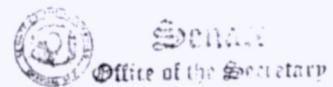


EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
First Regular Session)



Senate

Office of the Secretary

SENATE

*19 JUL 29 A11:22

S. No. 804

RECEIVED BY _____

Introduced by SENATOR RAMON BONG REVILLA, 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**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Article II, Section 17 of the 1987 Constitution states that, "the State shall give priority to education, science and technology, arts, culture, and sports to foster patriotism and nationalism, accelerate social progress, and promote total human liberation and development."

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) published on May 2013 the "Children and Young People with Disabilities: Fact Sheet" where it indicated among the key facts that, "a significant proportion of children with disabilities are denied access to basic services including education and health care." The same document recommended that to address the marginalisation of children and youth with disabilities, "disability as a global human rights issues must be mainstreamed within all development, health and educational programs as well as in humanitarian action intended to improve the lives of children and their families."

Several laws were already enacted regarding the provision of education to children and youth with special needs. Republic Act No. 5250 entitled, "An Act

Establishing A Ten-Year Training Program for Teachers of Special and Exceptional Children in the Philippines and Authorizing the Appropriation of Funds Thereof", was signed on 15 June 1968 and was amended by Republic Act No. 6067 on 04 August 1969. Republic Act No. 7277, "Magna Carta for Disabled Persons", specifically under Chapter II, provides for education for disabled persons, including the establishment of a system of special education, Braille and Record Libraries.

In 1997, then Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS) issued Order No. 26, s. 1997, "Institutionalization of SPED Programs in All Schools" which directed all divisions of the Department to organize at least one Special Education (SPED) Center and all districts to organize SPED programs in schools where there are identified children with special needs. Also, under the Alternative Learning Systems (ALS) Programs of the DepEd is the "Program for Hearing Impairment: Alternative Learning System for Differently-Abled Persons (ALS-DAP).

The Department of Education (DepEd), therefore, is actively at the forefront of espousing for the education of children and youth with special needs. However, the records of the Department still bear that only 2% of the 5.49 million children with special needs are getting government assistance.¹ In the 2019 General Appropriations Act, the new line item for proposed budget for the SPED under the DepEd was not considered. This was a result of the shift to inclusive education where learners with special needs are mainstreamed along with regular students.²

This "Inclusive Education for Children and Youth with Special Needs Act" seeks to provide children and youth with special needs free and appropriate public education and related services by establishing Inclusive Education Learning Resource Centers (IELRC) under the DepEd. It also provides for the hiring of personnel and staff, as well as their remuneration, benefits and incentives. To ensure sustainability of the

¹ Delizo, Michael Joe. "Gov't urged to uphold education rights of special needs children". 01 June 2019. www.abs-cbnnews.com.

² Malipot, Merlina Hernando. "DepEd: Special Education remains among its 'priority programs'". 13 August 2018

program, it provides appropriations from the funds of the DepEd, Department of Health (DOH) and Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).

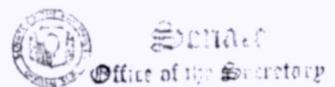
This measure was approved on Third Reading by the House of Representatives and was transmitted to this Chamber where it was sent to the Archives due to the adjournment of the 17th Congress.

In this light, the immediate passage of this bill is highly recommended.



RAMON BONG REVILLA, JR.

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**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 House of Representative of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

1 Section 1. *Short Title.* - This Act shall be known as the "Inclusive Education for
2 Children and Youth with Special Needs".

