



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education

25 MAY 2021

DepEd O R D E R
No. **018**, s. 2021

**INTERIM GUIDELINES ON GIVING OF AWARDS AND RECOGNITION
IN LIGHT OF THE BASIC EDUCATION LEARNING CONTINUITY
PLAN FOR SCHOOL YEAR 2020-2021**

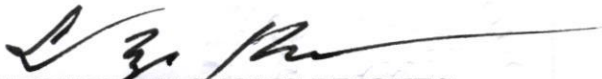
To: Undersecretaries
Assistant Secretaries
Minister, Basic, Higher, and Technical Education, BARMM
Bureau and Service Directors
Regional Directors
Schools Division Superintendents
Public Elementary and Secondary School Heads
All Others Concerned

1. The Department of Education (DepEd) issued the DepEd Order (DO) No. 012, s. 2020 titled *Adoption of the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP) for School Year (SY) 2020-2021 in Light of the COVID-19 Pandemic*, to ensure that teaching and learning continues while securing the health, safety, and well-being of learners, teachers, and other personnel who are involved in the delivery of basic education services.
2. To supplement the said DO, this Department, through the Office of the Undersecretary for Curriculum and Instruction, issued DM-CI-2020-162, Suggested Strategies in the Implementation of Distance Learning Delivery Modalities for SY 2020-2021, to provide guidelines to schools on the adoption of different distance learning modalities and their combinations.
3. The DM-CI-2020-162 was followed subsequently by the issuance of DO No. 031, s. 2020 titled *Interim Guidelines for Assessment and Grading in Light of the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan* to provide guidance on the assessment of student learning and on the grading scheme to be adopted during SY 2020-2021.
4. Given the principles of assessment and the fundamental change in the grading scheme, this policy, **Interim Guidelines on Giving of Awards and Recognition in Light of the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan for SY 2020-2021**, shall provide guidance on academic excellence awards. The awards identified in this policy are deemed appropriate given the extraordinary circumstance surrounding distance learning this SY to deserving learners in Grades 6, 10 and 12, while upholding integrity and fairness.
5. This policy shall be implemented in all public elementary and secondary schools nationwide for SY 2020-2021. While DO No. 036, s. 2016, *Policy Guidelines on Awards and Recognition for the K to 12 Basic Education Program*, is still in effect, provisions inconsistent with these new guidelines are suspended for this school year.
6. Private schools, technical and vocational institutions, and higher education institutions, including state and local universities and colleges offering the K to 12

Basic Education Program are encouraged to implement these interim policy guidelines according to their philosophy, vision, and mission.

7. For more information, please contact the **Bureau of Learning Delivery**, 4th Floor, Bonifacio Building, Department of Education Central Office, DepEd Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City through email at bld.od@deped.gov.ph or at telephone numbers (02) 8637-4346 and (02) 8637-4347.

8. Immediate dissemination of and compliance with this Order is directed.


LEONOR MAGTOLIS BRIONES
Secretary

Encl.:

As stated



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DEPED-OSEC-441628

References:

DepEd Order: (Nos. 012 and 031, s. 2020; 36, s. 2016)

To be indicated in the Perpetual Index
under the following subjects:

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BASIC EDUCATION
LEARNERS
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MCR/SMMA/APA/MPC, DO Interim Guidelines on Giving of Awards and Recognition...
0108 - April 05, 2021

**INTERIM GUIDELINES ON GIVING OF AWARDS AND RECOGNITION IN LIGHT
OF THE BASIC EDUCATION LEARNING CONTINUITY PLAN
FOR SY 2020-2021**

I. Rationale

1. Awards and recognition have been embedded in the Philippine basic education curriculum because of their profound effect on learners' morale, motivation, self-efficacy, and commitment of learners to consistently perform and strive to do better. These meaningful moments of recognition inspire others and reinforce behavior that leads to improvement.

2. Stakeholders highly value formal recognition program because it promotes positive reinforcement in learners' performance and behavior and influences their intrinsic motivation during low-interest and high-interest tasks (Cameron, et al., 2001). Moreover, using praise and reward system can decrease inappropriate behavior and reinforce desirable behavior in a positive learning environment under certain favorable conditions (Partin, 2020; Laura & Peters, 2010).

