

**Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City**

**Eighteenth Congress
First Regular Session**

285

House Bill No. _____



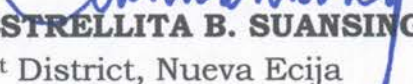
**Introduced by Representatives
Estrellita B. Suansing and Horacio P. Suansing, Jr.**


EXPLANATORY NOTE

While the State provides for free basic education, there are those that miss out opportunities to receive these benefits, especially as their needs are not similar with the average child. According to data from the Department of Education as of late 2012, children with special needs are estimated to account for 13 percent of the total population of children, figuring to 5.49 million; 1.27 million are gifted while persons with disability (PWDs) comprise 4.2 million.

The proposed bill seeks to provide inclusive education for children and youth with special needs by providing them appropriate public education and related services according to their needs in order to prepare them for adult living and community life towards self-sufficiency, ultimately enabling them to become fully participative members of society. Additionally, parents, caregivers, and teachers will be equipped with the capability to identify, refer and intervene with the developmental disorders and disabilities of children. This measure also envisions to create significant and positive changes in community attitudes towards disability and the need to provide special education and proper care for children and youth with special needs.

This bill is a re-file of House Bill No. 9104, approved on Third and Final Reading during the 17th Congress. In view of the foregoing, immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


REP. ESTRELLITA B. SUANSING
1st District, Nueva Ecija


REP. HORACIO P. SUANSING, JR.
2nd District, Nueva Ecija

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Introduced by Representatives

Estrellita B. Suansing and Horacio P. Suansing, Jr.

AN ACT

**INSTITUTING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION, ESTABLISHING INCLUSIVE
EDUCATION LEARNING RESOURCE CENTERS FOR CHILDREN AND
YOUTH WITH SPECIAL NEEDS (CYSNs) IN ALL PUBLIC SCHOOLS
DIVISIONS, PROVIDING FOR STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES, AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

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

1 **SECTION 1. Title.** – This Act shall be known as the “Inclusive Education for
2 Children and Youth with Special Needs Act.”

ARTICLE I

POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES

5 **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** – The following are hereby declared the
6 policies of the State:

7 (a) Protect and promote the rights of children and youth with special
8 needs to make quality education accessible to them;

1 (b) Recognize the vital role of children and youth with special needs
2 in society, consider their needs as integral part of national development
3 strategies, and facilitate their active participation and integration in public,
4 civic and State affairs;

5 (c) Give full support for their welfare and development to ensure
6 their full integration to society;

7 (d) Consider the special requirements of disabled persons in the
8 formulation of inclusive educational policies and programs;

9 (e) Encourage learning institutions to take into account the special
10 needs of persons with disabilities with respect to the use of school facilities,
11 class schedules, physical education requirements, and other pertinent
12 considerations;

13 (f) Support learning institutions, especially higher learning
14 institutions, in providing auxiliary services that will facilitate the learning
15 process for persons with disability, ensure inclusive and equitable quality
16 education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all;

17 (g) Recognize the right of the children and youth with special needs
18 to education on the basis of equal opportunity, in particular, making primary
19 education compulsory and accessible to every children and youth with special
20 needs;

21 (h) Recognize the right of the children and youth with special needs
22 to the highest attainable standard of health and to facilitate for the treatment
23 of illness; and rehabilitation of health and ensure that no child is deprived of
24 the right of access to such health care and rehabilitation services; and

25 (i) Ensure that children and youth with special needs belonging to
26 ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities or persons of indigenous origin shall
27 not be denied the right to education, health treatment, or health rehabilitation
28 in community with other members, to enjoy their own culture, profess and
29 practice their own religion, or to use their own language.

30 **SEC. 3. Objectives.** – This Act shall pursue the following objectives:

1 (a) Provide children and youth with special needs free and
2 appropriate public education and related services in accordance with their
3 needs, and in preparation for adult living and community life;

4 (b) Provide children and youth with special needs access to general
5 education curriculum through the formal systems and alternative delivery
6 services in education;

7 (c) Facilitate the inclusion and integration of children and youth with
8 special needs into mainstream education in accordance with the United
9 Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and the
10 Incheon Strategy to Make the Rights Real for Persons with Disabilities in Asia
11 and the Pacific;

12 (d) Implement inclusive education and establish Inclusive Education
13 Learning Resource Centers (IELRC) for inclusion of children and youth with
14 special needs in the educational mainstream in the least restrictive
15 environment;

