

To our resilient learners, committed parents, dedicated teachers, and valued stakeholders in the National Capital Region, a joyful and inspiring opening of School Year 2025–2026! As we embark on another journey of learning, growth, and nation-building, let us reaffirm our shared commitment to nurturing a generation of empowered, literate, and compassionate Filipinos.

This year's theme, ***"Sama-Sama Para sa Bayang Bumabasa,"*** calls upon all of us to unite in fostering a culture of reading, critical thinking, and lifelong learning. It is a reminder that education is not just the responsibility of teachers or schools but of the entire community—parents, local leaders, and every citizen who believes in the transformative power of education.

The foundation of a progressive society lies in ensuring that no child is left behind. Our first priority remains clear: **to keep every school-age child in schools**. Despite the challenges of economic hardships, accessibility, and shifting societal dynamics, we must work together to break the barriers that hinder our children from completing their education.

While keeping children in school is essential, we must also ensure that their time in school translates into real learning. This brings us to our second priority: **strengthening the foundational skills of our learners**—literacy, numeracy, and critical thinking. Through early grade literacy programs, we will reinforce reading interventions, teacher training, and community reading initiatives.

Lastly, but equally vital, is our commitment to **ensuring a learner-centered environment** where every student feels valued, safe, and motivated to learn.

As we open this school year, let us remember that education is not a solitary endeavor. *"Sama-sama"*—together—we can build a *"Bayang Bumabasa,"* a nation that reads, thinks, and progresses.

To our teachers, your passion lights the way. To our parents, your guidance anchors our children. To our learners, your dreams inspire our work. And to our partners in government and civil society, your support makes all the difference.

Let us move forward with hope, determination, and unity. #StrongerTogether, we will shape a brighter future—one child, one classroom, one community at a time.

  
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