



CATHOLIC EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF THE PHILIPPINES

INSPIRING THE REGIONS

Message delivered during the 2025 regional assemblies

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I would like to share three points in my message to you as President of CEAP.

First is that you are part of a large community on mission.

CEAP remains to be the largest association of private schools and universities in the Philippines. We have a total membership of more than 1500 schools. More than being an organization, we are a community. This means we share a deep purpose, a meaningful goal, which is what we call mission. Our mission is Catholic education in the Philippines, and our goal is to make it stronger. As a community, we pray and discern together; we deepen our faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the origin and end of our mission. We support each other in bringing Jesus and His Gospel closer to our learners, our teachers, our different publics, and stakeholders, through our work of education. Hence, we are proud of our large community at CEAP, and we continue to make it stronger, more effective, more responsive to our hundreds and thousands of students nationwide.

Secondly, CEAP helps in making our educational system better.

You have heard about the very terrible learning crisis that we have in our country. Our learners, our students are not learning well and effectively. We find the Philippines constantly at the bottom of international rankings of student assessments in functional literacy, reading, and other subjects. You have heard of EDCOM 2 and it's very sad and disturbing reports about the state of Philippine education. Our students deserve more.

Our government should be in a more meaningful and effective partnership with us, private schools, and universities. And this is done by acknowledging and promoting our complementary roles in education. **This complementarity of public and private education is enshrined in the Philippine Constitution, and we need to implement it, fulfill it. This complementarity means we need each other, and we are both needed to make education better in the Philippines.** This means the government should give more support to us, private schools, by providing us more resources to help students with their tuition and fees, to help our teachers through better salaries and benefits, and to help us with the many resources we need for quality and accessible education. This means controlling the massive migration of both students and teachers from private to public schools, mainly due to the financial advantages of public schools. We are very happy to announce, if you have not heard it yet, that the TSS, or the Teacher Salary Subsidy for our Junior High School ESC participants, has been increased from P18,000 to P24,000 - still not as high as we want, but nevertheless a significant help and achievement.

CEAP works very, very hard for all these. **We attend consultations of DepEd, CHED, TESDA, Senate, House of the Representatives, government agencies, and other stakeholders, to make our voices heard.** CEAP is a permanent member of PEAC, the Private Education Assistance Committee, which is chaired by the DepEd Secretary, which continues to seek for ways to strengthen private school with government support. CEAP is also the Chair, for the past two years, of COCOPEA, or the Coordinating Council of Private Educational Associations, the umbrella organization of all private schools and universities, which is very well recognized by government.



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We release several public statements and position papers that advance assessments, convictions, and recommendations on so many issues like K to 12, curriculum, ethics, sexuality education, respect for academic freedom, extent of government regulation, tuition fee rates, accreditation, quality assurance, innovation, legal matters, and many other school issues and concerns. You might have been seeing so many of these statements released in social media this past year. We tap so many experts like lawyers, educators, trainers, consultants in several fields to assist our small and mission schools improve our many programs and operations. In all these, our sentiments, and principles as Catholic educators are heard. **All of these to make our Philippine education better.**

Third, CEAP works hard in helping transform our Philippine society, and our world in general.

As Catholic educators we are inspired by the teachings of the Church, the directions of our Church leaders like our Pope, our Bishops, our leaders. Christian values define us, our very identities, our advocacies. Hence part of our vocation as Christian Catholic educators is to promote, advance, and even fight for these values and convictions.

Hence, we stand for peace, social justice, democracy, truth, rule of law, human rights, engaged citizenship, ethical and moral living.

We therefore fight injustice, deception, disinformation, immorality, and the increasing trend we find in many countries and societies toward authoritarian, non-democratic leadership and governance that disrespects human rights and rule of law.

We continue to model a community who is compassionate to the poor and the neglected, who works for the common good, who cares for creation. All these and more define us as CEAP. Yes, we together do our part in building a more just and peaceful Philippines and world community, and we have been doing this for the past 84 years.

Hence, dear friends of CEAP, these three are important to us: first, we are a big and vibrant community on mission; second, we work for a better Philippine education; and third, we do our part in nation-building and in building God's kingdom on earth. Altogether, they constitute our hope, hope in our mission of education, our work in our Church, in our country, and in the world. Hope in our teachers, our formators, our administrators, our leaders, our staff, our families, our students, our alumni, our partners. Hope, the theme of our Church jubilee year 2025, the theme of our CEAP National Convention in October in Manila.

A hope that does not disappoint, because it is essentially our hope in our Lord Jesus, and our Lord does not disappoint, because our Lord makes all things new. This hope and this newness are at the very heart of our Catholic education, at the very heart of CEAP.

Let us nurture and fight for this hope in all regions. Let us continue organizing and spreading the fire of this hope in every region and beyond!