16 (e) Ensure that children and youth with special needs fully develop
17 their potential toward self-sufficiency and become fully participative members
18 of society;

19 (f) Ensure that children and youth with special needs understand,
20 appreciate, and respect differences amongst groups and members of society
21 in which they live;

22 (g) Identify, through a Child Find System, children and youth with
23 special needs ages three (3) to twenty-four (24), and infants and toddlers
24 under the age of three (3), in compliance with Republic Act No. 10410,
25 otherwise known as the "Early Years Act of 2003";

26 (h) Develop, implement, and review individualized Education Plan;

27 (i) Provide parents with information and opportunities to actively
28 participate in the possible school placement options and educational
29 programs for their children and to enable them to make informed choices and
30 decisions;

1 (j) Enable and empower parents and family members by training
2 and equipping them with capabilities to identify, prevent, refer or intervene
3 with regard to disorders, disabilities and abilities of their children;

4 (k) Train and equip special education teachers, regular teachers,
5 principals/administrators, non-teaching staff of the school, and caregivers as
6 primary sources of care, development, education and advancement of children
7 and youth with special needs;

8 (l) Increase school retention and cohort survival of children and
9 youth with special needs;

10 (m) Create significant and positive changes in community orientation
11 towards disability and the need to provide inclusive education and proper care
12 of children and youth with special needs; and

13 (n) Regularly consult and actively involve persons with disabilities,
14 including children and youth with special needs, through their representative
15 organizations, in the implementation of this Act and issues relating to it.

16 **ARTICLE II**

17 **DEFINITION OF TERMS**

18 **SEC. 4. *Definition of Terms.*** – As used in this Act:

19 (a) *Basic education* refers to a program of instruction intended to
20 meet the basic learning needs which provide the foundation on which
21 subsequent learning can be based. It encompasses early childhood,
22 kindergarten, elementary and secondary education as well as alternative
23 learning systems for out-of-school learners and those with special needs.

24 (b) *Child Find System* refers to the process of identifying, locating,
25 and evaluating every qualified child or youth with special needs so that the
26 concerned child development teacher/workers who are under the jurisdiction
27 of local government units (LGUs) can notify parents or guardians of those who
28 are not receiving public education services of the right of their children to

1 receive the same and facilitate such children's integration into the school
2 system.

3 (c) *Children and youth with special needs* refer to children and youth
4 who are gifted or talented, or with intellectual disabilities, learning
5 disabilities, mental, emotional or behavioral disorders, speech and language
6 disorders, sensory impairments, autism, long-term physical or health
7 disabilities, deaf, blindness and multiple handicapping conditions which in
8 interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective
9 participation in society on an equal basis with others and are in need of
10 special education as well as services for rehabilitation. They differ from the
11 average children in neuropsychological characteristics, sensory and cognitive
12 abilities, neuromuscular or physical characteristics, and social attributes to
13 such an extent that the use of modified school practices or special education
14 services are required to develop them to maximum capability.

15 (d) *Disability* refers to (1) long-term physical, mental, intellectual or
16 sensory impairment that substantially limit one or more physiological or
17 anatomical function of an individual or activities of such individual; (2)
18 limitation or difficulty encountered by an individual in executing a task or
19 action; and (3) a participation restriction or problem experienced by an
20 individual in involvement in life's situations.

21 It does not just entail a health problem but shall reflect the interaction
22 between features of a person's body and features of the society in which he
23 lives as well as the difficulties the person has encountered to remove the
24 environment and social barriers.

25 (e) *Inclusive education* refers to a process of addressing and
26 responding to the diverse needs of all learners by increasing participation in
27 learning, cultural activities and community life, and reducing exclusion
28 within and from education. It involves changes and modifications in content,
29 approaches, structures and strategies, anchored on a common vision for all
30 children of the appropriate age range and the conviction that it is the
31 responsibility of the State to educate all children. It focuses on the

1 achievement of high-quality education for all learners and the all-
2 encompassing development of more inclusive societies.

3 (f) *Individual Education Program (IEP)* refers to the systematic,
4 purposive and developmental educational programming of curricular and
5 instructional priorities and contents designed to a meet a learner's special
6 needs and aimed at ensuring mastery of target skills and behaviors. It
7 specifies the services to be provided and how often; describes the learner's
8 present level of performances and how the learner's disabilities affect
9 academic performances; and specifies accommodations and modifications to
10 be provided to the learner. An IEP must be designed to meet the unique
11 educational needs of a child in the appropriate and least restrictive
12 environment.

