

Boys and Girls Week: An Avenue to Develop Leadership of Self and Others

The Boys and Girls Week launched through a program on September 01, 2009 at the Muntinlupa Sports Complex gathered students of public and private schools together with their teachers, principals and some invited guests led by the Honorable Senator and Congressman Rodolfo and Rufino Biazon, the Mayor's wife, Madam Lea San Pedro, Councilor Ryan Bagatsing and myself.

This activity is held and celebrated yearly through the partnership of DepEd Muntinlupa and the City Government because both agencies believe that the inculcation and development of civic duties and responsibilities among the young should be started early when their minds and hearts are still malleable and are at the peak of their idealism. This is the time when they should be introduced to good models of leadership and civic - mindedness so that they can imbibe and emulate what they see as worthy and eventually practice them in their adulthood.

This is the reason why a regular feature of the yearly Boys and Girls Week is the election of the Little Mayor, Vice Mayor, Councilors, Schools Division Superintendent, Chief of Police etc., and the immersion of those elected in these offices and workplaces so that these little officials can observe their day - to - day operations and interactions with their various publics. This exposure, I believe, contributes to the development of their sense of idealism in public service.

Since the idea of leadership entails not only influencing others but also directing and managing oneself, it is also important that we let them see the need to develop their character, talents and capabilities. As a popular saying goes, "We cannot give what we do not have" and corollary to this, "We cannot gain the respect of other and influence them if we do not walk our talk".

With this in mind, may I share with our young people an excerpt of my message -----

"Look around you. There are so many ways by which you can contribute and make a difference in the life of your community though how simple and insignificant it may seem to be. You can start practicing your civic duties within your sphere of influence in your family, in your school and in your neighborhood. You are a catalyst of change for a better community when you help in home chores rather than go loafing with your barkada on weekends. You become a role model to your younger brothers and sisters. You are a catalyst of change when you study hard and don't tolerate and practice cheating during examinations. You become a role model to your classmates. You are a catalyst of change when you practice good waste management, separating the biodegradable from the non - biodegradable, practice backyard composting and disposing your garbage properly. You become a role model to your neighbors and to

the whole neighborhood. Indeed, you have to do your share and play a vital role as a community member.

We are very happy when we hear success stories of your accomplishments. Start now while you are young. If you love your city, you'll accept this challenge."