

V COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Chapter 1. Information Dissemination

The Department's position on education-related matters and its policies on the implementation of its program and projects are disseminated to the public through the print and non-print media.

For this purpose, DECS maintains a Press Corps at the Central Office and Information Officers at the Regional Offices.

To ensure accurate, relevant, equitable information for all the DECS Central and regional offices, a communication information network has been established. The network includes all the Information Officers of the DECS Central Office, bureaus, and the regional and division offices. Each DECS bureau, center and service, regional director, and schools division superintendent of each school division shall designate one information officer who shall take charge of disseminating proper information of the activities of their respective areas of coverage.

The Central Office conveys information and instruction to the regional offices through printed materials and electronic devices.

Section 1. Information through the Print Media

1.1 *The Service Manual* contains the basic regulations, instructions, and information which guide DECS Central Office and the field personnel in carrying out the tasks of the Department. Subsequent amendments and new instructions are issued to the field through orders, memorandums and bulletins.

1.2 *Handbooks* are issued to provide handy reference materials to the field on DECS policies on certain educational issues and procedures in the implementation of its programs and projects. Leaflets, foldouts and the like are also issued to disseminate information on specific programs/projects being implemented by DECS.

1.3 Publications like the *Education News*, published on a regular basis are distributed to inform the field and other stakeholders on various activities undertaken by DECS toward the development of quality basic education in the country.

1.4 DECS Issuances

Directives and regulations for the information of, or compliance by, the field are generally issued in the form of DECS Orders, Memorandums and Bulletins.

1.4.1 *DECS Orders* are issuances on policies, guidelines, or regulations which are generally permanent in nature and are in effect until rescinded.

1.4.2 *DECS Memorandums* are issuances containing certain instructions and information which are temporary in nature and are usually applicable only during the year of issuance. These include announcement of conferences, seminars, examination, surveys, competitions and celebrations.

1.4.3 *Bulletins* are primarily informative issuances. These include educational statistics, statistics, curricular materials and professional papers, on academic, industrial, health concerns, etc. DECS memoranda, orders, and bulletins are numbered consecutively starting with the first issuance in January every year.

1.4.5 *Unnumbered Memorandums* contain instructions or information which are limited in application and concern only a few regions or offices.

1.4.6 *Office Orders* contain policies/instructions or regulations which are of general application in the Central Office.

1.4.7 *Office Memorandums* contain certain instructions or information which are office-specific.

Section 2 Information through Electronics

2.1 Urgent messages are conveyed to the regions through phone calls, fax or radio. The use of long distance messages is strictly limited and resorted to

only under extreme and exceptional circumstances. It is expected that these messages are clear, brief, and correct.

2.2 The DECS Central Office and its regional and schools division offices maintain a Radio and Communication Office each. The main function of this office is to send and receive calls/messages to and from field offices and other Department's clientele, local and international, through radio transceiver, fax message and PABX digital telephone.

2.2.1 Official outgoing messages coursed through this office by the different DECS offices are attended to on a first come first served basis. Fax machines, radio transmitter/transceiver are utilized to ensure that messages are sent. The same procedure applies to incoming messages.

2.2.2 Communication lines are open 24 hours daily, especially in times of election, calamity and other emergencies.

2.2.3 Digital telephone lines and radio transceiver wirings are available/maintained everyday for use at the DECS Central Office.

2.2.4 Reports on disconnected communication lines are attended to by the technical staff.

2.2.5 Duplicate copies of all incoming and outgoing communications and other similar requests should be neatly filed at the office to facilitate easy retrieval and tracing of job request.

2.3 Messages for transmittal shall be endorsed by the Director/Chief/Head of unit concerned.

2.4 Personal calls by employees are allowed on emergency cases only. This is charged to the employee's personal account.

Section 3. The Print and Non-Print Media

3.1 DECS is aware of the value of maintaining cordial relationship with the media.

Media should be provided with accurate data/information and should be referred to concerned offices for needed/updated materials.

3.2 All press releases and public statements containing policy statements should be cleared first with the Office of the Secretary. All other types of press releases should be cleared with the head of office concerned.