13 (g) *Learning Resource Center (Center)* refers to a teaching/learning
14 support system for students, teachers, school personnel and other education
15 stakeholders of children and youth with special needs. It includes
16 appropriate, accessible, disability-, cultural- and gender-sensitive
17 instructional learning materials, tools, devices, gadgets, equipment to
18 facilitate and enhance learning; assessment tools and instruments to evaluate
19 developmental domains and specific areas of concern necessary in
20 determining appropriate services and placement decisions; medical, health
21 and allied professional for care, rehabilitation and development of learners.

22 (h) *Least restrictive environment (LRE)* refers to the situation where a
23 learner, who has a disability, is accorded the opportunity to be educated with
24 non-disabled peers to the greatest extent appropriate. The children and youth
25 with special needs should have access to the general education curriculum,
26 or any other program that non-disabled peers are able to access. The children
27 and youth with special needs shall be provided with supplementary aids and
28 services necessary to achieve educational goals if placed in a setting with non-
29 disabled peers, and shall receive an appropriate version of educational and
30 social benefits which non-disabled students routinely receive in school.

(i) *Private sector participation* refers to all forms of indispensable, substantial and meaningful participation of private individuals, partnerships, groups or entities, disabled people's organizations, community-based organizations or non-government organizations, and business and industry groups in the delivery of educational and rehabilitative services for children and youth with special needs.

(j) *Special Education (SPED)* refers to the customized instructional program/service designed to meet the unique needs of individual children and youth with special needs, which may necessitate the use of supplementary aids and services and teaching strategies in classroom and non-academic settings and includes instruction on physical and vocational education, social skills development and travel training. It is geared towards their integration into mainstream education and to prepare them as independent and functioning members of society.

(k) *Special Instructional Materials* refer to textbooks in Braille, large type, audio, digital or any other medium or apparatus that convey information to a student or otherwise contributes to the learning process.

(l) *Universal Design for Learning (UDL)* refers to a scientifically valid framework for guiding educational practice established by the Department of Education that:

(1) Provides flexibility in the way information is presented, in the way students respond or demonstrate knowledge and skills, and in the way students are engaged; and

(2) Reduces barriers in instruction, provides appropriate accommodations, supports mental and physical challenges and maintains high achievement expectations for all students, including students with disabilities and students who have limited English proficiency.

It also refers to a set of principles that guides the design of inclusive classroom instruction and accessible course materials. The three principles of UDL are:

1 (i) *Recognition* – refers to multiple methods of representation that
2 give learners a variety of ways to acquire information and build knowledge;

3 (ii) *Strategic Learning* – refers to multiple means of student action
4 and expression that provide learners alternative modes for demonstrating
5 what they have learned; and

6 (iii) *Affective Learning* – refers to multiple modes of student
7 engagement that tap into learners' interests, challenge them appropriately
8 and motivate them to learn.

9 **ARTICLE III**

10 **INCLUSIVE EDUCATION LEARNING RESOURCE CENTER**

11 **SEC. 5. *Establishment of Inclusive Education Learning Resource***
12 ***Centers.*** – All public schools divisions of the DepEd shall establish an
13 Inclusive Education Learning Resource Center, hereinafter referred to as the
14 Center, for children and youth with special needs, where there are no existing
15 Centers: *Provided*, That all Centers shall comply with the Universal Design for
16 Learning as defined under Section 4, subparagraph (I) of this Act: *Provided*,
17 *further*, That all Centers and facilities for children and youth with special
18 needs shall also be compliant with the requirements of Batas Pambansa
19 Bilang 344, otherwise known as the "Accessibility Law."

