

AFFLIP Health & Nutrition

New Outdoor Learning Project at A Mabini Elementary School



A three-pronged outdoor learning project

An exciting new three-pronged outdoor learning project is being established at Mabini Elementary School which involves poultry farming (native chicken), greenhouse elevation and aquaponics. This has been made possible through the generous donation of the Rotary Club of Maitland. The School Year opened at Mabini in June last year with 1,437 enrolled pupils from Kindergarten to Grade 6 and 37 teachers. This year, for the first time, all the grade levels are permanently situated in the newly constructed school buildings.

Agriculture teacher Rey Cadiena has made an outstanding contribution to learning at the school over many years through innovative schemes which focus on vegetable gardening, aquaculture, vermiculture and various composting initiatives. This project is a further development in his work with the setting up of a sophisticated aquaponics system which focuses on growing vegetables and fish. The construction of a poultry shed to house native chickens will also provide another potential food source to supplement the school's feeding program for undernourished children, along with the vegetables and fish which are currently part of the program. The garden activity is one of the highlights of the school with all the grade levels taking part in the cultivation and harvesting processes. Teachers at school are encouraging children and their parents to eat healthy and nutritious food.

A major classroom building project has finally been completed at the school and the gardens and aquaponics work (moved 4 times in 2 years) is



Before the chickens arrived



Support from Maitland Rotary meant A Mabini was ready for the chickens!

now able to be finalised. Rey's perseverance and technical expertise have been tantamount to the success of the project.

School principal Mary Latiada and teacher Mahalia Laroscain have been great supporters of this new project as they have been of all AFFLIP activities. Mary explained that poultry farming of native chickens will open an opportunity for the school learners in the higher grade levels to enhance their entrepreneurial skills under the Technology and Livelihood Education area and the elevation of the greenhouse will make more room for the seedlings and the other vegetables. Mahalia highlighted the great potential of the project to support learning in other subject areas including math, science and language in addition to the importance of its impact on the school's feeding program. She added that a quiet area for reading had already been established in the garden and that many subject teachers were bringing their students for math and science activities.

There are exciting times ahead indeed for the children and teachers at Mabini Elementary School.



A Mabini ES Reading Corner.



A Mabini ES School Garden has been moved four times in 2 years!



Rey feeding the fish while Mahalia tries to count them!



Maitland Rotary great supporters.