



PHILIPPINE FEDERATION OF THE DEAF, INC.



Member of World Federation of the Deaf

PO BOX 2805
Quezon City Central
Post Office
1100 Quezon City

Address: 855 Samat St.,
Highway Hills Mandaluyong City
Cellphone: +63927-4038348 (SMS only)
Email: philfed deaf@yahoo.com

SEC Registration #: [A199711178](#)
BIR Registration #: [228-447-804](#)

Position Statement of the Philippine Federation of the Deaf regarding the use of Filipino Sign Language in Special Education

The Philippine Federation of the Deaf, the national Deaf advocacy organization comprised of eighteen member Deaf organizations in fourteen regions, hereby claims the fundamental human rights to language, culture, participation and self-determination for all Deaf Filipinos, in accordance with the Magna Carta for Persons with Disability, the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education, the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

As the national federation, we bring before you our vision, concerns and appeal for the thousands of Deaf Filipinos in our country. In order that Deaf Filipinos can fully enjoy these human rights, we present the following statements and requests:

- a) Recognition of the Filipino Deaf community as having its own culture and language, i.e., Filipino Sign Language or FSL and identity;
- b) Recognition of Filipino Sign Language as the national / official language of the Filipino Deaf community and the Filipino Deaf community as a linguistic and cultural minority with a right to use Filipino Sign Language as its native sign language that it knows, understands, and identifies with the most (in compliance with the Salamanca Statement and the U.N. CRPD);
- b) The Deaf community should be represented by *the Deaf themselves* in the Special Education Council and should be included in decision-making on *all* sign language policies and programs, specially Deaf education curriculum (in compliance with the U.N. CRPD);
- c) Affirmative action for the hiring of FSL signing Deaf teachers into SPED and BALS by promoting reasonable accommodation on the hiring of Deaf teachers (in compliance with the U.N. CRPD);
- d) Appropriation of 1% of the Department of Education budget as provided for by the General Appropriations Act, and Presidential Proclamation 240, for:

Institution of long term and continuing training & evaluation program on FSL for current hearing teachers / interpreters in SPED and BALS programs with training and evaluation to be designed and taught in partnership with the Philippine Federation of the Deaf; and

Formulation and implementation of 3-/ 5- year plans to adapt the Mother Tongue- Based Multilingual Education principles and methods to the teaching of Deaf students.

In consideration of the above,

Whereas, the State as duty-bearer has the obligation to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of Deaf Filipinos as part of its commitment to national and international law,

Whereas, the State through the Department of Education has already prescribed in Special Education policy that Filipino Sign Language shall be the medium of instruction, but to date has not implemented such,

Whereas, the State through the Department of Education is treaty-bound to employ teachers who are Deaf or are Persons with Disabilities who have the necessary sign language skills, but to date has not fully promoted or implemented such,

The Federation thus calls on the State, through the Department of Education, to immediately, effectively and fully:

halt the violation of the rights to language, culture, participation and self-determination of Deaf Filipinos; and

institute, facilitate and promote all appropriate measures to guarantee the full enjoyment of these rights.

Rey Alfred A. Lee
President
Philippine Federation of the Deaf