

Republic of the Philippines Department of Education

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DepEd ORDER No. **()45**, s. 2021

## POLICY GUIDELINES ON THE SELECTION OF AND MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR THE CONVERSION OF CERTAIN SCHOOLS WITH SPED CENTERS INTO PROTOTYPE INCLUSIVE LEARNING RESOURCE CENTERS

To: Undersecretaries Assistant Secretaries Bureau and Service Directors Regional Directors Schools Division Superintendents Public Elementary and Secondary School Heads All Others Concerned

1. Pursuant to the mandates under Sec. 2 (c) of Republic Act No. 10533, or the **Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013**, to make education learner-oriented and responsive to the needs, cognitive and cultural capacity, and circumstances and diversity of learners, the Department of Education (DepEd) adopts the enclosed **Policy Guidelines on the Selection of and Minimum Requirements for the Conversion of Certain Schools with Special Education (SPED) Centers into Prototype Inclusive Learning Resource Centers**.

2. The enclosed policy shall guide the field offices in the selection and conversion of identified school SPED centers into Inclusive Learning Resource Centers (ILRCs). The initial conversion of the School SPED Centers into ILRCs aims to develop or establish one prototype ILRC model in every region that will set the standards in the gradual expansion of ILRCs in the succeeding years. For Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 and FY 2022, one school SPED Center per region shall be converted into an ILRC. Thereafter, a gradual expansion in the succeeding FYs is expected until all school divisions shall have at least one ILRC for all types of learners, subject to the availability of funds.

3. For more information, please contact the **Bureau of Learning Delivery-Student Inclusion Division (BLD-SID)**, 4th Floor, Bonifacio Bldg., Department of Education Central Office, DepEd Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City through email at bld.sid@deped.gov.ph or at telephone number (02) 8637-4346.

4. Immediate dissemination of and strict compliance with this Order is directed.

LEONOR MAGTOLIS BRIONES Secretary



Encls.:

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As stated

Reference: None

To be indicated in the <u>Perpetual Index</u> under the following subjects:

> CENTERS POLICY REQUIREMENTS SCHOOLS SELECTION SPECIAL EDUCATION

MCR, JDMC, APA, MPC DO-Policy Guidelines on the Selection of and Minimum...ILRCs 0250/September 03, 2021



## POLICY GUIDELINES IN THE SELECTION OF AND MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR THE CONVERSION OF CERTAIN SCHOOL SPED CENTERS INTO PROTOTYPE INCLUSIVE LEARNING RESOURCE CENTERS

## I. RATIONALE

- 1. Education is a fundamental human right that should be accessible to all citizens. It plays a crucial role in the country's development and nation-building. The Philippine government initiated structural changes in the basic education system and increased education expenditures. Republic Act No. 10157 or known as "The Kindergarten Education Act", mandated the Department of Education for a mandatory a pre-elementary year of kindergarten education, while Republic Act No. 10533 or known as the "Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013", expanded the elementary and secondary education cycle from 10 to 12 years. The importance of this 13-year basic education cycle (K to 12) for every Filipino learner cannot be understated. As such, the K to 12 reform is an essential step to improve the global competitiveness of the Philippines and bring the country up to international standards.
- 2. The Enhanced Basic Education Program is designed to set a paradigm shift in the teaching and learning process that is learner-centered, culture-based, inclusive, rights-based.
- 3. The presence of Inclusive Learning Resource Centers (ILRCs) in the Department shall contribute to the realization of the DepEd's mission to protect and promote the right of every Filipino to quality, equitable, culture-based, inclusive, and complete basic education. The ILRCs shall provide the necessary support services to all types of marginalized and disadvantaged learners. They are important in carrying out various activities and programs of the Department in improving access to and quality of education, as well as participation of all learners. The primary aim of establishing ILRCs is to provide support to teaching and learning through appropriate and relevant services and access to learning resource materials in different formats to ensure equitable and quality basic education for the marginalized and disadvantaged learners. Likewise, ILRCs is a proper avenue for collaboration of stakeholders such as but not limited to teachers, school heads, supervisors, parents, medical and allied medical professionals, and others to determine appropriate interventions or solutions for diverse needs of marginalized and disadvantaged learners.

This means that learners with disabilities shall be given the opportunity to learn together with their typically developing peers in a child-friendly and inclusive general education classroom while they get the support for care, rehabilitation, as well as additional learning support from the ILRCs. Through the establishment of ILRCs, DepEd seeks to be better aligned with the current principles of inclusive education by gradually shifting away from the present set-up of segregating learners with disabilities in a SPED Center.

Further, the establishment of ILRCs supports the inclusiveness of basic education as stated in Section 8 of the DepEd Order (DO) No. 43, s. 2013 Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act No. 10533 Otherwise Known as the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013 on the provision of comprehensive programs for learners with disabilities which may be home-, center-, or community-based.

- 4. In the estimate population of the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) for 2020, considering the school age of 5 to 24 years old for learners with disabilities (LWDs), about 450,000 LWDs should be in Basic Education. However, based on DepEd Basic Education Information System (BEIS) Data for SY 2019-2020, the total number of LWDs in school is 360,879. Therefore, it is noted that more than 90,000 of these LWDs are not in school. DepEd wants to bring them to school through the support of the ILRC.
- 5. The ILRC shall play a vital role in supporting learners who are marginalized and disadvantaged by providing them the essential link between the curriculum and learning resources as well as support services such as but not limited to educational assessment for appropriate placement, physical therapy, occupational and behavioral therapy, speech and language therapy necessary for them to equitably access quality basic education.

#### II. LEGAL BASES

6. The provision of educational programs and services for learners with disabilities is integral to the right to accessible and quality basic education and the mandate of DepEd as a duty-bearer to uphold said right, as embodied in the laws and commitments mentioned in DO No. 44, s. 2021 (Policy Guidelines on the Provision of Educational Programs and Services for Learners with Disabilities in the K to 12 Basic Education Program). These same legal bases apply to this policy.

#### **III. SCOPE OF THE POLICY**

7. These policy guidelines focus on the standards in establishing and/or converting school SPED Centers into ILRCs in public schools. It defines the procedures and mechanisms for the conversion of school SPED centers into prototype ILRC models which shall guide the expansion of ILRCs in other Schools Division Offices nationwide in the succeeding years. The policy guidelines in the operationalization of an ILRC shall be issued in a separate DepEd Order.

#### **IV. DEFINITION OF TERMS**

- 8. For purposes of this policy, the following terminologies are operationally defined:
  - a. **Assessment Service area** refers to where the gathering of information about the learner using a variety of techniques and strategies that shall be done by trained SPED teachers or psychometrician.
  - b. **Assistive Devices** are external devices that are designed, made, or adapted to assist learners with disabilities to perform a particular task; carry out daily activities; and to participate actively and productively in the community.
  - c. **Behavioral Therapy Service Area** refers to where the learners with disabilities are being helped by Behavioral Therapist to modify the impact of the issues on their behavior and to understand the negative thoughts, difficulties, and debilitating behaviors they want to change.
  - d. **Bridging Service Area** refers to where learners with disabilities are being prepared by SPED teachers for which they are provided with direct instruction in the core curriculum to a supported full-inclusion program.

- e. **Daily Living Skills Development Area** refers to where learners with disabilities are trained and practice the different daily activities.
- f. **E-library/Instructional Materials Service Area** refers to the repository of electronic copies of learning resources where the learners can download to their respective devices or read the materials using the devices or computers or reproduce different accessible formats of learning resources based on their needs.
- g. **Equity** refers to the value of securing all learners' rights to education, and their rights within and through education to realize their potentials and aspirations.
- h. **Equitable** refers to the proportionate appropriation of resources and opportunities.
- i. **Management Service Area** refers to where the meeting of stakeholders, partners, medical and allied medical specialists and other sectors supporting the learners with disabilities shall happen.
- j. **Occupational Therapy Service Area** refers to where learners with disabilities receive services by an Occupational Therapist through therapeutic use of everyday activities to become an independent individual as possible.
- k. **Physical Therapy Service Area** refers to where learners with disability receive medical rehabilitation by a licensed Physical Therapist to improve their physical movement, reduce, or manage pain, restore function, and prevent further disability.
- 1. **Rehabilitation** is the process of helping a person who has suffered an illness or injury restore lost skills and so regain maximum self-sufficiency. For example, **rehabilitation** work after a stroke may help the patient walk and speak clearly again.
- m. **Skills Development Area** refers to where the learners with disabilities are trained to gain skills on arts and craft, cookery, bread and pastry, and ICT to prepare them for the world of work.
- n. **Speech and Language Therapy Service Area** refers to where the learners with disabilities receive from a Speech Therapist habilitative and rehabilitative programs to improve communicative efficiency of individuals with communication problems of organic and non-organic etiology.
- o. **Support Services** refers to the necessary services appropriate to the needs of learners with disabilities such as but not limited to sign language interpreting, speech-language therapy, and physical therapy, assessment, occupational and behavioral therapy, and others.
- p. **Water/Hydrotherapy Service Area** refers to where learners with specific disability would reduce anxiety and stress by relaxing muscles, reducing pain, stimulating circulation, and reducing spasticity which would lead to improving concentration in learning and improve health condition.

