
INTRODUCED BY SENATOR FRANCIS "TOL" N. TOLENTINO

RESOLUTION
EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE TO URGE THE DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION TO ALLOW THE RESUMPTION OF LIMITED FACE-TO-FACE
CLASSES FOR THE UPCOMING SCHOOL YEAR 2021-2022 IN AREAS THAT
ARE CONSIDERED SAFE AND LOW-RISK

WHEREAS, Section 1, Article XIV of the 1987 Constitution mandates that "the State shall protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels and shall take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all";

WHEREAS, Section 2(1), Article XIV of the 1987 Constitution also requires the State to "establish, maintain, and support a complete, adequate, and integrated system of education relevant to the needs of the people and society";

WHEREAS, the Department of Education (DepEd) recently announced that the classes for the upcoming school year 2021-2022 will start on September 13, 2021;¹

WHEREAS, President Rodrigo R. Duterte has yet to approve the proposal to resume limited-face-to-face classes, DepEd has decided to continue to adopt a blended learning approach for the upcoming school year and has suspended the pilot study of limited face-to-face classes even in areas that are considered low-risk;²

WHEREAS, the latest survey by the Social Weather Station (SWS) shows that a significant number of Filipino families with school-age children find blended learning more difficult than in-person classes. Based on the survey, 61% of the respondents answered that the blended learning approach is "much more difficult now" while 28% responded that it is "somewhat difficult". Only 6% of the families find the approach easier;³

¹ <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1147239>

² <https://mb.com.ph/2021/07/19/deped-eyes-100-schools-for-pilot-study-of-limited-face-to-face-classes-amid-covid-19-pandemic/>

³ <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2021/03/14/2084238/sws-89-filipino-families-find-blended-learning-difficult>

RECOGNIZING that some of the reasons why blended learning was found to be difficult are poor internet access in the Philippines, lack of means to purchase the necessary gadgets, increasing costs of internet subscription for online classes, and the glaring errors found in the printed modules and televised learning episodes provided by DepEd;⁴

ACKNOWLEDGING the mental, emotional, and physical toll brought by blended learning on students. Some students find it harder to focus during online classes, describing their home environment as distracting and not conducive for learning;⁵

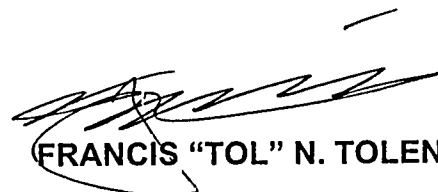
FURTHER ACKNOWLEDGING that aside from the students, parents and teachers also struggle with the blended learning approach. With the children at home, parents are forced to take over all the responsibility in guiding their children with their studies. Most parents, however, lack the time to assist their children with school work or are unfamiliar with the lessons. Blended learning is even more difficult for families whose heads are not high school graduates as compared to those with higher educational backgrounds;⁶

MINDFUL that to address these issues, the government should start exploring the possibility of resuming face-to-face classes in areas that are considered safe and low-risk, such as in the island provinces of Guimaras, Biliran, Batanes, and Camiguin which have low or zero Covid-19 infection rate. Limited face-to-face classes are made even more possible considering that the vaccination of teachers have already commenced;

RECOGNIZING the urgent need to undertake measures to improve and reform our educational system to be able to give Filipino students the quality education that they deserve, despite the Covid-19 pandemic;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved, to express the sense of the Senate to urge the Department of Education to allow the resumption of limited face-to-face classes for the upcoming school year 2021-2022 in areas that are considered safe and low-risk.

Adopted,


FRANCIS "TOL" N. TOLENTINO

⁴ <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1362497/the-promises-and-pitfalls-of-blended-learning-in-ph>

⁵ <https://www.onenews.ph/the-struggle-is-real-two-students-find-blended-learning-mentally-emotionally-draining>

⁶ <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2021/03/14/2084238/sws-89-filipino-families-find-blended-learning-difficult>