

# The Schools Division of Quirino

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June 18, 1966 marked the beginning and shaping of the vast forest area of Nueva Vizcaya envisioned to become a new place – the Province of Quirino, the 65<sup>th</sup> province of the Philippines.

The vast forest area called the Forest Region covered the municipalities of Diffun, Aglipay, Maddela and later Saguday upon its creation as a municipality on August 19, 1959. These towns were part of Bagabag District.

Then Republic Act 4734 authored by Senator Leonardo B. Perez and duly approved by Congress on June 18, 1966 provided therein the creation of the Subprovince of Quirino within the province of Nueva Vizcaya. The law weaned from Nueva Vizcaya the Forest Region towns Diffun, Saguday, Aglipay and Maddela, thus, was born DSAM (acronym for the four towns, the more popular name at the time), the subprovince of Quirino and the fledgling schools unit.

DSAM was one independent unit already detached from Bagabag District. In the provincial athletic meet held at the time at Bayombong, capital of Nueva Vizcaya DSAM showed its strength, mettle and prowess by raising its green and maroon banner high above the banners of the contending districts of the mother-province. The victory was a test, a worthy feat for a neophyte. The DSAM head was Mr. Juan Cabanban.

The Diffun-Maddela highway was the only developed road constructed under the administration of Governor Patricio Dumlao. He established the Ministry of Public Works and Highways at Mangandingay to facilitate development in the Forest Region.

Transportation facilities were scanty. To reach barangay schools near the highway, one way was to hitch – ride on big trucks transporting corn, peanut or other products. To reach the hinterland schools was the sled ride or horseback ride. Another means was a ride in the heavy-duty army weapon carrier that could pass through man-made trails whether rainy or dry seasons. For the daring, a hitch-ride on logging trucks sitting on top of piles of logs and if lucky enough a seat beside the driver.

The sled is a carabao-pulled bamboo made carrier without wheels. There is the open sled or the “*Pattuki*”, the big basket carrier over the open sled or the “*Tangkal*” and the “*Kariton*” with two big wheels but still pulled by a carabao.

The banca ride upstream from San Agustin, Jones destination Maddela or downstream back to San Agustin via the Cagayan River was one dangerous but exciting water-travel. One unique practice was that anyone can get *tilapia* from the bamboo fish cage

submerged in the water for a sumptuous meal of roasted fish along the way, provided that a bottle of Gin or more must be left inside the fish cage. If benighted on the way the banca passengers can have a night rest just on the river bank.

Supervision was really difficult at the time but the experience was one thrilling adventure. At the time, from Maddela Elementary School to Ponggo Elementary School was a banca-ride upstream. Along the way are the beautiful rock formations and scenery. The risk along the way – the risk of the banca being capsized or the presence of crocodiles but reaching the place is the heart-warming greetings and the welcome smiles of the teachers and folks. There is also the *batya* of tilapia-catch waiting to be roasted. The visit is not all supervision but also acquaintance and bonding with the people in the community.

In 1970, Mrs. Magdalena P. Castillo was appointed Schools Division Superintendent of the subprovince of Quirino or DSAM. She and her staff held office at the old army type building inside the wide lot of Gundaway Elementary, later named Cabarroguis Central School. Her staff was composed of qualified personnel from both Nueva Vizcaya and the subprovince.

In the same year the construction of the Division Office building was undertaken. Governor Dionisio Sarandi started with the putting of the foundation and building framework. Then the Schools Superintendent, Mrs. Magdalena P. Castillo, continued to the finish the edifice. The teachers association augmented the budget with the one hundred-peso contribution per teacher-member and the industrial arts teachers and non-teaching personnel provided the manpower. In due time, the building was finished, product of a labor of love. In the years that followed the superintendents assigned continued the work by providing a way to acquire needed facilities.

For lack of accommodation at the time the Court of Justice was temporarily housed at the new division office building. After the 1972 election Governor Dionisio Sarandi and staff transferred temporarily from the San Leonardo Office to the new division office.

Not long after, Republic Act 5554 authored by Leonardo B. Perez was approved converting the subprovince to a regular province-the Province of Quirino. Cabarroguis, the capital town was created on January 1, 1972 by merging area parts of Diffun and Aglipay. The upland portion of Maddela was created a new municipality, Nagtipunan on February 25, 1983. Thus, the new province consisted of six municipalities and consequently, the schools division with six schools districts.