## V. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

9. The Department adheres to the principles of inclusion, responsiveness to rights and sensitivity and responsiveness to context, as cited in DO No. 21, s. 2019. In addition, it adheres to the (UN) Convention on the rights of the child (1989) principles of non-discrimination, best interest of the child, survival and development, and participation.

## VI. POLICY STATEMENT

In support of the ILRC, the Department of Education:

- 10. Protects and promotes the fundamental right of all citizens to quality basic education and shall take appropriate steps to make basic education accessible to all.
- 11. Adopts and promotes inclusive education in the enhanced basic education program for all types of learners especially to those who are considered marginalized and disadvantaged learners.
- 12. Recognizes the right of all types of marginalized and disadvantaged learners for mainstreaming and integration in a general education classroom to learn together with the typical learners.
- 13. Supports the vital role of the ILRC in ensuring that the unique needs of marginalized and disadvantaged learners especially those learners with disabilities shall be provided. Therefore, the ILRC shall be equipped with specific adaptive educational materials and assistive devices as well as staffed and allied medical professionals to give support to learners, teachers, and neighboring schools.
- 14. Supports the conversion of the existing SPED Centers within a school into ILRCs for all types of learners especially for those marginalized and disadvantaged learners.
- 15. Shall establish/develop a state-of-the-art ILRC in every Schools Division Office (SDO) that shall cater to the needs of the marginalized and disadvantaged learners particularly those learners with disabilities. It aims to increase access and participation rate of all types of marginalized and disadvantaged learners to quality and relevant basic education through the provisions of accessible, and specialized learning materials, equipment, devices, and other learning resources, and support services for all types of learners. The ILRC also offers assessments and rehabilitation of LWDs and training programs for educators and parents.
- 16. Specifically, the ILRC shall:
  - a. Give support to nearby cluster schools to improve the teaching and learning process for all types of marginalized and disadvantaged learners and in difficult circumstances;
  - b. Develop a proactive and strategic plan for sustainability and continuous improvement;

- c. Empower learners by providing information and resources that can be translated into knowledge, skills, and practices for the enhancement of civic responsibility;
- d. Strengthen the organizational culture and service delivery of ILRCs to be responsive, accessible, relevant, equitable, accountable, and gender & culture sensitive; and
- e. Facilitate the realization of ILRC-related policies that are comprehensive, holistic and address the needs of learners, particularly the marginalized and vulnerable communities.

# VII. GENERAL PROVISIONS, MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURES

#### A. GENERAL PROVISIONS

- 17. There shall be one (1) ILRC for each Schools Division Office, equipped with competent human resources, appropriate and relevant teaching-learning resources, facilities and equipment like adaptive educational materials, assistive devices, and assessment mechanism for all types of learners especially those learners with disabilities.
- 18. The existing schools with SPED Center/classrooms or with available space facility shall be converted/constructed into ILRC with different support service rooms in conformity with the provisions of DO No. 64, s. 2017 Establishing the Minimum Performance Standards and Specifications for DepEd School Buildings, and DO 6, s. 2021 Re-Establishment of Minimum Performance Standards and Specifications for DepEd School Buildings Using Alternative.
- 19. The establishment/construction of the ILRC shall follow the standards and specifications provided in **Enclosure No. 2** of this policy.
- 20. The policy guidelines on the operationalization of the ILRC shall be issued in a separate DepEd Order.

## B. MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS AND CRITERIA

- 21. The school SPED Center should have enough available classrooms to be converted into ILRC support service areas or any school with space facility to be used for the construction or establishment of the ILRC.
- 22. The ILRC needs a minimum of 10 support service areas following the layout and dimensions/specifications found in **Enclosure No. 2** of this policy. The ten support service areas shall be utilized for the following:
  - a. Assessment Service Area
  - b. Physical Therapy Service Area
  - c. Occupational and Behavioral Therapy Service Area
  - d. Speech and Language Therapy Service Area
  - e. Bridging Service Area
  - f. E-library/Instructional Materials Service Area
  - g. Management Service Area
  - h. Daily Living Skills Area
  - i. Skills Development (e.g., Arts & Craft; ICT; Bread & Pastry)
  - j. Water/Hydrotherapy Area

- 23. The site of the school SPED Center or any school with available space shall be duly owned by DepEd and shall be in a strategic place that can be easily accessed by learners with disabilities from nearby schools.
- 24. The school head must express willingness to support and manage the operation of the ILRC by submitting to the Division a letter of Intent addressed to the Schools Division Superintendent and assign teaching and non-teaching personnel to render the appropriate and necessary services to learners with disabilities.
- 25. Establishment of school partnership and collaboration with Local Government Units (LGUs) and Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) for sustainability of the ILRC support services to be rendered by the professionals such as but not limited to educational psychologists, speech therapists, occupational & physiotherapists, school nurse, Filipino Sign Language interpreters, orientation & mobility trainers, braille trainers, itinerant teachers, and others, as necessary.
- 26. The school head and teaching personnel must be willing to attend consultative meetings and undergo orientation and capacity building during Phase 1.
- 27. The school head must have shown his/her strong support to learners with disabilities by including programs and activities of SPED in the School Improvement Plan (SIP) for the last three (3) years.
- 28. The school head shall assign an ILRC coordinator (preferably SPED teacher with permanent item) for proper coordination. The ILRC coordinator shall oversee and coordinate with different stakeholders in terms of the operation and management of facilities and equipment. He/she shall serve as focal person on the conversion of the SPED center into ILRC. He/she shall provide monthly report of the ILRC activities to the school head.

## C. PROCEDURE

The conversion of the school SPED Centers into ILRCs or establishment/construction of ILRCs shall be done in two phases as follows:

# PHASE 1: Development of Prototype ILRC Models for FYs 2021, 2022 and 2023

The development of Prototype ILRC model shall be done in a progressive manner based on budget allocation for every Fiscal Year. Hence, the following procedure and provisions shall guide the implementers in the development of prototype ILRC model:

- 29. Each region is required to identify and submit 3 potential school SPED centers based on the minimum requirements and criteria stipulated in VIII-B, Nos. 34-41. The recommended school with SPED center or school with space facility shall comply with the submission of the following documents:
  - a. Certification from the School Head that the SPED classrooms can be converted into support service areas of the ILRC and a letter of intent expressing the support and management of ILRC. The certification and letter of intent should be signed and approved by the Schools Division Superintendent (SDS).
  - b. Pictures and recorded video of the SPED classrooms to be converted into ILRC support service areas;

- c. Engagement from LGU or any NGO that support the development and welfare of learners with disabilities (MOA/MOU, Certification, etc.); and
- d. Letter of Recommendation from the RO specifying the SPED Center as a candidate for its conversion into an ILRC.
- 30. The list of submitted school SPED centers or schools with space facilities shall be validated by the Central Office through the BLD-SID and Education Facilities Division (EFD) team and identify the most qualified school with SPED Center or school with space facility to be developed as a prototype ILRC model for each region. The final list shall be announced through a Memorandum.
- 31. The concerned SDO, where the school SPED Center or school with space facility is located, shall be the implementing unit that shall receive an allocation of two million pesos (Php 2 million) for 3 consecutive fiscal years, subject to the availability of funds, to be utilized for the conversion or restructuring of the SPED classrooms into the different support service areas listed in VII-B, No. 35 which is classified under Capital Outlay.
- 32. The fund shall be downloaded to the implementing unit for the procurement of materials and services guided by the government procurement, accounting and auditing rules and regulations.
- 33. For FY 2021, the implementing unit shall ensure that obligation and disbursement of the ILRC Fund under the SPED Program shall be in accordance with Cash-Based Budgeting System and consistent with Section 62 of General Provision of the FY 2021 General Appropriations Act (GAA) of RA No. 11518 and National Budget Circular (NBC) 583 dated January 4, 2021.
- 34. The succeeding release of fund particularly for FYs 2022 and 2023 for the ILRC purpose shall be guided by the corresponding legislative act authorizing the release and use of the said fund and the corresponding NBC to be released by DBM.
- 35. The conversion of the SPED classrooms into prototype ILRC model for each region shall be programed in three consecutive Fiscal Years as follows:

**For FY 2021**, the following support service areas shall be converted based on the layout design, dimensions and requirements provided in Enclosure No. 2:

a. Assessment Service Area

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- b. Physical Therapy Service Area
- c. Occupational and Behavioral Therapy Service Area
- d. Speech and Language Therapy Service Area

**For FY 2022**, the following support service areas shall be converted based on the layout design, dimensions and requirements provided in Enclosure No. 2, subject to the availability of funds:

- a. Bridging Service Area
- b. E-library/Instructional Materials Service Area
- c. Daily Living Skills Development Area

**For FY 2023**, the following support service areas shall be converted based on the layout design, dimensions and requirements provided in Enclosure No. 2, subject to the availability of funds:

- a. Management Service Area
- b. Skills Development Area (e.g., Arts & Craft; ICT; Bread & Pastry)
- c. Water/Hydrotherapy Area
- 36. The scope and program of work to be prepared by the SDO for the procurement shall be based on the number of support service areas per Fiscal Year and their layout design, dimensions and requirements found in Enclosure No. 2.

