

GOOD PRACTICE DOCUMENTATION

DSWD FIELD OFFICE VIII



“Pagbalik ha Pag-Aram” A Center-Based Implementation of Mainstream Formal Secondary School for the Residents in RRCY-08

A Good Practice Documentation of the Regional Rehabilitation Center for Youth Eastern Visayas


CONTEXT:

The efforts of bringing the residents of the Regional Rehabilitation Center for Youth (RRCY) – Eastern Visayas closer to the achievement of their academic endeavors for the past years swamped the social workers and the center in general into concerns that forced them to cancel it out. In the last couple of years, the residents are sent outside the center and were enrolled in nearby elementary and secondary schools for them to continue studying. Given that these children are still under intensive protection due to their liability under the law, sending them out for school caused many concerns to crop up, such as their safety and the exposure to stimulants that may disrupt the smooth implementation of their rehabilitation programs. If left continually implemented, the intervention may defer or hinder the objective of preparing the CICL for reintegration into society. The program on sending qualified residents for off-center studies was terminated, and the rehabilitation programs' educational aspect temporarily hibernated.

This situation probably took a bearing on an evaluation study on the Intervention and Rehabilitation Program in Residential Facilities and Diversion Programs for Children in Conflict with the Law conducted by Universalis, a management consulting firm through United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), that the current status on the provision of rehabilitation

programs in the Philippines through RRCYs and Bahay Pag-Asa (BPAs) needs strengthening and refinement in order for CICLs to gain more from it. The need to provide education programs that are the same as what is available in schools in the community regarding quantity and quality can enable more effective facilitation of the rehabilitation process. The chance of going to a formal school or a regular school has an advantage due to a more holistic approach that is suitable to their needs, situation, age, given that acquisition of primary education is a universal right.

The initiative sprang out of the blue during the 2019 celebration of the Juvenile Justice Welfare Month where the residents of the Regional Rehabilitation Center for Youth showcased their talents in Literary and the Arts. An event on “Spoken Word Poetry” judged by School Principal Dr. Dorcas L. Mejia featured literary pieces written by the residents themselves which impressed her that she thought about supporting them in any way that she can. As a School Principal, she had offered extension services to a lot of institutions, including a tie-up program with the Leyte Regional Prison (LRP) on training campus journalists and eventually enable Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDL) to publish their own newsletter inside the prison. The LRP offers Secondary Education hosted by Hampipila National High School which caters high school level PDLs. This intervention of the Department of Education (DepEd) to educate adult inmates in LRP ignited the interest of Dr. Dorcas L. Mejia to enable the delivery of formal secondary education to the Children in Conflict with the Law in RRCY. If educating adults in LRP was made possible by DepEd thru Hampipila National High School, she is eager to make Tanauan School of Arts and Trade (TSAT) as the implementing arm of the agency to deliver secondary education in RRCY. With the warm response of Center Head Georgina M. Bulasa on this initiative, planning and negotiations commenced. Upon presentation of preliminary mechanisms, the Local Government Unit of the Municipality of Tanauan, Leyte headed by Mayor Pelagio R. Tecson expressed their support by way of providing the school uniforms of the enrolled residents. The Center, TSAT and the LGU deems to extend formal education for the residents, packed with routinary curricular activities for them to feel normalcy even if they are still in RRCY and amidst the pandemic. The inspiration to be a channel of hope for these CICLs to gain qualifications for work, opportunities for higher education and skills moved Dr. Mejia and Mrs. Bulasa to expedite the institutionalization of the initiative for School Year 2020-2021.




The Center tapped the Department of Education (DepEd) through Tanauan School of Arts and Trade (TSAT), a public technical vocational secondary school where they readily conducted a feasibility survey last March 2020 to formulate a possible intervention to rebuild the bridge towards education. Based on the diagnostic test results, 90% of the target CICL students failed to gain a passing rating. This means that they do not possess the mastery of the lessons one level below the grade level they are supposed to be enrolled at. This also gives an idea that these students are not fully equipped to learn the competencies that should be delivered if they intend to continue studying. Though these residents are found unready, it does not mean that they are hopeless. If the government deems to prepare these children for reintegration by empowering them, the education aspect of their rehabilitation process must be intensified.

