**GUIDELINES ON ELIGIBILITY AND APPLICATION FOR THE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL VOUCHER PROGRAM (SHS VP) IN SY 2019-2020**

1. **RATIONALE**

Republic Act (RA) No. 10533, otherwise known as the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013, lengthened Philippine basic education from ten (10) to thirteen (13) years with the addition of Kindergarten and Grades 11 and 12 in Senior High School (SHS). Grade 11 was introduced in School Year (SY) 2016-2017, Grade 12 in SY 2017-2018.

The Philippine Constitution of 1987, particularly Article XIV, Section 1, guarantees the right of every Filipino to accessible and quality basic education, and Article XIV, Section 2.3 mandates the State to establish a system of, among others, subsidies and incentives to deserving individuals in both public and private schools. RA No. 10533 upholds both of the said provisions by explicitly expanding the programs of assistance under Government Assistance to Students and Teachers in Private Education (E-GASTPE Law or RA No. 8545 which amends RA No. No. 6728) to extend the benefits accorded by E-GASTPE to qualified learners in Grades 11 and 12. RA No. 10533 further mandates the Department of Education (DepEd) to formulate programs to enact the abovementioned law based on the principles of public-private partnership.

In this regard, DepEd developed the Senior High School Voucher Program (SHS VP), a program of financial assistance wherein subsidies in the form of vouchers are provided to qualified SHS learners in participating private or non-DepEd public SHSs. DepEd Order (DO) No. 11, s. 2015 provided the policy guidelines on the implementation of SHS VP. The said guidelines categorized the learners into two: those who automatically qualify for SHS VP, and those who shall undergo application, subject to additional guidelines that DepEd will issue for that purpose. This DepEd Order is being issued to provide the guidelines on the application for SHS VP in SY 2019-2020.

1. **SCOPE**

These guidelines shall have national applicability, and provide details on the requirements, procedure, and schedule for voucher application, from qualification to redemption, as well as other information relative to SHS VP application. These guidelines shall be effective for vouchers that will be redeemed in SY 2019-2020.

1. **DEFINITION OF TERMS**

For purposes of these guidelines, the terms listed below are defined as follows:

1. **Non-DepEd Senior High School (Non-DepEd SHS)** – An educational provider not directly operated by DepEd, but granted by DepEd with a permit or government recognition to operate SHS. This includes private high schools, private colleges and universities; state universities and colleges (SUCs); local universities and colleges (LUCs); and technical and vocational institutions offering SHS.
2. **Voucher** – A subsidy given by the State to qualified Grade 10 completers to enable them to enroll in a non-DepEd SHS of their choice. The assistance helps to defray the cost of tuition and all other published fees charged by a non-DepEd SHS. The subsidy is not given to the learner as cash; DepEd instead pays directly to the non-DepEd SHS where the learner enrolls. No vouchers are given to learners who enroll in DepEd SHSs.
3. **Grade 10 completers** – Learners currently in Grade 10 and are expected to complete Junior High School (JHS) at the end of SY 2018-2019.
4. **Education Service Contracting (ESC) grantees** – Learners who participate in the ESC, a program of financial assistance by DepEd for learners in certified private JHSs.
5. **Qualified Voucher Recipients (QVRs)** – Grade 10 completers who are automatically qualified to avail of the voucher. QVRs need not apply.
6. **Voucher Applicants (VAs)** – Grade 10 completers who apply to qualify for vouchers.
7. **Qualified Voucher Applicants (QVAs)** – Voucher applicants whose applications were successful and are thus eligible to avail of the voucher.
8. **Voucher Redemption** – The act of availing of the voucher by successfully enrolling in a non-DepEd SHS.
9. **Voucher Program Beneficiaries (VPBs)** – QVRs and QVAs who availed of the vouchers through voucher redemption.
10. **POLICY STATEMENT**

It is a policy of the Department to uphold the right of every Filipino to quality basic education by providing access whether through public provision or programs and arrangements based on the principles of public-private partnership. Consistent with Section 10 of RA No. 10533, DepEd engages the services of private educational institutions and non-DepEd public schools offering senior high school through programs of assistance under E-GASTPE.