# PHASE 2. EXPANSION ON THE CONVERSION OF SPED CENTERS INTO ILRCs

- 37. The conversion of one (1) SPED Center into ILRC shall be expanded in every SDO after the prototype ILRC models have been fully operationalized and subject to the availability of funds.
- 38. Additional guidelines for the expansion on the conversion of SPED centers into ILRCs shall be issued based on the lessons gained/experienced from the development of the prototypes ILRC models.

#### VIII. GOVERNANCE, DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The conversion of the school with SPED Center or School with space facility into ILRC shall be a shared responsibility of the different levels of governance.

39. Central Office

- a. Provides overall direction in the conversion of school with SPED center or school with space facility into ILRC through policy formulation and standard setting;
- b. Provides technical assistance to the regional, division and the ILRC personnel through the Bureau of Learning Delivery on the operationalization of the ILRCs;
- c. Facilitates the processing of the Sub-Allotment Release Order and download to the implementing units the allocated budget; and
- d. Serves as oversight during the preparatory activities in the conversion of SPED centers into ILRC.
- 40. Regional Office
  - a. Recommends to the Central Office through the Bureau of Learning Delivery

     Student Inclusion Division the schools with SPED Center based on the
     requirements and criteria for validation and finalization on the list of SPED
     centers to be converted into ILRC;
  - b. Monitors and evaluates the conversion school with SPED center into ILRC; and
  - c. Provides technical assistance to the Division Office on the conversion of school with SPED center into ILRC.
- 41. Division Office
  - a. The Curriculum Implementation Division (CID) shall serve as the implementing unit for the conversion of the school with SPED center into ILRC;
  - b. Recommends to the Regional Office the school with SPED center or school with space facility to converted into ILRC;

- c. Prepare the program of work for the procurement of materials and services in the conversion of the SPED center or school with space facility into ILRC;
- d. Ensure the compliance of the service provider based on the layout, design and specification provided in Enclosure No. 2; and
- e. Forges partnership with the Local Government Units and/or Non-Government Organization for support to the conversion of SPED center into ILRC through a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA)/Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).
- 42. School

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- a. Ensure the availability of SPED classrooms to be converted into different ILRC support service areas;
- b. Implement the policy guidelines in collaboration with the Division Office on the conversion of the SPED center into ILRC;
- c. Designates an ILCR coordinator, preferably a SPED teacher to serve as the focal person on the conversion of the SPED center into ILRC;
- d. Prepares and submits status report on the conversion of SPED center into ILRC when necessary;
- e. Coordinate with the Division Office on the decisions to be made in all matters related to the conversion of SPED center into ILRC; and
- f. Initiate partnership with Local Government Units or Non-Government Organizations in collaboration with the Division Office to support the conversion of the SPED center into ILRC.

## IX. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- 43. The Central Office through the monitoring team organized by the Bureau of Learning Delivery Student Inclusion Division (BLD-SID) shall conduct monitoring and evaluation on the implementation of this policy in aid policy formulation and standard setting.
- 44. BLD-SID shall evaluate outcomes/results based on the standards, related policies, requirements, and involvement of the stakeholders in Phase 1, establishment of ILRC.
- 45. The Quality Assurance Division (QAD) in the regional office shall organize a team to monitor and evaluate the implementation of this policy guidelines at the division level for technical assistance when necessary.
- 46. The School Governance and Operations Division (SGOD) in the Division Office as the implementing unit shall conduct monitoring and evaluation for progress tracking and necessary adjustments in the program of work and other interventions to ensure that the conversion of SPED center into ILRC is implemented as planned.

## X. EFFECTIVITY

47. This policy guidelines shall take effect immediately upon its publication in the DepEd official website. It shall be filed with the University of the Philippines - Office of the National Administrative Register (UP-ONAR).

## XI. REFERENCES

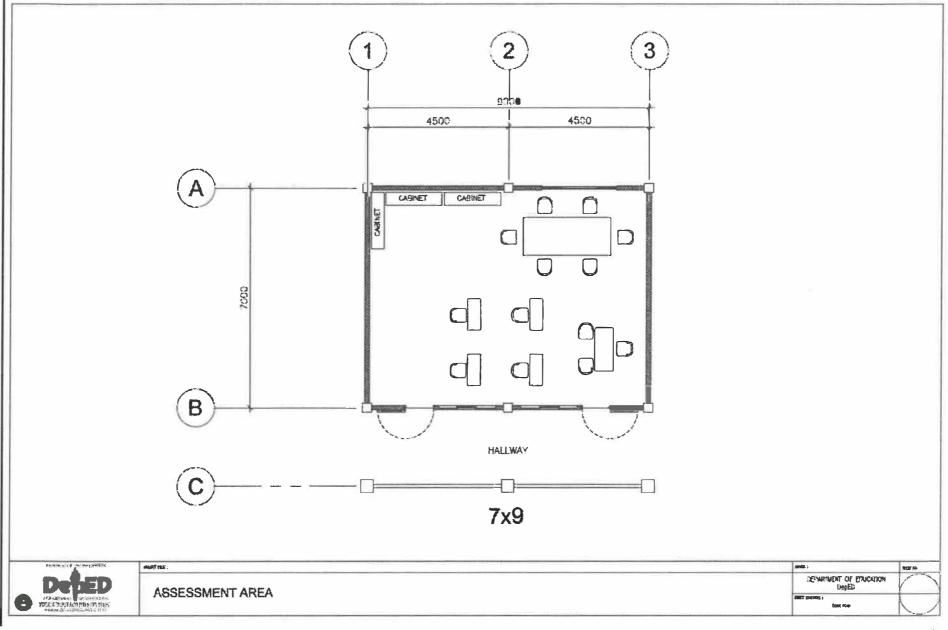
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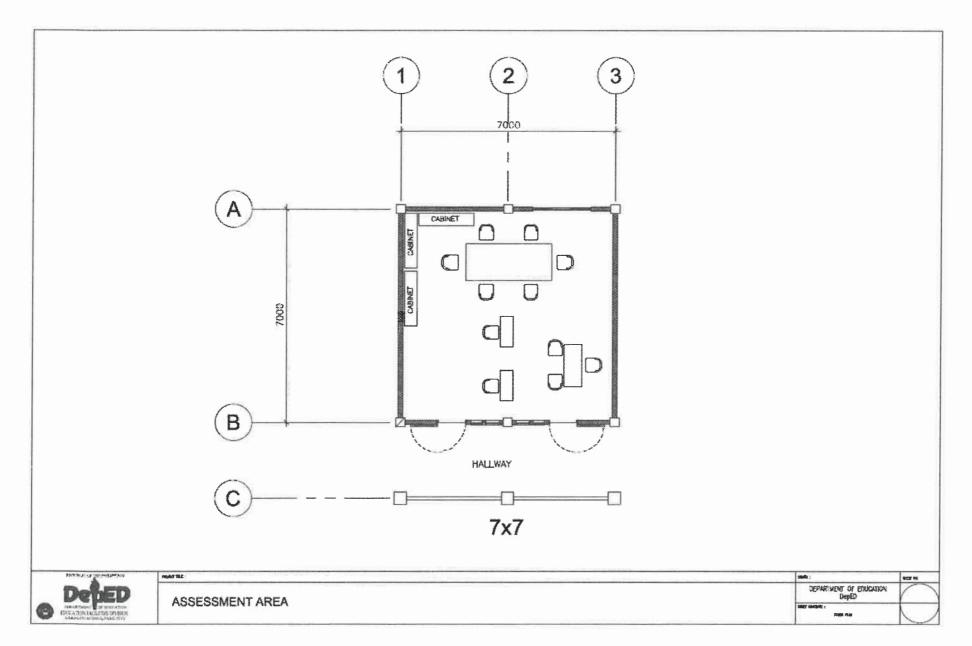
1987 Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines

