



**POLICY NOTE**  
**NO. 2020-01**  
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# Making Quality Practice Common Practice: Strengthening and Consolidating Structures and Processes to Enhance Quality Teaching and School Leadership

## Introduction

Following the recommendation of the Department of Education (DepEd) Secretary Leonor Magtolis Briones and then Chair of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) Patricia Licuanan, after a discussion on teacher quality in the Philippines facilitated by the Office of the Cabinet Secretary on July 28, 2017 in Malacañang, the Philippine Government Cabinet Secretary Leoncio B. Evasco, Jr. created the Technical Working Group on Teacher Quality (TWG-TQ).

Atty. Karlo Nograles, the new Cabinet Secretary, continues to spearhead the work of the TWG-TQ.

This policy note presents insights drawn from the discussions and recommendations of the TWG-TQ. The insights indicate how the oversight and support of currently diverse areas of teacher preparation, registration, recruitment, promotion, recognition and quality assurance can be brought together as functions of one body.

## Background

The landscape of teacher education—which “refers to pre-service education, in-service education, and graduate education of teachers” (RA No. 7784, Section 2b) – is changing. The implementation of the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (DO 42, s. 2017); the release of new Policies, Standards and Guidelines on pre-service teacher education from the Commission on Higher Education; the rollout and conduct of Curriculum Quality Audit among leading Teacher Education Institutions; and the transformation of the National Educators Academy of the Philippines (NEAP) have remodelled and revitalized the full spectrum of teacher education across all career stages.

The stage is also set for revolutionizing the practice of school leaders through the development of professional standards for school heads and supervisors. The leadership standards-in-progress will serve as public statements of professional accountability and set out what school heads and supervisors are expected to know, be able to do, and value as they progress in their profession.



*A meeting among education officials and advocates on 28 July 2017 in Malacañang was attended by DepEd Secretary Leonor Magtolis Briones, CHED Chair Dr. Patricia Licuanan, and Undersecretary Gloria Jumamil-Mercado and Assistant Secretary Evelyn Cruzada from the Office of Cabinet Secretary. Joining them were former Cong. Magtanggol Gunigundo, education advocate Dr. Ricardo Nolasco, and Dr. Gina Gonong and Dr. Jennie Jocson of RCTQ.*

There should be a national focus for teachers and school leaders that entails a coherent voice for the profession, offering a strong and distinctive national brand. A professional body is envisioned to make a distinctive contribution to developing the reputation and standing of the profession and, as such, become a driving force for innovation and excellent practice in schools.

The body should be dedicated to *making quality practice common practice* through supporting effective teaching and quality school leadership. It should achieve this by creating a national professional structure through which various stakeholders can operate, and through focusing its work on functions that develop:

- **intellectual leadership** — foster stimulating and powerful professional debate to advance educational thinking, the practice of teaching and school leadership and the profession as a whole;
- **a vision for the future of teaching** — develop a primary focus on the nature of teaching in the 21st century and the vision for schools as centers of knowledge to meet the complex economic and social challenges of future generations; and
- **advocacy for the teaching profession** — provide an informed, lively and responsible voice for the profession in the community and build the influence of the profession in advancing the status of teaching.

## Functions of the Body

Nine Functions are envisaged for the body:

1. Maintaining the integrity of professional standards;
2. Ensuring a stronger and more transparent link between the outcomes of pre-service teacher education programs and the expectations of teachers and the community;
3. Supporting teachers entering the profession through setting and monitoring systematic requirements;
4. Supporting the career progression and advancement of classroom teachers and school leaders;
5. Establishing and maintaining national assessor training for professional standards;
6. Supporting NEAP in linking the professional standards for teachers and school leaders to ongoing professional development;
7. Undertaking, applying and sharing research;
8. Communicating to Government, stakeholders and the community; and
9. Promoting the profession.

## Research and Communication

The body should have the opportunity to adopt a much more active research and communication function than is typical of a professional organization. Research and communication activities should underpin the effectiveness of its functions.

## Benefits of strengthening and consolidating structures and processes

Many benefits would accrue from strengthening and consolidating structures and processes within one body. These include:

1. Improving student learning outcomes, which are heavily dependent upon improving teaching and school leadership quality;
2. Strengthening the direction of the K to 12 Reform towards a central focus on quality teachers, school heads, teaching and school leadership;
3. Developing policies to reduce the over-burdensome administrative duties expected of teachers, and freeing them to spend more time in the classroom working with, and for, students;
4. Supporting NEAP to ensure that teacher professional learning targets the specific needs of teachers at various stages of their career;
5. Offering a single nationally validated framework for all teacher tools such as classroom observation, teacher self-assessment and Results Based Performance Management System (RPMS);
6. Linking TEIs with the demonstrated needs of schools and the community;

7. Providing the basis of new pre-service teacher education programs that are K to 12 compliant; and
8. Providing a framework for quality assurance procedures for TEIs.

## Options for Moving Forward

**Option 1.** Strengthen the Teacher Education Council (TEC) by refining old functions, and adding extra functions to its mandate.

**Option 2.** Create an independent agency with a focus on teacher and school leader quality in the Philippines.

**Option 3.** Establish an Office of Quality Teacher and School Leadership under the office of the Secretary of DepEd.

## Proposed Next Steps

The TWG-TQ recommends the following next steps:

1. An Interim Committee (or a Task Force) be created under the Office of the President through an Executive Order;
2. The Interim Committee to develop an establishment plan for the body; and
3. The Interim Committee to propose to the President an executive action (Executive Order) or to Congress through the President a legislative action on the agreed best way forward for the country to improve the quality of teachers and school leaders.

## Conclusion

The coming together of important changes in Philippine education at the same point in time and around a common understanding of the role of standards in strengthening the practice of educators – from pre-service teachers to leaders – presents a unique opportunity to consolidate structures and processes that enhance teaching and school leadership within one professional body. The structure and functions suggested create an environment in which quality professional practice becomes common practice.

*Authors: Gina O. Gonong, PhD; John Pegg, PhD; Joy Hardy, PhD; Jennie V. Jocson, PhD*

## References

Department of Education Order No. 42, s. 2017 on *National Adoption and Implementation of the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers*.

Republic Act No. 7784 on *An Act to Strengthen Teacher Education in the Philippines by Establishing Centers of Excellence, Creating a Teacher Education Council for the Purpose, Appropriating Funds therefor, and for other Purposes*.

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