QC updates class suspension guidelines

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Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte issued an updated localized guideline for suspensions of face-toface classes during inclement weather, extreme heat, earthquakes and poor air quality.

"Our decisions will always be guided by data and evidence. Class suspensions will be announced based on real-time information from our weather and monitoring systems," Belmonte said.

"The safety and well-being of our students remain our top priority, but we are also committed to ensuring that their education continues uninterrupted. We will explore all available options to maintain learning continuity despite these challenges," she added.

Under the updated guidelines, class suspensions due to tropical cyclones will follow the tropical cyclone wind signal levels issued by the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA).

Classes in public child development centers and kindergarten are automatically suspended when signal no. 1 is raised, while it will be suspended in public schools up to Grade 10 in areas under signal no. 2.

Classes in all public and private schools at all levels are suspended when signal no. 3 or higher is raised.

Classes in public schools up to Grade 12, as well as Alternative Learning System, are suspended during orange and red rainfall warnings.

For extreme heat conditions, classes in public school up to Grade 12 will be suspended if the city's iRISE UP system forecasts a heat index of 42°C or higher.

Classes in all public schools are suspended in the event of an earthquake with an Intensity VI or higher. Localized suspensions may be declared for earthquakes with lower intensities.

Belmonte's latest memorandum also outlined the protocol for class suspensions due to poor air quality.

Public school classes up to Grade 12 will be automatically suspended when the Quezon City Air Quality Monitoring Network reaches Alert Level 3, which occurs when 50 percent or more monitoring sites register air quality at "very unhealthy, acutely unhealthy or emergency levels."

The city said announcements will be made typically no later than 4 a.m. on the day of suspension, or before 10 a.m. "in cases of sudden extreme weather changes."