

**PRESS RELEASE****Education chief to DepEd officials, personnel: Focus on non-partisan public service, veer from electioneering**

*PASIG CITY, January 15, 2019* – As the election period officially opens, Department of Education (DepEd) Secretary Leonor Magtolis Briones cautioned all officials, teaching and non-teaching personnel of the agency against electioneering and engaging in any partisan political activity, and reminded them to strictly observe the periods of certain prohibited acts in connection with the 2019 mid-term polls.

“The Constitution mandates that no officer or employee in the civil service shall engage, directly or indirectly, in any electioneering or partisan political campaign. The same applies to our officials, teachers, and employees. DepEd must maintain its focus on non-partisan public service and remain a beacon of integrity in these times,” Briones noted.

DepEd Order No. 48, series 2018 identified activities regarded as partisan political activities, in accordance with existing rules and regulations promulgated by the Civil Service Commission (CSC) and the Commission on Elections (Comelec). The prohibited activities include but are not limited to:

- Forming organizations, associations, clubs, committees, or other groups of persons for the purpose of soliciting votes and/or undertaking any campaign for or against a candidate/party;
- Making speeches, announcements, or commentaries, or holding interviews for or against the election of any candidate or party for public office;
- Publishing, displaying, or distributing campaign literature, or materials designed to support or oppose the election of any candidate or party;
- Receiving any contributions for political purposes, either directly or indirectly;
- Wearing of t-shirts or pins, caps or any other similar election paraphernalia bearing the names of the candidates or political party except as authorized by Comelec;
- Being a watcher for a political party or candidate during the election;
- Utilizing government resources such as personnel, including job order or contract of service hires, time, and properties for political purposes

DepEd officials are also prohibited from using their position of authority to influence teaching and/or non-teaching personnel under their supervision of jurisdiction to support any preferred candidate or political party.

Meanwhile, DepEd Memorandum No. 199, series 2018 provided guidance for all officials and personnel on the Comelec resolutions that prescribe a calendar of activities and periods of prohibited acts beginning May 13, 2018 until August 11, 2019 in connection with the 2019 national and local polls.

The Education chief circulated the two issuances as early as November and December in 2018, respectively, to ensure the proper information and strict compliance of all its officials and personnel. Any DepEd official or personnel who commits any of the prohibited acts shall be dealt with in accordance with DepEd Order No. 49, series 2006 (Revised Rules of Procedure of the Department of Education in Administrative Cases), the Revised Rules on Administrative Cases in the Civil Service, and the Omnibus Election Code.

**END**