One such program of assistance is the SHS VP which aims to increase access to SHS thereby providing greater choice to learners and their families in deciding the SHS program that caters to their needs and career goals. In accordance with Section 22 of the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of RA No. 10533, DepEd shall make SHS VP available primarily to Grade 10 completers in public schools, but shall also make it available to qualified Grade 10 completers in private educational institutions, subject to compliance with the qualifications and guidelines provided in this DepEd Order.

1. **IMPLEMENTATION ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**DepEd** is the institutional owner and final authority of the SHS VP. It implements SHS VP in fulfillment of its mandate, and in furtherance of the K to 12 reform agenda of the government. It shall oversee and formulate policies and programs, provide the necessary resources, and monitor and evaluate indicators relative to SHS VP to ensure its successful implementation.

The **Private Education Assistance Committee (PEAC)** has been contracted by the DepEd to manage the SHS VP. PEAC is the trustee of the Fund for Assistance to Private Education, a perpetual trust fund created to provide assistance to private education in the country. Specifically, for SHS VP application, PEAC shall coordinate with DepEd and other stakeholders to ensure that applications are processed and results are promptly released. PEAC is represented nationally by its National Secretariat (PEAC NS).

***Learners and their parents/guardians are responsible for their choice of Senior High School and their own voucher applications. They shall ensure that forms are correctly filled, documents are complete, and applications are received by PEAC NS on or before the deadline. They are also responsible for checking the results of their application once the results have been announced. Learners who are QVRs and QVAs are responsible for redeeming their vouchers within the prescribed redemption period.***

**Schools** shall provide assistance and guidance to uphold student choice in the SHS VP. They must process documents requested by the learners, and may provide career guidance programs, conduct orientations on SHS VP, and provide resources to facilitate voucher applications. In contrast, schools should not impose their preferences on learners or otherwise engage in practices that undermine student choice.

1. **ELIGIBILITY**

Only learners who completed JHS in public schools operated by DepEd, and in public or private educational institutions not directly operated by DepEd, but granted by DepEd with a permit or government recognition to operate SHS are eligible for SHS VP. For brevity, these learners shall be referred to as Grade 10 completers. Grade 10 completers are subdivided into (1) automatically qualified learners, and (2) voucher applicants.

1. **Automatically Qualified Learners**

Only Grade 10 completers in SY 2018-2019 who fall under the categories below automatically qualify for vouchers and are considered qualified voucher recipients (QVRs). They do not need to apply for vouchers.

* Category A: All Grade 10 completers in Public Schools operated by DepEd
* Category B: All Grade 10 completers in SUCs and LUCs
* Category C: All Grade 10 completers in private schools who are ESC grantees

1. **Voucher Applicants**

Only learners in the categories below need to apply for vouchers, and shall be referred to as voucher applicants (VAs).

* Category D: All Grade 10 completers in private schools in SY 2018-2019 who are not ESC grantees
* Category E: Learners who passed the Alternative Learning System (ALS) Accreditation and Equivalency (A&E) Test for Grade 10 by the start of the school year
* Category F: Learners who passed the Philippine Educational Placement Test (PEPT) for Grade 11 by the start of the school year.

**NOTE: The following learners are not eligible for SHS VP:**

* Grade 10 completers who completed Grade 10 before SY 2018-2019
* Learners who graduated High School in March 2015 or earlier
* Incoming Grade 12 learners who were not part of SHS VP in Grade 11
* Non-Filipino learners

The table below may be used for easy reference:

*Table 1. Eligibility Guide*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Not eligible** | **QVRs** | **VAs** |
| (No need to apply) | (Need to apply) |
| Grade 10 completers before SY 2018-2019  To clarify: ALS A&E Test and PEPT passers prior to SY 2018-2019 are also not eligible | Category A: Grade 10 completers in DepEd public schools | Category D: Grade 10 completers in private schools who are not ESC grantees |
| High School Graduates of March 2015 or earlier | Category B: Grade 10 completers in SUCs and LUCs | Category E: Learners who took/will take the ALS A&E Test\* in the current school year |
| Incoming Grade 12 learners who were not part of SHS VP in Grade 11 | Category C: Grade 10 completers who are ESC grantees | Category F: Learners who took/will take the PEPT\* in the current school year |
| Non-Filipino learners |  |  |

\* For VAs who fall under Categories E and F, they may apply for the voucher while waiting for results of the ALS A&E Test and PEPT, respectively.