With these findings, the center, powered with the interest of Tanauan School of Arts and Trade in extending formal education, the program in implementing the Center-Based Mainstream Formal Secondary School was conceived.

IMPLEMENTATION:

The COVID-19 pandemic is existentially known to have hampered operations and activities in the government and of private sectors but who would have thought that it would also provide life-changing opportunities. Although the preparatory phase was conducted before the onset of the pandemic, most of the crucial elements of the initiative was pursued amidst the health crisis. The limited work arrangement of DepEd employees and the suspension of face-to-face classes enabled the launch of the formal school in the Center. Though the workloads of the teachers increased upon the implementation of distance modular learning nationwide, it helped for Tanauan School of Arts and Trade to extend its services to RRCY because there is no demand for the observation of a daily regular schedule of classes, and students will just work on their modules instead of reporting to school. The paradigm shift in the delivery of instruction during health emergencies enabled TSAT to deploy teachers who will facilitate modular learning twice a week, or as the need arises.

To meet the challenge of offering a more comprehensive educational experience package to the residents, a formal school was officially opened last



August 2020, and formal classes delivered by Tanauan School of Arts and Trade started last October 5, 2020. In this setup, all qualified school-aged residents of the RRCY are enrolled in the formal classes where they will be experiencing the complete package of competencies prescribed in the Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCS), the Department of Education for School Year 2020-2021. A complete set of subjects prescribed for every grade level, including the classroom experience and co-curricular activities enjoyed in formal classes, is laid inside the RRCY facility, with due observance to existing health procedures to thwart the spread of coronavirus disease.

The implementation of the Center-Based Mainstream Formal Secondary School aims to establish a support system for the rehabilitation process undergone by the residents by providing quality and equitable secondary education that has the same quantity and quality as offered nationwide. With this intervention, it is expected that the enrolled residents can readily transfer to a local school upon their discharge or the credentials that they will earn inside the center can help them qualify for scholarships, opportunities for work, or higher studies. Indeed, their reintegration will be smooth sailing if they have an option to continue their pursuit of a professional career if they are prepared with school credentials and competence earned under formal schooling.

The key components of the intervention are:

- Resource Preparation and Mobilization
- Placement of Residents to Grade Levels
- Formal Education on All Subject Areas
- Monitoring, Evaluation, and Adjustment
- Career Pathways and Exits

1. The planning on the implementation of the Center-Based Mainstream Formal Secondary School with the concerned agencies and benefactors caused for the following to be made:

- Dialogue among the concerned agencies and benefactors: the Local Chief Executive of the Municipality of Tanauan Province of Leyte, DSWD FO8 through the Institution Head of the Regional Rehabilitation Center for Youth and the Department of Education through the Schools Division Superintendent of the Division of Leyte.

- Establishment of linkages to benefactors such as the Sangguniang Bayan of Tanauan, Leyte, teaching personnel of Tanauan School of Arts and Trade, UNICEF, and non-government organizations and agencies.
- The signing of the Tripartite Memorandum of Agreement signed by the Regional Director of Department of Social Welfare and Development Regional Office No. 08, the Schools Division Superintendent of the Department of Education – Division of Leyte, and the Local Chief Executive of Tanauan, Province of Leyte.
- Commitment engagement and service delivery brainstorming with the top leaders of DepEd Division of Leyte and Tanauan School of Arts and Trade.
- Commitment to target deliverables and shared resource capital for the successful implementation and sustainability of the program.
- Coordination with parents of the qualified residents for preparation of enrollment documents.