As early as the birth of the province a lively song, the “*Quirino March*” was composed by Ms. Catalina C. Naui. The song reverberated and sang widespread in schools. Then followed the *Quirino Hymn* composed by Mr. David Thiam and Mr. Filemon V. Ranchez, the lyrics and music, respectively. With the coming of Mr. Santiago

Dumaliang as Superintendent in 1983 another song “*Quirino Dear We Love You*”, his own composition was popularized.

The year 1985 was Quirino’s turn to host the CAVRAA (Cagayan Valley Regional Athletic Association). There was nothing; a playing field, a grandstand and other needed facilities but hosting was made possible with the concerted effort of Congressman Orlando Dulay, Acting Governor George Gatchalian, Superintendent Santiago Dumaliang down to the officials and the people. The playground, grandstand and other facilities were made in time for the 1985 CAVRAA.

In 1986, Dr. Benjamin Lodriguito was appointed the Schools Division Superintendent. Another *Quirino March*, his own composition emerged and sang in schools. With his inspiration and leadership the dances “*Balse Quirino*” and “*Jota Quirino*” became part of the culture of the province. These dances were created by a group of teachers. The said dances were made the center of competition participated in by the different districts.

Looking back, the new Division of Quirino was first headed by Mr. Magdalena P. Castillo from 1970-1971. Coming from Nueva Vizcaya, she moved to the newly-organized division with eagerness and full of energy. After a year, she was promoted as Regional Director of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports Region 02. In the succeeding years the division experienced a change in leadership under several superintendents: Mr. Tomas B. Lumicao, 1971-1973; Mr. Laurencio C. Ramel, 1973-1975; Dr. Virginia S. Bacud, 1975-1983; Mr. Santiago D. Dumaliang, 1983-1986; Dr. Benjamin G. Lodriguito, 1986-1989; Mrs. Geraldine V. Nitura, 1989-1992; Dr. Lolito L. Apostol, 1992-1996; Dr. Benito S. Tumamao, 1996-1997; Dr. William P. Binwag-OIC, October 1, 1997; Mr. Orlando G. Gundayao, 1997-2004; Dr. Jose Rosendo, Sr., 2004-2006; Dr. Norma B. Brillantes-OIC, May 10, 2006-2007; Mr. Orlando G. Gundayao, 2007-2010; Dr. Jesus B. Maggay-OIC, November 28, 2010-December 1, 2010; Dr. Benjamin D. Paragas, 2010-2012; Dr. Reynalda R. Bangunan, 2012-2014; Dr. Benjamin D. Paragas, January 4, 2015- October 12, 2015; Dr. Orlando E. Manuel, 2015 to present. All the predecessors of Dr. Manuel had done a great deal to improve the division. This time under his dynamic leadership, more improvements have been and more innovations have been introduced to upgrade the existing conditions.

Many of the superintendents in the past came from other provinces of the region. Later on, Quirino division has produced from the ranks men qualified as leaders in the educational field to occupy top positions in the hierarchy. Worth-mentioning are Mr. Orlando G. Gundayao, Dr. William P. Binwag, Dr. Norma B. Brillantes, Dr. Benjamin D. Paragas, Mrs. Leticia T. Binwag, Dr. Orlando E. Manuel and Dr. Eduardo C. Escorpiso.

The swelling of school population in the 80's onward meant a greater need for building schools. Elementary and even integrated schools were then organized making education accessible to all especially those pupils and students living in the hinterlands of the province.

Likewise, the rapid growth of enrolment in the schools led to the division of Diffun into two districts and the same with Maddela. Thus, on January 1991, Diffun became Diffun District I and Diffun District II. Then on April 18, 2009, Maddela became Maddela District I and Maddela District II. Hence, SDO Quirino grew from six (6) to eight (8) schools districts. Likewise, in the secondary, from six (6) to fourteen (14) schools. In addition, twenty four (24) integrated schools were created through the leadership of Hon. Junie E. Cua, the Representative of the Lone District of Quirino.

With over forty fulfilling years of bringing service to the schools, the Division of Quirino has really come a long way. The challenges it hurdled though not always triumphantly, have paved the way towards bringing SDO Quirino to the core of its mission which is to serve and provide quality basic education to all Quirino learners.