- DepEd Order No. 44, s. 2021 (Policy Guidelines on the Provision of Educational Programs and Services for Learners with Disabilities in the K to 12 Basic Education Program)
- DepEd Order No. 21, s. 2019 (*Policy Guidelines on the K to 12 Basic Education Program*), Annex 5: Inclusive Education Policy Framework for Basic Education
- DepEd Order No. 46, s. 2013 (Guidelines on the Madrasah Education Program and Utilization of the Support Fund)
- DepEd Order No. 54, s. 2012 (Policy Guidelines on the Implementation of Alternative Delivery Modes (ADMS))
- DepEd Order No. 72, s. 2009 (Inclusive Education as Strategy for Increasing Participation Rate of Children)
- DepEd Order No. 51, s. 2004 (Standard Curriculum for Elementary Public Schools and Private Madaris)
- DepEd Order No. 117, s. 1987 (Policies and Guidelines for Special Education)
- National Budget Circular 542, issued by the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) on August 29, 2012, reiterates compliance with Section 93 of the General Appropriations Act of FY 2012

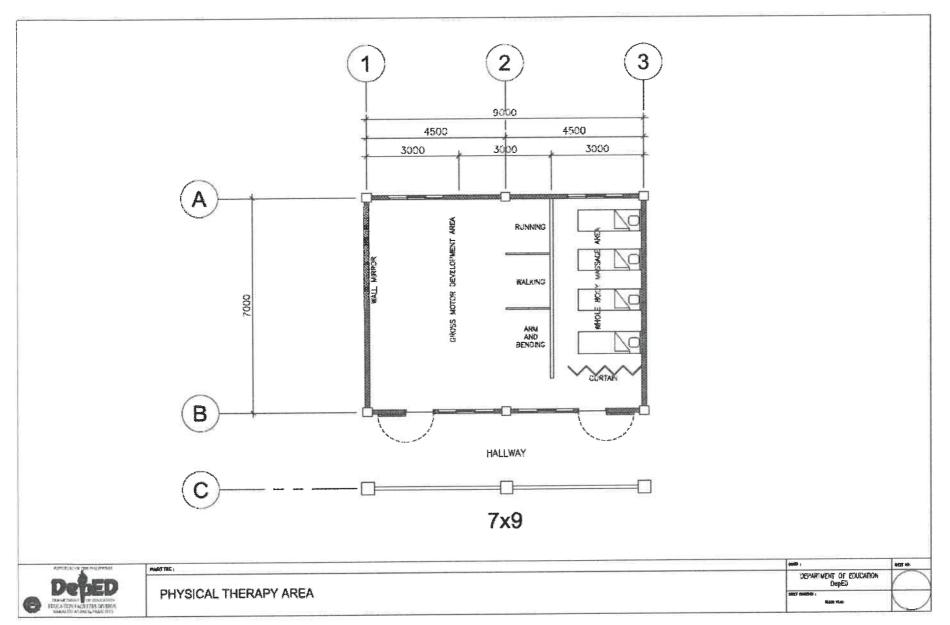
(Enclosure No. 2 to DepEd Order No. 045, s. 2021)



