55 - 9:55	English	English	English	English	Araling Panlipunan
	9:55 - 10:55	Filipino	Filipino	Filipino	Filipino	Values Education
	10:55 - 11:55	Araling Panlipunan	Araling Panlipunan	Araling Panlipunan	Values Education	Research
	11:55 - 12:30	Lunch Break				
	12:30 - 1:30	Values Education	Values Education	MAPEH	MAPEH	MAPEH
	1:30 - 2:30	MAPEH	TLE	TLE	TLE/Elective	TLE/Elective
	2:30 - 3:30	Research	Research	Research	ARAL Program	HGP
	3:30 - 3:45	Break Time				
	3:45 - 4:45	ARAL Program	ARAL Program	ARAL Program		

11. Nature of Science High Schools

Science High Schools are special schools for the more intellectually promising student, with the objective of fostering the problem-solving approach of critical thinking. They are separate high schools and not merely special classes in regular secondary schools. They should offer only the Science High School Curriculum.

12. The Principal of the STE and LSHS

Science High Schools shall be managed by a Principal who is preferably a degree holder in Science or Mathematics.

13. Screening, Identification and Placement

- a. Administration of High School Occupation and Interest and aptitude test shall be under the supervision of the Education Program Supervisor in charge of the Program.
- b. Grade 7 aspirants may come from the school implementing SSES Project or from regular schools.

- c. Secondary school applicants must have no grade lower than 85% in English, Science and Mathematics, no grade lower than 80% in other learning areas, and with general average not lower than 83%. In addition, the said applicants must be physically fit and must have special aptitudes in Science and Mathematics.
- d. Selection will be done in three (3) stages to be conducted by the school. The first stage is the conduct of preliminary elimination based on grade requirements and Mental Ability Test results. Applicants who meet the grade requirements and with above average mental ability test results are automatically qualified to the second stage. A special consideration to applicants with average mental ability level to proceed to the second stage may be granted by the school head upon recommendation of either the STE coordinator or the guidance counselor based on the final grades in the applicant's student report card.
- e. The second stage is the interview of the applicants to be conducted by the respective school screening committee. The interview shall be rated in accordance with the prepared rubric.
- f. The third and final stage is the proficiency test in Science, English and Mathematics to be administered by the school and monitored by the Division Testing Committee.
- g. The implementing school may offer up to two sections. Only the top 60–70 learners based on their scores shall qualify for the program and will be assigned to two sections, each accommodating 30–35 learners.

14. Transfer and Retention

Implementers of this Special Program in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (SPSTEM) shall accept transferees from PSHS and other RSHS, LSHS, STE implementers without subject deficiency provided that they have maintained the required level of proficiency.

15. Stayers and Leavers in the Program

- a. All learners accepted shall complete the program.
 - a. Learner shall maintain no grade lower than 85% in English, Science and Mathematics, no grade lower than 80% in other learning areas, and with general average not lower than 83% for any grading period.
 - b. Intervention activities shall be provided for learners who need special attention to be able to cope with the program to remain in the program requirements.

- b. Willingness of learner and parent to remain in the program.

Learners or parents who are willing to remain in the program shall abide by the provisions covered by the agreement.

- c. Leavers from the Program.

Learners with their parents expressing intention to withdraw from the program shall sign a waiver after a thorough discussion of the case.

- d. Transferees from the program shall be accepted to other SPSTEM implementing school.

16. Teacher Qualifications

The teacher should:

- a. Possess positive work ethics, creative and innovative, willing to work with highly motivated learners, welcome challenges, and committed to upholding the SSES mission, vision and goals.
- b. Have specialization in either Science or Math with relevant training.
- c. Have experience in teaching corresponding subject for at least three years.
- d. Be scientifically and technologically oriented and proficient.
- e. Have experience in conducting and participating in research.
- f. Have clear professional and personal development plans aligned with their subject specialization as reflected in the Individual Plan for Professional Development (IPPD) formulated annually.
- g. Work for maximum implementation of his/her IPPD.
- h. Must serve the program for at least four (4) years.
- i. Not transferrable from the program within any school year.

VI. Assessment

17. Assessment of the learners shall follow all the guidelines prescribed DepEd Order No. 8 s. 2015 "Policy Guidelines on Classroom Assessment for the K to 12 Basic Education Program". A separate memorandum shall be issued containing the standardized entrance examination for the aspiring learners of SSES, LSHH and STE program.

VII. Monitoring and Evaluation

18. The Regional Office through the Curriculum and Learning Management Division (CLMD) shall ensure the implementation of these guidelines by all Schools Division Offices (SDOs).
19. The Schools Division Offices (SDOs) through the Curriculum Implementation Division (CID), shall closely monitor the implementation of these guidelines in the schools.

VIII. Effectivity

20. These guidelines shall take effect this school year 2026-2027 until such rescind by a latest DepEd Order issued by the Central Office after the issuance of this Regional Order.

VIII. References

1987 Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines

DepEd Order No. 49, s. 2003: The 2003 Curriculum of the Regional Science High Schools

DepEd Order No. 41, s. 2004: Revised Curriculum of the 110 S & T Oriented ESEP High Schools

DepEd Order No. 51, s. 2010: Guidelines on Strengthening Science Education at the Elementary Level

DepEd Order No. 55, s. 2010: Policy Guidelines on Strengthening Science and Mathematics Education at the Secondary Level

DepEd Order No. 57, s. 2011: Policy Guidelines in the Implementation of Special Science Elementary Schools (SSES) Project

DepEd Order No. 31, s. 2012: Policy Guidelines on the Implementation of Grades 1 to 10 of the K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum (BEC) Effective School Year 2012-2013

DepEd Order No. 6, s. 2012: Policy Guidelines on Implementation of the Special Curricular Programs at the Secondary Level

DepEd Order No. 21, s. 2019: Policy Guidelines on the K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum

DO 009, s. 2026 – Guidelines on the Implementation of the Three-Term
School Calendar in Basic Education