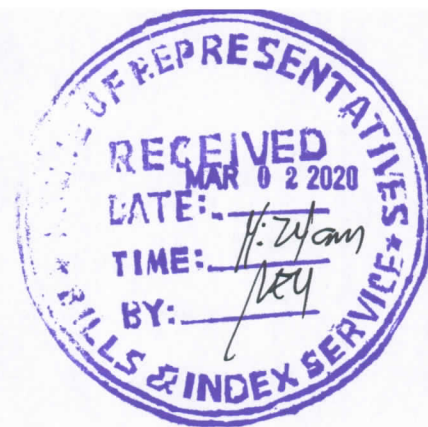


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 6415



Introduced by **Rep. Rodante D. Marcoleta**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The most important formative years of the youth are spent in the elementary and secondary education. Before, it consisted of six years in the elementary level (Grades 1 to 6) and four years in high school (First year to Fourth year). Under the “K to 12 curriculum”, the old high school system now covers Grades 7 to 12—where Grades 7 to 10 are deemed junior high school while Grades 11 to 12 are considered senior high school.

This reform in the educational system is in line with the concept of UNESCO’s four pillars of education which requirements are the ones being implemented across the educational system today. Thus, the K to 12 basic curriculum now covers functional literacy, virtues, values education, social learning theory, social emotional learning, constructivism, career development, self-concept, attitude, ethical decision making, experiential learning and competencies. More than these components, it broadly envisions a sound approach to college preparation, vocational and other technical skills for better employability after graduation.

There is obviously not enough basis to check whether or not all these concepts, theories, or systems guiding K to 12 produced positive outcomes if those who went through the curriculum are assessed or evaluated. However, there may even be early signs that, the tendencies are skewed and did not achieve the goals that have been intended. While the components, dimensions, and key concepts in the implementation of the K to 12 are deemed good, no valid comparison can yet be made upon graduates of the old system with that of the new system whose first graduates were reaped in 2018, or only two years ago.

Thus, in its present form, the K to 12 curriculum has left much to be desired. For many years, the every 10-year update of our educational system appears to have been taken for granted—unlike Japan which will again roll out a new curriculum this year. Other problems that can seriously affect the most basic objective of knowledge absorption may have been overlooked. The public school system, for one, failed to maintain the ideal average class size of 30 as practiced in Japan and Singapore, and 20 in Finland. Compared to Japan, our exposure to English goes as early as before Grade 1 or during pre-school years. In Japan, however, such exposure starts only for fifth and sixth-graders, the emphasis being only on listening and speaking. Even the matter of average school day is only 6 hours in Japan and even less in Finland while we observe up to average of 9 hours in high school alone, not to mention in elementary grades.

If we must truly set the goal of the holistic development of the young toward nation building, then the case of Finland could be instructive in some respects. The Philippine

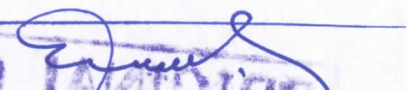
educational system could replicate the bar set for comprehensive school teachers in Finland, namely, that they have a Master's degree; those who teach grades 1 to 6 are specialized in pedagogy; and grades 7 to 9 teachers are specialized in the subjects they teach. Interestingly, children often have the same teacher for the first six years thus the teacher gets to know the students well. While our educational system is too merit-based, this is discouraged in Finland because it adds unnecessary stress to students. In fact, there are no mandated standardized tests in Finland, apart from one exam at the end of students' senior year in high school. The same is true with Singapore that only administers the Primary School Learning Examination (PSLE) at the end of Primary 6 to determine entry into secondary school. Again, students in Finland get everything they need to get done in school with little homework unlike our educational practice of too much homework that finds parents the ones finishing them for their children. In Finland, there are no rankings, no comparisons or competition between students, schools, or regions unlike our way of too many contests and competitions like inter-school or inter-regional levels which come in many forms. A general re-orientation drawing lessons from these foreign educational systems will help us reform a more relevant and enhanced curriculum for our young children.