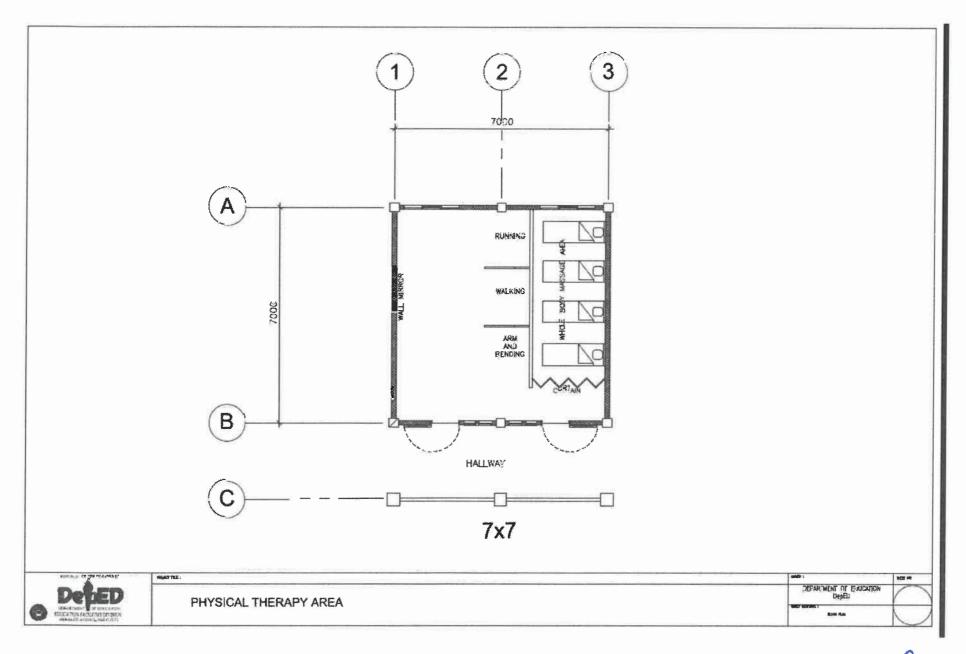


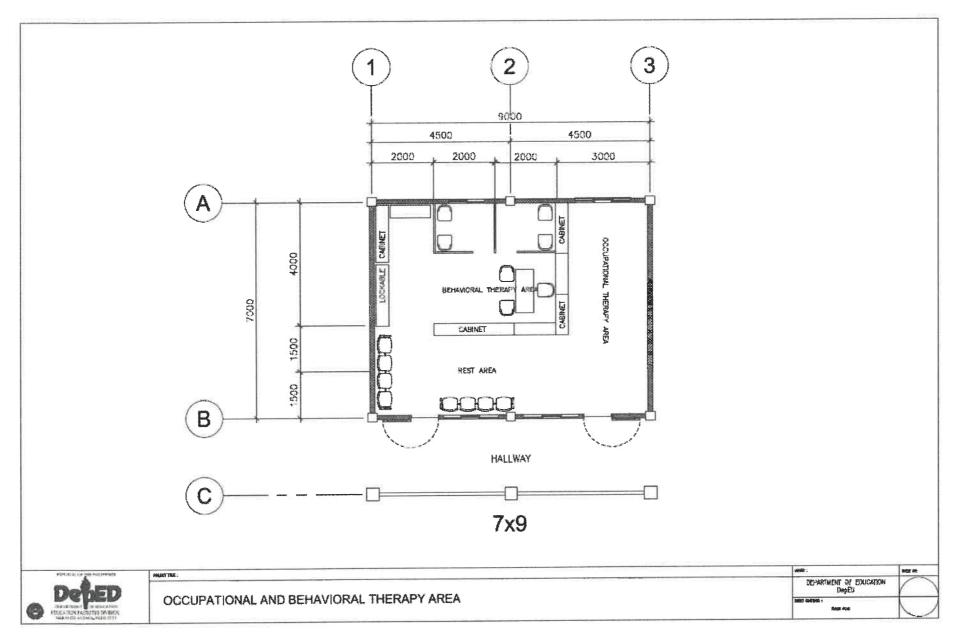




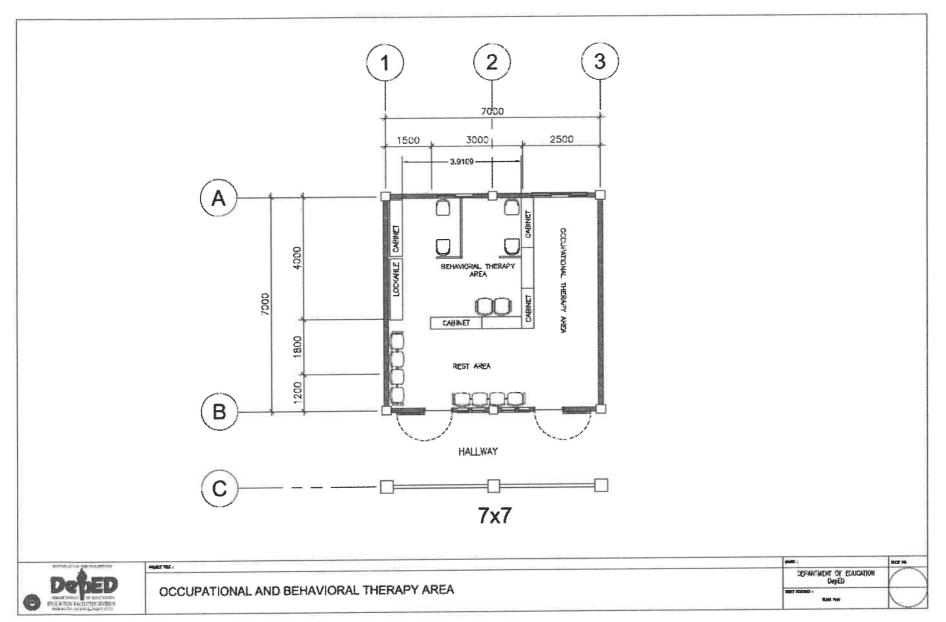




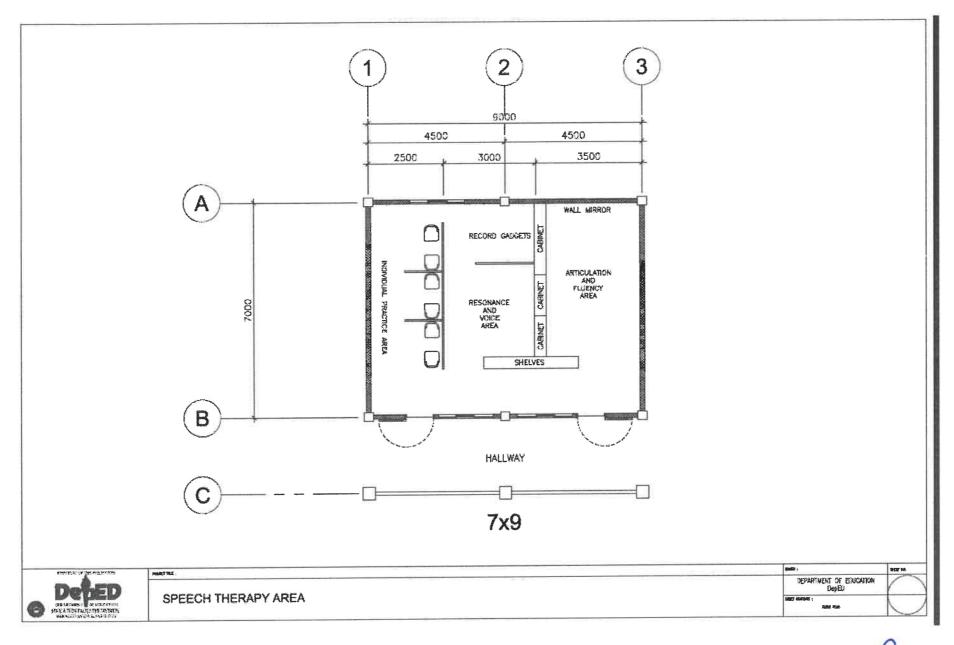


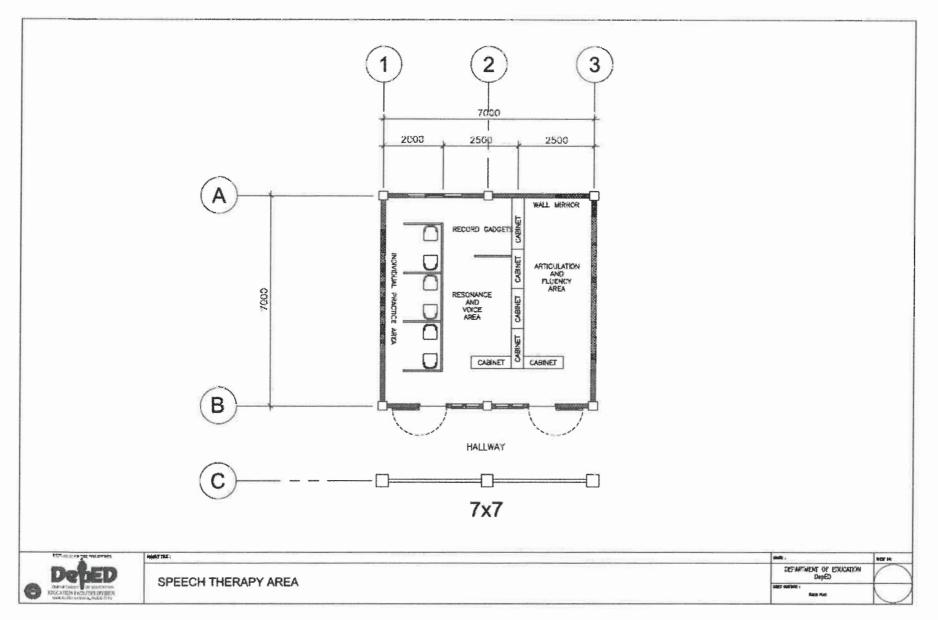