2. The placement of qualified residents to respective Grade Levels is based on the conducted activities such as:

- Conduct Diagnostic Tests for all qualified residents which include Literacy (Philippine Informal Reading Inventory) and Numeracy.
- Interpretation of the results of the test by designated personnel of the school.
- Designing the needed preparatory session that will help the resident cope with the lessons for the school year.
- Registration of qualified residents and admission interview to assess emotional preparedness.

- Enrollment and credential verification for the identification of the Grade Level where they are qualified to enroll.
- Assignment of Classes, Meeting their classmates, class advisers, and subject teachers.

3. Delivery of formal classes included the following activities:

- Orientation on the conduct of formal classes with the residents, social workers, house parents, and other staff of the center by the School Principal of Tanauan School of Arts and Trade.
- Orientation on the method of implementation, data privacy and confidentiality, and other restrictions concerning the sensitivity of the status of the children with the visiting teachers of TSAT by the Institution Head and Social Workers.
- Orientation on the conduct of the distance printed modular learning method with scheduled face-to-face lecture sessions with the enrolled students by the Class Advisers and Subject Teachers, assisted by house parents and social workers.
- Delivery of printed modules with a scheduled face-to-face lecture for academic subjects every Monday morning and retrieval of answer sheets a week after.
- Scheduled face-to-face lectures for academic subjects every Wednesday morning.
- Scheduled skills-based face-to-face lecture (e.g. TLE hands-on and Science experiments) every Tuesday and Thursday morning.
- Counseling and Homeroom meeting of enrolled students with their Class Advisers per Grade Level every Friday morning.
- Conduct co-curricular activities (e.g. culminating programs, portfolio days) as scheduled.

4. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Adjustment include the following activities:

- Designing of a Monitoring Tool to help house parents monitor the performance of enrolled residents.

- The accomplishment of Student's Monitoring Tool by the house parents to aid supervision of attendance and compliance to expected deliverables for the week.
- Designing and deliberating of program monitoring and evaluation tool to aid program implementation
- Inclusion of a sharing session among enrolled residents on their experiences on their classes during Therapeutic Counselling (TC) meetings.
- Maintaining narrative reports of teacher-advisers on the individual performance of residents based on their behavior in the classroom, their relationship towards their classmates and teachers, and the intervention needed if any.
- Monthly situation reporting of class advisers and subject teachers with the Institution Head and the Social Workers and Psychometrician on the behavior of students, highlighting significant behavior patterns, class performance, and upcoming curricular and co-curricular activities.
- Intervention Planning

5. The identification of Career Pathways and Exits includes the following activities:

- Orientation on the Career Pathways and Exits expected for completers of the K to 12 Curriculum and qualifiers of competency assessments.
- Planning with institutions related to the offered Strand and Track with regards to the alignment of learned skills and competencies taught and needed in the industry.
- Quarterly Portfolio and Card-Giving Day with the Class Advisers, with Homeroom Counselling on the preferred career pathway of the student and the expected exit after the completion of formal education.
- Preliminary capacity and situation survey with the families of the enrolled students.

- Planning on the Career Summit which will be participated by Human Resource Personnel of varied companies and establishments which seek to screen graduates for possible employment.

The onset of the program implementation required coordination between the Department of Education and the center. As such, an initial planning session was done with Education Program Supervisor Dr. Raul Salaño of DepEd Division of Leyte. To prepare the residents about the upcoming collaborative program, a short



talk was done by Dr. Salaño on the importance of education in achieving their aspirations in life. A sort of diagnosis on the perception of the residents which may contribute to the final preparations on the

feasibility of the program was also facilitated. The objectives of the program and possible modes of its delivery, considering its flexibility amidst the threat of the pandemic. To create a picture of the learning situation, a pre-registration for qualified residents was facilitated by the School Principal herself and her two department heads assisted by the social workers. It must be noted that this preliminary phase was done before the pandemic started and before the government raised quarantine



levels in the country. After which, a diagnostic test conducted by DepEd through its



implementing arm, Tanauan School of Arts and Trade identified the need for a modified scheme of delivery to address the issue on the preparedness of the residents to receive mainstream formal instruction equal to what is

offered outside the walls of the center.