Section 4. Educational Management Information System (EMIS)

4.1 The *Educational Management Information System (EMIS)* provides information to education administrators in the planning and delivery of educational services.

4.2 The main sources of basic data are institutions both public and private, school divisions, public and private elementary and secondary schools. The regional offices collect all forms/profiles of district and division offices. It is here where data verification and processing takes place. Processing of school profiles is undertaken using computer software. The final output is a data bulletin at district, division, and regional levels.

4.3 To facilitate the storage and withdrawal of data, the EMIS network has built-in subsystems related to functions and/or responsibilities of the regional, division and district offices.

These subsystems are:

- a) Pupil/Student Management Information System
- b) Personnel Management Information System
- c) Curricula Implementation Information System
- d) Regulation and Control Information System
- e) Physical Facilities Management Information System
- f) Financial Management Information System, and
- g) Community Services Information System.

Section 5. DECS Web Site (D.M. No. 286, s. 1998)

DECS has joined the information highway through web site provided by an accredited provider. The page includes the following data:

Profile of DECS	Vision	Goals
Overview	Mission	Objectives
Philosophy		

Organizational Structure

Brief Description of Sub-divisions

Office of Planning Service
Financial Management Service
Administrative Service
Human Resource Development
Service
Technical Service
Bureau of Elementary Education
Regional Office
Bureau of Secondary Education

Bureau of Non-Formal
Education
School Health and Nutrition
Center
National Educational
Testing and Research
Center
Educational Development
Projects Implementing
Tasks Force
National Educators
Academy of the
Philippines

DECS Circulars

DECS Memoranda from 1996 to the present
DECS Orders from 1996 to the present
DECS '96 Annual Report
Facts and Figures on Philippine Education
Education Statistics
On-going Projects and other Research Studies (since 1990)

Chapter 2. Correspondence

Section 1. Preparation of Correspondence

1.1 For the present, all official communication including issuances of the Department shall be written in English. Answers to letters received shall be in the language of the basic letter. With the present bilingual policy of the government, Filipino may also be used in official communications.

1.2 Where a letter or endorsement requires more than one (1) sheet, the page number should be indicated at the top of the page.

1.3 Enclosures to correspondence should be indicated/listed on the lower left-hand corner of the page.

1.4 Generally, the use of the *first and second* persons when reference is made to the writer and to the recipient should be avoided. The content of a communication should be limited to only one (1) subject. However, several

letters may be enclosed in one envelope. It is not considered a good practice to make notations on original correspondence, unless the papers are ready for file.

1.5 *Salutation*: A higher authority should be addressed as “*Sir*” or “*Madam*”. In addressing one of equal rank or a subordinate, the less formal salutation of “Dear Sir” and “Dear Madam” may be used. The complimentary close of formal official letters should be “Very truly yours”. Envelopes of official correspondence should be plainly addressed and stamped and should identify the sender.

1.6 In official correspondence, the name of the office should be used not the name of the official unless expressly necessary for identification purposes. If the occupant of an office has been designated only in an acting capacity, the name of the office shall be indicated with the “Acting” position. Hence, the Provincial Treasurer not the Acting Provincial Treasurer.

1.7 The correct form of addressing official communications should be observed.

In accordance with E.O No. 2 dated January 14, 1954 the word “Excellency” should be omitted in addressing the President of the Philippines. He shall be addressed as “Mr. President”. Letters and other communications shall be addressed as follows:

President Joseph Ejercito Estrada
Malacañang, Manila

1.8 The following officials shall be addressed as;
“The Honorable”

The Vice President of the Philippines, Ambassadors, other foreign Ministers and consuls, Department Secretaries, Undersecretaries, Commissioners, Senators, Congressman, Justices of the Supreme Court and Judges of Inferior Courts, Provincial Governors and City Mayors.

By courtesy or custom, these officials are addressed in their private capacity during and after their term of office by placing the word or abbreviation for “Honorable” before their full name; as Honorable Jose Abad Santos.

1.9 Titles should not, as a rule, be abbreviated. However, certain recognized abbreviations may be used when the initial before the surname is used as in "Dr. A. Gonzales" or "Dr. Gonzales".

