

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Batasan Hills, Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **3706**



Introduced by
HON. YEDDA MARIE K. ROMUALDEZ

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The 1987 Constitution of the Philippines provides for the recognition and promotion of other forms of education, other than formal education. Article XIV, Section 2, Paragraph (1) declares that the State shall establish, maintain and support a complete, adequate and integrated system of education relevant to the needs of the people and society; and paragraph (4) concisely encourages non-formal, informal and indigenous learning systems as well as self-learning, independent and out-of-school study programs particularly those that respond to community needs.

To this end, Republic Act 9155, otherwise known as the Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001 stipulates the establishment of the Alternative Learning System (ALS) to provide out-of-school children, youth and adults population with basic education (cf. Sec 2, RA 9155). The Alternative Learning System is a parallel learning system to provide a viable alternative to the existing formal education instruction, encompassing both the non-formal and informal sources of knowledge and skills.

Since its introduction in 2001, thousands of out-of-school youth and persons in disadvantaged situations, including those who cannot afford formal schooling for reasons of poverty, employment or other pressing circumstance, have benefitted from the Alternative Learning System. It has been recognized as one of the most important initiatives in non-formal education in the last fifteen years, addressing the needs of marginalized learners.

Nonetheless, there remains the need to institutionalize ALS as a major component of our basic education system with a clearly defined role within the overall education goals in our country, parallel to the formal educational system. This will allow the ALS to build a more systematic and flexible approach in responding to all types of learners outside the school system and providing a viable alternative to the existing formal education instruction,

encompassing both the non-formal and informal sources of knowledge and skills.

By institutionalizing the Alternative Learning System, the State shall protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality basic education and make it accessible to all by providing all Filipino children in the elementary level and free education in the high school level. Furthermore, the ALS will provide the development of livelihood skills, which manifest in the individual specific competencies that prepare, improve, and enhance employability and economic productivity.

In view of the foregoing, the passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



Rep. YEDDA MARIE K. ROMUALDEZ
Representative, First District of Leyte

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13

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16 **AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING AN ALTERNATIVE LEARNING SYSTEM**
17 **FOR INDIGENT ADULTS, OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH, INDIGENOUS**
18 **PEOPLES, PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AND SPECIAL NEEDS AND**
19 **SENIOR CITIZENS, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREOF AND FOR OTHER**
20 **PURPOSES**
21

22
23 *Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of the Representatives of*
24 *the Philippines in Congress assembled:*
25

26 **Section 1. Short Title** - This Act shall be known as the "Alternative
27 Learning System Act of the Philippines".
28

29 **Section 2. Declaration of Policy**. It is hereby declared the policy of the
30 State to promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels and
31 shall take the appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all.
32 The State shall likewise give the highest priority to the enactment of measures
33 that promote human development and the acceleration of social progress,
34 thereby reducing social, economic and political inequalities.
35

36 Towards this end, the State shall provide the marginalized and
37 disadvantaged sectors of society including indigent adults, out-of-school
38 youth, indigenous people, persons with disabilities and special needs and
39 senior citizens with opportunities to improve their knowledge, vocational

1 efficiency and other skills through an alternative learning system parallel to
2 the existing formal education system.

3
4 **Section 3. Statement of Purpose.** This Act seeks to attain the following
5 objectives:

6
7 (a) To provide a viable learning alternative to the formal education
8 system that will address all learning needs of marginalized learners,
9 particularly indigent adults, out-of-school youth, indigenous peoples,
10 persons with disabilities and with special needs and senior citizens;

11
12 (b) To afford an opportunity for a systematic and flexible learning
13 program outside of the formal education system;

14
15 (c) To provide opportunities for quality learning especially in far-flung,
16 underserved and conflict-affected communities;

17
18 (d) To institute a mobile teacher program especially for persons who
19 are physically or economically unable to attend center-based
20 learning programs;

21
22 (e) To improve access to education and raise the level of literacy to
23 contribute to an individual's future.

24
25 **Section 4. Coverage.** This Act shall cover learners from marginalized
26 and disadvantaged sectors of society, who are not currently enrolled in the
27 formal education system particularly indigent adults, out-of-school youth,
28 indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities and with special needs and
29 senior citizens.

30
31 The alternative learning system shall be institutionalized and
32 implemented in all municipalities of the country.

