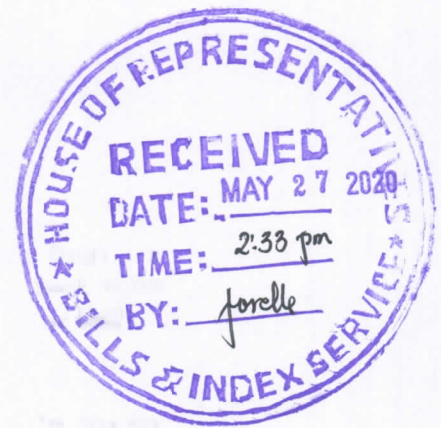


Republic of the Philippines
Congress of the Philippines
Metro Manila
Eighteenth Congress
First Regular Session



HOUSE RESOLUTION NO: 915

Introduced by:

JUAN FIDEL FELIPE F. NOGRALES
Second District
Province of Rizal

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND OTHER RELEVANT AGENCIES TO COME UP WITH A NATIONAL POLICY GUIDELINES FOR PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SCHOOLS THAT WILL BALANCE THE INTEREST OF LEARNERS, SCHOOLS, TEACHERS AND PARENTS IN THE RETURN TO SCHOOL PROCESS IN THE INCOMING ACADEMIC YEAR

WHEREAS, on March 9, 2020, President Rodrigo Roa Duterte declared a State of Public Health Emergency as a measure to prepare for the global pandemic of the Corona Virus Disease (COVID-19) and prevent its spread in the Philippines;

WHEREAS, the President of the Republic of the Philippines also suspended classes in all levels in the National Capital Region from March 10-14, 2020. On March 16, 2020, the President placed the entire Luzon Island on Enhanced Community Quarantine effective from March 17 to April 13, 2020, which resulted to the shift to other alternative modes of learning in institutions of learning and telecommuting work arrangements in both private and public sectors;

WHEREAS, the President of the Republic of the Philippines on April 7, 2020 extended the duration of the Enhanced Community Quarantine to April 30, 2020, which was further extended up to May 31, 2020 in the National Capital Region and other high-risk areas in Luzon, thereby expanding the exigencies that resulted from the community quarantine measures;

WHEREAS, the declaration of the State of Public Health Emergency and placing widespread community quarantine regulation has forced unprecedented shift of the academic calendar and resulted to the shift of teaching methods into internet and home-based and other blended learning systems;

WHEREAS, while a majority of education stakeholders shifted to virtual learning, there are learners without access to computer and reliable Internet at home especially those from families with no income due to lockdown and are disproportionately affected by the shift to digital teaching;

WHEREAS, the pandemic has caused added pressure to learners who are exposed to various physical and emotional strain in such a difficult time and has already taken a toll on the mental health of some students and even parents and teachers;

WHEREAS, the shift to telecommuting work arrangements and alternative modes of learning during pandemic highlighted the need for an accessible, reliable and fast internet connection to maintain normal operations of educational institutions;

WHEREAS, health experts predict that social distancing measures and other public health measures during pandemic will still be necessary even after the enhanced community quarantine is lifted, and the need for observance of these measures may last for at least twelve to eighteen months (12-18 months) or until a vaccine is discovered effective;

WHEREAS, the current academic calendar is continuously being affected by the declaration of a State of Public Health Emergency and the imposition of community quarantine measures, thus the need to look for ways to prepare for the incoming academic year to prevent exposing the learners to the dangers of contracting COVID-19;

WHEREAS, the Philippine government has the primary responsibility to provide basic education and promote access to various modes of learning and ensure that the rights of at least 30 million learners are protected and that the health and well-being of learners, teachers, school officials, school support personnel and other stakeholders remain as a top priority in combatting COVID-19;

WHEREAS, there is a need for a nationally-coordinated pandemic response and recovery plan for the education sector, based on the assessment of the needs and situation of all stakeholders of the education sector, taking into primary consideration the safety and welfare of the learners and respecting the choice of parents in safeguarding their children from any possible exposure to COVID-19;

WHEREAS, the Department of Education must be circumspect and provide guidelines and options for parents on the education of their children and shall not impose penalties for those parents who do not allow their children to physically attend school and the learners who choose not to be physically present when mandated, and likewise issue guidelines in providing for reprieve in tuition fee payments and other payment options for tuition and other fees.

WHEREAS, the Department of Education must design a relevant, effective, and efficient home based/virtual educational system and in conjunction, the Department of Information and Communications Technology and other relevant agencies must likewise provide for the

platform and process in order to properly implement such system with the maximum reach to learners and other education stakeholders;

WHEREAS, the Department of Education must align with the minimum health standards set by the Department of Health and must proactively observe and promote health etiquette and health literacy among learners;

WHEREAS, the National Government must provide stimulus funds for students, faculty, and institutions to ensure continuing viability of operations that will provide a conducive learning system to learners in these extraordinary times;

WHEREAS, the Department of Education must take the necessary steps to create platforms for consultation and dialogue on the new education policies to include a review of manual of regulations to both public and private educational institutions during and after COVID-19 and that these consultations must be made public, inclusive, and transparent;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AND IS HEREBY RESOLVED by the House of Representative to urge the Department of Education to come up with a national policy guidelines for public and private schools, including their back-to-school programs, that will balance the interest of the education stakeholders taking into consideration the protection of the welfare of the students and the economic issues faced by the students, parents, and other education stakeholders;

RESOLVED FURTHER, to direct the Department of Education, Department of Information and Communications Technology, the Department of Health and other concerned agencies of the government to immediately form a task force and come up with system for a home-based/virtual education to adjust the education system, including curriculum, content, methodology and means of learning to address the threat of COVID 19 in this extraordinary time, taking into consideration the primacy of the health and safety of the learners;

RESOLVED FINALLY, to urge the Department of Budget and Management and Department of Finance to propose effective measures that will allow financial stability of private institutions amidst the pandemic and the opening of classes like stimulus package for the education sector and emergency relief assistance to the stakeholders.

Adopted:

J. Fidel Nograles
JUAN FIDEL FELIPE NOGRALES