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SENATE

Senate Bill No. 1639

INTRODUCED BY HON. MANNY VILLAR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Many children of high school age are out of school because they have to stay at home during school hours to take care of younger siblings and do household chores to allow their parents and elders to earn a living. Others are prevented from attending classes regularly because they live far from the high school. In the case of youthful offenders, they cannot attend conventional classes because they are detained in correctional institutions. There are also the youth whose secondary education is hampered by armed conflict as what presently besets the students in some areas in Mindanao.

Recognizing the critical immediacy of addressing the need for secondary education of the aforementioned citizens, this measure seeks to institutionalize the open high school system in the country.

The open high school system delivers educational services to high school students utilizing print, radio, television and computer-based communications, satellite broadcasting, teleconferencing and other multi-media learning and teaching technologies that allow students to study on their own without having to regularly attend classes in conventional classrooms. This alternative learning system is consistent with the constitutional mandate to democratize access to quality education at all levels even as it "recognizes the vital role of the youth in nation-building."

Approval of this bill is earnestly sought.


MANNY VILLAR

SENATE

Senate Bill No. **1639**

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**AN ACT
INSTITUTIONALIZING THE OPEN HIGH SCHOOL SYSTEM
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

SECTION 1. Short Title. - This Act shall be known as the "Open High School System Act."

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. - It is hereby declared the policy of the State to broaden access to relevant quality education through the employment of an alternative learning system that would, enable the youth including adults to overcome geographical, socio-economic and/or physical constraints to their completion of secondary education.

SECTION 3. Definition of Terms. - For purposes of this Act, the following terms are hereby defined:

a.) Open High School System is a system of delivering educational services to high school students utilizing print, radio, television and computer-based communications, satellite broadcasting, teleconferencing, and other multi-media learning and teaching technologies that allow students to study on their own without having to regularly attend classes in conventional classrooms.

b.) Distance Learning Program is an educational program whereby the teaching and learning processes are accomplished through self-instructional materials that allow independent study, multi-channel learning and school-family-community partnership;

c.) Inang Paaralan or Mother High School is a regular secondary school in the regional or division level that functions, among others, as: 1) headquarters of the distance learners and teachers; 2) center for enrolment, evaluation, direct or face-to-face instruction and promotion of distance learners; 3) receiver of donations, instructional materials and reports relative to distance learning; and 4) coordinator of the different learning centers in the community.

d.) Guro is a regular secondary school teacher of the "Inang Paaralan" who is in charge of direct instruction, evaluation of student progress and keeping of the records of individual learners.

e.) Gurong Tagapatnubay is a regular secondary school teacher of the Inang Paaralan who serves as guidance counselor to the distance learners; coordinates with the guro and para guro in evaluating the students' progress; and prepares and submits reports to the authorities concerned.

f.) Gurong Kadluan is a resource person with specialized skills in practical or industrial subjects such as farming, handicraft, auto-mechanics, tailoring and other skills.

g.) Para Guro is a degree holder or college level citizen/resident in the community who manages a learning center and facilitates the learning process of a group of distance, learners.

h.) Tagapagpayong Pansamahan is the adviser of a club in the community who helps learners harmonize study with community service and leisure.

SEC. 4. Institutionalization of the Open High School System. - To carry out the above-declared policy, the Open High School hereinafter referred to as the System is hereby, institutionalized in the Philippines in accordance with the provisions of the Act.

SEC. 5. Coverage. - This Act shall apply to public secondary educational institutions with existing distance learning programs and all other such institutions that shall later be authorized as qualified implementers of the System.

All existing programs and projects of the Bureau of Secondary Education regarding dropout intervention and poverty alleviation through education shall be part of the Open High School System.

SEC. 6. Clientele of the System. - The System shall be open to all youth and adults who have finished elementary education and high school qualifiers of the Philippine Educational Placement Test (PEPT).