Section 5. Definition of Terms. For the purposes of this Act, the following terms are used to mean as follows:

- (a) Alternative Learning System (ALS) -- refers to the system of education, which provides a parallel learning system of a viable alternative to the existing formal education. It includes the non-formal, informal and indigenous learning systems as sources of knowledge and skills;
- (b) Adults - refer to persons at least eighteen (18) years of age and above;
- (c) Out-of-School Youth - refers to children who belong to any of the categories: at least 7 to 14 years of age who are not enrolled in school, or at least 15 to 24 years of age, who are not enrolled in school, not employed and not a tertiary level graduate;
- (d) Indigenous People - refers to a group of people or homogenous societies identified by self-ascription and ascription by others, who have continuously lived as organized community on communally bounded and defined territory, sharing common bonds of language, customs, tradition and other distinctive cultural traits or who have, through resistance to political, social and cultural inroads of colonization, have become historically differentiated from the majority of the Filipinos;
- (e) Persons with Disabilities and Special Needs - refer to those suffering from a restriction of different abilities, as a result of a mental, physical or sensory impairment, to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being. Such impairment may be permanent or transitory in nature.

(f) Senior citizen or elderly - refers to any resident citizen of the Philippines at least sixty (60) years old.

(g) Alternative Learning System Accreditation and Equivalency (ALS A&E) Test - is a paper and pencil test conducted by the Bureau of Alternative Learning System designed to measure the competencies of those who have neither attended nor finished elementary or secondary education in the formal school system.

(h) Alternative Delivery Mode - refers to the non-traditional education program that applies a flexible learning philosophy and curriculum delivery program

Section 6. Administrative Supervision. The Department of Education through the Bureau of the Alternative Learning System (BALS) shall exercise general supervision and administration over the alternative learning system.

Section 7. Functions of the Bureau of Alternative Learning System. The Bureau of Alternative Learning System (hereafter, the Bureau) shall have the overall authority to set, promulgate and implement the detailed rules, guidelines, terms, conditions, qualifications and regulations pertaining to the alternative learning system. Subject to the overall supervision of the Secretary of Education, the Bureau shall perform the following functions:

(a) Formulate the objectives and basic policies of the alternative learning system;

(b) Formulate, adopt and supplement schemes and systems that will be most effective and productive for ALS;

- 1 (c) Formulate guidelines, policies, criteria for accreditation and evaluation
2 of establishments offering ALS;
3
- 4 (d) Formulate policies, guidelines, systems that will effectively administer
5 admission of students, delivery of instruction, and graduation;
6
- 7 (e) Formulate policies, guidelines and systems that will efficiently transfer
8 of students from ALS to formal education and vice-versa;
9
- 10 (f) Administer and supervise the education programs of institutions and
11 schools offering ALS;
12
- 13 (g) Develop a uniform learning program for ALS;
14
- 15 (h) Coordinate and monitor the objectives, functions and activities of ALS;
16 and;
17
- 18 (i) Administer, supervise, monitor and coordinate all programs and
19 activities under alternative learning system.
20

21 **Section 8. Private ALS Providers.** The Department of Education
22 though the Bureau of Alternative Learning System may authorize private
23 organizations to open, manage and operate alternative learning centers,
24 subject to the supervision of the said department.
25

26 **Section 9. Classification of Levels.** The alternative learning system
27 shall be composed of four levels:
28

- 29 (a) Functional Literacy Program - a intensive community-based literacy
30 program that targets learners who have never attend a formal
31 school and includes developing basic literacy skills of reading,
32 writing and numeracy;

(b) Basic Alternative Learning Program - which shall correspond to the elementary course;

(c) Advanced Alternative Learning Program - which shall correspond to the secondary course in the formal education system.

(d) Informal Education Program - a life skills-focused and experiential learning program aimed at developing and enhancing social, civic, cultural and personal development integrated with livelihood skills trainings and entrepreneurship education adapted and tailored-fit to the identified needs of the learners.

Section 10. Alternative Delivery Modes. The alternative learning system may utilize one or a combination of the following alternative delivery modes:

(a) Center-Based Learning - ALS learners are required to attend alternative learning classes conducted on a scheduled basis at a designated community-based alternative learning center managed by an authorized instructional manager;

(b) Open or Distance Learning - ALS learners undergo an independent, self-pacing and flexible delivery of learning through study modules delivered through mail or broadcast through radio and television or other such means of communication, bringing learning to where the learners are and enabling them to acquire equivalency in basic education;

(c) Home-Based Learning - ALS learners study at home under the supervision by a mobile teacher or a literate family member in order to help non-literate members upgrade their literacy skills and

1 improve the learning capabilities of those belonging to families in
2 disadvantaged situations;

3
4 (d) Digital Learning - learning is conducted through the use of
5 information and communication technology (ICT) tools and facilities
6 such as electronic modules, learning management systems and
7 online module guides.