3 **ARTICLE I**

4 **POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES**

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

- 7 (a) Protect and promote the rights of children and youth with special needs
8 to make quality education accessible to them;
- 9 (b) Recognize the vital role of children and youth with special needs in
10 society, consider their needs as integral part of national development
11 strategies, and facilitate their active participation and integration in
12 public, civic and State affairs;
- 13 (c) Give full support for their welfare and development to ensure their full
14 integration to society;

- 1 (d) Consider the special requirements of disabled persons in the formulation
2 of inclusive educational policies and programs;
- 3 (e) Encourage learning institutions to take into account the special needs of
4 disabled persons with respect to the use of school facilities, class
5 schedules, physical education requirements, and other pertinent
6 considerations;
- 7 (f) Support learning institutions, especially higher learning institutions, in
8 providing auxiliary services that will facilitate the learning process for
9 disabled persons, ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and
10 promote lifelong learning opportunities for all;
- 11 (g) Recognize the right of the children and youth with special needs to
12 education on the basis of equal opportunity, in particular, making
13 primary education compulsory and accessible to every children and
14 youth with special needs;
- 15 (h) Recognize the right of children and youth with special needs to the
16 highest attainable standard of health and to facilities for the treatment
17 of illness; and rehabilitation of health; and ensure that no child is
18 deprived of the right of access to such health care and rehabilitation
19 services; and,
- 20 (i) Ensure that children and youth with special needs belonging to ethnic,
21 religious or linguistic minorities or persons of indigenous origin shall not
22 be denied the right to education, health treatment, or health
23 rehabilitation in community with other members, to enjoy their own
24 culture, profess and practice their own religion, or to use their own
25 language.

26 Sec. 3. *Objectives.* – This Act shall pursue the following objectives:

- 27 (a) Provide the children and youth with special needs free and
28 appropriate public education and related services in accordance with
29 their needs, and in preparation for adult living and community life;
- 30 (b) Provide children and youth with special needs access to general
31 education curriculum through the formal systems and alternative
32 delivery services in education;

- 1 (c) Facilitate the inclusion and integration of children and youth with
2 special needs into mainstream education in accordance with the
3 United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons With Disabilities,
4 and the Incheon Strategy to Make the Rights Real For Persons With
5 Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific;
- 6 (d) Implement inclusive education and establish Inclusive Education
7 Learning Resource Centers (IELRC) for inclusion of children and
8 youth with special needs in the educations mainstream in the least
9 restrictive environment;
- 10 (e) Ensure that children and youth with special needs fully develop their
11 potential toward self-sufficiency and become fully participative
12 members of society;
- 13 (f) Ensure that children and youth with special needs understand,
14 appreciate and respect differences amongst groups and members of
15 society in which they live;
- 16 (g) Identify, through a Child Find System, children and youth with special
17 needs ages three (3) to twenty-four (24), and infants and toddlers
18 under the age of three (3), in compliance with Republic Act No.
19 10410, otherwise known as the "Early Years Act of 2003";
- 20 (h) Develop, implement, and review individualized Education Plan;
- 21 (i) Provide parents with information and opportunities to actively
22 participate in the possible school placement options and educational
23 programs for their children and to enable them to make informed
24 choices and decisions;
- 25 (j) Enable and empower parents and family member by training and
26 equipping them with capabilities to identify, prevent, refer or
27 intervene with regard to disorders, disabilities and abilities of their
28 children;
- 29 (k) Train and equip special education teachers, regular teachers,
30 principals/administrators, non-teaching staff of the school, and
31 caregivers as primary sources of care, development, education and
32 advancement of children and youth with special needs;

- 1 (l) Increase school retention and cohort survival of children and youth
2 with special needs;
- 3 (m) Create significant and positive changes in community orientation
4 towards disability and the need to provide inclusive education and
5 proper care of children and youth with special needs; and,
- 6 (n) Regularly consult and actively involve persons with disabilities,
7 including children and youth with special needs, through their
8 representative organizations, in the implementation of this Act and
9 issues relating to it.

