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PRESS RELEASE

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CUA URGES USE OF LGUS' SPECIAL EDUCATION FUND TO HELP TEACHERS

"Use the Special Education Fund to help ease the plight of teachers in your communities."

This was the call of Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines president and Quirino governor Dax Cua to his fellow local leaders as the country commemorates National Teachers' Month this September.

Calling local government units' SEF a "powerful tool," Cua said that its smart use could provide "timely interventions that could benefit our overworked and underpaid school teachers."

According to the governor, the SEF could be used for a wide variety of programs, including the provision of additional allowances for teachers, or procurement of teaching materials.

Cua said LGUs could also consider coming up with health and wellness programs including free annual physical exams (APE) and discounts on medical consultations, laboratory tests, and emergency services for teachers and non-teaching personnel.

"If we get creative as well as use the SEF intelligently, we can create programs that would bring much-needed relief and aid to our teachers," Cua said.

"We are in a position to lighten the burden carried by our teachers, so I hope we prioritize doing so because our educators are crucial in ensuring that our children have a better and brighter future," he added.

Cua also urged the national government to help LGUs properly utilize the SEF, amid reports by the Second Congressional Commission on Education (EDCOM 2) that the fund remains underutilized.

According to the EDCOM, between 2018 and 2022, SEF underutilization amounted to P15 billion in 2022, with the highest rate noted in cities at 57 percent.

"Perhaps the national government could help less capable LGUs on the technical side so that they could maximize fund use," said Cua.

The SEF is taken from the additional one percent on real property tax that Republic Act No. 7160 or the Local Government Code allows LGUs to impose and collect. The said tax is automatically released to the local school boards.

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ULAP is the umbrella organization of all leagues of local government units and local government officials in country, serving as the focal representative and mouthpiece of the subnational government in all policy and program platforms to amplify our unified advocacy towards the strengthening of LGUs into able partners in nation-building.
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