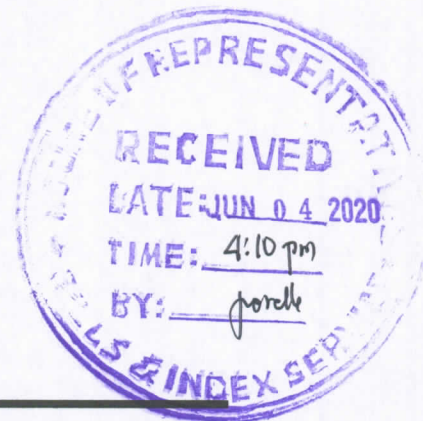


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS

First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 6964



Introduced by HONORABLE WES GATCHALIAN

AN ACT

**PROVIDING FOR THE BASIC EDUCATION DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAM
AND MANDATING ALL TV NETWORKS TO PROVIDE THE DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION AIR TIME FOR AIRING DISTANCE LEARNING TV CLASSES.**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Department of Education (DepEd) moved the opening of classes for 2020 from June to August while waiting for a cure or a vaccine for the 2019 novel coronavirus or COVID-19. Since the traditional face-to-face classroom set up in schools might still not be safe in light of the virus, DepEd is planning to implement alternative learning modalities, such as technology-mediated learning in delivering lessons to students.

While DepEd is leaning towards an alternative learning system with the internet as the primary delivery medium, this Representation believes that an alternative learning system delivered through TV broadcast would be more inclusive and accessible to the masses. Several studies have consistently shown that TV is still the media platform with the greatest reach in the country. A study conducted by Philippine Survey and Research Center (PSRC) in 2019, showed that 87% of households in the country have a television. As of May 2020, there are 22,975,630 total households in the Philippines.

Moreover, DepEd will not be able to provide all of its teachers and students internet-capable equipment. In an interview last May 21, 2020, Education Undersecretary Alain Pascua shared that the ratio of computers per student in public schools is roughly 1 computer to 20 students. DepEd only has 1.3 million tablets, laptops and computers for its 21.4 million public school students.

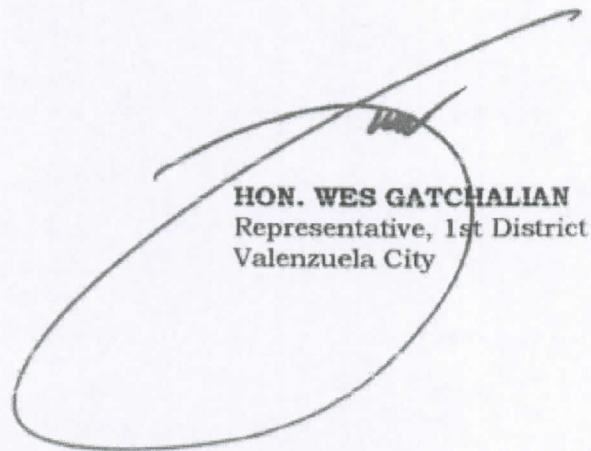
Then there is question of readiness for both the teachers and the students to transition into a different learning modality. In a survey conducted by the Asia Foundation it was shown that only 15% of Filipino teachers have been trained to deliver alternative modes of education, while some 84 percent said they are "not yet ready".

In view of the foregoing, this Bill seeks to invoke the responsibility to the public embedded in the legislative franchises of all TV networks to “assist the Government in the functions of public information and education” by mandating all TV networks to provide DepEd free air time for distance learning TV classes targeting specific school levels at specific times to ensure that students without internet access or from far-flung areas can still study under the distance-learning scheme.

In addition, This Bill also seeks to establish the BASIC EDUCATION Distance Learning Program by mandating DepEd to implement the necessary modifications in the current public school in order to transition to a TV broadcast-based system.

Lastly, this legislation also aims to provide additional layer of protection to our public school in the performance of their duties during this pandemic.

Urgent approval of this bill is earnestly requested.



HON. WES GATCHALIAN
Representative, 1st District
Valenzuela City

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**PROVIDING FOR THE BASIC EDUCATION DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAM
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EDUCATION AIR TIME FOR AIRING DISTANCE LEARNING TV CLASSES.**

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

3 **SECTION 1. *Short Title.*** - This Act shall be known as the "*Basic Education*
4 *Distance Learning Program*"

5 **SEC. 2. *Declaration of Principles and Policies*** - It is the policy of the State
6 to promote the right of all citizens to quality education. It is likewise that State's
7 highest priority to enact of measures that will promote health and safety of the
8 students and the teachers alike. Towards this end, the State shall provide an
9 accessible alternative learning system to allow students to continue their education
10 while keeping them safe from the threats of 2019 corona virus disease (COVID-19).

11 **SEC. 3. *Objectives*** - This act seeks to attain the following objectives:

- 12 a) Provide continuity of learning and education to all basic education students
13 during the period wherein physical classes or traditional face-to-face classroom
14 lecture is not possible due to the threats of the COVID 19 virus.
- 15 b) To provide adequate attention to the learning needs of basic education students
16 during the period wherein physical classes of traditional face to face is not possible
17 due to the threat of COVID 19 virus.
- 18 c) To provide effective and accessible alternative modes education to basic education
19 students in the Country.
- 20 d) To adopt and implement innovative alternative modes of education in adherence
21 to the Social Distancing Protocol.

e) To equip our teachers to deliver alternative modes of education.

SEC. 4. **Basic Education Distance Learning Program** – The Basic Education Distance Learning Program will be delivered primarily via television broadcast of distance learning TV classes/lessons, which will be complemented by the appropriate teaching module and material to be administered by the teacher in charge.