10 **ARTICLE II**

11 **DEFINITION OF TERMS**

12 Sec. 4. *Definition of Terms.* – As used in this Act:

- 13 (a) *Basic education* – refers to a program of instruction intended to meet
14 the basic learning needs which provide the foundation on which
15 subsequent learning can be based. It encompasses early childhood,
16 kindergarten, elementary and secondary education as well as alternative
17 systems for out-of-school learners and those with special needs;
- 18 (b) *Child Find System* – refers to the process of identifying, locating, and
19 evaluating every qualified child or youth with special needs so that the
20 concerned child development teachers/workers who are under the
21 jurisdiction of local government units (LGUs) can notify parents or
22 guardians of those who are not receiving public education services of
23 the right of their children to receive the same and facilitate such
24 children's integration into the school system;
- 25 (c) *Children and youth with special needs* – refers to children and youth who
26 are gifted or talented, or with intellectual disabilities, learning disabilities,
27 mental, emotional or behavioral disorders, speech and language
28 disorders, sensory impairments, autism, long term physical or health
29 disabilities, deafblindness, and multiple handicapping conditions which
30 in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective
31 participation in society on an equal basis with others and are in need of
32 special education as well as services for rehabilitation. They differ from

the average children in neuropsychological characteristics, sensory and cognitive abilities, neuromuscular or physical characteristics, and social attributes to such an extent that the use of modified school practices or special education services are required to develop them to maximum capacity;

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

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

(e) *Inclusive education* – refers to a process of addressing and responding to the diverse needs of all learners by increasing participation in learning, cultural activities and community life, and reducing exclusion within and from education. It involves changes and modifications in content, approaches, structures, strategies, anchored on a common vision for all children of the appropriate age range and the conviction that it is the responsibility of the State to educate all children. It focuses on the achievement of high quality education for all learners and the all-encompassing development of more inclusive societies;

(f) *Individual Education Program (IEP)* – refers to the systematic, purposive and developmental educational programming of curricular and instructional priorities and contents designed to meet a learner's special needs and aimed at ensuring mastery of target skills and behaviors. It specifies the services to be provided and how often; describes the learner's present level of performances and how the learner's disabilities affect academic performances; and specifies accommodations and modifications to be provided to the learner. An IEP must be designed

1 to meet the unique educational needs of a child in the appropriate and
2 least restrictive environment;

3 (g) *Learning Resource Center (Center)* – refers to a teaching/learning
4 support system for students, teachers, school personnel and other
5 education stakeholders of children and youth with special needs. It
6 includes appropriate, accessible, disability-, cultural-, and gender-
7 sensitive instructional learning materials, tools, devices, gadgets,
8 equipment to facilitate and enhance learning; assessment tools and
9 instruments to evaluate developmental domains and specific areas of
10 concern necessary in determining appropriate services and placement
11 decisions; medical, health and allied professionals for care, rehabilitation
12 and development of learners;

13 (h) *Least restrictive environment (LRE)* – refers to the situation where a
14 learner, who has a disability, is accorded the opportunity to be educated
15 with non-disabled peers to the greatest extent appropriate. The children
16 and youth with special needs should have access to the general
17 education curriculum, or any other program that non-disabled peers are
18 able to access. The children and youth with special needs shall be
19 provided with supplementary aids and services necessary to achieve
20 educational goals if placed in a setting with non-disabled students
21 routinely receive in school;

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

28 (j) *Special Education (SPED)* – refers to the customized instructional
29 program/service designed to meet the unique needs of individual
30 children and youth with special needs, which may necessitate the use of
31 supplementary aids and services and teaching strategies in classroom
32 and non-academic settings and includes instructions 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* – refers 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 Department of Education (DepEd) 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, support mental and physical challenges and maintain 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) Recognition – refers to multiple methods of representation that give learners a variety of ways to acquire information and build knowledge;

(2) Strategic Learning – refers to multiple means of student action and expression that provide learners alternative modes of demonstrating what they have learned; and,

(3) Affective Learning – refers to multiple means of student engagement that tap into learners' interests, challenge them appropriately and motivate them to learn.