Necessarily, the age of formal education can be set at 7 years of age, not much earlier. In the Philippines, pre-school is too prevalent while in Singapore, the same is optional. Ideal length of school hours might have to be radically reduced to shorter time frame. Aside from a free basic education in the public school system, maybe free school meals as that practiced in Finland can also be tried. Young students in Finland work on interdisciplinary projects based on student interest and this could be replicated as well. There should be the same freedom for students to determine their own weekly targets with their teachers in specific subject areas and to choose the tasks they will work on at their own pace. Our own educational system might have been too fixated in unnecessary schedules for quizzes, exams, tests. It might have been too absorbed with identifying the fast learners from the slow learners via all forms of theoretical and practical examinations that may prove detached in real world setting. We have equated intelligence and other competencies based on honors or medals conferred upon graduates as if these are the sole determinants for young students' future professional path.

In all these educational systems, there are standard and foundation subjects common to all, but their approaches vary. For instance, in Singapore, it has abolished examinations and weighted assessment for Grades 1 and 2 for a smooth transition to formal schooling. In another, time spent on homework is about thirty minutes to an hour for Grades 1 and 2 pupils; 1 – 1.5 hours for Grades 3 and 4 pupils; and 1.5 – 2 hours for Grades 5 and 6 pupils.

The bill contemplates a revitalized approach to the K to 12 program with the view of integrating some best practices that more effectively develop skills, knowledge and competencies for the holistic development of the young. The K to 12 must be more adaptable to practical than theoretical approaches to be at par with such countries as Japan, Finland, Singapore, Germany or France. It proposes 30 key building blocks to the K to 12 program as the way forward.

Urgent passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


RODANTE D. MARCOLETA

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS

First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **6415**

Introduced by **Rep. Rodante D. Marcoleta**

AN ACT

**MANDATING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO INTRODUCE
STRUCTURAL AND INSTITUTIONAL ADJUSTMENTS INTO THE K TO 12
CURRICULUM TO ACHIEVE GREATER EFFICIENCY AND SUCCESS ACROSS
ALL KEY STAGES OF THE PROGRAM**

Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. This Act shall be known as the “Building Blocks to the Enhanced K to 12 Program Act”.

SEC. 2. In order to achieve the objectives of greater efficiency for higher education and employability, there shall be new terms of reference into the structure, institution, and process of the Enhanced K to 12 basic curriculum that will rationalize the key stages of the program.

SEC. 3. The Department of Education shall introduce a broad range of provisions called “Building Blocks of the Enhanced K to 12 Curriculum”, which are categorized as follows:

A. TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

1. As the Enhanced K to 12 program matures, the benchmark requirement of a master’s degree shall be required for old and new teachers alike until a desired ratio or threshold is reached. This is to ensure that the young students acquire judgmental skills, such as critical thinking and problem solving;
2. Qualified instructors for tech-voc shall be those with valid PRC licenses. In the sports track, various subjects in human kinetics shall be taught only by qualified instructors particularly those with Certificate Program in Physical Education or full degree programs;
3. Teachers shall be encouraged to undertake action research in the Enhanced K to 12, where a teacher conducts his/her own in-class research project with students;
4. Efforts at revitalizing Science and Math education shall be the thrust of the program so that more teachers thereof are brought together into the program and are incentivized to go through intensified Science and Math instruction training.

B. CLASS SIZE/HOURS:

5. The size of a class for both primary and secondary education shall be set at thirty (30) and a little above this threshold only if warranted;
6. Class hours at the primary education shall be reduced to three (3) to four (4) hours to give more time to students to learn more in math and science as studies have proved;
7. Time spent on schoolwork shall be 30 minutes to 1 hour for Grades 1 and 2 students; 1 to 1.5 hours for Grades 3 and 4 students; and 1.5 to 2 hours for Grades 5 and 6 students;
8. Class hours at the secondary education shall be reduced to six (6) hours through lesser requisite subjects since this allows rehearsal of learned skills, particularly language skill, among others.