3. The School Year 2020-2021 has been extraordinary and challenging due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the implementation of distance learning delivery modalities cited in DM-CI-2020-162, *Suggested Strategies in the Implementation of Distance Learning Delivery Modalities for School Year 2020-2021*, in consonance with DepEd Order (DO) No. 012, s. 2020, *Adoption of the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan for School year 2020-2021 in Light of the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency*. The temporary departure from physical classes to distance learning led to a nimble process of reducing the learning competencies to arrive at the Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs) which subsequently restructured instruction and recalibrated assessment and grading. DO No. 031, s. 2020, *Interim Guidelines on Assessment and Grading In Light of the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan* has stipulated a fundamental change in the grading scheme to be more responsive to the adverse circumstances that surround the new learning delivery modalities, and ensuring assessment and evaluation of learning remains valid and reliable.

4. The flexibility of teaching and learning this school year, the prioritization of the mental health and well-being of learners, being sensitive to equity considerations, and the suspensions of some curricular and co-curricular activities that involve large physical gathering of people, were considered in the issuance of this policy which temporarily suspends selected awards provided for in DO No. 36, s. 2016, *Policy Guidelines on Awards and Recognition for the K to 12 Basic Education Program*. The basis for these awards are largely from observable behavior in the classroom and various collaborative engagements.

5. However, Academic Excellence Awards will not be suspended to recognize the time, commitment, and effort exerted by all learners, as well as promote a culture of excellence and growth mindset. DO No. 31, s. 2020 already ensures that assessment and grading is grounded on the principles of validity, reliability, authenticity, and fairness even in distance learning. Planning and conducting assessment remotely have been made possible through the adoption of various formative and summative assessment strategies where every learner is properly monitored and receive timely and effective feedback for improvement.

6. In addition, Academic Excellence Awards are the primary eligibility requirements for scholarship grants in universities and colleges as indicated in CHED Memorandum Order No. 08 s. 2019, Policies and Guidelines for CHED Scholarship Programs (CSPs). Private secondary schools, likewise, offer scholarships based on general weighted average being a solid reflection of exemplary academic performance in elementary. Thus, it is necessary that academic excellence awards are given to Grades 6, 10, and 12.

II. Scope

7. This DepEd Order provides for the ***Interim Policy Guidelines on Giving of Awards and Recognition in Light of the Learning Continuity Plan for SY 2020-2021*** that will be implemented by public elementary and secondary schools nationwide this SY 2020-2021.

8. Private school, technical and vocational institutions, and higher education institutions including state and local universities and colleges offering the K to 12 Basic Education Program are encouraged to implement these interim policy guidelines as well. Private schools and institutions are permitted to modify these policy guidelines according to their Philosophy, Vision, and Mission.

III. Definition of Terms

9. For the purpose of this policy, the following terms are defined:

a. Academic Excellence Award is a grade-level award that is given to learners from grades 6, 10 and 12 who have attained a general average of at least 90 and a passing final grade in all learning areas (DO No. 36, s. 2016). This award, which covers the following categories: *With Highest Honors (May Pinakamataas na Karangalan)*, *With High Honors (May Mataas na Karangalan)*, and *With Honors (May Karangalan)*, is the only award that shall be given this SY 2020-2021.

b. Suspension of Awards refers to the deferral of giving certain awards and recognition stated in DO No. 36, s. 2016 for SY 2020-2021 as these awards entail demonstrations of in-person and collaborative performance possible only for face-to-face learning set up. Such awards include the following: *Classroom Awards*

(Performance Awards for Kindergarten, Conduct Awards, Recognition for Perfect Attendance); *Grade-Level Awards* (Leadership Award, Award for Outstanding Performance in Specific Disciplines, Award for Work Immersion, Award for Research or Innovation, Award for Club or Organization Achievement); and *Special Recognition*.

IV. Policy Statement

10. DepEd recognizes the impact of recognition and awards to learners' motivation, self-confidence, and determination especially in a time that is beset with extraordinary challenges brought about by health crisis. The sudden shift to distance learning necessitated adjustments in teaching and learning, and grading and assessment, which led to corresponding modifications in the previously identified awards and recognition provided for in DO No. 36, s. 2016.

11. This policy is anchored on the provisions of DO No. 31, s. 2020 which stipulates the principles of assessments and the basis of grading. As such, teachers and school leaders must commit to uphold honesty and fairness in assessing, evaluating, and identifying learners who deserve the awards indicated herein. In effect, this policy encourages learners to be more diligent and mindful in the performance of their learning tasks as these are critical to their success in school and at work.