20 **SEC. 6. *Functions of the Center.*** – The Center shall function as a learning
21 resource center that shall assist in promoting inclusive education and in
22 capacitating regular schools to effectively handle the needs of children and
23 youth with special needs. It shall:

24 (a) Assess children and youth with special needs to identify specific
25 developmental areas of concern and determine appropriate services and grade
26 placement options;

27 (b) Support children with disabilities and special needs in such a
28 manner that they could be integrated/included in regular schools in the least
29 restrictive environment;

30 (c) Conduct school-based training of children and youth with special
31 needs;

1 (d) Produce appropriate teaching materials for children and youth
2 with special needs'

3 (e) Provide training to regular teachers, administrators, non-
4 teaching personnel and parents on inclusive education;

5 (f) Monitor case management of children and youth with special
6 needs within the division;

7 (g) Ensure that the children and youth with special needs within the
8 division shall receive the appropriate services needed;

9 (h) Implement the programs of the Center such as individualized
10 education, transition program, alternative educational programs and early
11 intervention program;

12 (i) Establish a referral system that shall provide and develop
13 multidisciplinary services such as healthcare delivery systems and other child
14 and youth support systems to address the challenges and difficulties of the
15 families of children and youth with special needs and stimulate community
16 resources which shall promote and foster systems integration within
17 education;

18 (j) Provide access to auxiliary aids and services that are basically
19 non-educational but which enhance the education process for children and
20 youth with special needs. These aids and services may include:

21 (1) Language and speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical
22 and physiotherapy, among other modes of therapy, through multi-disciplinary
23 specialist team;

24 (2) Quality reading or other effective methods of delivering reading
25 materials to individuals with visual impairments;

26 (3) Acquisition or modification of equipment or devices;

27 (4) Appropriate classroom accommodation;

28 (5) Other similar services and actions or all types of aids and services
29 that facilitate the learning process; and

30 (6) Assistance in the transfer or admission of qualified children and
31 youth with special needs to post-secondary or tertiary education institutions.

32 **ARTICLE IV**

1 **PARTNERSHIP MECHANISM AND ROLES OF PARTNERS**

2 **SEC. 7. *Partnership Mechanism.*** – The DepEd and the concerned agencies
3 may coordinate and enter into cooperative agreement, arrangement or
4 contract with other government agencies, private non-profit agencies,
5 institutions or organizations duly accredited or recognized by the government
6 agencies, civil society, business and industrial sector, and other concerned
7 sectors in the furtherance of the provisions of this Act: *Provided, That* the
8 DepEd shall coordinate with the Department of Health (DOH), Department of
9 Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Department of Public Works and
10 Highways (DPWH), Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and the
11 National Council on Disability Affairs (NCDA) for the establishment or creation
12 of Centers on the implementation of programs such as the following:

13 (a) Technical assistance to teachers who are preparing to serve or
14 are serving in the Centers;

15 (b) Training of professional or related services personnel, including
16 all regular teachers;

17 (c) Replication of successful innovative approaches in providing
18 educational or related services to children and youth with special needs;

19 (d) Facilitation of parental involvement in the education of their
20 children and youth with special needs;

21 (e) Diagnosis and educational evaluation of children and youth with
22 special needs;

23 (f) Consultative, counseling and training services for the families of
24 children and youth with special needs;

25 (g) Familiarization of the municipality or city being served by an
26 Inclusive Education Learning Resource Center with the problems and
27 potentials of children and youth with special needs; and

28 (h) Entering into agreements with medical and allied medical
29 professional groups.

30 Centers created under this Section shall remain part of the DepEd
31 System.

SEC. 8. Responsibilities of Agencies. – In conformity with their respective charters and mandates, government agencies shall define and delineate their respective areas of responsibility with respect to the implementation of this Act. These areas shall be subject to periodic re-assessment of the Inter-Agency Coordinating Council on Inclusive Education (IACCIE), as provided in Section 9 of this Act, whenever necessary.

For purposes of this Act, the different agencies shall have the following roles:

(a) Department of Education (DepEd) – The DepEd shall be the lead government agency responsible for the implementation of this Act to ensure inter-agency coordination and integration of services among school systems, early intervention programs, mainstreaming of children and youth with special needs in the regular classroom set-up, concerned welfare agencies, children and youth with special needs availability of access and classification of developmental domains and establishment of a referral system and redress mechanisms for parents and guardians.

(b) Department of Health (DOH) – The DOH shall make available health care services for children and youth with special healthcare needs, child mental health service providers, health plans, oral health providers, family-to-family health information and education, advocacy organizations and other community organizations serving children and youth with special needs, and their families. Due to the importance of integrating primary care with mental health services, the DOH shall collaborate with the National Nutrition Council (NNC) and the Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) Council in the provision of inclusive health and nutrition services for the implementation of this Act.

(c) Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) – The DSWD shall be responsible for the effective management and provision of social and welfare services for poor and deserving children and youth with special needs based on their assessed needs, subject to guidelines it shall prescribe.