To sustain the program, a Tripartite Memorandum of Agreement was inked. The MOA contains the general and specific objectives of the program, the duties, and responsibilities of DSWD, DepEd, and the LGU for the implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and adjustment of enabling resources and logistics.

Classes officially started last October 5, 2020, along with the nationwide launch of School Year 2020-2021. The teachers were allowed by the Regional Office of DSWD to conduct scheduled face-to-face sessions with the students considering the strict implementation of the health and safety protocols to combat the spread of COVID-19.



A total of thirty-five (35) residents are enrolled across grade levels in Junior and Senior High School. Four (4) visiting teachers and one (1) resident teacher are facilitating the delivery of instruction and accomplishment of learning modules in the center. The administrative function in the part of the school is handled by the School Principal herself and two Department Heads who serve as visiting teachers, too.

Residents are given learning opportunities in both academic and curricular aspects of education. They are exposed to activities that enhance their learning and put it into practice such as center-wide competitions and the launch of the school publication.



Students were able to issue a quarterly newsletter in a form of a gazette, and a literary and arts folio. Opportunities to develop their leadership capability were offered to them when they organized a Supreme Student Government.

Indeed, a wave of opportunities was offered by the school to the residents which fill in the educative aspect of the rehabilitation of minors and enables the full-swing implementation of the programs in the center.



RESULTS/IMPACT:

The implementation of the formal school brought about changes in the way the rehabilitation programs of the Center were discharged. This program was able to impart lifelong skills and knowledge to all enrolled students for the School Year 2020-2021.

In the study conducted by Mabag, et al. with the title, “Stepping up for a Diploma: The Lived Experiences of Children in Conflict with the Law in a Center-based formal school, it revealed that the students had an essentially better relationship with their teachers in the center-based formal school than what they had outside. This may be attributed to the fact that they are in the process of rehabilitation and that they are expected to behave well. They also stated that, while they must spend money to support their studies outside of the facility, the center provides everything that they will need in a formal school within the facility. Given that the distance printed modular system was implemented this year, everything from bags to school supplies and even tutors in difficult subjects was provided. These things add to the convenience of their school experience in the Center.

They value being enrolled in a formal school because they believe it will provide them with knowledge and qualifications that will help them achieve their goals in life. The residents believe that being educated will help them keep up with the demands of society when they get reintegrated. This may also be connected to their experience in studying before. Due to the very limited income that their parents

earn to support their needs, the experience of going to school is often described as being challenging.

When asked about the comparison between their experiences before and at present, they emphasize the convenience and warmer approach of teachers and staff to them. Most of the residents also grew up in families where their parents only had an elementary education and they take it as inspiration to do well in school and life in general.


The experience gained in school also helped them weigh things to come up with better decisions. The residents mentioned that the maturity that they gain through formal school helps them understand situations from a broader perspective. The attention given by teachers to them makes them feel that they are trusted, which further strengthens their belief that they can improve and be better individuals that can make better decisions.

The formal school is regarded as a source of knowledge by the residents. They claim that the experience of being students again has made them more knowledgeable in academics and life. They gain skills in various learning areas which add to their abilities. The awards and academic honors that they receive during Portfolio and Recognition Days, the newsletters that they produce, the projects that they complete, and the improvement in the way they understand and analyze things are all proofs of their claims.

For them, attending a formal school appears to be akin to crossing a river. With the current challenges that they face, such as those CICLs who are still on trial and whose behavior requires further modification, the opportunity to go to school and finish it appears to be difficult. Considering that they are qualifiers of the Accreditation and Equivalency Test by the Alternative Learning System of the Department of Education, they finished their elementary, and some, their secondary education with limited competencies mastered. The mainstreaming that they currently experience in the formal school tends to be challenging in such a way that they need to review lessons that are pre-requisites for the current lesson. They also need to re-master some learning competencies needed to understand and comprehend their lessons at present. The long gap in their schooling experience may also have been a contributing factor in the difficulty that they experienced.