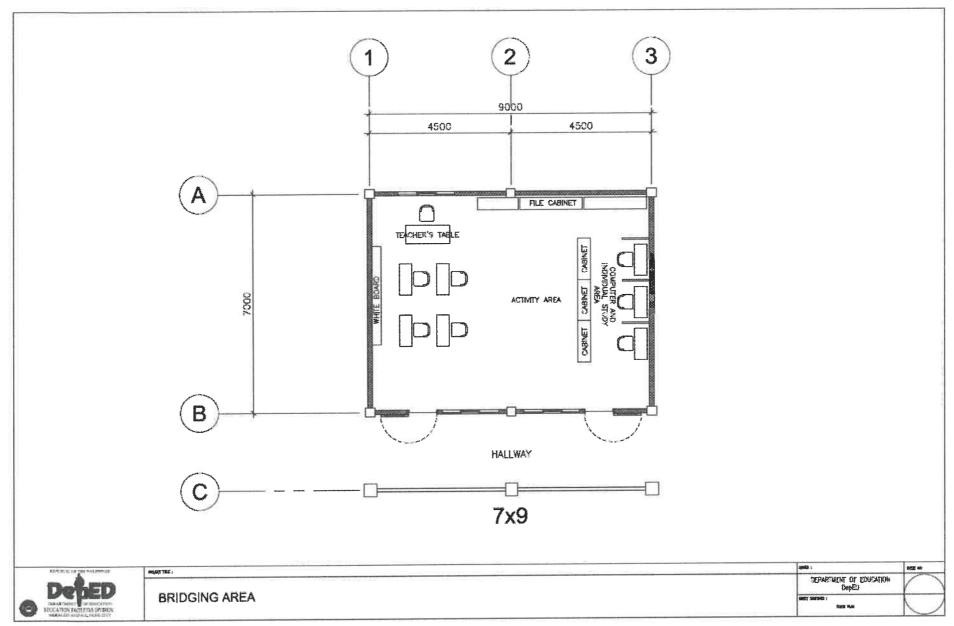


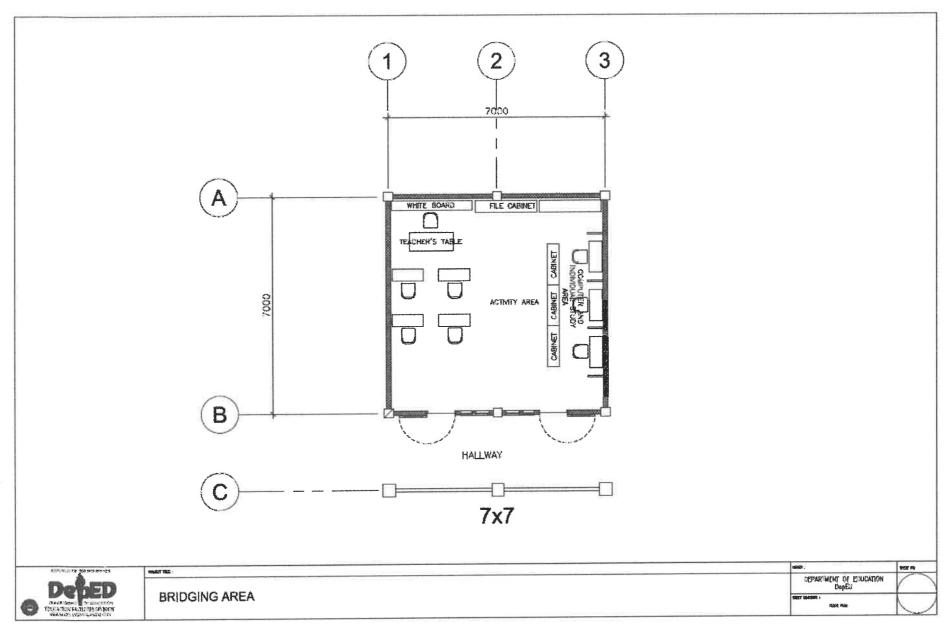
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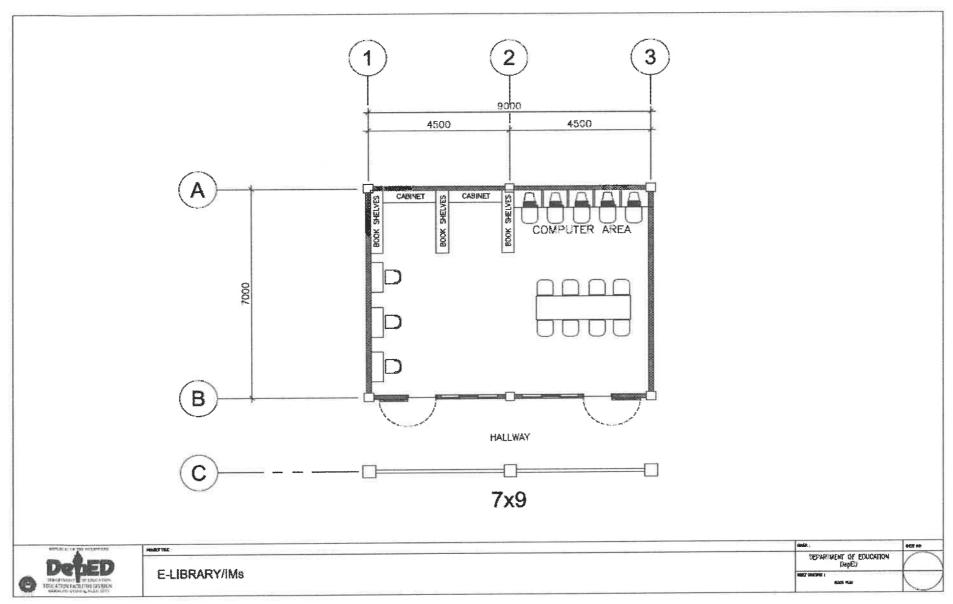