1.10 In addressing teachers or referring to them in a letter, the full name as carried in the rolls of the regional/division offices and the civil service roster, preceded by "Mr.", "Mrs." Or "Miss" should be used. A married woman teacher should be referred to in official correspondence using her own given name or initials not of her husband's. Thus, the wife of Mr. Carlos L. Gomez should be addressed as "Mrs. Maria S. Gomez", not Mrs. C. L. Gomez". In mentioning towns, school courses etc., the name officially adopted should be uniformly used.

1.11 In official communications, the name of the incumbent of an office should be followed by the title of his office. In case the office is temporary or tentatively filled by someone other than the regularly or permanently appointed incumbent, the title following the name should be preceded by the word "Acting", "In Charge", etc., as the case may be, depending upon the designation made, thus:

JOSE VERA
Acting District Supervisor

The signature of the women should always be preceded by the word "Ms." or "Mrs.", as the case may be, in parenthesis.

1.12 *Writing a Memorandum.* A memorandum is sent to an official or employee in the organization to announce a directive/assignment or to request information, authority, funding, etc. In writing a memorandum, use "To" if it is addressed to an employee of lower rank, use "For", if it is addressed to an official of higher rank.

1.13 *Endorsements.* Official letters should be answered by return endorsements (numbered consecutively) in order that the complete correspondence may show all facts relative to a particular letter. The original copies (not the carbon copies) of the whole correspondence, including all endorsements, should be sent to their next destination, the last endorsement being sent in duplicate. The under-endorsement system is prescribed. This means that an endorsement may be written on the space following the conclusion of a letter or preceding endorsement, or it may commence on a new set of paper. For appearance's sake no endorsement

should commence at the bottom of a page if only four (4) or five (5) lines of the body of the endorsement can be accommodated on that page.

- a) Where no new significant information or opinion is given, a notation such as "Contents Noted" shall be indicated and signed by the sender. Such action should not go beyond the fifth endorsement. If it is necessary to send another response, then a letter must be sent.
- b) Use " Respectfully forwarded" to an office of higher rank. "Respectfully transmitted" to an office of equal rank and "respectfully referred" to a subordinate office.

1.14 Communications should not be indorsed to firms or persons outside the government service, a letter should be sent instead.

Section 2. Promptness in Attending to Correspondence

2.1 Action on Official Matters

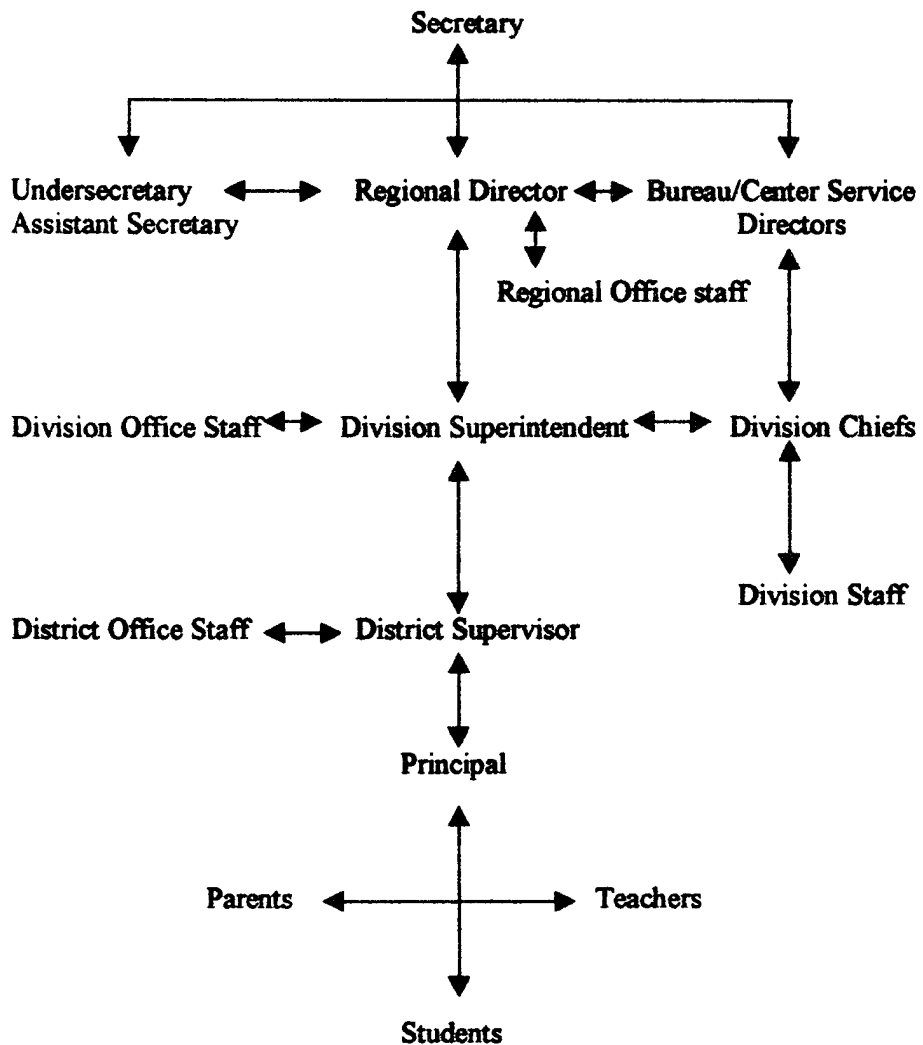
2.1.1 Matters within DECS jurisdiction:

