

PRESS RELEASE**DepEd cites revised targets, ongoing classroom constructions**

PASIG CITY, August 19, 2019 – Department of Education (DepEd) Secretary Leonor Magtolis Briones on Wednesday set the record straight on the alleged deficiencies in the Department’s physical accomplishments vis-à-vis targets during an organizational meeting convened by the Senate Committee on Basic Education, Arts, and Culture for the 18th Congress.

The Education chief explained that the original target of 47,000 classrooms for 2018 was revised to 28,170 due to the increased costing of the modified calamity-resilient school building designs.

While only 11 classrooms were fully completed as of December 31, 2018, 27,469 are ongoing constructions, 16,936 are for mobilization, and 8,749 are under procurement. Following the Department’s timelines, around 11,826 are expected to be completed by the end of 2019.

While project completion has not been reached within the year in certain major items, these are mostly already obligated but completion spills over to the succeeding fiscal year.

“Nonetheless, if we show related information such as ongoing implementation, we may have a fairer picture,” the Secretary shared.

Some of the issues encountered in the timely implementation of projects were attributed to procurement delays and contract implementation lags, as well as securing building and occupancy permits which was initially not part of the budget.

To address this, DepEd and the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH)—the engineering arm of the government and the implementing agency of the School Building Program—conducted inter-agency convergence meetings to resolve the issue.

“The Senate is fully aware that the Department does not build the buildings and that the money does not go to us,” Briones emphasized, pointing out that the DPWH is in charge of the construction and completion of school buildings, and that “these are the subject of continuing operational reforms.”

Moreover, during the harmonization meeting in the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), the DPWH agreed to timely submit financial and physical accomplishment reports to DepEd.

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