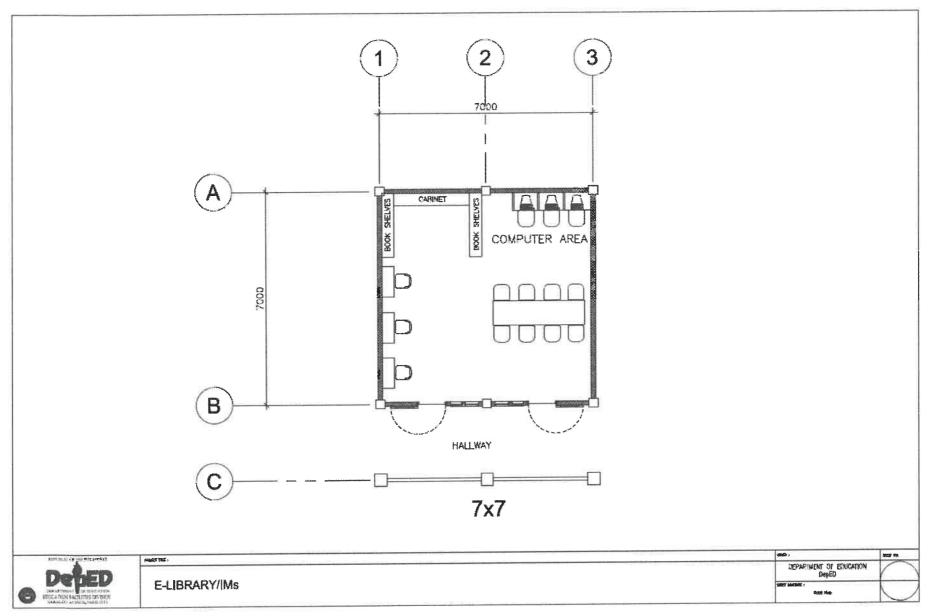






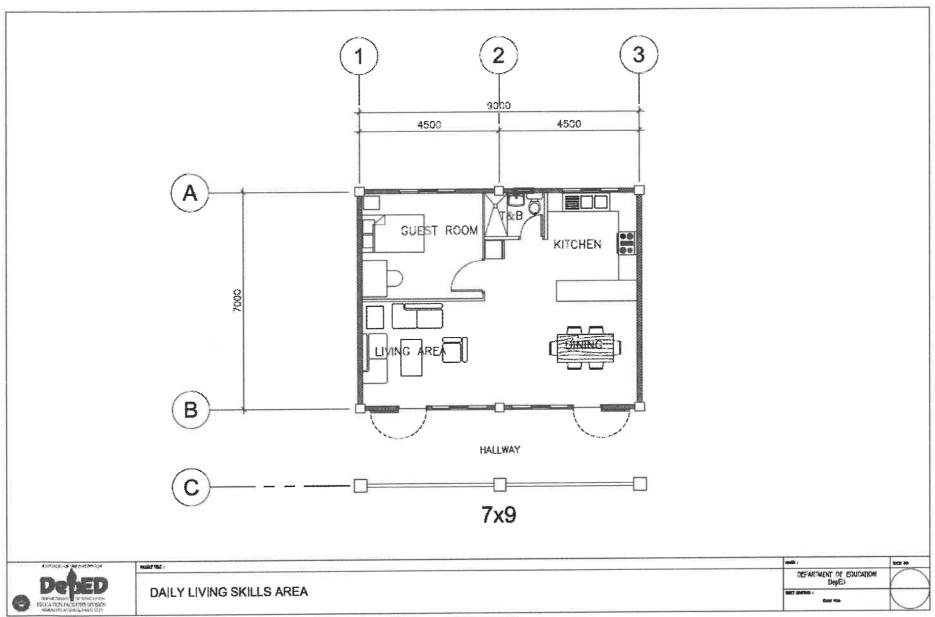


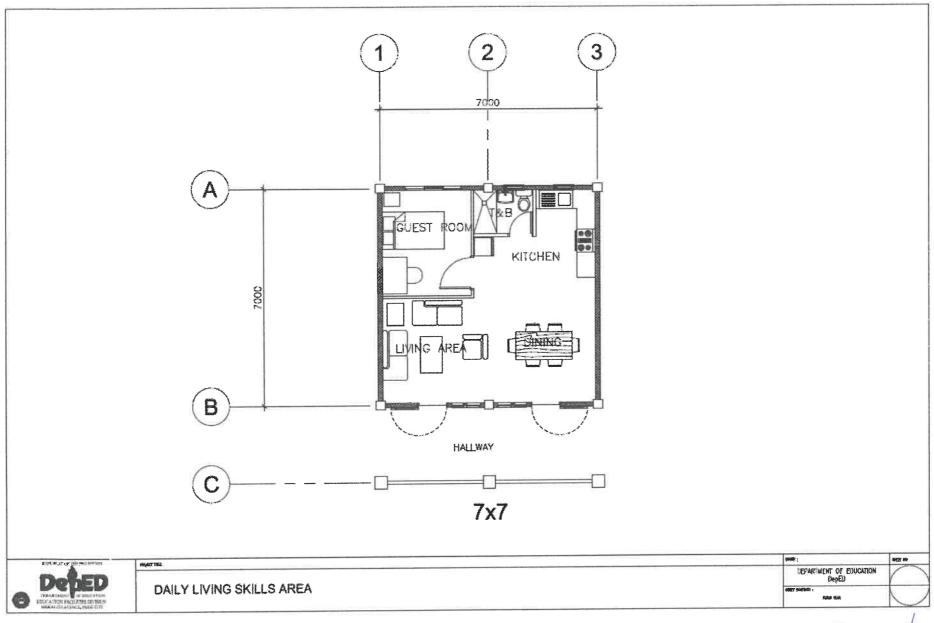




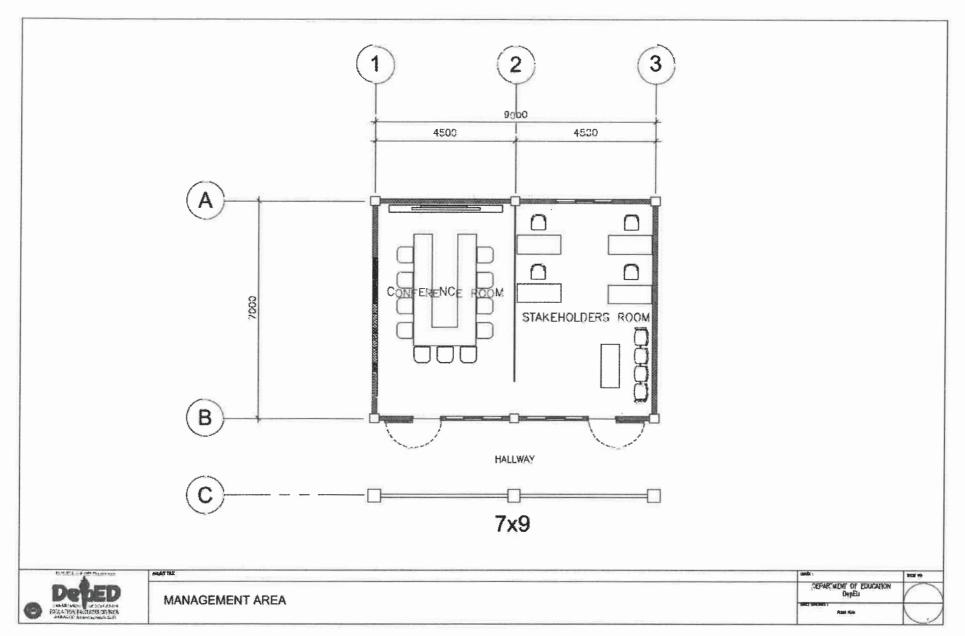


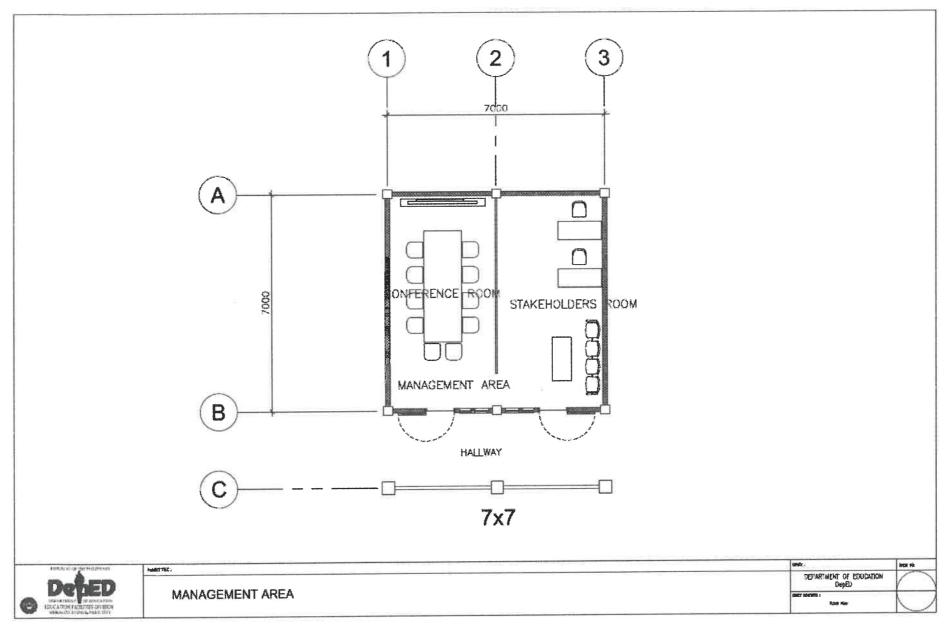


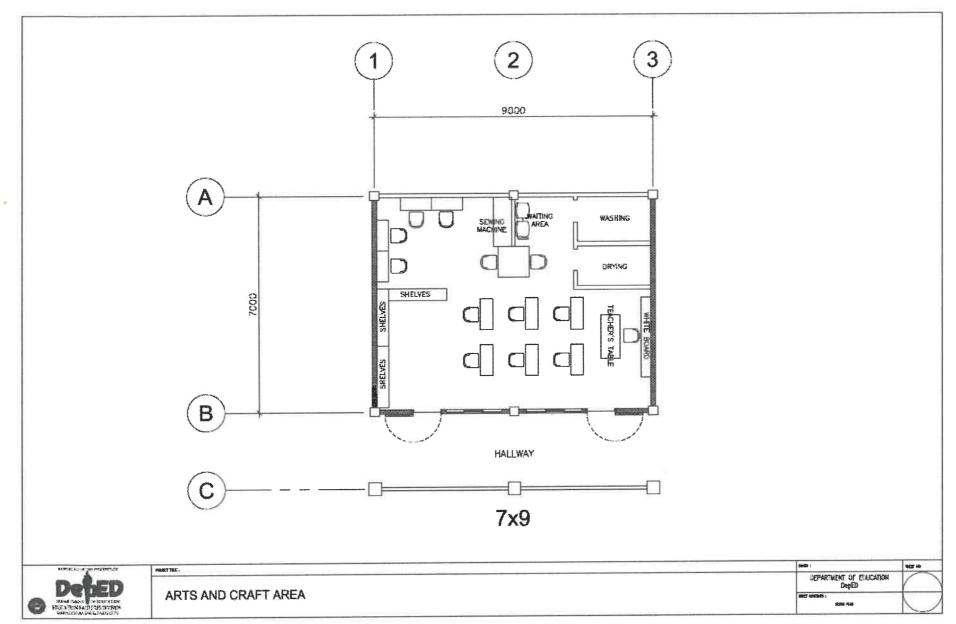


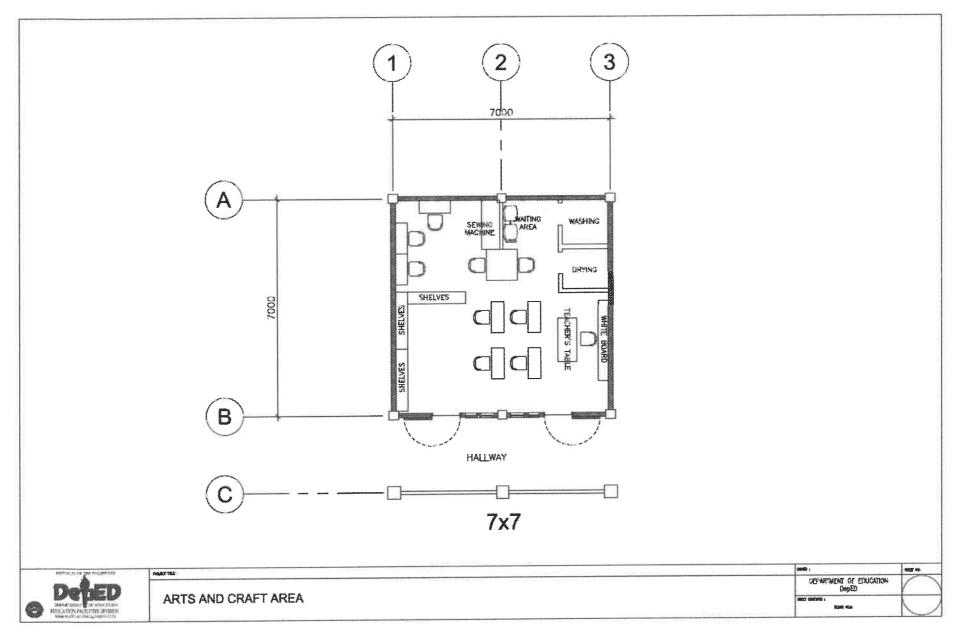


