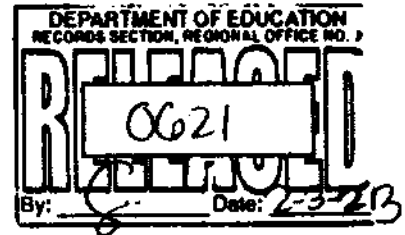






Republic of the Philippines  
**Department of Education**  
REGION X – NORTHERN MINDANAO



February 2, 2023

REGIONAL MEMORANDUM

No. 56, s. 2023

**INTENSIFY DAILY HANDWASHING WITH SOAP ACTIVITY IN SCHOOLS**

To: Schools Division Superintendents  
Chiefs, School Governance and Operations Divisions  
Public Schools District Supervisors  
Elementary and Secondary School Administrators  
School Health Personnel  
All others concerned

1. This issuance refers to the attached **Memorandum OASGFO No. 2022-102** from the Office of Assistant Secretary for Governance and Field Operation on the **Department of Health's (DOH) Recommendations to Prevent Hand Foot and Mouth Disease (HFMD)** to intensify daily handwashing with soap activity in schools.
2. The DOH, through the Center for Disease Control (CDC), cited the widespread of this very contagious viral disease, which is most common in children and quickly spreads in schools. There is an increasing number of HFMD affected learners in some parts of the country. The disease can be easily transmitted through person-to-person contact like hugging, kissing, sharing of utensils, respiratory droplets (e.g., sneezing and coughing) and touching contaminated surfaces and objects. Signs and symptoms include fever, sores in the mouth, hands, palms, fingers, and soles.
3. Hence, this Office requires all schools to intensify daily handwashing with soap activity as a cost-effective preventive measure and adapt the DOH recommendations as follows:
  - a. Ensure that handwashing facilities in all schools are utilized and always functional and that water and soap are always available.
  - b. Coordinate with Local Chief Executive, through the Local Health Units for regular disinfection of classrooms and school offices.
  - c. Utilize all locally available information and campaign materials, including the DOH Playbooks for Schools on Hand Hygiene and Sanitation.
  - d. ~~Inte~~ntensify information dissemination on proper handwashing to students, teachers, and all school personnel.




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- e. Inform parents of the learners to also monitor other family members for signs and symptoms and to seek immediate medical advice when these are present.
4. This Office directs the immediate and wide dissemination of this Memorandum.

**DR. ARTURO B. BAYOCOT, CESO III**  
Regional Director

  
**DR. VICTOR G. DE GRACIA JR., CESO V**  
Assistant Regional Director  
Officer-in-Charge  
Office of the Regional Director

ATCH.: As stated  
To be indicated in the Perpetual Index  
under the following subject:

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

RE: Intensify daily handwashing with soap activity in schools

ESSD/rbc





Republic of the Philippines  
**Department of Education**  
**OPERATIONS**


OASGFO No. 2022-102

**MEMORANDUM**

TO : **ALL REGIONAL DIRECTORS**  
**ALL SCHOOLS DIVISION SUPERINTENDENTS**  
**ALL SCHOOL HEADS**  
**ALL OTHERS CONCERNED**

FROM :   
**Atty. REVSEE A. ESCOBEDO**  
*Undersecretary for Operations*

  
**FRANCIS CESAR B. BRINGAS**  
*Assistant Secretary for Operations*

  
**DEXTER A. GALBAN**  
*Assistant Secretary for Operations*

SUBJECT : **Department of Health's Recommendations to Prevent Hand Foot and Mouth Disease**

DATE : **January 25, 2023**

This Office respectfully endorses the attached letter from Dr. Maria Rosario S. Vergeire, Officer-in-Charge, Department of Health (DOH), dated December 2, 2022, regarding the DOH's recommendations to prevent Hand Foot and Mouth Disease (HFMD).

- To prevent the spread of HFMD, DOH encourages the following actions.
1. Ensure that handwashing facilities in all schools are utilized and always functional and that water and soap are always available.
  2. Coordinate with Local Chief Executives through the Local Health Units for regular disinfection of classrooms and school offices.
  3. Utilize all locally available information and campaign materials, including the DOH Playbooks for Schools on Hand Hygiene and Sanitation.
  4. Intensify information dissemination on proper handwashing to students, teachers, and all school personnel; and

5. Inform parents of students to monitor other family members for signs and symptoms and to seek immediate medical advice when these are present.

For wide dissemination and appropriate action.



Republic of the Philippines  
Department of Health  
**OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY**

02 December 2022

**HONORABLE SARA Z. DUTERTE**  
Vice President, Republic of the Philippines  
Secretary, Department of Education

Dear **Hon. Duterte:**

The Department of Health (DOH) is concerned with the recent health events and surveillance reports on the increasing number of cases of **Hand Foot and Mouth Disease (HFMD)**.

According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), HFMD is a very contagious viral disease that is most common in children and it spreads quickly in schools and daycare centers. The disease can be easily transmitted through person-to-person contact (e.g. hugging, kissing, sharing cups/utensils); respiratory droplets (e.g. virus particles spread from sneezing, coughing) and contact with contaminated surfaces and objects (e.g. contaminated doorknobs, toys then touching the eyes, nose, mouth). Signs and symptoms include fever, sores in the mouth, hands, palms, fingers and soles.

The DOH has already recorded 541 HFMD cases in Albay Province and most of which occurred only in a month-long period. Oas Municipality has the highest number of cases (162 cases as of December 2, 2022). The Albay Central School has already initiated preventive measures, like disinfection of classrooms and information dissemination.

Clustering of cases was also detected in other provinces like Cagayan and Isabela with 45 and 29 cases respectively. There were also reports in Mariveles, Bataan and in Trinidad and Mankayon of Benguet.

To prevent the spread of this highly transmissible disease amongst our school children, the DOH shares with you the following recommendations for DepEd's consideration:

- Ensure that handwashing facilities in all schools are utilized and always functional and that water and soap are always available.
- Coordinate with Local Chief Executives, through the Local Health Units for regular disinfection of classrooms and school offices.
- Utilize all locally available information and campaign materials, including the DOH Playbooks for Schools on Hand Hygiene and Sanitation.
- Intensify information dissemination on proper handwashing to students, teachers, and all school personnel.
- Inform parents of students to also monitor other family members for signs and symptoms and to seek immediate medical advice when these are present.

We hope that we have provided your Department with relevant information that can be disseminated to students, teachers and other school staff. DepEd is a crucial government agency that can support the DOH in controlling this infectious disease that is mostly affecting

our children. Rest assured that the DOH is more than grateful to provide assistance and support on any activities of DepEd that aims to address and prevent HFMD.

Thank you very much for your utmost cooperation on this public health issue.

Very truly yours,

**MARIA ROSARIO S. VERGEIRE, MD, MPH, CESO II**  
Officer-in-Charge  
Department of Health