The last eight (8) years witnessed the progress and more accomplishments attained by the division. Year 2008, under the administration of Schools Division Superintendent, Mr. Orlando G. Gundayao, the physical development program of the division was in full swing. Construction of additional classrooms and new school buildings, renovation of the dilapidated ones, fencing and titling of school lots were among the projects done. Also included was the renovation of the Division Office building. After two months, its old look was totally changed into a beautiful structure that is well-equipped with modern facilities and equipment. Aside from this, two more buildings were constructed – one for the Library Hub and the other is a two-story building that was built through the initiative of Hon. Junie E. Cua, then Chairman on Appropriations in Congress. This building now serves as a comfortable venue for conferences and trainings. More improvements and innovations were provided by the succeeding leaders of the division.

Many other significant achievements along academics, sports and projects/programs had been reached successfully. In SY 2011-2012 Kindergarten Education was fully implemented in almost all of the elementary schools. Also, in the same school year, SPED classes were organized in all central schools while the Computerization Program/Internet Connectivity was/has been implemented in the secondary and integrated schools. Project FOCUS (Flagship Operation on Comprehensive and Unified Supervision) was conceptualized and has been implemented by the division since SY 2012-2013 as a means of improving supervisory skills of school heads and teaching competencies of teachers. Year 2013 was also a very fruitful year for Cabarroguis National School of Arts and Trades for being the National Champion in Brigada Eskwela (now in the Hall of Fame). In 2014, a number of students from the secondary who participated in the national and regional academic contests won major awards or

as finalists like in the National Schools Press Conference – Champion in Photo Journalism, Search for Ten Outstanding Students, National Pop Ed Quiz, Science and Math Quiz Bee and National Festival of Talents.

2015 was another fruitful and rewarding year for SDO Quirino. Elementary Schools achieved higher performance in the 2015 National Achievement Test-from 75% MPS to 91.44% MPS; in the Palarong Pambansa held at Tagum City, Davao del Norte, SDO Quirino won two (2) silver medals along Taekwondo; the prestigious Guro ng Pangulo award was given to Mrs. Maricon F. Domingo, Master Teacher I of Quirino General High School and Mr. Val Gawi, Division ALS Coordinator; competent and K to 12 trained teachers have been deployed to serve the 40, 563 pupils and students enrolled in the different elementary, secondary and integrated schools within the division; 94 classrooms have been constructed for the 23 schools that offer Senior High School; Open High School Program is now offered by two (2) schools – San Antonio Integrated School and Dibibi Integrated School; and finally was the assignment of two (2) of the most prominent educators of Quirino to serve as Schools Division Superintendent of SDO Quirino – Dr. Benjamin D. Paragas who served for the second time and in a period of ten (10) months from January 4, 2015 to October 12, 2015. Dr. Paragas did not stay long in the division because of his promotion as Officer-In-Charge of the Office of the Assistant Regional Director of Region 02. Taking his place as Schools Division Superintendent of SDO Quirino since October 13, 2015 is Dr. Orlando E. Manuel, a leader of equal energy and vision.

Meantime, the implementation of the rationalization program of the government for DepEd in 2015 saw many changes in the organization. In the SDO-Quirino, two working divisions like the Curriculum Implementation Division (CID) and Schools Governance and Operations Division (SGCOD) were organized. The CID is composed of 12 Education Program Supervisors and ten Public Schools District Supervisors. The SGDO has six sections that take care of the different areas which need to be emphasized in order to achieve the goals set by the division.

Despite all the achievements, SDO-Quirino's work is never finished and challenges are always bigger. However, with Dr. Manuel at the helm together with his assistant, Dr. Eduardo C. Escorpiso, Jr., the divisions and sections, school leaders and external stakeholders working together and taking their share of the load in the arduous mission of providing quality education for Quirino children, continuous development and more progress will happen. Their dedication and commitment are the springboard that make SDO-Quirino today.

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Resource Persons:

Mrs. Conception Calpatura

Mrs. Alicia Cambi

Mr. Segundo Capinpin

Mrs. Erlinda C. Danao

Mr. Jesus Guillermo

Mrs. Carmelita Padilla

Dr. Josefina M. Parungao

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