- a) Action on requests or petitions. All requests or petitions, oral or written, must be acted on promptly and expeditiously, when the referral is within the DECS jurisdiction or competence, both in the Central and regional offices within fifteen (15) days to be counted from the date of receipt.
- b) Action needed in routinary matters: A note or letter of acknowledgement shall be written specifying the date when the matter will be disposed/acted upon and the name of the official/employee in charge.
- c) Action needed in non-routinary matters. A note or letter of acknowledgement shall be written informing the writer of the action to be taken or when the matter can be acted upon. If additional information, requirements or documents, are needed, the acknowledgement note/letter shall so indicate, stating the period when such additional submissions have to be submitted, and the name of the official or employee in-charge of or handling the matter.

When additional submission action or information are requested by a party, the official or employee in-charge shall inform the interested party of the action to be taken and when such action or disposition can be expected, barring unforeseen circumstances.

2.1.2 Correspondence to and from offices within the Department shall follow the Communication Flow Chart.

Communication Flow Chart



2.1.3 Offices by passed by communications sent to any offices should be furnished copy of the same communication.

The Regional Directors, Schools Division Superintendents, and District Supervisors should be furnished a copy of communications sent directly to the School Principal.

2.2 Matters outside of DECS jurisdiction:

On matters outside the jurisdiction of the DECS Central or Regional Office: The matter shall be referred to the appropriate department or agency. Simultaneously, the request/petition shall be acknowledged and the interested party advised of the action taken, attaching a copy of the referral letter.

2.3 Handling of Official Papers and Documents:

2.3.1 All official papers and documents shall be processed and completed within a reasonable time from preparation thereof;

2.3.2 Reasonable time shall be determined by the following rules:

- a) **When the law or rule prescribes a period within which a decision is to be rendered or an action taken;**
- b) **In accordance with the rules issued by the Department taking into account the following factors;**
 - **The simplicity or complexity of the subject matter being processed;**
 - **Completeness of the submissions, evidentiary or documentary, necessary for making a decision;**
 - **Lack of resources (manpower or financial) caused by circumstances beyond the control of the affected DECS office or agency;**
 - **Legal constraints such as restraining orders and jurisdictions, issued by judicial or administrative authorities;**
 - **Where, due to the fault/failure or negligence of the interested party, decision or action is not possible or premature; and**
 - **Fortuitous events or force majeure.**

2.4 Signing Protocol:

2.4.1 Except when required by law or regulation, and as may be expedient, any written action or decision must have no more than three (3) initials or signatures.

2.4.2 In the absence of the authorized signatory, the next-in-rank official or officer-in-charge shall sign for and in behalf of the authorized signatory except in cases of delegated authority which cannot be sub-delegated.