

Mayor Celso Lobregat yesterday convened the Local School Board to discuss equitable deployment of additional teacher items allocated for Zamboanga City by the Department of Education for this school year.

The DepEd through Secretary Armin Luistro has allocated additional teacher items as a reciprocation to the city's aggressive support to the education sector that comes in the form of school buildings, teacher items, teachers' allowances and other education-related projects. "We are building a lot of classrooms but what good will these classrooms be if there are no teachers?", the mayor said as he disclosed the allocation of additional teacher items for the city. "This is part of DepEd's reciprocating our school building program where we have invested more than P600 million so DepEd realizes what good are classrooms if there is no sufficient teacher allocation".

The city government hires teachers through the Local School Board (LSB) and some items have been absorbed under the DepEd system creating vacancies in the LSB.

The meeting held at the City Hall conference room yesterday was intended to help the LSB determine which schools have high student-teacher ratio and where new teachers should be deployed.

With the volume of classrooms that the city government has been constructing for public elementary and secondary schools in the city, Mayor Lobregat has sought the DepEd's support by augmenting the number of teacher allocation for Zamboanga City.

Lobregat has personally asked Sec. Luistro to look into the possibility of increasing the regular allocation for Zamboanga City to a level that is commensurate to the aggressive support being given by the city government to the education sector in terms of school buildings and other education-related programs.

He stressed that the city government has been footing in the bills for the construction of classrooms in the different public elementary and secondary schools in the city even if it is the main concern of the national government through the DepEd.

The mayor said with sufficient classrooms and teachers, the children are assured of quality education. He stressed that the city is exerting all efforts in order to provide the students easy access to education, sufficient classrooms for students and teachers and ultimately to ensure better future for the youths.

The city government has invested over P600 million for the education sector from 2007 to 2010.

Aside from constructing and rehabilitating/ repairing school buildings, the city also constructs or repairs comfort rooms, fences, stage facilities, covered sheds, shore protection, pave roads as well as provide teachers' allowances and many others. — Sheila Covarrubias

