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By Merlina Hernando-Malipot

At least 200 Filipino teachers are being tapped to teach the English language in Spain every year, the Department of Education (DepEd) confirmed on Monday.



Education Secretary Leonor Briones
(DepEd / MANILA BULLETIN)

Education Secretary Leonor Briones met with Spanish Ambassador to the Philippines Jorge Moragas in a courtesy call last August to “renew ties for the promotion and teaching of Spanish language and culture in the Philippines.”

DepEd said Moragas expressed Spain’s intention to “continuously work” with the Philippine government through the agency “by enhancing collaboration on teacher training” through their Language Assistance Program (LAP). “Through this program, Spain shall hire around 200 teachers every year to teach the English language in Spain,” DepEd said.

Moragas, DepEd noted, said that Spain regularly conducts seminars for LAP participants and “they aim to partner with DepEd so that these seminars would be organized and certified by the Department.” DepEd explained that the Spanish government “proposed for a pilot test for 10 individuals from 2020 to 2021 and a possible memorandum of understanding (MOU) on the partnership.”

DepEd added that Moragas also proposed that the country’s education department should send teachers to Spain for cultural exchange “since the Philippines lacks Spanish language teachers.”

Briones expressed openness to the proposals. “We appreciate you for taking the initiative in visiting us and sharing the state of Spanish language teaching,” Briones said during the courtesy call. “As you know, we are offering it at the high school level,” she added – referring to DepEd’s Special Program in Foreign Language (SPFL).

Renewing ties

Meanwhile, DepEd noted that “both parties concurred to review, update details, and finalize the memorandum of cooperation (MOC) on SPFL” – which is also “expected to be renewed and approved soon.”

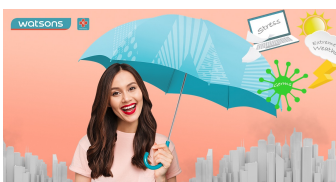
“We are here to talk about the teaching of Spanish as one of the seven languages for our high school students,” Briones said. “I’ve read the MOU and I would be very happy to sign it now because it’s an extension of what we have done before,” she added.

Aside from Briones and Moragas, also present in the meeting were Undersecretary for Curriculum and Instruction Diosdado San Antonio, Special Curricular Program Division OIC-Chief Education Program Specialist Rosa Ligaya Domingo, Senior Education Program Specialist Tina Amor Buhat, and Embassy of Spain Counsellor of Education David Ferran Priestley, and Spanish Embassy’s Education Advisor Sandra Lozano-Alberich.

In an earlier statement, DepEd said that it has already recognized the need to develop the foreign language skills of learners amid the increasing impact of globalization as early as the school year 2009-2010.

The SPFL is one of the special programs being offered by the DepEd to “cater to multiple intelligences of the learners and to help equip them with the necessary skills to meaningfully engage in a linguistically and culturally diverse world.” DepEd said the program is open to Grades 7 to 10 learners who have demonstrated competence in Filipino and English, and are interested in and capable of learning another foreign language.

Apart from offering Spanish language classes, DepEd has been implementing SPFL classes in French, German, Chinese, Korean, and Japanese in select public schools. For the SPFL, DepEd has also partnered with the Korean Cultural Center, Embassy of Spain, Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation Filipinas, Instituto Cervantes, Japan Foundation, the Embassy of France, Goethe-Institut Philippinen, and Confucius Institute-Angeles University Foundation in the conduct of capacity building activities for SPFL teachers.



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