1 (d) Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) – The DPWH
2 shall prescribe the proper physical set-up of the Centers and shall build and
3 maintain roads that shall ensure accessibility to children and youth with
4 special needs.

5 (e) Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) – The DILG
6 shall promulgate the policies and guidelines relevant to the implementation
7 of this Act by the local government units.

8 (f) Local Government Units (LGUs) – The LGUs shall allocate a
9 portion of their Special Education Fund (SEF) for the following:

10 (1) Provision of sites, buildings or centers where there are no existing
11 school facilities that may be used for the special education of children and
12 youth with special needs as well as the establishment of Child Development
13 Centers (CDCs) pursuant to Section 11 hereof;

14 (2) Identification, coordination and partnership with public or
15 private volunteers and private organizations, national or international, duly
16 recognized and accredited by appropriate government office, for information
17 dissemination campaigns and funding support to augment the funding for
18 Inclusive Education programs and activities;

19 (3) Provide assistive devices, instructional materials and teacher's
20 training provisions;

21 (4) Provision of funds for the delivery of health and nutrition services
22 and interventions, educational assessment program for children and youth
23 with special needs in their respective localities that would be initiated by the
24 DOH and DepEd, respectively;

25 (5) Participate in all efforts concerning integration of children and
26 youth with special needs to regular schools, health services, transport
27 services and other social and welfare services;

28 (6) Develop government and community awareness and
29 responsiveness to the needs of children and youth with special needs;

30 (7) Provide a means for redress in case parents are not amenable to
31 educational program for children and youth with special needs under the
32 jurisdiction of the Local School Boards;

(8) Coordinate with other agencies in ensuring the proper implementation of the provisions of this Act within their territorial jurisdiction, including the child find and referral system; and

(9) Enact appropriate ordinances to implement the LGUs role in this Act.

ARTICLE V

INTER-AGENCY COORDINATING COUNCIL ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

SEC. 9. *Inter-Agency Coordinating Council on Inclusive Education*

(IACCIE). – For purposes of policy integration, harmonization and coordination of functions, there is hereby created an Inter-Agency Coordinating Council on Inclusive Education (IACCIE), which shall be attached to the DepEd and which shall be composed of the following officials or their duly authorized representatives, up to the level of Assistant Secretary or its equivalent:

(a) Secretary of the Department of Education (DepEd), as Chairperson

(b) Secretary of the Department of Health (DOH), as Co-Chairperson;

(c) Secretary of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), as Co-Chairperson;

(d) Secretary of the Department of Finance (DOF);

(e) Secretary of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH);

(f) Secretary of the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG);

(g) Secretary of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE);

(h) Director General of the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA);

(i) Commissioner of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED).

The IACCIE shall perform the following functions:

(a) Develop and set criteria on Individual Educational Programs. It shall evaluate fundamental changes both in educational practice and in the

1 design of educational services for inclusion of children and youth with special
2 needs in regular schools. Inclusive Education involves changes in philosophy,
3 curriculum, teaching strategy and structural organization;

4 (b) Implement appropriate and coordinated programs in health and
5 related physiological and psychological health services, multidisciplinary
6 domains, transportation and accessibility for children and youth with special
7 needs;

8 (c) Act as catalyst of change and source of information for the benefit
9 or both regular students and children and youth with special needs;

10 (d) Constitute and authorize a multidisciplinary body to conduct an
11 annual audit to determine the compliance of the Centers on its operations;

12 (e) Document, monitor and assess the performances of the Centers
13 and their personnel; and

14 (f) Coordinate and disseminate information with partner agencies or
15 local government units.

16 **SEC. 10. The IACCIE Technical Working Committee.** – The IACCIE shall
17 be supported by a Technical Working Committee (TWC) which shall be
18 composed of representatives from the following agencies and institutions:

19 (a) Bureau of Curriculum Development of the DepEd

20 (b) Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) Council

21 (c) National Council on Disability Affairs (NCDA)

22 (d) Council for the Welfare of Children (CWC)

23 (e) National Nutrition Council (NNC) of the DOH

24 (f) Local Government Units – Leagues of Provinces, Cities and
25 Municipalities

26 (g) Health organizations such as PhilHealth and other healthcare
27 services of the DOH

28 (h) Civil society organizations on persons with disability and
29 indigenous peoples' concerns

30 (i) Academe

31 The TWC shall provide groundwork technical support to the IACCIE on
32 its activities to capture varied clientele scope and needs, mainstream

1 programs, and reach grassroots levels. Representatives of civil society
2 organizations and the academe shall be nominated through a process
3 designed by the IACCIE.

