



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education
REGION V – BICOL
SCHOOLS DIVISION OFFICE OF CATANDUANES
DISTRICT OF GIGMOTO
GIGMOTO, CATANDUANES

Features

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Re: Social Media, Education, & Freedom of Expression

**The Power of Social Media and Communication
in Forging a Liberating Education and Freedom of Expression**

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A common denominator of people, aside from change, is obviously our rights. Our rights bring us on the same page in spite of our differences, social classes, inherent privileges, and characteristics. Evidently, the historical landscapes shaped us into a present world of lesser injustices. And through all time, the only thing that gives us absolute value begins with the recognition of our rights. There is another greatest equalizer for people—education. When these two are combined, we can never fathom its impact specially to teachers and educational leaders.

As a teacher and educational leader by profession, my life’s greatest argument always culminates with advocating for freedom of expression and transparency in basic education service delivery. I always put prime value to this one facet of our many rights as human beings. Whenever I get to express my unsuppressed thoughts and ideas, it always feels good. And if this one thing makes me feel good, I am sure that the rest also get to taste the same feeling whenever they exercise their right to freedom of expression. But there is a caveat on this, when we exercise our right to expression, do we also keep in mind the impact it ripples towards others? Say, when we simply express our thoughts or opinions about our work in social media which entails we carry the badge of the Department of Education? How responsible do we practice this right and privilege? Is it used to develop and strengthen our service or the other way around?

This is very evident today especially since the world can now be crisscrossed right at the fingertip through the technology and the internet. It seems every person now becomes entitled to whatever they wanted to drop right at the newsfeeds of their social media accounts and teachers and education leaders are not an exception. Everybody can now shield themselves under the cloak of expressing freely through social media that come in a handful of platforms. We can really tell how the world has snapped and turned the table, for one, our country which from a not so distant past during the martial law had been deprived of the freedom of expression, only to



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bring itself into an epiphany that no strongman and iron hand can overwhelm the people and their right to retaliate whenever their rights are trumped.

The present time has outlived little by little all those that are inconsistent with the fight for equality. Our privileges that come with how we exercise our entitlement of the right to freedom of expression are perhaps our most valued right at the time being. The last year, for instance, has been a landmark of this right as Maria Ressa became the very first Filipino who was lauded the most coveted Nobel Prize. This award, more importantly, is a culmination of continuously fighting for the freedom of the press, and how this guarantees a check and balance to the government that continues to be a breeding ground of corruptions and anomalies.

In a democratic country like ours, the presence of transparency particularly in government service is very fundamental in maintaining a public trust in the government and its officials. This is a primary concern of teachers and school officials as they have to win the trust and confidence of the community in order to co-exist for the school's progress and development. When there is proper use of social media, the general public is assured of access to any information that matters to them which will eventually help them fully participate in school's undertaking. Therefore, it becomes the responsibility of the teachers and school officials to use social media as a vehicle of responsible communication platform with its stakeholders and community.

In this technology-driven century, we are provided with all the tools that we can use to exercise our right to expression, information, and education. Had it not been with social media, how can we effectively and efficiently communicate and link with our bigger community of stakeholders? Had it not been with social media, how do we strengthen a liberating education not only with our learners inside the four corners of classrooms but also our parents, local folks and all other individuals involved in education? The real question boils down into how responsible are we in using the power of social media as a helpful tool of communication to either break or build better schools and education for our children and the future?

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