SEC. 7. Administration and Supervision. - The Department of Education (DepEd) shall administer and supervise the System. An Open High School Unit shall be attached to the Bureau of Secondary Education (BSE) to assist the Bureau in performing the following functions:

- a) Formulate the objectives and basic policies of the System;
- b) Formulate, adopt and supplement programs that will make the System effective and productive;
- c) Monitor and evaluate existing distance learning programs for integration with the System;
- d) Develop and validate prototype instructional distance learning materials;
- e) Consult and collaborate with other DepEd divisions, local government units (LGUs), non-government organizations (NGOs) and other private agencies for the effective operation of the System;
- f) Promulgate the necessary guidelines, rules and regulations for the effective implementation of the System;
- g) Recommend to the DepEd the annual budget of the System for inclusion in the General Appropriations Act for the year; and
- h) Perform such other tasks as may be necessary to attain the objectives of the System.

SEC. 8 Establishment of Distance Learning Centers. - Distance learning centers shall be established in the Inang Paaralan or in the community. The Center is a room of building where the distance learners can conduct researches or gather additional information on topics under study. It can also serve as a venue where the Gurong Kadluan can conduct hands-on exercises/activities.

SEC. 9. Collaboration between the Department of Education (DepEd) and the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG). - The DepEd and DILG shall sign a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) defining the role of local government units in the operation of the System in order to ensure maximum collaboration between DepEd and local government units toward the success of the System.

SEC 10. Role of Government Broadcast Stations and Telecommunication Networks. - Government broadcast stations and telecommunication networks shall provide the necessary assistance and support to the System; provide that private stations and networks shall also be encouraged to provide the same.

SEC. 11. Role of Parents. - Parents of distance learners shall be provided with adequate information on the System as well as for sharing experiences to enable them to competently assist their children in their distance learning.

SEC. 12 Personnel Recruitment and Incentives. - All personnel involved in the system shall have adequate and appropriate education and training to be determined by the BSE- DepEd.

Teachers or Guro and Gurong Tagapatnubay shall receive incentives and/or monetary compensation as determined by the BSE-DepEd while Para Guro, Gurong Kadluan and Tagapayong Pansamahan shall receive honoraria, to be arranged with the local school board.

It shall be the duty of the local government units concerned to employ the Para Guro, Gurong Kadluan and Tagapayong pansamahan in accordance with the guidelines on hiring such Personnel prepared upon prior consultation with the BSE-DepEd and issued by the same LGUs.

SEC. 13. Training of the System's Teachers. - The Open High School Unit attached to the Bureau of Secondary Education shall take charge of the training of the Guro, Gurong Tagapatnubay, Gurong Kadluan, Para Guro and Tagapayong Pansamahan.

The training of the Para Guro, Gurong Kadluan and Tagapayong Pansamahan shall be in coordination with the local government units and non-government organizations concerned.

SEC. 14. Curriculum Content. - The System shall adopt the National Secondary Education Curriculum (NSEC) using the Philippine Secondary Schools Learning Competencies (PSSLC).

The Open High School System Unit in collaboration with the Curriculum Development Division, Bureau of Secondary Education" (BSE) shall modify the herein adopted curriculum, devise a Rating system; instructional strategies and materials that will suit the psycho-social needs and Physical condition of conduct disordered and antisocial learners who are detained in correctional institutions. In the discharge of this function; the BSE shall consult with professional psychiatrists, Psychologists, social workers and other related experts who manage or deal with youth offenders who are undergoing rehabilitation.

SEC. 15. Implementing Rules and Regulations. - The Department of Education, through the Curriculum Development Division of the Bureau of Secondary Education, upon prior consultation with the Committees on Education of the Senate and the House of Representatives, Shall issue the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act within a Period of ninety (90) days after its approval.

SEC. 16. Appropriations. - The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act, shall be charged against the current year's appropriation of the Distance Learning Program of the BSE-DepEd. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for its continued implementation shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 17. Separability Clause. -, If any provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions not so declared shall remain in force and effect.

SEC. 18. Repealing Clause. - All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 19. Effectivity. - This Act shall take effect immediately upon its approval.

Approved,