4 **ARTICLE VI**

5 **OTHER EDUCATION AND HEALTH INTERVENTIONS**

6 **SEC. 11. *Inclusion of Children with Special Needs in Child Development***

7 **Centers.** – Child Development Centers (CDCs) specially designed for pre-
8 school children and their parents where early identification of disabilities
9 and/or special needs and introductory educational and intervention
10 programs will be administered, and development of future multidisciplinary
11 child development centers shall be established near all schools or within
12 existing Inclusive Education Learning Resource Centers. As far as practicable,
13 the use of CSCs and facilities shall be maximized.

14 The ECCD Council shall coordinate with the DepEd, DSWD, DOH,
15 LGUz and other agencies to provide the necessary programs and support for
16 children with special needs under five (5) years old.

17 **ARTICLE VII**

18 **ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES**

19 **SEC. 12. *Hiring of Personnel and Staff.*** – In addition to teachers and
20 licensed social workers who have knowledge, skills and special training in
21 handling cases of children and youth with special needs, and to ensure the
22 effective implementation of this Act, the DepEd, DOH and DSWD may hire the
23 necessary personnel and support staff to operate, administer and oversee the
24 Center.

25 **SEC. 13. *Remuneration, Benefits and Incentives for Inclusive Education***

26 **Learning Personnel and Staff.** – The salary grades of Special Education
27 (SPED) teachers and Program Directors managing the Centers shall be in
28 accordance with the Revised Compensation and Position Classification
29 System and other civil service rules and regulations.

1 The DepEd shall enhance the access of teachers/instructors to
2 specialized and continuing training and education and ensure that the
3 Centers shall endeavor to attract the best available teaching staff and talents
4 through adequate remuneration, benefits, scholarship and training grants,
5 teacher exchange programs, incentives and allowances, and other means of
6 securing their job satisfaction and tenure in their respective posts. A similar
7 program shall be designed for support personnel to include interpreters,
8 psychologists, social workers, and health service professionals/workers
9 involved in the education, health and rehabilitation of children and youth with
10 special needs.

11 The DepEd shall identify at least one (1) leading institution or university
12 in Luzon, Visayas, Mindanao and in Metro Manila, Metro Cebu and Metro
13 Davao, whose faculty is considered or regarded as highly competent in the
14 area of special education and where a uniform or standardized curriculum for
15 any post-graduate education program shall be designed to benefit SPED
16 teachers and other personnel of the Centers. The manner of selection of such
17 institution shall be provided under the rules and regulations to be formulated
18 to implement the provisions of this Act.

19 **SEC. 14. *In-Service Training of Teachers, Administrators, and Non-***
20 ***Teaching Personnel.*** – To enhance the inclusive education program, the
21 DepEd shall coordinated with the appropriate national government agencies
22 to offer basic and advanced seminars on disability awareness and inclusive
23 education for the concerned education stakeholders.

24 The appropriate and necessary trainings, seminars and other
25 opportunities for upgrading the performance of the DepEd teachers
26 implementing the inclusive education curriculum shall be conducted and
27 evaluated by the National Educators' Academy of the Philippines.

28 **ARTICLE VIII**

29 **RESEARCH, SCHOLARSHIPS AND OTHER SUPPORT MECHANISMS**

30 **SEC. 15. *Continuing Research to Identify the Needs of Children and***
31 ***Youth With Special Needs.*** – The DepEd, by itself or in coordination with

1 organizations or institutions, shall undertake continuing research to identify
2 and design programs that shall meet the full range of needs of children and
3 youth with special needs: *Provided*, That such continuing research shall also
4 be used to develop instructional techniques for use by the Centers towards
5 improving the acquisition of skills by the children and youth with special
6 needs necessary for their transition to independent living, vocational training
7 or competitive skill development: *Provided, further*, That such continuing
8 research shall be used by the DepEd in designing holistic programs for all
9 schools and inclusive Education Resource Learning Centers to enhance the
10 potential of the children and youth to participate and be integrated into
11 community life.