The residents emphasized certain points in their reflections based on their experiences as students in formal school, such as the feeling of pride in their





accomplishments as students; they felt they were closer to achieving their life goals; they gained more self-confidence, strengthened their self-discipline; and they could manage their time better to meet the deadlines for submissions. Their experiences, such as involvement in the School Publications Office where they publish a quarterly newsletter and a literary and arts folio, involvement in school curricular and extra-curricular activities, their achievements being recognized during Portfolio Days where they receive certificates and medals, add to the joy of being rehabilitated in the Center.

The students also expressed a changed perspective on dealing with the future. They mentioned their will to finish their studies so that they would be more equipped to find a job to support their family. Even though all of them already have entrepreneurial skills, they are all determined to further their education to escape poverty.

IMPLICATIONS FOR REPLICATION:

Those who seek to benchmark the implementation of formal school in the residential facilities of the Department of Social Welfare and Development may consider the following preparation and checkpoints:

- Scout for a public school that is willing to render services and extend special classes in the facility through their School Head.
- Conduct a preliminary study on the feasibility of the program. Consider the legalities of the implementation of Special Classes through an Education Program Supervisor who can pave the way for the roll-out of preparations.
- Institutionalize the implementation of the program and integrate it into the roster of daily activities in the Center.
- Periodic monitoring and evaluation are deemed necessary to sustain the program. Quarterly consultative meetings with the teachers, house parents, and social workers along with other staff of the Center also help in maintaining the swift groundwork conducted by the visiting teachers.

LESSONS LEARNED:

The experiences of the implementing agencies and staff behind it inculcated a lot of realizations in the continuing roll-out of the program and for its development. These lessons were as follows:

- Integrating formal school experience into the rehabilitation program of residential facilities is possible. In the case of RRCY Eastern Visayas, the program turned out as expected, though minor adjustments were made as concerns arise.
- With constant communication and updating, program implementation such as the formal school roll-out becomes more convenient for all partner agencies.
- Agency and institution heads must be receptive of any modification and abrupt adjustments for the benefit of the clientele and with the objectives of the program, VGMO of agencies in mind.
- Allocation of funds for program implementation is necessary to be projected earlier. Considering the provisions of the Procurement Law, preparing in advance for the onset of the roll-out through the procurement of school supplies and necessary endorsement of needs to non-government agencies and benefactors is an advantage.
- Quarterly evaluation and monitoring help in sustaining the needs of the program and informs the institution on adjustments to be made to facilitate the full-swing implementation of the program.

REFERENCES:

Yang, S. (2015). Evaluation of the Intervention and Rehabilitation Program in Residential Facilities and Diversion Programs for Children in Conflict with the Law. Canada: Universalialia.

APPENDIX:

Qualitative Study: “Stepping Up for a Diploma: The Lived Experience of Children in Conflict with the Law in a Center-Based Formal School” by Argie B. Mabag, Rowena M. Balbarino, Courtney Love Ajos, Jonathan T. Cabel, and John Mark M. Daradal



Preliminary dialogue of the Center Head Mrs. Georgina M. Bulasa with DepEd Education Program Supervisor Dr. Raul M. Salano on the technicalities and possible implementation of the Center-Based Formal School in RRCY.



A short talk of DepEd EPS Dr. Salano with the residents, discussing the possible roll-out of formal school inside the Center.