ARTICLE III

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION LEARNING RESOURCE CENTER

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

9 Sec. 6. *Functions of the Center.* – The Center shall function as a learning
10 resource center that shall assist in promoting inclusive education and in capacitating
11 regular schools to effectively handle the needs of children and youth with special
12 needs. It shall:

- 13 (a) Assess children and youth with special needs to identify specific
14 developmental areas of concern and determine appropriate services and
15 grade placement options;
- 16 (b) Support children with disabilities and special needs in such a manner
17 that they could be integrated/included in regular schools in the least
18 restrictive environment;
- 19 (c) Conduct school-based training of children and youth with special needs;
- 20 (d) Produce appropriate teaching materials for children and youth with
21 special needs;
- 22 (e) Provide training to regular teachers, administrators, non-teaching
23 personnel and parents on inclusive education;
- 24 (f) Monitor cases management of children and youth with special needs
25 within the division;
- 26 (g) Ensure that the children and youth with special needs within the division
27 shall receive the appropriate services needed;
- 28 (h) Implement the programs of the Center such as individualized education,
29 transition program, alternative educational programs and early
30 intervention program;
- 31 (i) Establish a referral system that shall provide and develop
32 multidisciplinary services such as healthcare delivery systems and other

1 child and youth support systems to address the challenges and
2 difficulties of the families of children and youth with special needs and
3 stimulate community resources which shall promote and foster systems
4 integration within education;

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

- 8 (1) language and speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical and
9 physiotherapy, among other modes of therapy, through multi-
10 disciplinary specialist team;
11 (2) quality reading or other effective methods of delivering reading
12 materials to individuals with visual impairments;
13 (3) acquisition or modification of equipment or devices;
14 (4) appropriate classroom accommodation;
15 (5) other similar services and actions or all types of aids and services
16 that facilitate the learning process; and,
17 (6) assistance in the transfer or admission of qualified children and
18 youth with special needs to post-secondary or tertiary education
19 institutions.

20 **ARTICLE IV**

21 **PARTNERSHIP MECHANISM**

22 Sec. 7. *Partnership Mechanism.* — The DepEd and the concerned agencies may
23 coordinate and enter into cooperative agreement, arrangement or contract with other
24 government agencies, private non-profit agencies, institutions or organizations duly
25 accredited or recognized by the government agencies, civil society, business and
26 industrial sector, and other concerned sectors in the furtherance of the provisions of
27 this Act; *Provided*, That the DepEd shall coordinate with the Department of Health
28 (DOH), Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Department of Public
29 Works and Highways (DPWH), Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and the
30 National Council on Disability Affairs (NCDA) for the establishment or creation of
31 Centers on the implementation of programs such as the following:

- 1 (a) Technical assistance to teachers who are preparing to serve or are
2 serving in the Centers;
3 (b) Training of professional or related services personnel, including all
4 regular teachers;
5 (c) Replication of successful innovative approaches in providing educational
6 or related services to CYSNs;
7 (d) Facilitation of parental involvement in the education of their children and
8 youth with special needs;
9 (e) Diagnosis and educational evaluation of children and youth with special
10 needs;
11 (f) Consultative, counseling and training services for the families of children
12 and youth with special needs;
13 (g) Familiarization of the municipality or city being served by an Inclusive
14 Education Learning Resource Center with the problems and potentials of
15 children and youth; and,
16 (h) Entering into agreements with medical and allied medical professional
17 groups.

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

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

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

26 (a) Department of Education (DepEd) – The DepEd shall be the lead
27 government agency responsible for the implementation of this Act to ensure
28 inter-agency coordination and integration of services among school
29 systems, early intervention programs, mainstreaming of children and youth
30 with special needs in the regular classroom set-up, concerned welfare
31 agencies, children and youth with special needs availability of access and

classification of developmental domains and establishment of a referral system and redress mechanism 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 (NCC) and the Early Childhood Care and Development Council (ECCD) 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.