1. **Voucher Application Procedures**

Application may be done manually OR online; both are free of charge**.** VAs are highly discouraged from submitting multiple applications. All applications shall be coursed through PEAC NS via the Online Voucher Application Portal (OVAP) for online application and the PEAC NS office for manual application. **DepEd shall not accept submissions of applications.** VAs are urged to apply online as this mode carries a number of features not available for manual applications. Online applications allow VAs to have a longer period to apply, submit the required documents in parts, and track their applications. The table below enumerates the steps for both manual and online application.

*Table 2. Voucher Application Procedures*

| **Online Application** | **Manual Application** |
| --- | --- |
| Deadline: **May 31, 2019** for account creation, **June 2, 2019** for submission of applications | Deadline: **May 31, 2019** |
| * 1. Access OVAP at <http://ovap.peac.org.ph>. Follow the instructions to create an OVAP account. VAs must use a working email address they have access to.   **NOTE: An account is not yet an application.** | 1. Obtain and fill out the Voucher Application Form (VAF-1). The VAF-1 is available at DepEd Schools Division Offices, private JHSs, and non-DepEd SHSs. It is also attached as **Annex 1** to this issuance and may be printed and reproduced. |
| * 1. A confirmation email shall be sent to the VA’s email address. Upon receipt of the confirmation email, click on the link provided to access the OVAP as a registered user. | 1. Enclose the following required documents in a long brown envelope:    * + - 1. Recent 2x2 colored ID photo          2. Proof of financial means\* of both parents or guardian/s, and the other person/s helping send the VA to school, if any          3. Signed Parent Consent Form\*\* for VAs below 18 years old at the time of the submission of the application          4. Certificate of Financial Assistance\*\*\* received (issued by the school), if applicable |
| 1. Complete the electronic Voucher Application Form (VAF-1). VAs may do this in parts, but must ensure changes are saved by section. | 1. Mail or submit the application package to:   **SHS Voucher Program Applications**  PEAC National Secretariat  5th Floor Salamin Building  197 Salcedo Street  Makati City 1229 |
| 1. Scan or take a picture and upload the following required documents:    * + - 1. Recent 2x2 colored ID photo          2. Proof of financial means\* of both parents or guardian/s, and the other person/s helping send the VA to school, if any  Signed Parent Consent Form\*\* for VAs below 18 years old at the time of the submission of the application  * + - * 1. Certificate of Financial Assistance\*\*\* received (issued by the school), if applicable | 1. Courier services that allow VAs to track their submissions are highly recommended. |
| 1. Submit the application only when the VAF-1 and the required supporting documents are complete. |  |
| 1. After submission of the application, OVAP shall automatically confirm receipt of the application through an email sent to the VA’s email address. The email shall contain a Voucher Application Number (VAN) assigned by OVAP which VAs may use to track their application. |  |

\*Refer to Table 3. Expected submission per scenario and Table 4. Required document as proof of financial means

\*\*Attached as **Annex 2** is the Privacy Notice and Consent Form. The Parent Consent Form is a requirement for VAs below 18 years old at the time of the submission of the application.

\*\*\*A template for the Certificate of Financial Assistance is attached as **Annex 3**.

VAs must submit proof of the financial means of both their parents or guardian/s and the other person/s helping send the VA to school, if any. The table below provides the expected submission per scenario.