Early Registration of qualified RRCY residents to Junior and Senior High School Formal Education offered by Tanauan School of Arts and Trade



Ceremonial signing of the Tripartite Memorandum of Agreement by and between the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Department of Education (DepEd) and the Local Government of Tanauan, Leyte



Grade 11 Senior High School students' first day in school



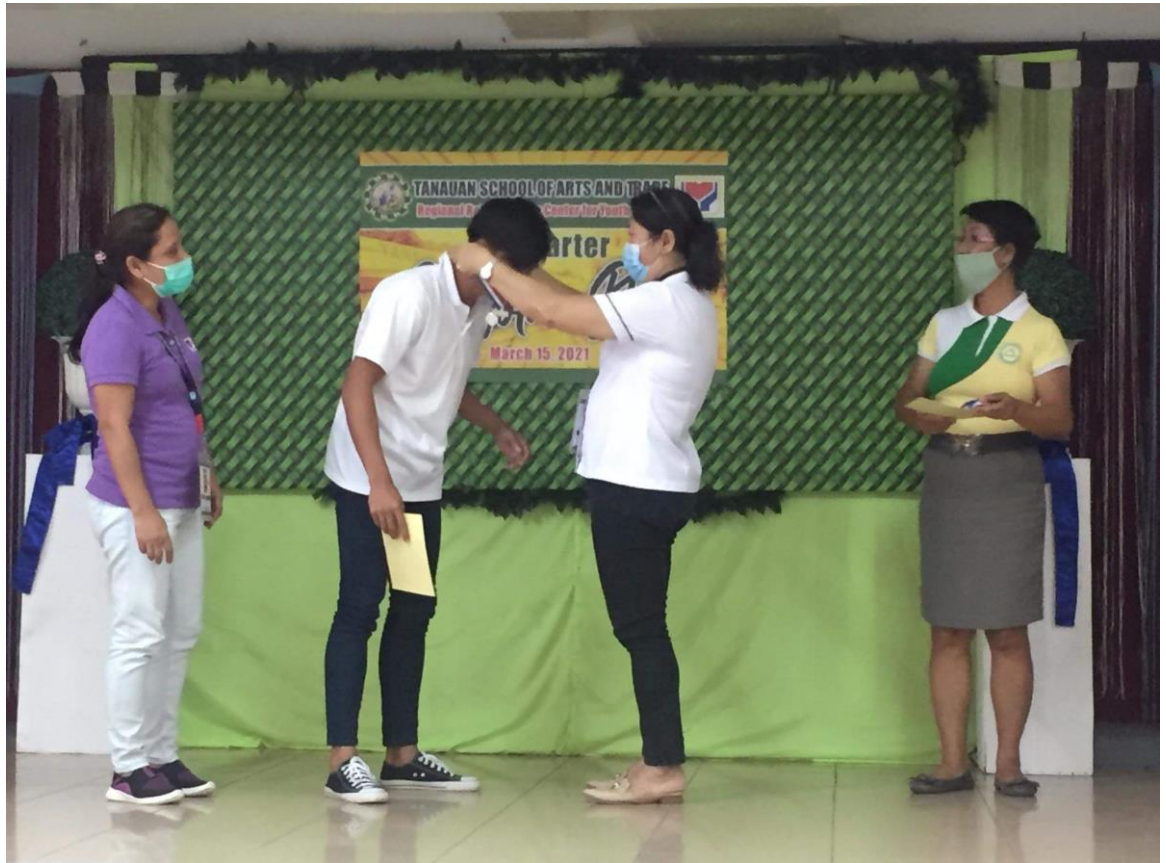
TSAT-RRCY's entry to the Sabayang Pagbigkas Competition of the Juvenile Justice Welfare Council which bagged 1st Place in the Regional Level and 3rd place in the National Finals.



Unveiling of the School Publications Office' Logo and Cover of its First Newsletter



Launching of the School Publications Office and presentation of the premiere release of "The Beacon" Gazette and Literary & Arts Folio



Awarding of Medals and Certificate of Academic Honors to deserving students in the Center-Based Formal School during the Portfolio, Recognition and Card-Giving Day





Quarterly Performance Monitoring, Evaluation and Adjustment on the implementation of the Formal School in the Center



Scheduled mentoring and assistance of visiting teachers and Department Heads.