V. Procedures

a. Awards

12. The Department **suspends a majority of the awards and recognition** provided in DepEd Order 36, s. 2016. These awards require face-to-face interaction and in-person observation of learner's classroom demeanor and performance; however, the current learning set-up limits the basis for authentically identifying recipients of these awards. These awards include the following: **Classroom Awards** (Performance Awards for Kindergarten, Conduct Awards, Recognition for Perfect Attendance); **Grade-Level Awards** (Leadership Award, Award for Outstanding Performance in Specific Disciplines, Award for Work Immersion, Award for Research or Innovation, Award for Club or Organization Achievement); and, **Special Recognition**. These awards are results of largely observable behavior in the classroom and are demonstrations of exemplary performance in in-person academic and non-academic competitions, which are possible only in a face-to-face learning set-up.

13. **Academic Excellence Awards, however, shall not be suspended for graduating/moving-up learners from Grades 6, 10, and 12.** Academic excellence awards are highly valued by learners and their families, teachers and the community owing to their profound effect on motivation, self-efficacy, and determination of learners to consistently perform and strive to do better especially in these trying times. These awards are also indispensable in applying for

scholarships and admissions as learners transition to Junior High School, Senior High School, and College, respectively. Conversely, Academic Excellence Awards shall be suspended for learners from Grades 1 to 5, Grades 7 to 9, and Grade 11 this SY 2020-2021.

14. The following table provides the awards to be suspended and the awards to be recognized for the SY 2020-2021.

Awards to be Suspended	Awards to be Recognized
• Academic Excellence Awards for Grades 1 to 5, Grades 7 to 9, and Grade 11 • Classroom Awards (Performance Awards for Kindergarten, Conduct Awards, Recognition for Perfect Attendance) • Grade-Level Awards (Leadership Award, Award for Outstanding Performance in Specific Disciplines, Award for Work Immersion, Award for Research or Innovation, Award for Club or Organization Achievement) • Special Recognition	• Academic Excellence Awards for graduating/moving up learners from Grades 6, 10, and 12

15. Academic Excellence Awards for Grades 6, 10, and 12 shall be given at the end of the school year. Recipients of these awards shall have attained a general weighted average of 90 with no failing final grade in any learning area. The general average grade shall be reported as a whole number following relevant provisions in DO No. 8, s. 2015, *Policy Guidelines on Classroom Assessment for the K to 12 Basic Education Program*.

Table 1 shows the specific academic excellence award given to learners who meet the following cut-off grades.

Table 1. Academic Excellence Award

Academic Excellence Award	General Average	Weighted
1. With Highest Honors/ <i>May Pinakamataas na Karangalan</i>	98-100	
2. With High Honors/ <i>May Mataas na Karangalan</i>	95-97	
3. With Honors/ <i>May Karangalan</i>	90-94	

16. In lieu of the awards suspended for SY 2020-2021, teachers may recognize exemplary performance through positive reinforcement during synchronous

discussions or through the class' established mechanism for giving constructive feedback to build a levelled opportunity for all learners to excel in distance learning. Different forms of positive reinforcements ensure that teachers create an effective learning environment that nurtures learning engagement and celebrates academic successes.

17. Teachers are likewise reminded to be more intentional about excluding from grades criteria that can perpetuate inequities, e.g., extra-credit assignments and the likes and shares of outputs posted on social media. It should be recognized that these things are highly dependent on a student's home environment and resources; including them makes grading less equitable (Feldman, 2020). Learners should not fail nor receive low grades because of circumstances outside their control. Teachers shall observe the guidelines on providing assessment tasks and giving of grades stipulated in DO No. 31 s. 2020 and DO No. 8 s. 2015.

18. The aforementioned provisions shall guide all schools in creating a vibrant and supportive culture of learning even in this time of an emergency health crisis and in framing grades not for rewards and recognition nor as the end of instruction and learning, but as a guide for future decisions to improve the performance of both learners and teachers.

b. Determining Awardees

19. As provided in DO No. 36, s. 2016, an Awards Committee (AC) shall be organized by the school head in every school for each grade level (Grades 6, 10, and 12). For small schools, only one (1) AC shall be organized. The committee must be composed of at least three (3) members from the teaching staff, guidance counselor or designated teacher. The total count of committee members should be an odd number. The chairperson of the AC could be any of the teachers, department head or grade-level chairperson. No member of the AC must be related within the second degree of consanguinity or affinity to any of the candidates for awards.