8
9 The delivery of the alternative learning system shall always be self-
10 paced, project-based, and learner-centered and shall always take into
11 consideration the level of literacy, learning preferences and needs of the
12 learners.

13
14 **Section 11. Uniform Learning Program.** The alternative learning
15 system shall follow a uniform learning program to be determined by the
16 Department of Education, which shall as much as practicable cover the
17 academic subjects included in the standard basic education curriculum.
18 Delivery of instruction may be provided by licensed learning facilitators
19 assigned by the Department of Education or by an authorized private ALS
20 provider: *Provided*, That the said uniform learning program shall reflect the set
21 of knowledge skills and competencies that learners should develop to meet
22 the minimum requirements of basic education: *Provided further*, That it shall
23 cover functional literacy, academic skills, values formation and life learning:
24 *Provided furthermore*, That it shall also be complemented by livelihood skills
25 and entrepreneurship trainings: *Provided finally*, That a specialized learning
26 program may be developed, adopted and adapted to meet the identified
27 needs of a particular group of learners.

28
29 **Section 12. Admission to Senior Secondary School or College.**
30 Learners who successfully completed required learning program and passed
31 the Accreditation and Equivalency Test shall be awarded a certificate/diploma,
32 bearing the seal of the Department of Education and the signature of the

1 Secretary, certifying their competencies as comparable graduates of the
2 formal school system. They may be admitted to a senior secondary school or
3 to a college or university to pursue degree courses of their own choice
4 provided that they pass the qualifying entrance examinations and other
5 requirements given by the said college or university.

6
7 The Bureau shall develop supplemental learning programs to provide
8 learners who have passed the A&E Test and intend to enter college with
9 higher competencies in particular advanced academic subjects in order to
10 meet the demands and entry requirements of college education.

11
12 **Section 13. Admission of Applicants.** No learner may be refused
13 admission to the alternative learning system: *Provided*, That no student
14 currently enrolled under the formal education system may be admitted into the
15 alternative learning system: *Provided further*, That all learners are
16 automatically admitted to the Basic Alternative Learning Program: *Provided*
17 *finally*, That if a learner has already graduated from an elementary course
18 under the formal education system, the learner shall be automatically admitted
19 to the Advanced Alternative Learning Program

20
21 Learners who have not attended any formal school or failed to pass the
22 Functional Literacy Test shall be required to complete first the Functional
23 Literacy Program.

24
25 Learners, who at least eighteen (18) years old but have not yet
26 completed his elementary course, shall be first admitted conditionally to the
27 Basic Alternative Learning Program and required to take the Functional
28 Literacy Test (FLT) in order for the learning facilitator to identify their level of
29 literacy. Once the level of literacy of the learners has been determined, the
30 learning facilitator shall identify the appropriate learning modules that will help
31 develop the necessary competencies required of the learners for acceleration
32 to the Advanced Alternative Learning Program.

1
2 **Section 14. Establishment of Community-Based Alternative Learning**
3 **Centers.** There shall be at least one community-based learning center in
4 every barangay of a city or municipality.
5

6 **Section 15. Learning Facilitators.** Each school district and community-
7 based alternative learning center shall have at least one qualified licensed
8 teacher who shall serve as learning facilitator.
9

10 The Bureau shall strengthen personnel development and conduct
11 training activities to improve managerial skills and teaching competencies of
12 ALS learning facilitators.
13

14 **Section 16. Local ALS Committee.** There shall be in every city or
15 municipality, under the Local School Board, a Local Alternative Learning
16 System (ALS) Committee.
17

18 It shall be composed of the following members:
19

- 20 (a) The City or Municipal Mayor as chairperson;
21
22 (b) The School District Supervisor as co-chairperson;
23
24 (c) The Chairperson of the Education Committee of the Sangguniang
25 Bayan or Sangguniang Panlungsod;
26
27 (d) The City or Municipal Chairperson of the Federation of Sangguniang
28 Kabataan;
29
30 (e) The City or Municipal Chairperson of the Liga ng mga Barangay;
31
32 (f) The Representative of the Teachers Association;
33

34 In the event that a municipality has two (2) or more District Supervisors,

1 the Division Superintendent of Schools shall designate the District Supervisor
2 who shall serve as co-chairman of the Local ALS Committee.

