

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City
17th CONGRESS
First Regular Session
House Bill No. **3316**

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES	
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Introduced by Representative Wes Gatchalian

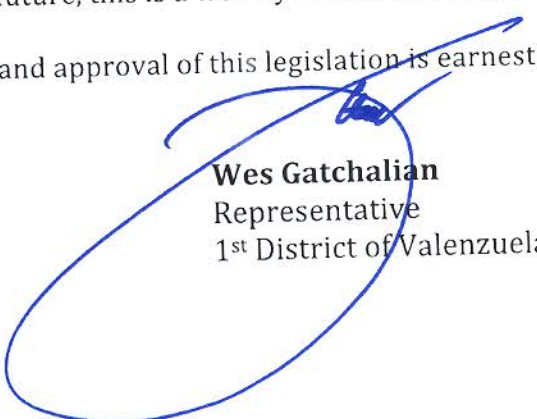
EXPLANATORY NOTE

It might very well be that education is the single most potent equalizing force in our society. By it a pauper is able to compete with a prince in the marketplace of competence, as the only capital needed is a sufficient supply of diligence, perseverance, and merit. It is therefore apropos that our constitution has gone as far as making the availability of quality education to all an utmost priority in the hierarchy. Given this general framework, it is incumbent upon us to enact and legislate measure which would enable our forefathers' dream and promise of equal opportunity to all a bit more of a tangible reality. By this measure, it is proposed that Math and Science Public High Schools be established in previously underserved areas.

Despite the increasing government commitment to improving the state of Philippine education, recent editions of the Global Competitiveness Survey have consistently ranked the Philippines in the bottom 20% of participating countries in terms of the quality of science education. National performance in math has worsened, with students posting an average score of only 46.3% on the National Achievement Test from 2011-2012. The increased budget for education has yet to pay dividends when it comes to science education. These results do not bode well for a nation whose greatest asset are the men and women who form it.

Therefore, this legislation seeks to close the educational access gap between different sectors of Philippine society. The establishment of a new structure of accessible math and science high schools across the Philippines will allow capable and willing students who have been hindered by geographic and economic barriers to pursue a science-based education in numbers that are as of yet unheard of in the Philippines. In time, this investment in human capital will pay dividends as these ambitious young students become the next science-related professionals of our country. Considering the enormous dividends that the cultivation of these brilliant minds will pay to society in the future, this is a worthy investment for us to make.

Support for the passage and approval of this legislation is earnestly sought.


Wes Gatchalian
Representative
1st District of Valenzuela

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AN ACT
PROMOTING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PUBLIC MATH AND
SCIENCE
HIGH SCHOOLS IN PREVIOUSLY UNDERSERVED AREAS, AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

SECTION 1. Short Title. - This Act shall be known as the "Equitable Access to Math and Science Education Act".

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. - It is hereby declared a policy of the State to provide equitable access to quality education in the pure and applied sciences, mathematics, and technology for all Filipinos as a means to nurture future generations of scientists, mathematicians, engineers, and other professionals who will serve the Nation as catalysts for scientific, technological, and industrial progress.

Pursuant to this declaration, the State shall work hand-in-hand with local government units (LGUs) to eliminate economic and geographical barriers that restrict the access of otherwise willing and qualified students to said education.

SEC. 3. Coverage. - All provinces of the Republic of the Philippines which do not have at least one (1) public math and science high school currently operating within their respective geographical boundaries at the time this Act takes effect shall be required to fulfill the establishment requirements prescribed by Section 4 of this Act.

For the purposes of this Act, the term public math and science high school shall refer to a school principally financed through national or local government funds that implements an advanced curriculum focused on science, mathematics, and technology subjects, for grade 7-12 students.

SEC. 4. *Establishment of Schools.* - All provinces covered by the preceding section of this Act are hereby mandated to work with the Department of Education to establish at least one (1) public math and science high school within their respective provincial capitals. Schools established in compliance with this Act may be established through the construction of new school facilities, the conversion and/or reorganization of an existing school, or the renovation and re-opening of currently non-operational school facilities or other idle government-owned property: Provided, That these schools must be fully operational by Academic Year 2018-2019: Provided, further, That any utilization of idle government-owned assets shall follow pertinent procedures as prescribed by law: Provided, finally, That schools which have been designated by the Department of Education as fully compliant under this Act may start operations earlier than the prescribed deadline.

SEC. 5. *School Operations.* - Schools established in compliance with this Act shall be operated by the Department of Education, with the proper participation of the applicable LGUs and other community shareholders as prescribed by law. Said schools shall be funded in full under the budget of the Department of Education and shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 6. *Admissions.* - Schools established in compliance with this Act shall accept applicants based on the results of a competitive entrance examination. A student may be eligible to apply for admission to said school only if he or she has established continuous residence within the establishing province for at least one (1) year by the date of examination.

SEC. 7. *Curriculum.* - Schools established in compliance with this Act shall implement a six-year integrated junior-senior high school curriculum that focuses on advanced science, mathematics, and technology subjects under the guidance of the Department of Education and the Department of Science and Technology (DOST). The revised curriculum of the Philippine Science High School system

for Grades 7-12 shall be used as a basis for the formulation of said curriculum.

SEC. 8. *Higher Education Bond.* - A graduate of a school established in compliance with this Act shall be required to enroll in a four or five-year Bachelors Degree in Science program at an accredited college or university. Said graduate must enroll in a course-of-study in one of the following fields: pure and applied sciences, mathematics, engineering, technology, or any other field deemed appropriate by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED). A graduate who shifts or transfers to a course in any unrelated field prior to completion of the degree program shall pay a fine equivalent to the total full cost incurred by the government in subsidizing the secondary education programme of said graduate, as calculated by the Department of Education. Any fine collected under the terms of this provision shall be allocated to any Government program that promotes the advancement of science, mathematics, and technological education in the Philippines.

SEC 9. *Appropriations.* - The amount of Five Hundred Million Pesos (P500,000,000.00) is hereby initially appropriated to implement the provisions of this Act. Thereafter, such amount necessary to effectively carry out the provisions of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 10. *Implementing Agencies.* - The Department of Education, in coordination with the Department of Science and Technology and the Commission on Higher Education, shall be responsible for implementing the provisions of this Act. Within (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the implementing agencies shall promulgate the implementing rules and regulations as may be necessary to ensure the efficient and effective implementation of this Act.

SEC. 11. *Separability Clause.* - Should any part of this Act be declared unconstitutional, the rest of the provisions of this Act shall continue to be in effect and subsisting.

SEC. 12. *Repealing Clause.* - The provisions of other laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SEC. 13. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after

its publication in the Official Gazette and/or in at least two (2) national newspapers in general circulation.

Approved,