Table 3. Expected submission per scenario

| **Scenario** | **Expected Submission** |
| --- | --- |
| VA lives with/is supported through school by both parents | * Required documents for both parents |
| VA’s parents are separated, but is supported through school by both parents | * Required documents for both parents |
| VA has one deceased parent, lives with/is supported through school by living parent | * Required document only for solo parent * Solo Parent I.D. of living parent OR Death Certificate for deceased parent OR Notarized Affidavit\* stating that solo parent is a widow/widower |
| VA’s parents are separated, lives with/is supported through school by only one parent | * Required document only for solo parent * Solo Parent I.D. of solo parent OR Notarized Affidavit\* stating that solo parent is separated (whether legally or not) |
| VA has a single/solo parent | * Required document only for solo parent * Solo Parent I.D. of solo parent OR Notarized Affidavit\* stating that parent is a single/solo parent |
| VA lives with/is supported through school by one parent and one guardian | * Required documents for both the parent and the guardian |
| VA lives with/is supported through school by a guardian/s | * Required documents for the guardian/s |
| VA is supported through school by a person/s other than the parent/s or guardian/s | * Required documents for the person/s helping send the VA to school |

\*A template for the Affidavit to be notarized and submitted is attached as **Annex 4**.

Based on the scenarios above, the following table provides the required document as proof of financial means.

Table 4. Required document as proof of financial means

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **If the concerned person is:** | **Required document** | **Where to obtain document if not readily available** |
| Employed in the Philippines (including self-employed) | Latest Annual Income Tax Return OR | Bureau of Internal Revenue |
| Certificate of Employment\* | Employer |
| Employed abroad | Certificate of Employment\* | Employer or recruitment agency |
| Unemployed but with other sources of income | Affidavit of Source of Income stating average monthly earnings/support\*\* received | Notary Public |
| Unemployed and without income | Certificate of Non-filing of Income Tax Return OR | Bureau of Internal Revenue |
|  | Municipal Certificate of Unemployment\*\*\* | Mayor’s office (NOT from the Barangay or the City Assessor’s office) |

\*The Certificate of Employment should state the person’s occupation and gross monthly income, which refers to the gross monthly wages or salaries before taxes and other deductions. It includes basic pay, overtime pay, commissions, tips, allowances and one-twelfth of annual bonuses.

\*\*Average monthly earnings refers to earnings from sources of income such as business, trade, profession, investments, and/or pensions.

\*\*\*A template for the Municipal Certificate of Unemployment is attached as **Annex 5**.

1. **Tracking the Application, Follow-ups, and Inquiries**

**It is the responsibility of the VA to ensure that his or her application is complete and correct, and that it is received on or before the deadline.** It is likewise the responsibility of the VA to track the status of the application.

VAs who applied online can track the status of their applications by accessing their accounts on OVAP.

For inquiries, please call the PEAC National Secretariat at

1. **Qualification or Disqualification**

Grade 10 completers who fall under Categories A, B, and C, as discussed in Section VI. (Eligibility) of these guidelines are QVRs and should not apply. Applications by QVRs shall not be processed.

PEAC NS shall process all and only complete applications submitted by VAs on or before the deadline, and forward the results to DepEd for approval.

**The following applications shall be disqualified:**

* 1. Applications submitted after the deadline
  2. Applications with incomplete VAF-1
  3. Applications with incomplete required documents
  4. Applications that contain false information
  5. Applications by learners who are not eligible for the SHS VP
     + Grade 10 completers who completed Grade 10 before SY 2018-2019
     + Learners who graduated High School in March 2015 or earlier
     + Incoming Grade 12 learners who were not part of SHS VP in Grade 11
     + Non-Filipino learners

1. **Results of Application**

Results for both manual and online applications will be posted on OVAP and may be accessed by learners, parents, and schools. VAs will not be notified of the results; **it is the responsibility of the VA to check the results of the application on OVAP.** Announcements on the posting of results shall be made on the PEAC NS and DepEd websites, and other available media.

VAs with successful applications become eligible for the voucher and shall be called Qualified Voucher Applicants (QVAs). **For VAs who fall under Categories E and F**, being a QVA is contingent upon the results of the ALS A&E Test and PEPT. VAs who have successful SHS VP applications but do not pass the ALS A&E Test and PEPT in time for SY 2019-2020 are still not eligible for vouchers.

Results of the voucher application are deemed **final and not subject to appeal**.

