

DepEd Naga Capacity Building for Lesson Study Implementation in Mathematics through AusAid Funding

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The Schools Division of Naga City is one of the recipients of the funding program of the Basic Education Sector Transformation (BEST), an Australian funding institution. The approved proposal of Mr. Michel P. Basister (program specialist for HRD) and Mr. Rustico Z. Azana (program supervisor for Mathematics) about Lesson Study implementation in Grade 3 and Grade 7 Mathematics was granted a maximum funding amount of 1 million pesos. Funding covers capacity building for teachers, actual implementation of lesson study in schools, sharing of best practices, and documentation and evaluation of the program.

Preparing the teachers and other stakeholders is one of the series of activities conducted to ensure the effectiveness and successful implementation of the Lesson Study in the targeted groups of teachers and subject area. The aim of the activity is to provide teachers, school leaders, instructional leaders, and collaborating agencies with a concrete understanding of the use of **Lesson Study** as a professional development strategy to improve the teaching and learning processes in Mathematics. The actual conduct of the Lesson Study intends to improve the performance of both teachers and students, which will directly redound to the **Division Change Plan: Transform Naga**. The implementation of this project is in collaboration with the Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) in the city and nearby municipality. This includes the University of Nueva Caceres, Ateneo de Naga University, and the Central Bicol State University of Agriculture. All of these higher education institutions are offering programs for pre-service and in-service teachers in mathematics and can provide content and pedagogical expertise in the delivery of lessons in math.

The capacity building was conducted last July 5-7, 2018 at the Villa Caceres Hotel, Magsaysay Avenue, Naga City. It was participated by the Public Schools District Supervisors, School Heads, and selected Grade 3 and Grade 7 mathematics teachers. Mathematics professors from the collaborating universities were also invited and two representatives from each institution responded to the request. The resource speakers for this training are known experts in the field of mathematics education and lesson study. One of these is Prof. William Atweh who is a visiting professor at the Philippine Normal University and was previously connected with several universities in Australia such as Curtin University and Queensland University of Technology. He has published a number of peer-reviewed articles and has written/edited books in mathematics education, professional development, and teaching and learning processes. Another resource speaker is Prof. Levi Elipane who is a former Monbukagakusho scholar, received postgraduate education in Japan and Denmark, and currently connected with the Philippine Normal University and De La Salle University. He does research in Mathematics Education, Lesson Study, Pre-service Teacher Education, In-service Teacher Education, Teacher Education, and Teaching Methods.

The training started with the opening program which was attended by the Schools Division Superintendent William E. Gando, CESO VI who shared information on the different processes and series of revisions which the proposal went through before its

final approval for implementation in the division. He also gave his motivation to the participants to maximize their learning incurred during the training to really improve the performance of the students and finally contribute to the realization of the division change plan. The opening program was immediately followed by the first session which is all about building communities of practice. This was delivered by the Chief of the Curriculum Implementation Division, Lynn Z. Padillo. Communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly. Ideas on how to build communities of practice will be very essential for teachers who will engage in the lesson study implementation.

Prof. Atweh followed the session on teaching mathematics through problem-solving and higher order thinking and inquiry in mathematics education. With the implementation of lesson study, participating teachers are expected to focus on developing problem-solving and higher order thinking skills among their students. The last session for the first day of the training was delivered by Prof. Elipane, which was all about deeper understanding of mathematics involving its basic concepts and some common misunderstanding.

On the second day of the training, discussion about the use of lesson study as a professional development strategy was led by Prof. Elipane. This resulted in the better understanding of the participants on the "what" and "how" of the practice. To enhance more the understanding of participants on this practice, a demonstration lesson and post-lesson discussions immediately followed. The remaining time of the day was devoted to the identification of least learned competencies in mathematics as well as collaborative lesson planning on the identified "research lesson." The third day was all about discussions on the relationship of lesson study to action research. This was facilitated by Prof. Atweh who underscore the importance of action research and on how to conduct one in an easier way. Parallel sessions were conducted in the afternoon which involved collaborative lesson planning for the group of mathematics teachers and planning, conducting, and documenting the project for the group of school and instructional leaders, university faculties, and the project team.

In the closing program, the representatives from each group of participants were given the chance to give their impressions about the activity and the program. On the part of the university faculty, Prof. Noel Noche of the Ateneo de Naga University underscores the uniqueness of the activity since they have to do follow-up activities after the training. Their group was also appreciative on the chance to collaborate with the teachers of the Department of Education. On the other hand, Mr. Jeovannie Conde of Carolina National High School represented the group of teachers who emphasized the necessity of collaboration to address the pressing needs in the division as far as mathematics is concerned. He was thankful to the division officials who introduced the concept of lesson study as their professional development strategy. The group of school and instructional leaders was represented by Dr. Sonia D. Teran who challenged the teachers and all other members of the lesson study team to be serious on its implementation and seize every opportunity to learn from the project implementation and improve their practice as a teacher and officials of the Department of Education.



The resource speakers and the program implementers during a short briefing activity.

Prof. Elipane during his demonstration teaching with the Grade 7 students of the Naga City Science High School.



Prof. Atweh during his session with the school and instructional leaders about the Planning, Conducting, and documenting the lesson study implementation.