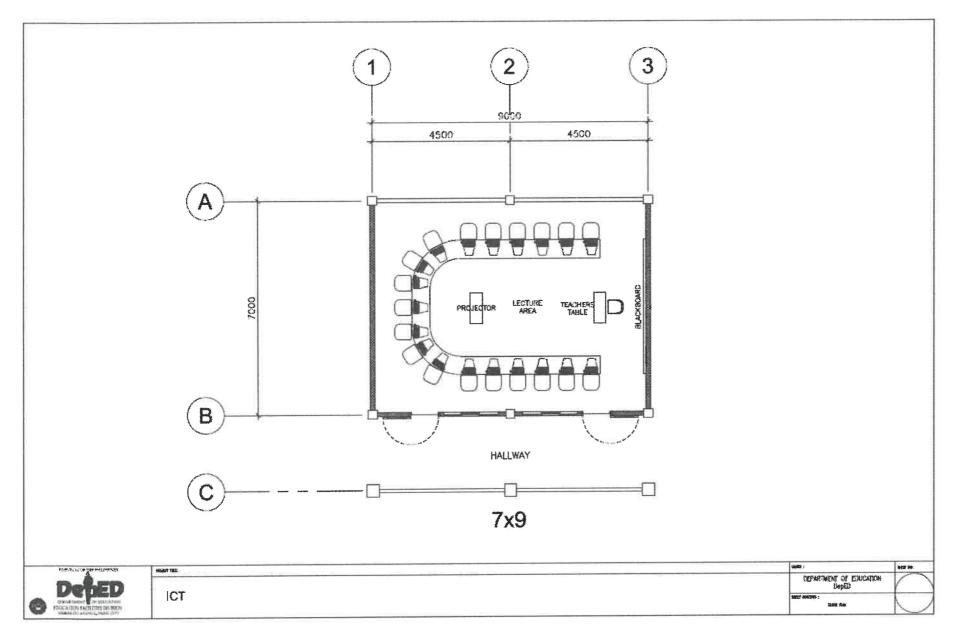


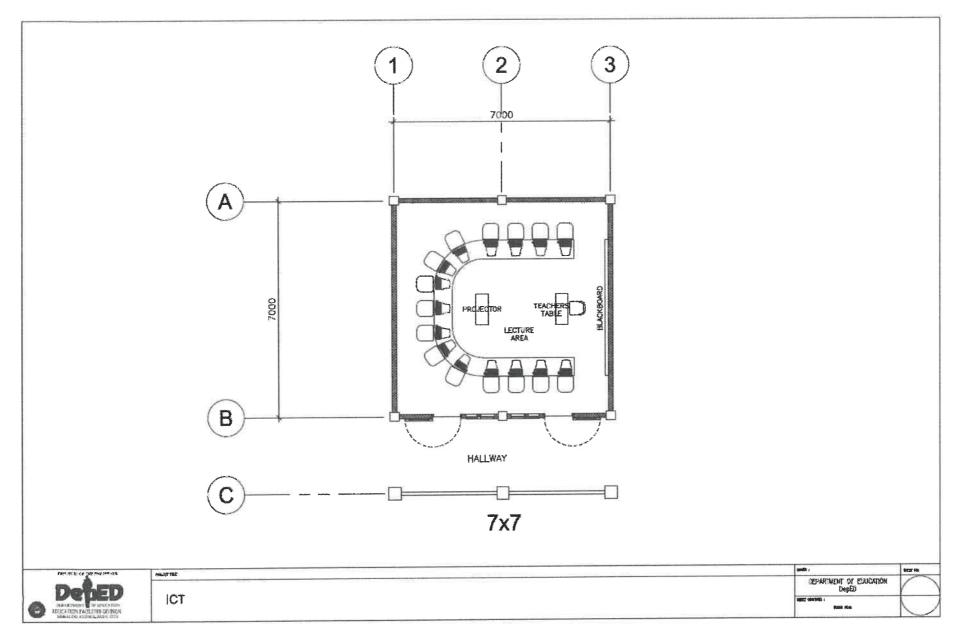




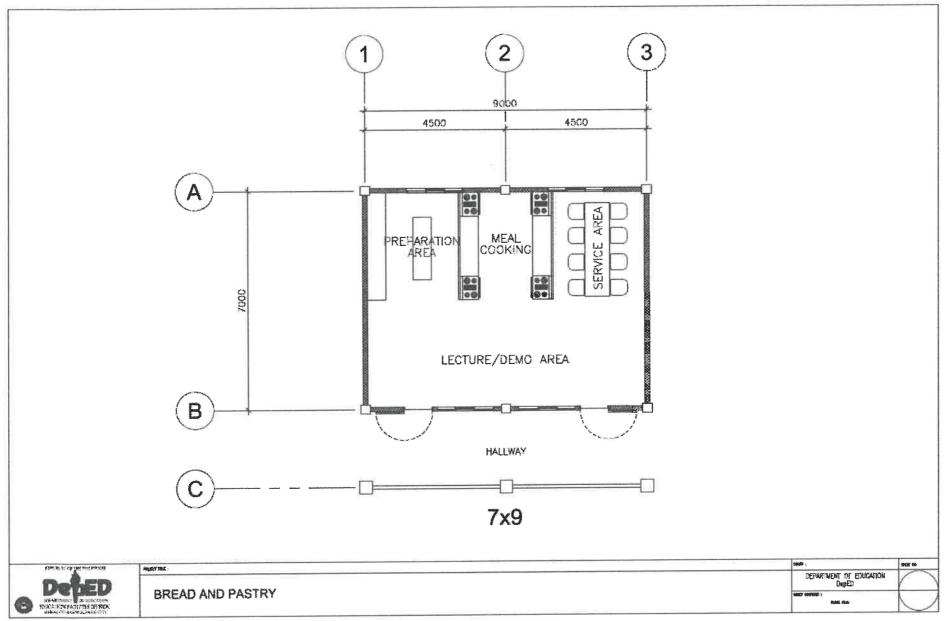


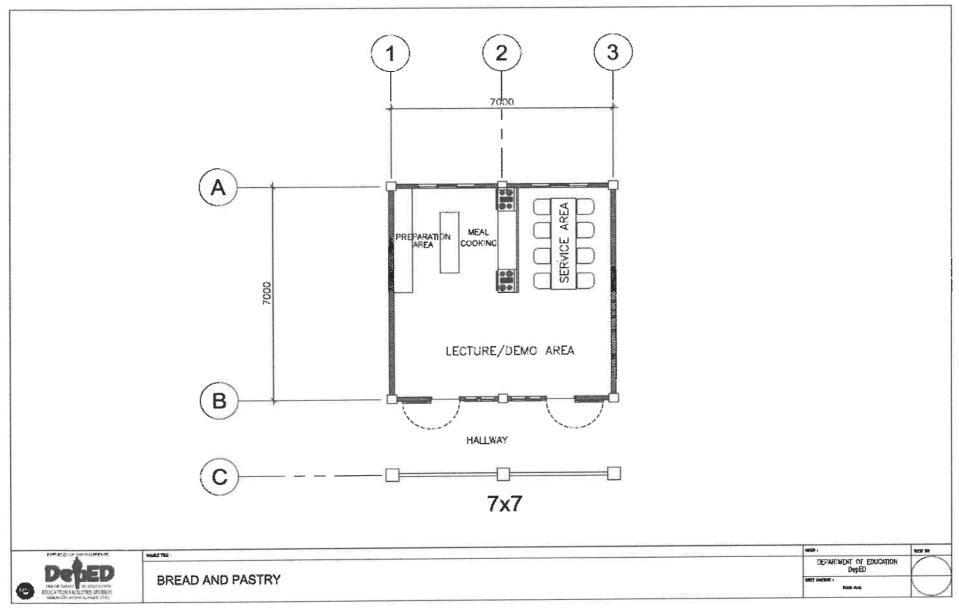




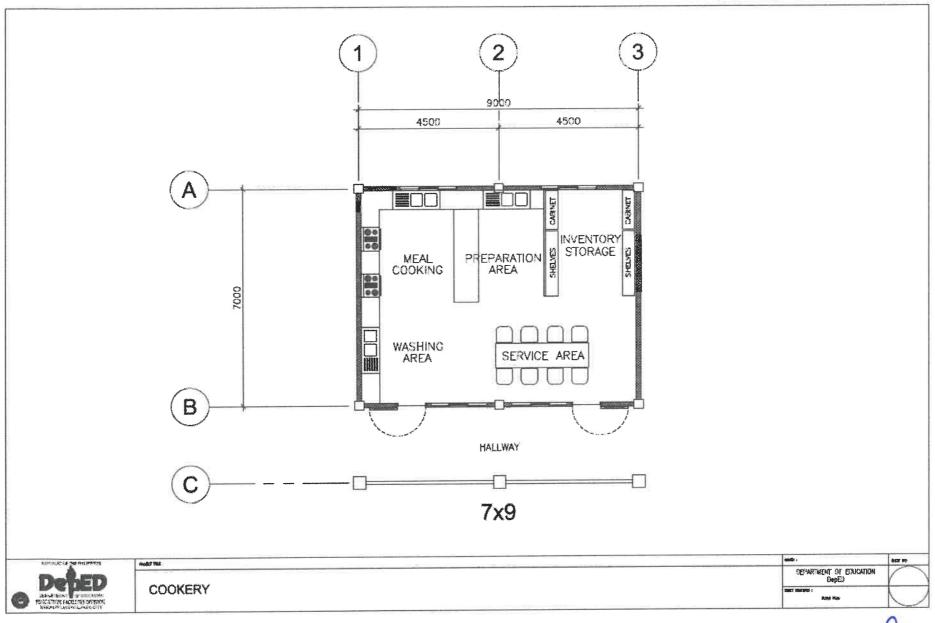








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