DepEd will prepare distance learning TV classes based on its existing curriculum for each grade level under the BASIC EDUCATION Program taking into consideration the following guidelines:

- a) The distance learning TV classes/lessons for the Distance Learning System will be composed 3 hours video lessons;
- b) The video lessons must cover at least two subjects per day.
- c) The video lessons will be aired from Monday to Saturday, 8am to 12am;
- d) The video lessons must be interactive and include activity materials or homework to reinforce the lessons which will be administered by the teacher in charge.

Furthermore, DepEd shall furnish the necessary teaching module and materials, provide training to teachers and other staffs, and the guidelines to implement the distance learning program in every barangay in the country.

SEC. 5. **Allocation of Air Time for DepEd**- All television stations in the Philippines, including those owned or controlled by the Government, are hereby mandated to give, free of charge, three hours of their air time every Monday to Saturday, from eight o'clock (8:00) am to twelve noon (12:00), to Department of Education (DepEd) upon the approval of this Act and until such time that the Philippine education system can return to its traditional classroom setting. Nothing in this Act shall prevent TV networks from donating to DepEd more than three hours of their air time. The donation of air time will be considered as part of the TV Network's corporate social responsibility project or program.

The National Telecommunication Commission (NTC) is hereby directed to provide DepEd the list of all active TV Networks in the country within fifteen (15) days upon the approval of this Act. The NTC shall also provide a report if the one station - one grade level ratio can be implemented in the entire country.

DepEd will assign to each television network a specific grade level/s to cater to. Furthermore, each television stations are also mandated to:

- a) simultaneously stream the virtual lessons on their own online platforms; and
- b) are also required to make the video file of the distance learning TV classes available for at least one year and accessible to all.

SEC. 6. **Enrollment Procedure** - DepEd in close coordination with the

Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) must adopt and implement innovative enrollment procedure consistent with social distancing protocols.

Enrollment shall be conducted per barangay for all learners intending to attend academic year 2020-2021, including those who enrolled during the early registration period in February 2020. The enrollees and/or their parents/guardians shall provide their information through an enrollment survey form intended to collect important information to consider for in the implementation of the BASIC EDUCATION Distance Learning Program, such as, but not limited to:

- a. Number of TV sets in their household;
- b. Number of students of different grade level per household;
- c. Number of Computer, laptop and tablets in their household;
- d. Whether or not they access to the internet;

SEC. 7. Role of Teachers - A class adviser will be assigned per grade level in every barangay. Every class advisor shall be responsible for twenty (20) students. In case the number of students in a grade level in one barangay exceeds twenty (20), additional teachers or temporary teacher assistants (TTA) will be assigned to help in the conduct of the distance learning program.

DepEd will provide the teachers orientation and training activities on the implementation of the Basic Education Distance Learning Program, preparation of activity worksheets and other materials. DepEd may facilitate the training through television broadcast.

Under this Act, all public-school teachers will be classified as frontliners and the State shall ensure that they are protected by providing them with a "Special risk allowance" in addition to the "Special Hardship Allowances" granted under the Magna Carta of Public-School Teachers or Republic Act No. 4670.

In areas where there is shortage of teachers, DepEd may engage services of Temporary Teacher Assistants (TTA) who must be over eighteen years old and a bachelor's degree holder, to assist the teachers in the distribution and collection of educational materials. Provided, that TTA to be hired on temporary basis shall receive appropriate compensation and allowances: Provided, further, that all TTA shall also receive "Special risk allowance" from the government.

SEC. 8. Role of Parents - The parents/guardians will be the primary supervising authority of the students under the Basic Education Distance Learning Program. As such seamless coordination between the parent/guardian and teacher will be essential in order to ensure that the objective of this act is achieved. Therefore, DepEd shall conduct orientations and capacity building for parents and guardians to prepare them for their role/responsibilities under this Act.

SEC. 9. Provision for Students without TV Access - For students without TV at home, or for household with single TV set and multiple students of different grade levels, DepEd in coordination with the Barangay Council and the Local

1 Government Unit must provide television sets in designated facilities where the said
2 students may view the distance learning TV classes under the Distance Learning
3 Program, provided that strict social distancing is observed. In barangays with
4 existing schools, the rooms and building of the said schools will be used for this
5 purpose, subject to compliance with minimum health standards.

6 In low risk localities, as determined by the Department of Health (DOH), and
7 the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases
8 (IATF), TV sharing between neighboring households may be allowed, provided that
9 social distancing is observed. DepEd, in coordination with the DOH, and the IATF
10 will promulgate guidelines regarding the minimum health standards to be observed
11 and number of students allowable per rooms/area.

12 SEC. 10. **Student Progress Monitoring** – DepEd is hereby mandated to
13 modify its grading system and come up with a monitoring protocol to ensure that
14 the goals of the Act are achieved and to effectively track the progress of each student.

15 SEC. 11. **Allocation from the Department of Education** - The DepEd shall
16 allocate an appropriate amount from its regular budget for the implementation of
17 the Basic Education Distance Learning Program under this Act.

18 SEC. 12. **Implementing Rules and Regulations.** - Within thirty (30) days
19 upon the approval of this Act, the DepEd shall, in consultation with the various
20 stakeholders, formulate the rules and regulations necessary for the proper
21 implementation of this Act.

22 SEC. 13. **Separability Clause** - If any provision or SEC. of this Act or the
23 application thereof to any person or circumstances is held invalid, the other
24 provisions or sections of this Act, in the application of such provision or SEC. to
25 other persons or circumstances, shall not be affected thereby.

26 SEC. 14. **Repealing Clause** - All acts or parts of acts and executive orders,
27 administrative orders, or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of
28 this Act are hereby repealed.

29 SEC. 15. **Effectivity Clause** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days
30 following the completion of its publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2)
31 newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,