12 **SEC. 16. Student Assistance.** – The DepEd, DSWD, DOLE, NCDA and the
13 LGUs shall develop programs to support the financial and educational needs
14 of the marginalized or disadvantaged children and youth with special needs,
15 as defined in Republic Act No. 8425, known as the “Social Reform and Poverty
16 Alleviation Act”. The benefits accorded by Republic Act No. 8545, otherwise
17 known as the “Government Assistance to Students and Teachers in Private
18 Education (GASTPE) Act” shall likewise be extended to qualified children and
19 youth with special needs in the secondary level.

20 **SEC. 17. Recreational and Artistic Opportunities.** – The DepEd shall
21 establish opportunities for the safe, wholesome, interactive individual as well
22 as group recreation and social activities of children and youth with special
23 needs, optimal use of their leisure hours and advancement of their physical,
24 mental, social and cultural development.

25 **SEC. 18. Special Instructional Materials.** – Publishers shall grant the
26 DepEd the authority to transcribe adopted instructional materials into
27 accessible format, without penalty or payment of royalty, in accordance with
28 Republic Act No 8293, otherwise known as the “Intellectual Property Code of
29 the Philippines”: *Provided*, That publishers of a newly adopter instructional
30 material shall provide, not later than the second working day after the
31 adoption of a textbook title by the DepEd, the digital copy as specified by the
32 DepEd for the purpose of producing accessible versions of the textbooks for

1 students with reading disabilities. The accessible versions may be produced
2 by the DepEd or by non-profit accessible book producers which may be copied
3 and distributed upon request by a Schools Division for instructional
4 purposes.

5 **SEC. 19. *Family Members, Guardians, Caregivers and Day Care Workers***

6 ***Education.*** – A formal training and counseling program for family members,
7 guardians, caregivers, and day care workers of children and youth with
8 special needs shall be developed jointly by the DepEd, DSWD, LGUs, ECCD
9 Council, disabled people’s organizations, parent-support organizations,
10 health professional organizations, healthcare services, nongovernment
11 organizations, and civil society organizations to provide them with a working
12 knowledge of special education and an understanding of the physical and
13 mental needs of children and youth with special needs; and set their
14 important role as educators, so as to maximize their knowledge and skills to
15 fully participate in developing the potentials of children and youth with special
16 needs.

17 **ARTICLE IX**

18 **PRIVATE SECTOR PARTICIPATION**

19 **SEC. 20. *Incentives for Private Sector Participation.*** – Partnerships
20 between the government and private institutions catering to the needs of
21 children and youth with special needs shall be encourages. Private entities
22 which team up with the DepEd or provide the necessary educational
23 assistance and service of children and youth with special needs enrolled in
24 public schools shall be entitled to the benefits and incentives provided under
25 Republic Act No. 8525, otherwise known as the “Adopt-a-School Act” and its
26 implementing rules and regulations.

27 **ARTICLE X**

28 **PUBLIC INFORMATION AND DISSEMINATION**

29 **SEC. 21. *Public Information, Education and Communication.*** – A
30 nationwide information dissemination campaign on the prevention, early

1 identification and the strategic intervention programs for children and youth
2 with special needs shall be intensified. This shall be the joint responsibility of
3 the Philippine Information Agency (PIA), CSC, NCDA, and the DepEd.
4 Likewise, the DepEd, in collaboration with the DOH, DOLE, CHED, TESDA
5 and DILG shall disseminate materials and information concerning effective
6 practices in working with training and education of children and youth with
7 special needs.

8 **ARTICLE XI**

9 **FINAL PROVISIONS**

10 **SEC. 22. Appropriations.** – The Secretaries of the DepEd, DOH and DSWD
11 shall immediately include in their respective Departments' programs the
12 implementation of this Act, the funding of which shall be included in the
13 annual General Appropriations Act.

14 **SEC. 23. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** – Within one hundred
15 twenty (120) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Secretaries of the DepEd,
16 the DOH and the DSWD, in coordination with the heads of other concerned
17 agencies, shall promulgate and issue the necessary guidelines for the effective
18 implementation of this Act. The implementing rules and regulations issued
19 pursuant to this Section shall take effect thirty (30) days after its publication
20 in two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

21 **SEC. 24. Separability Clause.** – If any provision or part hereof is held invalid
22 or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise
23 affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

24 **SEC. 25. Repealing Clause.** – All laws, presidential decrees, executive
25 orders, rules and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions
26 of this Act are hereby repealed, modified, or amended accordingly.

27 **SEC. 26. Effectivity.** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
28 publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,