20. Until face-to-face gathering in the schools is allowed by the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF), the following procedures for determining the awardees shall be carried out virtually by the AC through any video conferencing platform.

21. The AC shall:

- a. Establish the processes and timelines in accepting nominations and determining qualifiers for academic excellence awards.
 - b. Communicate to the school community, parents, and other stakeholders the processes involved in giving academic excellence awards and the results of the evaluation.
 - c. Verify the authenticity of documents submitted (learners' portfolios that contain their written and performance task outputs, class records, report cards, and other school forms).
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- e. Ensure accuracy in the computation of grades of the candidates.
- f. Recommend to the school head the result of evaluation and deliberation for approval.
- g. Recommend to the school head the resolution on any related issue that may arise from the results of the awards.
- h. Ensure that guidelines stipulated in this policy are followed.

22. Table 2 shows the activities for determining the awardees with indicative timelines that need to be conducted by the AC. These are recommendatory but may also be revised or adapted to give flexibility to schools. Schools are enjoined to adjust the schedules as necessary.

Table 2. Steps for Determining the Awardees

STEP	PROCESS	MONTH
Step 1	Establish the processes of and timelines in accepting nominations and in determining qualifiers for academic excellence award consistent with the policy guidelines.	May
Step 2	Seek approval from the school head on processes and timelines.	May
Step 3	Communicate the approved processes and timelines to the school community.	June
Step 4	Accept nominees for academic excellence award from the class advisers based on the minimum requirements set by these guidelines. Those that meet the requirements are endorsed to the AC by the class adviser.	June
Step 5	Ensure the accuracy of the computation of grades of each of the candidates and check on their portfolio (written and performance task outputs) and supporting documents (class records, report cards, other school forms).	June to July
Step 6	Submit results of the evaluation and deliberation to the school head for approval.	
Step 7	Ensure that the results of the evaluation and deliberation are communicated to the class advisers, parents, nominees, and school community (In case of protest/s, the AC will facilitate its timely resolution).	
Step 8	Announce or post the final list of awardees.	

23. The AC shall use the report cards and permanent records supported by the learners' portfolio as the main reference for determining the awards.

24. The report of the AC shall be signed by all members of the committee and certified by the school head. The school head shall approve the final list of awardees upon the recommendation of the committee. If the school head or principal is related within the second degree of consanguinity or affinity to any of the candidates for awards, the school head or principal must inhibit himself/herself from participating in the process. The approval shall come from the person next in rank.

25. The documents shall be kept in the office of the school head for ready reference. Copies of the results shall be submitted to the Schools District and Division Offices. The AC, through the Office of the School Head, shall release the final list of awardees upon the request of stakeholders for scholarship purposes.

26. The AC, together with the school head, shall determine roles and assign tasks to the awardees (e.g., delivery of graduation speech, batch history) for the graduation or school-awarding ceremony which may be done virtually.

c. What Awardee will Receive

27. Awardees in Grades 6, 10, and 12 shall receive medals from the school, bearing the official seal of the Department (DepEd Order No. 63, s. 2011). Schools are required to follow the specifications to ensure the quality of medals and uphold the prestige of the awards.

Table 3 Technical Specifications of Medals

Award	Technical Specification	
Academic Excellence Award		
a. With Highest Honors	Gold	Medal with DepEd seal (consistent with the guidelines set in DepEd Order No. 31 s. 2019, <i>The Department of Education Service Marks and Visual Identity Manual</i>) Diameter Size: 6cm Weight: 30g Ribbon width: 1 inch Ribbon color: depending on region
b. With High Honors	Silver	
c. With Honors	Bronze	

d. Conducting the Awarding Ceremonies

28. After the deliberation, the school must plan the program for the awarding ceremonies. All awardees, including their parents or guardians shall be informed by the homeroom adviser. The homeroom adviser shall provide the details including the schedule, program, and role of the parents and the awardees during the awarding.

