



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education
Region III
SCHOOLS DIVISION OF PAMPANGA

July 13, 2026

DIVISION MEMORANDUM
No. 411, s. 2026

**CLARIFICATION ON THE NATIONAL ASSESSMENT FOR SCHOOL HEADS (NASH)
AS AN ESSENTIAL QUALIFICATION FOR APPOINTMENT TO PRINCIPAL I
POSITIONS**

To: Assistant Schools Division Superintendents
Chief Education Supervisors
Education Program Supervisors
Public Schools District Supervisors
Public Elementary and Secondary School Heads
All Others Concerned

1. The Schools Division Office of Pampanga warmly congratulates all Batch 2 takers who successfully passed the National Assessment for School Heads (NASH). Your success reflects your commitment to professional excellence and educational leadership. The Division recognizes this achievement as an important milestone in your career and encourages every passer to continue strengthening the competencies, values, and leadership qualities expected of future school heads. Passing the NASH demonstrates preparedness to be considered for school leadership, but it should likewise inspire every passer to continuously pursue excellence in service and professional growth.
2. The Schools Division Office has received several inquiries regarding the effect of passing the NASH on appointments to Principal I positions. To ensure a common understanding among all concerned and to properly manage expectations, this Memorandum reiterates the applicable constitutional provisions, Civil Service laws, and Department of Education policies governing appointments to school head positions. This issuance clarifies that while passing the NASH is an essential qualification, it does not, by itself, confer an automatic right or entitlement to appointment as Principal I.
3. Consistent with DepEd Memorandum No. 013, s. 2024, passing the National Assessment for School Heads is one of the prescribed requirements for appointment to Principal and Assistant Principal positions. The policy recognizes the assessment as a qualifying requirement that enables an individual to participate in the recruitment and selection process for school head positions. However, the Memorandum does not provide that a successful passer shall automatically be appointed. Passing the NASH qualifies an individual for consideration; it is not, in itself, the appointment.
4. In accordance with DepEd Order No. 007, s. 2023 (Guidelines on Recruitment, Selection, and Appointment in the Department of Education), appointments to Principal I positions shall undergo the prescribed publication, recruitment, comparative assessment, evaluation, deliberation, and selection process. These procedures ensure transparency, equal opportunity, fairness, and adherence to the principles of merit and fitness. Accordingly, passing the NASH does not exempt any applicant from participating in the prescribed recruitment and comparative evaluation process.



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5. Under existing Civil Service and Department of Budget and Management rules, no appointment may be made in the absence of an authorized and funded vacant plantilla item. Accordingly, even when an applicant has successfully passed the NASH and possesses the required qualifications, appointment cannot be made unless there is an available Principal I position authorized for filling. The existence of a vacancy is therefore an indispensable legal requirement before any appointment can be issued.
6. Passing the NASH satisfies only one of the requirements for appointment. Applicants must likewise meet all Qualification Standards prescribed by the Civil Service Commission, the Department of Education, and other applicable issuances, including education, training, experience, eligibility, competencies, and other position-specific requirements. Appointment is based on compliance with the totality of these standards rather than on a single qualification alone.
7. In determining merit and fitness, this Office gives due consideration not only to documentary qualifications but also to demonstrated leadership in actual school operations. School heads are entrusted with instructional leadership, financial stewardship, personnel management, learner welfare, stakeholder engagement, and the overall improvement of school performance. Accordingly, applicants are expected to demonstrate competence in governance, accountability in the management of public resources, sound judgment, professionalism, ethical conduct, and the ability to inspire teachers and learners toward continuous improvement. Where supported by sufficient, objective, and documented records, previous performance in leadership assignments may appropriately be considered as part of the overall evaluation.
8. SDO Pampanga continues to uphold a culture of excellence, fairness, transparency, accountability, and integrity in all human resource actions. Every appointment to a school leadership position shall always be guided by existing laws, Civil Service rules, and Department of Education policies to ensure that every school is entrusted to leaders who possess not only the prescribed qualifications but also the competence, ethical leadership, commitment, and dedication necessary to deliver quality education to every learner in the Province of Pampanga.
9. This Office once again congratulates all NASH passers for this significant accomplishment. Passing the assessment marks the beginning of a greater journey toward educational leadership. The Division encourages every passer to continue pursuing professional growth, strengthening leadership competencies, maintaining the highest standards of integrity and public accountability, and preparing for future opportunities to serve as school leaders. While passing the NASH qualifies an individual for consideration, appointment to a Principal I position shall always be made in accordance with law, existing Department of Education policies, the constitutional principles of merit and fitness, and the best interest of the service.
10. Immediate and wide dissemination of this Memorandum is desired.

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