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

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

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

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

(2) Identification, coordination and partnership with public or private volunteers and private organizations, national or international, duly recognized and accredited by appropriate government office, for

- information dissemination campaigns and funding support to augment the funding for Inclusive Education programs and activities;
- (3) Provide assistive devices, instructional materials and teacher's training provisions;
- (4) Provision of funds for the delivery of health and nutrition services and interventions, educational assessment program for children and youth with special needs in their respective localities that would be initiated by the DOH and DepEd, respectively;
- (5) Participate in all efforts concerning integration of children and youth with special needs to regular schools, health services, transport services and other social and welfare services;
- (6) Develop government and community awareness and responsiveness to the needs of children and youth with special needs;
- (7) Provide a means for redress in case parents are not amenable to educational program for children and youth with special needs under the 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 (AICCIE).* —

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:

- (1) Secretary of the DepEd, as Chairperson;
- (2) Secretary of DOH, as Co-Chairperson;
- (3) Secretary of DSWD, as Co-Chairperson;
- (4) Secretary of Department of Finance (DOF);

- 1 (5) Secretary of DPWH;
2 (6) Secretary of DILG;
3 (7) Secretary of Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE);
4 (8) Director General of Technical Education and Skills Development
5 Administration (TESDA); and,
6 (9) Commissioner of CHED

7 The IACCIE shall perform the following functions:

- 8 (a) Develop and set criteria on Individual Educational Programs. It shall
9 evaluate fundamental changes both in educational practice and in the
10 design of educational services for inclusion of children and youth with
11 special needs in regular school. Inclusive Education involves changes in
12 philosophy, curriculum, teaching strategy and structural organization;
13 (b) Implement appropriate and coordinated programs in health and related
14 physiological and psychological health services, multidisciplinary
15 domains, transportation and accessibility for children and youth with
16 special needs;
17 (c) Acts as catalyst of change and source of information for the benefit of
18 both regular students and children and youth with special needs;
19 (d) Constitute and authorize a multidisciplinary body to conduct an annual
20 audit to determine the compliance of the Centers on its operations;
21 (e) Document, monitor and assess the performances of the Centers and
22 their personnel;
23 (f) Coordinate and disseminate information with partner agencies or local
24 government units.

25 Sec. 10. *The IACCIE Technical Working Committee.* – The IACCIE shall be
26 supported by a Technical Working Committee (TWC) which shall be composed of
27 representatives from the following agencies and institutions:

- 28 (a) Bureau of Curriculum Development of the DepEd;
29 (b) Early Childhood Care and Development Council (ECCD);
30 (c) National Council on Disability Affairs (NCDA);
31 (d) Council for the Welfare of Children (CWC);
32 (e) National Nutrition Council of the DOH;

- (f) Local Government Units – League of Provinces, Cities or Municipalities;
- (g) Health organizations such as PhilHealth and other healthcare services of the DOH;
- (h) Civil society organizations on persons with disability and indigenous peoples' concerns;
- (i) Academe.

The TWC shall provide groundwork technical support to the IACCIE on its activities to capture varied clientele scope and needs, mainstream programs, and reach grassroots levels. Representatives of civil society organizations and the academe shall be nominated through a process designed by the IACCIE.

ARTICLE VI

OTHER EDUCATION AND HEALTH INTERVENTIONS

Sec. 11. *Inclusion of Children with Special Needs in Child Development Centers.* – Child Development Centers (CDCs) specially designed for pre-school children and their parents where early identification of disabilities and/or special needs and introductory educational and intervention programs will be administered, and development of future multi-disciplinary child development centers shall be established near all schools or within existing Inclusive Education Learning Resource Centers. As far as practicable, the used of CDCs and facilities shall be maximized.

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

ARTICLE VII

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

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

Sec. 13. *Remuneration, Benefits and Incentives for Inclusive Education Learning Personnel and Staff.* – The salary grades of Special Education (SPED) teachers and Program Directors managing the Centers shall be in accordance with the

1 Revised Compensation and Position Classification System and other civil service rules
2 and regulations.

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

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

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

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

27 **ARTICLE VIII**

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

29 Sec. 15. *Continuing Research to Identify the Needs of Children and Youth With
Special Needs.* – The DepEd, by itself or in coordination with organizations or
30 institutions, shall undertake continuing research to identify and design programs that
31 shall meet the full range of needs of children and youth with special needs: *Provided,*

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

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

16 Sec. 17. *Recreational and Artistic Opportunities.* – The DepEd shall establish
17 opportunities for the safe, wholesome, interactive individuals as well as group
18 recreation and social activities of children and youth with special needs, optimal use
19 of their leisure hours and advancement of their physical, mental, social and cultural
20 development.