1. **Voucher Validity and Redemption**

QVRs/QVAs redeem their voucher by enrolling for Grade 11 at a non-DepEd SHS. As with any learner, they must satisfy the requirements for admission set by the non-DepEd SHS. A QVR/QVA who successfully enrolls at a non‐DepEd SHS becomes a voucher program beneficiary (VPB). Upon enrollment, QVRs/QVAs must present to their chosen non-DepEd SHS the following documentary evidence as proof of their eligibility.

Table 6. Documentary Evidence of Eligibility

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **QVR/QVA Category** | **Document** | **Where to obtain document** |
| Categories A and B | Report card bearing a Learner Reference Number | Junior high school |
| Category C | ESC Certificate | Junior high school or PEAC NS |
| Categories D, E, and F | QVA Certificate | PEAC NS via OVAP |
| Category E | Certificate of Rating (COR) – ALS A&E for Secondary | DepEd-Bureau of Educational Assessment (BEA) |
| Category F | COR – PEPT for Grade 10 | DepEd-BEA |

Voucher redemption begins on the day of posting of application results on OVAP and ends on September 30 of the school year immediately after Grade 10 completion. Vouchers not redeemed within the prescribed period shall no longer be valid. QVRS/QVAs who shall be unable to redeem their vouchers within the said period due to prolonged illness, accident, force majeure, or prolonged illness or death of a parent/guardian must submit a letter addressed to the PEAC Executive Director providing justification for not redeeming the voucher. Relevant documents to support their claims e.g. for prolonged illness, a medical certificate issued by a licensed medical doctor, must be submitted along with the letter. The letter and supporting documents shall be evaluated by PEAC and become the basis for extension of voucher validity, subject to approval of DepEd.

The voucher covers only two school years – Grades 11 and 12, regardless of the number of school years it takes for the recipient to complete SHS.

1. **Applicable Voucher Values**

The applicable voucher amount is determined by the category of the QVR/QVA, and the location, type, and fees of the non-DepEd SHS where the QVR will enroll. The maximum voucher amounts are shown in the table below:

Table 7. Maximum applicable voucher amount (in PHP per student per school year)

| **Location of Non-DepEd SHS** | **QVR/QVA**  **Category** | **Voucher Amount** | **Voucher Amount for SUC/LUC** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| National Capital Region (NCR) | Categories A, B, E, F | 22,500 | 11,250 |
| Categories C, D | 18,000 |
| Highly urbanized cities (HUCs) outside of NCR | Categories A, B, E, F | 20,000 | 10,000 |
| Categories C, D | 16,000 |
| All other locations | Categories A, B, E, F | 17,500 | 8,750 |
| Categories C, D | 14,000 |

Voucher amounts represent the maximum payment a non‐DepEd SHS shall be paid per VPB per school year. Schools receive voucher payments based on the total school fees they charge or the maximum voucher amount applicable, whichever is lower.

1. **Schedule of Implementation**

VAs are advised to be mindful of significant dates in the SHS VP as shown in the schedule below:

Table 8. Schedule of SHS VP Application implementation

| **Schedule** | **Process** |
| --- | --- |
| May 26, 2019 | Start of voucher application period |
| June 2, 2019 | Deadline for manual applications |
| May 31, 2019 | Deadline for creation of accounts on OVAP for online applications |
| June 2, 2019 | Deadline for submission of online applications on OVAP |
| June 17, 2019 | Posting of application results on OVAP |
| Start of voucher redemption |
| September 30, 2019 | Deadline for voucher redemption |

1. **Monitoring and Evaluation**

DepEd and PEAC shall conduct random checks on schools and learners to ensure program compliance.

PEAC shall monitor processes in the voucher applications so as to meet standards on turnaround times and data integrity. It shall prepare and submit interim reports as may be required by DepEd to improve future implementations of the SHS VP.

A period review of these guidelines shall be conducted by DepEd and PEAC to further enhance the provisions stipulated herein, and ensure effectiveness of the application processes.

**List of Annexes**

**Annex 1:** Voucher Application Form (VAF-1)

**Annex 2:** Privacy Notice and Consent Form

**Annex 3:** Certificate of Financial Assistance

**Annex 4:** Affidavit

**Annex 5:** Municipal Certificate of Unemployment