

Republika ng Pilipinas
(Republic of the Philippines)
MINISTERI NG EDUKASYON, KULTURA AT ISPORTS
(MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SPORTS)
Maynila

February 23, 1984

MECS ORDER
No. 12, s. 1984

AUSTERITY AND SIMPLICITY IN SCHOOL COMMENCEMENT
EXERCISES AND RELATED ACTIVITIES

To: Bureau Directors
Regional Directors
Schools Superintendents
Presidents, State Colleges and Universities
Heads of Private Schools, Colleges and Universities
Vocational School Superintendents/Administrators

1. Elementary and high school administrators and graduating class advisers in public and private schools and colleges are hereby reminded of the provisions of **MEC Order No. 13, s. 1980**, enjoining all to observe austerity and simplicity in holding graduation exercises this year, in line with the nation's retrenchment policy.
2. It has come to the attention of this Office that many elementary and high school graduation exercises are being planned elaborately by graduating classes.
3. To be more explicit the following issues have been questioned by parents. So-called consensus or unanimous decisions are really being made by teachers and principals and spoonfed to the pupils/students. These decisions involve the following:
 - a. Choice of expensive convention halls as venues for the exercises.
 - b. Choice of dress to be worn by the graduates at the exercises, usually the special kind.
 - c. Amount of miscellaneous graduation fees; the mandate to pay, whether or not the pupil attends the ceremonies, is being imposed so as to meet the terms of contracts entered into by graduating class advisers with hall owners.
4. In connection with the above the following guidelines are listed for implementation:
 - a. Venues for the exercises should be selected on the basis of economy. Preferably the school premises which is less expensive should be the choice.

Convention halls and theaters are expensive places for such exercises and if the pupils and students are to shoulder this expense it becomes a problem for the parents to meet. Arrangements for rentals made with managements of expensive halls should be reviewed and reconsidered. The financial conditions of students shall be the paramount consideration of this action.

- b. No graduating pupil or student should be compelled to pay graduation fees which he/she cannot afford. Pupils/students who will not attend the exercises shall not be made to pay any graduation exercise fee, provided he informs beforehand the administration of the graduating class of his inability to pay for the required fees.
 - c. Simple attire should be the rule. It is not necessary to have high school and elementary (kindergarten) graduates wear togas (caps and gowns) which have to be rented, bought or made to order. In no way should a pupil/student be made to feel that he/she should miss participating in his/her graduation exercises for the reason that he/she could not afford to have the dress or the fees required. Measures should be adapted to have all graduating pupils or students attend this memorable activity in his/her life. Any or one objector shall be enough to discard plans for special dresses or gowns or halls.
 - d. Section 210 of the BPS Service Manual as quoted in paragraph No. 2 of MEC Order No. 13, s. 1980 prohibits the publication of school annuals. However, this is relaxed if expenses for the school annuals are subsidized by outside-of-school sponsors or if paid for by solicitation of advertisements. In no case should the graduates pay for this with their own or their parent's funds.
 - e. Non-attendance in the graduation exercises and non-payment of graduation fees should not be reasons for withholding grades, diplomas and other school credentials when asked for by a graduate.
5. Principals, district supervisors, schools superintendents and the regional directors shall be held responsible for any violations of these guidelines. In no case should they approve such activities.

6. PTA's are being discouraged from using the activities for graduation as means of securing funds for any purpose. PTA resolutions shall not be made the front for such expensive activities for graduation.
7. Immediate and strict compliance with this Order is desired.

(SGD.) JAIME C. LAYA
Minister

References:

BPS Service Manual (Sec. 210, Fourth Revision, 1960)
MEC Order: (No. 13, s. 1980)
MECS Order: No. 7, s. 1983

Allotment: 1-2-3-4--(D.O. 1-76)

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

GRADUATION
OFFICIALS
PUBLICATIONS
PUPILS
RULES & REGULATIONS
SCHOOLS
SOCIETY or ASSOCIATIONS
STUDENTS
UNIVERSITIES and COLLEGES