21 Sec. 18. *Special Instructional Materials.* – Publishers shall grant the DepEd the
22 authority to transcribe adopted instructional materials into accessible format, without
23 penalty or payment of royalty, in accordance with Republic Act No. 8293, otherwise
24 known as the “Intellectual Property Code of the Philippines”: *Provided,* That publishers
25 of a newly adopted instructional material shall provide, not later than the second
26 working day after the adoption of a textbook title by the DepEd, the digital copy as
27 specified by the DepEd for the purpose of producing accessible versions of the
28 textbooks for students with reading disabilities. The accessible versions may be
29 produced by the DepEd or by non-profit accessible book producers which may be
30 copied and distributed upon request by a Schools Division for instructional purposes.

31 Copies of these instructional materials shall be furnished without cost either to
32 the children and youth with special needs or their teachers in charge.

1 Sec. 19. *Family Members, Guardians, Caregivers and Day Care Workers*
2 *Education.* – A formal training and counseling program for family members, guardians,
3 caregivers, and day care workers of children and youth with special needs shall be
4 developed jointly by the DepEd, DSWD, LGUs, ECCD Council, disabled people's
5 organizations, parent-support organizations, health professional organizations,
6 healthcare services, non-governmental organizations, and civil society organizations
7 to provide them with a working knowledge of special education and an understanding
8 of the physical and mental needs of children and youth with special needs; and set
9 their important role as educators, so as to maximize their knowledge and skills to fully
10 participate in developing the potentials of children and youth with special needs.

11 **ARTICLE IX**

12 **PRIVATE SECTOR PARTICIPATION**

13 Sec. 20. *Incentives for Private Sector Participation.* – Partnerships between the
14 government and private institutions catering to the needs of children and youth with
15 special needs shall be encouraged. Private entities which team up with the DepEd or
16 provide the necessary educational assistance and service of children and youth with
17 special needs enrolled in public schools shall be entitled to the benefits and incentives
18 provided under R.A. No. 8525, otherwise known as the "Adopt-a-School Act" and its
19 implementing rules and regulations.

20 **ARTICLE X**

21 **PUBLIC INFORMATION AND DISSEMINATION**

22 Sec. 21. *Public Information, Education and Communication.* – A nationwide
23 information dissemination campaign on the prevention, early identification and the
24 strategic intervention programs for children and youth with special needs shall be
25 intensified. This shall be the joint responsibility of the Philippine Information Agency
26 (PIA), CWC, NCDA, and the DepEd. Likewise, the DepEd, in collaboration with the
27 DOH, DOLE, CHED, TESDA, and DILG shall disseminate materials and information
28 concerning effective practices in working with, training and education of children and
29 youth with special needs.

30 **ARTICLE XI**

31 **FINAL PROVISIONS**

1 Sec. 22. *Appropriations.* – The Secretaries of the DepEd, DOH, and DSWD shall
2 immediately include in their respective Departments' programs the implementation of
3 this Act, the funding of which shall be included in the annual General Appropriations
4 Act.

5 Sec. 23. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within one hundred twenty
6 (120) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Secretaries of the DepEd, the DOH and
7 the DSWD, in coordination with the heads of other concerned agencies, shall
8 promulgate and issue the necessary guidelines for the effective implementation of this
9 Act. The implementing rules and regulations issued pursuant to this section shall take
10 effect thirty (30) days after its publication in two (2) national newspapers of general
11 circulation.

12 Sec. 24. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part hereof is held invalid or
13 unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall
14 remain valid and subsisting.

15 Sec. 25. *Repealing Clause.* – Any laws, presidential decrees, executive orders,
16 rules and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are
17 hereby repealed, modified, or amended accordingly.

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

20

21 *Approved,*