29. The awarding ceremonies shall be held virtually to conform with the present ruling of IATF. Schools shall reiterate and communicate with the parents and learners that health and safety is the top priority. On the announcement of awardees, schools shall observe their compliance with Data Privacy Act by ensuring that no personal information of learners shall be posted without the parents' informed consent.

30. The program should run in less than two hours, to consider the internet connectivity that will be consumed. Only the awardees, their parents/guardians, teachers, and school administrations will be present during the virtual awarding ceremony. The school has the discretion to broadcast live the virtual awarding ceremonies through appropriate social media platforms. The school shall secure the consent of the parents and learners before doing such broadcast.

The following is the indicative program of activities which may be revised or adapted by the schools:

- A. National Anthem
- B. Opening Prayer
- C. Regional Hymn, Division Hymn, School Hymn
- D. Welcome Remarks
- E. Inspirational Message
- F. Presentation of the School Officials, Teachers, Guests, Parents, and Awardees
- G. Conferment of Awards
- H. Message from the Representative of the Awardees
- I. Closing Remarks

31. In the Conferment of Academic Excellence Awards, the announcement of the names of awardees in each category (i.e., With Honors, With High Honors, With Highest Honors) shall be done in alphabetical order to observe fair, impartial, and non-hierarchical manner of presenting the awardees.

32. School shall release an official announcement of the awardees for the school year by posting the list in the school bulletin board and shall be communicated through the agreed communication platform that the school has adopted this year in reaching out with the families (i.e., email, messenger, SMS, letter) so that all concerned stakeholders will be informed.

33. For those adopting modular-based instruction with limited or no access at all to the internet, the school may provide a pre-recorded video where the school head shall acknowledge and confirm the award that the learner shall receive. The pre-recorded video may be saved through a USB flash drive or can be shared to the cellular phone of the parents/guardian. The certificate and medal shall be given to the awardees or to the parents and receipt thereof shall be acknowledged accordingly.

34. The school head may also schedule a date when the parent and awardee may drop by in the school to receive the award and recognition. This must be coordinated properly ensuring that not all awardees will come to school on the same schedule to ensure social distancing. The awardee, together with his/her parent or guardian, shall receive the award from the principal alongside the respective homeroom adviser. This measure shall be consistent with the guidelines regarding age restrictions among children in going out of their residence, and the health and social distancing protocols set by the IATF.

e. Filing for and Settling Protests

35. Cases of protest shall be filed by the candidate with his/her parent or guardian to the office of school head within three (3) working days from the receipt of the announcement of the awards and shall be decided on by the school head considering the recommendations of the AC within three (3) working days from filing.

VI. Monitoring and Evaluation

36. The school heads shall be primarily responsible in ensuring that the provisions of this policy are properly communicated to all concerned stakeholders in the school. The school head shall lead the implementation of this policy and ensure that teachers shall diligently maintain and keep records of learners' progress as valid bases for giving the awards.

37. The Regional and Schools Division Offices shall jointly monitor and evaluate the compliance of schools with these guidelines. The Curriculum and Learning Management Division and Curriculum Implementation Division shall collaborate with each other in ensuring that provisions of this policy are complied with.

38. Overall policy feedback from the Regional Offices shall be provided to the DepEd Central Office through the Office of the Undersecretary for Curriculum and Instruction (OUCI) to be used in evaluating the policy to further enhance its provisions should there be a need for a continuous implementation brought about by arising challenges in the future with magnitude similar to the COVID-19 pandemic.

39. Questions and feedback relative to this policy shall be addressed to the Office of the Director IV of the Bureau of Learning Delivery, via telephone numbers (02) 8637-4346 and 8637-4347 or email at bld.od@deped.gov.ph.

VII. Effectivity

40. This Order shall take effect immediately upon its approval and shall remain in force and in effect for the duration of SY 2020-2021. This shall be registered with the Office of the National Administrative Register (ONAR) at the University of the Philippines (UP) Law Center, UP Diliman, Quezon City.

41. DO No. 36, s. 2016 (Policy Guidelines on Awards and Recognition for the K to 12 Basic Education Program) is still in effect, but its provisions inconsistent with these guidelines are suspended for SY 2020-2021.

VIII. References

Commission on Higher Education (2019). *Policies and Guidelines for CHED Scholarship Programs (CSPs)*. (CHED Memorandum Order No. 08 s. 2019). Manila: Commission on Higher Education, Republic of the Philippines.

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