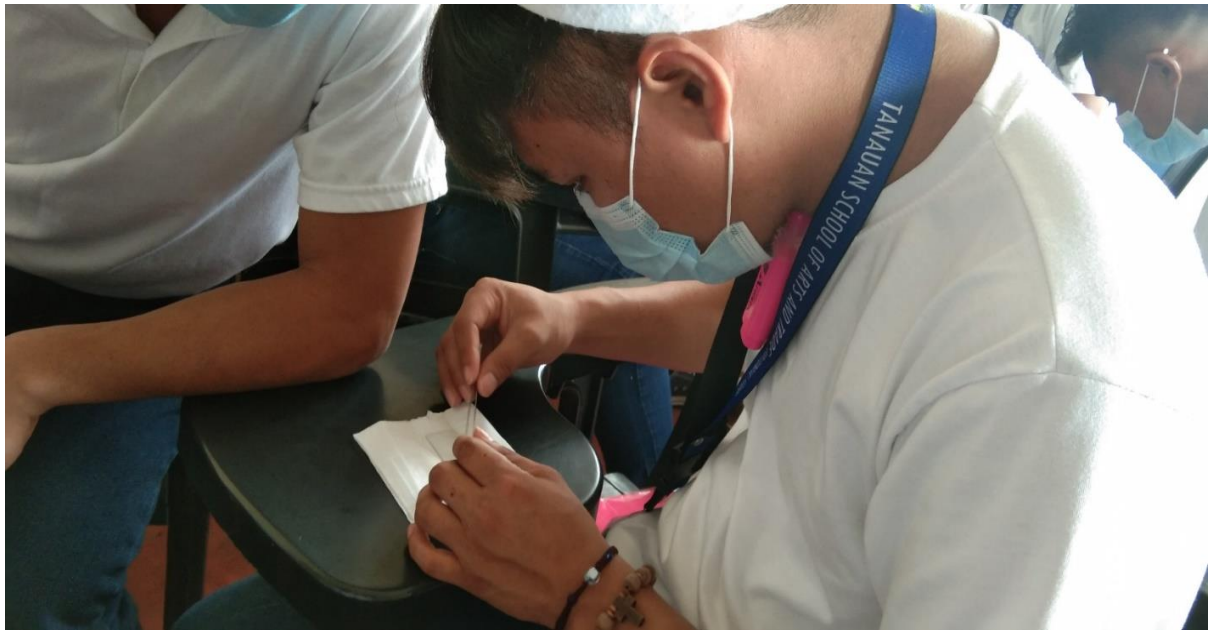
Grade 11 Students in the Rock Identification Activity in Earth and Life Science



Scheduled conduct of laboratory activities in Science Grade 7. A visiting Science Teacher and Department Head mentors the students in the proper execution of air transfer by submersion in water technique to test the presence of hydrogen.



Grade 7 and 11 students setup an improvised electrolysis apparatus to breakdown water to hydrogen and oxygen gas.



Grade 11 students prepare a wet mount of plant specimen using glycerine as mounting medium for their Earth and Life Science class.



Grade 7 students view their prepared slide containing pond water in a Compound Light Microscope.





Students perform their activities on the construction of models and miniatures in Junior High School Science.



Launching of the School Publications Office in the Special Classes of Tanauan School of Arts and Trade in the Regional Rehabilitation Center for Youth – Eastern Visayas



Students prepare their storylines and storyboards for a Participatory Video creation project sponsored by UNICEF Philippines.



Members of the School Publications Office attend a virtual lecture and training hosted by Philippine Normal University.



Grade 7 Class Picture with Institutional Head and Resident Department Head



Grade 9 Class Picture with Institutional Head and Resident Department Head





Grade 11 Class Picture with Institutional Head and Resident Department Head



Grade 7-11 students with Institutional Head and Resident Department Head





4th Quarter Portfolio and Year-End Recognition Day



4th Quarter Portfolio and Year-End Recognition Day

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