3 **Section 17. Functions of the Local ALS Committee.** The Local ALS
4 Committee shall perform the following functions:

- 5
- 6 (a) Oversee the implementation of the alternative learning system at the
7 city or municipal level, including the establishment of community-
8 based alternative learning centers, provision of technical assistance to
9 learning facilitators and program monitoring and evaluation;
- 10
- 11 (b) Recommend to the Local School Board, in accordance with the criteria
12 set by the Department of Education, the determination of the annual
13 supplementary budgetary needs for the operation and maintenance of
14 the alternative learning system within the city or municipality, and the
15 supplementary local cost of meeting such as needs, which shall be
16 reflected in the form of an annual ALS budget corresponding to its
17 share of the proceeds of the special levy on real property constituting
18 the Special Education Fund and such other sources of revenue as this
19 Act and other laws or ordinances may provide;
- 20
- 21 (c) Ensure the implementation of community mapping activities within the
22 city or municipality and coordinate with the barangays, non-
23 government organizations and other agencies in the identification of
24 indigent adults, out-of-school youth, indigenous people and persons
25 with disabilities and special needs who have not yet completed their
26 basic education;
- 27
- 28 (d) Coordinate with the Local School Board, barangays, schools and non-
29 government organizations on the establishment, operation and
30 maintenance of community-based alternative learning centers;
- 31
- 32 (e) Regulate the accreditation of private ALS providers;

1
2 (f) Serve as an advisory committee to the Sangguniang Panglungsod or
3 Sangguniang Bayan concerned on the implementation of the
4 alternative learning system in the city or municipality.
5

6 The Local ALS Committee shall meet at least once a month or as often
7 as may be necessary.
8

9 **Section 18. Unlawful Fees.** It shall be unlawful for an alternative
10 learning center established and operated by the Department of Education
11 and/or the local government units to solicit or require the payment of
12 admission, enrollment and other kinds of fees from any interested applicant as
13 a requisite for admission.

14 **Section 19. Information Dissemination.** The Department of Education
15 through the Bureau of Alternative Learning System, in coordination with the
16 local government unit, shall conduct an information campaign to increase
17 awareness among the general public on the alternative learning program and
18 the learning schedule and location of community-based alternative learning
19 centers in the said municipality and/or barangay.
20

21 **Section 20. Allocation of the Special Education Fund.** - In order to
22 fulfill the objectives of this Act, as well as sustain its continued
23 implementation, a portion from the proceeds of the Special Education Fund
24 under Sections 235 and 272 of Republic Act 7160, otherwise known as the
25 "Local Government Code of 1991," shall be automatically set aside by the
26 Local School Board, in coordination with the respective local chief executive,
27 of every local government unit for utilization by the program within their
28 respective local governments.
29

30 **Section 21. Tax Incentives.** - Any donation, contribution, bequest,
31 grant, in cash or services, whether local or foreign, which may be made by
32 individuals and organizations, including private entities which shall provide

1 the appropriate services, materials, and delivery support services for the
2 promotion of the alternative learning program in the barangays, shall be
3 exempt from the donor's tax and the same shall be considered as an
4 allowable deduction from the gross income in the computation of the income
5 tax of the donor in accordance with the provisions of the National Internal
6 Revenue Code of 1997, as amended.

7
8 **Section 22. Allocation from the Department of Education** - The
9 Department of Education shall allocate an appropriate amount from its
10 regular budget to support the ALS education program under this Act.

11
12 **Section 23. Implementing Rules and Regulations**. The Department of
13 Education shall promulgate the implementing rules and regulations for the
14 effective and immediate implementation of this Act.

15
16 **Section 24. Repealing Clause**. -- All laws, decrees, executive orders,
17 rules and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with or contrary to the
18 provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

19
20 **Section 25. Separability Clause**. -- If any part or provision of this Act is
21 held unconstitutional or invalid, other parts or provisions hereof which are not
22 affected shall continue to remain in full force and effect.

23
24 **Section 26. Effectivity**. -- This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days
25 following completion of its publication in the Official Gazette and in at least two
26 (2) newspapers of general circulation.