

# The Philippine School for the Deaf (1907-2007)

## A CENTURY OF COMMITMENT

One hundred years ago, the Philippine School for the Deaf (PSD), formerly known as the School for the Deaf and the Blind (SDB) was established in a small rented house in Manila. Since then, the school has become the pioneer institution for the handicapped in the country and to its Asian neighbors.

The year was 1907, Dr. David P. Barrows, then Director of Education in the Philippines, invited Ms. Delia Delight Rice of Columbus, Ohio to teach the deaf and the blind children in the country. Ms. Rice, a teacher of the deaf and born to deaf parents, began the country's deaf education program with a class of three pupils (two deaf and one blind) from the nearby provinces.

In June 1923, PSD transferred to a large two-storey and semi-concrete structure on a lot donated by an anonymous American lady along F.B. Harrison Boulevard in Ermita (the present site), Manila. Since then, a number of buildings had been constructed for the diverse educational programs and services of children with hearing impairment in the country.

In June of 1963, by virtue of Republic Act 3562, SDB was divided into two schools – The Philippine National School for the Blind and the Philippine School for the Deaf. PSD remained in its current site. In 1986, PSD redirected its thrusts by serving as an educational, research, resource and service center.

## PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

The school prides itself with the philosophy that a hearing impaired child has a communication problem but needs to be educated as an integral part of the learning world rather than apart from it. Hence, the school provides basic technology like numerous assistive listening devices and other aids for the unique needs of children with hearing impairment.

## THE CURRICULUM AND LEARNING PROCESS

English is the language of education with simultaneous communication as the mode of instruction. The school provides special subjects in language, speech, speech reading, rhythm and auditory training, increased time allotment for communication arts and the introduction of Filipino in grade 3. PSD's programs are aligned on the Basic Learning Competencies (BLC), based on the Modified Basic Educational Competencies (MBEC) mandated by the Department of Education.

Children with hearing impairment who are diagnosed at an early age are given the opportunity for an intensive "individualized education plan" (IEP) which will equip them with the skills for formal education, and provide them with the self-help skills needed for daily living. These skills are carried to further programs, therefore, increasing their chances for being functional members of society.

## CURRICULAR OFFERINGS

In line with the school's vision to be the premier service provider for children with hearing impairment in the country, PSD provides venues that allow its students to become morally upright, globally competitive and responsive to the demands of a technologically-advancing world and ensure their integration in the mainstream.

The curricular offerings are divided into four categories:

- Pre-elementary education
- Early Childhood Education (5 to 6 years old)
- Preparatory (pre-requisite to grade 1)
- Literacy Class. This is open for adult beginners who wish to have academic pursuits and vocational skills.
- Elementary education
- Secondary education
- Transition education
- Vocational Program. This starts in the elementary then moves on to high school, and later, culminates in an apprenticeship program. It includes functional curriculum in computer education, cosmetology, food trades, electricity, garment trades, graphic arts, furniture and cabinet making, and welding and sheet metal.
- Apprenticeship Program. Initiated in 1992, this program aims to prepare graduating students for the actual field of work. This includes career guidance and working in companies that match the students' training in vocational

specialization subjects. The training is useful in preparing future job seekers if they opt not to pursue further education after high school.

## **SPECIAL PROGRAMS**

Children with hearing impairment need a formal training in school that maximizes their residual hearing to make them “listen” and experience the wonders of learning. But more importantly, is the ability of their hearts to listen with values that will help them live their lives to the fullest. Here are the special programs of PSD:

- Early Childhood Intervention. The program adheres to the ideals of early intervention as an important facet of educating children with hearing impairment from ages 4 years and below. Intensive parent-teacher collaboration is a pre-requisite to the program.
- Multiple Handicapped Program. As a manifestation of individualization, the program for children with hearing impairment and co-occurring handicapping conditions address the unique needs of these children. Specialized classes are held as guided by the principles of educating and providing functional programs that would respond to the immediate concerns of every child.
- Deafblind Program. The program caters to children with dual sensory impairment by providing augmentative communication materials, behavior modification and specialized programs in response to their diverse needs.
- Speech Program. The program provide intensive opportunities in oral communication for pupils from preparatory to grade 3 who have the abilities to develop, enhance and maximize their speech capabilities as well as their speechreading skills in addition to their basic speech lessons in class.

## **EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

The students at PSD enjoy activities with the following organizations: Boy Scout of the Philippines, Girl Scout of the Philippines, Art Club, Sign and Drama Club and sports groups. They are encouraged and trained to handle their own student government organizations. Exposures in organizing and performing in programs are provided in and out of school.

## **BASIC SERVICES**

PSD boasts of advanced facilities that allow students to have fun while learning. The school is now in a P5-million facility donated by the HongKong Shanghai Banking Corporation.

- Dormitory. A free board and lodging dormitory is provided for students residing in areas far from school during school days.
- Speech and Hearing Clinic. The center serves as a speech classroom and clinic where free hearing tests are conducted for everybody.
- Guidance and Testing Center. The center provides assessment for students, counseling support for students and parents, career orientation for graduating students and other related guidance services. Linkage among employers is established for the smooth transition of labor opportunities for students.
- Library
- Publicity and Research Center
- Canteen
- Medical and Dental Clinic`

## **GREAT VOICES IN THE WORLD OF SILENCE**

Starting with only three pupils, PSD now boasts of 634 students coming from the different parts of the country. PSD has 180 highly professional and devoted special education teachers and staff trained locally and abroad. Principal Yolanda T. Capulong and Assistant Principal Carmelita C. Abellaneda are behind the success of PSD.