

THIRTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
First Regular Session

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SENATE

S. No. 529

INTRODUCED BY HON. MANUEL B. VILLAR JR.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The role of non-formal education (NFE) in the development of the literacy and vocational skills of drop-outs and out-of-school youth has been acknowledged as one of the major avenues to uplift the socio-economic condition of the masses.

There is a compelling need to continuously provide training and educational opportunities for the people so that they can contribute positively to nation-building.

The non-formal education learning center will serve as the specific venue for conducting non-formal education such as basic literacy education, vocational skills training, values development and other socio-cultural activities. The NFE learning center will also serve as the community library.

With these in mind, early passage of this bill is sought.


MANUEL B. VILLAR, JR.

THIRTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
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SENT BY: *Ordo*

SENATE

S. No. 529

INTRODUCED BY HON. MANUEL B. VILLAR JR.

AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING THE NON-FORMAL EDUCATION ACCREDITATION AND EQUIVALENCY (NFE A&E) SYSTEM, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREOF AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

SECTION 1. *Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Non-Formal Education (NFE) Act.”

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It shall be the policy of the State to provide an alternative means of certification of learning to Filipinos aged fifteen (15) years and above, who are unable to avail of the formal school system, or who have dropped out of formal elementary or secondary education, to enable them to be self-reliant citizens of this country, while relying on their own capabilities and achievements for their, as well as their families’ daily survival; to actively pursue and attain full potential as individuals and as members of society, to effectively contribute their just share in the social and economic development of the community through the full exercise of their gifts, talents and abilities; and to live lives of honor, dignity and prosperity.

SEC. 3. *Objectives.* – This Act shall:

(a) Provide a system for assessing levels of literacy and non-formal learning achievement based on a national Non-Formal Education Accreditation and Equivalency (NFE A&E) curriculum covering basic and functional education skills and competencies and designed to be comparable to the formal school system;

(b) Offer an alternative pathway by which out-of-school youth and adults earn an educational qualification comparable to the formal elementary and secondary school system; and

(c) Enable out-of-school youth and adults to gain reading, writing and numeracy skills, to meet their learning goals as they define them and to gain the skills they need to improve their economic status and function more effectively in society.

SEC. 4. *Framework.* – The (NFE A&E) system is a pioneering effort to offer a uniquely non-formal alternative learning system to formal schooling. It shall be built around a truly non-formal curriculum and shall utilize a range of innovative non-formal learning strategies designed to break down traditional learning barriers of time, accessibility and resources. It shall also allow flexible entry and exit points and shall aim to maximize learners' control of the learning process. It shall be comprised of the following four (4) key components:

(a) NFE A&E curriculum framework which contains a learning continuum of essential skills, knowledge, attitudes and values desired for non-formal basic education and which are designed to be comparable to the formal school system;

(b) NFE A&E learning materials which are based on the NFE A&E curriculum framework and designed to provide learning support for out-of-school youth and adults who wish to continue learning outside of the formal school system, particularly as preparation for certification of learning achievement through successful accomplishment of a national accreditation and equivalency test;

(c) NFE accreditation and equivalency testing which is based on the NFE A&E curriculum framework and content of the NFE A&E learning materials, and designed to provide two (2) levels of certification of learning achievement comparable to the formal elementary and secondary education system;

(d) NFE A&E learning support delivery system is designed to provide learners a range of alternative pathways in order that they may continue their learning outside of the formal system and upgrade their skills and competencies in preparation for taking the NFE A&E tests. This includes utilization of the NFE learning materials and a range of learner support strategies, structures and delivery modes, (such as learning facilitators, learning group sessions, peer learning and learning centers) and a NFE A&E administrative support system.

SEC. 5. *Certification of Learning of Individuals.* – The NFE A&E system shall offer opportunities for two (2) levels of individual certifications which are deemed as comparable qualifications to the elementary level certificate and secondary level certificate of the formal school system.

SEC. 6. *Who May Avail.* – For purposes of this Act, the following are the target beneficiaries of this program:

- (a) Any fifteen (15)-year-old and above who are either out-of-school youth or adults;
- (b) Anyone who completed the Functional Education Literacy program (FELP);
- (c) Unemployed out-of-school youth and adults;
- (d) Elementary and secondary drop-outs;
- (e) Those who want to learn to read and write;
- (f) Industry-based workers.

SEC. 7. *Courses and Curriculum.* – Adults and out-of-school youth may undergo basic and short-term courses, including those on, but not limited to, literacy skills, values education, environmental education, nutrition and family planning, community building, leadership and such other courses as may be determined by the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS) in pursuance of this Act, in addition to courses presently undertaken.

The potential graduates may also choose from among the following learning areas that will be offered by the program:

- (a) Communication skills (including listening, speaking, reading and writing from print and electronic media);
- (b) Problem solving and critical thinking (including numeracy, scientific thinking, innovativeness, creativity and decision making);
- (c) Sustainable use of resources/productivity (including the ability to earn a living as an employed or self-employed person, sustainable use of resources and appropriate technology, entrepreneurship and productivity);

(d) Development of self and a sense of community (including self-development, interpersonal relationships, personal and national identity, and recognition and practice of civil and political rights and responsibilities);

(e) Expanding one's world vision (including knowledge, respect and appreciation of diversity, peace and nonviolent resolution of conflicts, and global awareness and solidarity).

SEC. 8. *NFE Coordinating Centers in Each Division.* – The program shall include the establishment of NFE coordinating centers in each division of the DECS.

The NFE coordinating centers shall have general supervision over the program's activities in the municipalities and barangays.

SEC. 9. *Coordination Between the Bureau of Non-Formal Education and Local Government Units.* – The DECS Bureau of Non-Formal Education and local government units concerned shall coordinate with each other in the implementation of the program in their area of jurisdiction. They shall help sustain the NFE A&E system by:

- (a) Identifying and helping in the recruitment of learners;
- (b) Providing incentives to NFE A&E learners to enroll and attain their program goals;
- (c) Conceptualizing and/or setting-up income generating projects as follow on programs for sustaining the learning gains of NFE A&E; and
- (d) Disseminating information on NFE A&E.

SEC. 10. *Collaboration Among Concerned Agencies, Groups and Individuals.* – This program shall encourage a concerted and collaborative effort among the interest groups and individuals.

SEC. 11. *Implementing Agency: Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The Bureau of Non-Formal Education of the DECS shall serve as the implementing agency. It shall formulate the implementing rules and regulations of this Act.

In pursuance of the state policy enunciated in this Act, the Bureau of Non-Formal Education shall continuously improve and upgrade its NFE activities and the components of its program in conformity with the demands of the changing times, for the benefit of adults and out-of-school youth.

SEC. 12. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary to carry out the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current year's appropriations of the Bureau of Non-Formal Education and loans obtained from foreign institutions under the DECS. Thereafter, such amount as may be necessary for the institutionalization of the NFE A&E system nationwide shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 13. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the same shall not affect the validity and effectivity of the other provisions thereof.

SEC. 14. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, rules and regulations and executive orders contrary or inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 15. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect upon its publication in at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,