C. CURRICULAR CONTENT/REVIEW

9. The curriculum for both the primary and secondary education shall be evaluated every fifteen (15) years to span the length of the K to 12 continuum;
10. Partial evaluations/revisions may be conducted at the following levels: Grade 3 (end of primary); Grade 6 (end of intermediate); Grade 10 (end of junior high school); and Grade 12 (end of senior high school);
11. English and Filipino as medium of instruction shall be taught to students from Grade 4 onwards;
12. There shall be a mandated standardized tests or examinations at the end of students' 6th grade in the elementary level and senior year in high school, respectively as basis for promotion to the next educational tier;
13. It shall hereby be mandated that there shall be five (5) subjects for pupils in the primary grades or elementary education level, namely: math, science, language, practical life, and sensory or psychomotor activities;
14. As the Enhanced K to 12 matures over time, the establishment of Science High Schools shall be proliferated to include agriculture and disaster preparedness;
15. Entrepreneurship instilling the value of earning a living through self-empowerment shall be taught across the junior and senior high school continuum.

D. INSTRUCTION (INCLUDING LEARNING RESOURCES)

16. Textbooks, which are to be used under the stewardship of the National Book Development Board, are to be provided free of charge to students at both the primary and secondary education levels. Such textbooks shall be digitized and uploaded into an application so that they are accessible through a single computing device, as a tablet, so that students carry all their instructional materials under one portable device;
17. Learning resources (LR) leading toward grooming students to become effective members of society by end of Grade 12 shall be revitalized by educational authorities;
18. Congress shall appropriate funds for a broad range of resources needed to fully implement the K to 12 basic education curriculum such as: i) library resources, ii) science laboratories, iii) sports facilities, iv) tech-voc facilities, v) industrial arts facilities especially at the Senior High School stage particularly Grades 11 to 12, vi) instructional materials storage devices/gadgets;
19. There shall be same incentives for the production of educational materials for the Enhanced K to 12 through a thorough process of editing of manuscripts before they are mass developed.

E. CONVERGENCE/SYNERGY

20. The Department of Education, in close coordination with Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), in respect to the technical-vocational and sports track of the Enhanced K to 12 basic education curriculum, shall issue the National Certification Level II to students under tech-voc;

21. DepEd, in coordination with TESDA, shall determine the content of the tech-voc track;
22. In this regard, all companies shall be required to institute a Work Immersion Program to absorb senior high school students at the work immersion stage to undergo thereat their internship or as OJT/interns upon satisfaction of eighty (80) hours' worth of immersion. Whenever practicable, Senior High School students shall have the option to undergo apprenticeship as this provides viable means of training and eventually employment for students coming out of Grade 11, this being consistent with TESDA's role of "Enrolment to Employment;"
23. In revitalizing the sports track, greater emphasis shall be given to developing team sports via a Philippine national team training camp where most Philippine national teams and athletes prepare for international competition as well as where they may have to finish their academic and athletic training as a specialized independent school offering integrated sports and academic program for secondary and post-secondary students;
24. In the field of science and technology, leaders in the industry shall incentivize and train senior high school students who excel in the allied sciences during their senior high school year.

F. GENERAL PROVISIONS

25. Ranking and class standing or any parameter that promotes competition or comparison shall no longer be the norm in our educational system and shall be replaced with that which instills a sense of individual development, dignity, and excellence;
26. Homework whose objective is to assess academic progress shall be converted to classwork at least one (1) hour before the start of school hour proper;
27. Competent application, practice and performance shall be the ultimate objective of our educational system;
28. Basic education shall be free of charge and free school meals shall be provided to students in the primary education level and as far as practicable, at the secondary education level as well;
29. Students shall be allowed to determine their own weekly targets with their teachers in specific subject areas and to choose the tasks they will work on at their own pace; and
30. In respect to a congested class schedule brought about by class suspensions due to calamitous events and aggravated by a number of holidays in the academic calendar, the Department of Education may choose to swap non-academic related holidays with special school days.

SEC. 4. The Department of Education shall be the office of primary responsibility in order to fully implement the new provisions under this Act. It shall hereby be directed to survey the regions or cities to keep an inventory of the facilities of every school and to assess whether these schools can offer the whole range of the Enhanced K to 12. Otherwise, DepEd shall recommend which school can offer special tracks and strands of K to 12.

SEC. 5. Every provision itemized under Section 3 hereof shall, without failure, supply the K to 12 basic curriculum at satisfactory level.

SEC. 6. For the effective implementation of this Act, the Department of Education shall, within sixty (60) days from its enactment, promulgate the implementing rules and regulations.

SEC. 7. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette and in at least three (3) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,