

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



Senate
Office of the Secretary

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SENATE
S. No. 192

BY: *ja*

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Constitution, Article XIV, Section 3 (2) provides:

[All educational institutions] shall inculcate patriotism and nationalism, foster love of humanity, respect for human rights, appreciation of the role of national heroes in the historical development of the country, teach the rights and duties of citizenship, strengthen ethical and spiritual values, develop moral character and personal discipline, encourage critical and creative thinking, broaden scientific and technological knowledge, and promote vocational efficiency.

Schools are tasked with creating knowledgeable individuals of good character. In the words of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., "We must remember that intelligence is not enough. Intelligence, plus character, that is the goal of true education."

The root of the crisis facing the Filipino people in past decades is moral in nature. Since the People Power Revolution of 1986, public and private sectors have responded to the call for social transformation and value recovery by introducing reforms in education. Various institutions and groups such as the Department of Education (DepEd), the Association of Philippine Colleges of Arts and Sciences (APCAS), and the Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines (CEAP) have introduced various programs for values education.

In 1988, the Philippine Association for Philosophical Research (PAPR) laid down the theoretical philosophical foundations of values education. Many teachers at the elementary and high school levels were then practitioners of various programs on values education without being aware of its philosophical underpinnings. In January 1989, the DepEd and the Ateneo de Manila University held a roundtable discussion on "The Philippine Context of Values Education." The forum gathered experts from various disciplines and focused on the value resources of the Filipino people, the contemporary transformation of values, and their implications for education.

In 1995, the Office of the Ombudsman signed a memorandum of agreement with the DepEd for the development and publication of “anti-corruption” modules for elementary and high school students. In 2000, they produced separate volumes of “Graft and Corruption Prevention Modules” for the elementary and the secondary levels.

The modules were intended to “awaken the students’ consciousness towards being honest and responsible citizens of their community.” The development of the modules was based on the concepts and values specified in Republic Act No. 6713 or the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees. The volumes highlighted the values of commitment to public interest, professionalism, justness and sincerity, political neutrality, responsiveness to the public, nationalism and patriotism, commitment to democracy, and simple living.

Lack of a strong moral foundation breeds corruption in the government. It is high time to inquire into the strengths and weaknesses of the Filipino people with a view to solving social ills and strengthening our nation's moral fiber. Nothing less than the intensive absorption of ethical values, through an educational system, can stem the continuing dominance of the culture of corruption in the Philippines today.

This bill seeks to make a separate course on Ethics compulsory at all levels of elementary and secondary education, and at every college, with a compulsory Ethics course for every profession.¹


MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

¹ This bill was originally filed during the Thirteenth Congress, First Regular Session.



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Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

1 AN ACT
2 MAKING A SEPARATE COURSE ON ETHICS COMPULSORY AT ALL LEVELS OF
3 ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION, AND IN EVERY DEGREE COURSE
4 IN ALL COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

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

5 SECTION 1. *Short Title.* - This Act shall be known as "Compulsory Teaching of Ethics
6 Act."

7 SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - It is the policy of the State to inculcate and
8 strengthen the ethics and values of its citizen through the educational system.

9 SECTION 3. *Definition of Terms.* - As used in this Act, the term:

10 (A) "Ethics" means conformity to the accepted, honorable, and professional standards of
11 conduct in government and in private life;

12 (B) "Values" means normative standards which influence human beings in their choice
13 among their alternative courses of action;

14 (C) "DepEd" means the Department of Education;

15 (D) "CHED" means the Commission on Higher Education;

16 (E) "Elementary education" refers to the second stage of compulsory basic education
17 which is composed of six (6) years. The entrant age to this level is typically six (6) years old;

18 (F) "Bridge Program" means an intensive one-year program focused on three foundation
19 subjects namely English, Science and Math. It enables students to become fully prepared for the
20 secondary education curriculum;

1 (G) "Secondary education" refers to the third stage of compulsory basic education. It
2 consists of four (4) years of junior high school education and two (2) years of senior high school
3 education. The entrant age to the junior and senior high school levels are typically twelve (12)
4 and sixteen (16) years old, respectively; and

5 (H) "University" means all institutions for higher learning with teaching and research
6 facilities constituting a graduate school and professional schools that award master's degrees and
7 doctorates and an undergraduate division that awards bachelor's degrees.

8 SECTION 4. *Compulsory Teaching of a Separate Subject Called Ethics.* - The teaching
9 of a separate subject called Ethics shall be compulsory at all levels of: elementary education;
10 bridge program; secondary education; and in all degree programs offered by colleges and
11 universities. All colleges and universities shall provide a compulsory 3-unit Ethics course for
12 every profession, e.g., Legal Ethics for law schools, Medical Ethics for medical schools, Military
13 Ethics for the Philippine Military Academy and other military schools, etc.

14 SECTION 5. *Ethics and Values formation Syllabus.* -

15 (A) Public Morality. - The main syllabus should include the following six levels of public
16 morality:

17 (1) Basic Honesty and Conformity to Law. - This level describes the basic
18 adherence to the constitution, laws, ordinances, and moral codes that is expected from all
19 members of a group or society;

20 (2) Conflicts of Interest. - This level deals with the conflict between advancing the
21 public interest, which a public official is charged to do, and advancing one's self-interest;

22 (3) Service Orientation and Procedural Fairness. - This level deals with the
23 responsibility of public officials to ensure that their actions serve the public and that the
24 power they wield is used only for that purpose. This concentrates on procedural
25 safeguards to prevent abuse of authority and on moral obligation of public servants;

1 (4) Ethics of Democratic Responsibility. - This level deals with the public
2 officials, either elected or appointed, to make moral choices consistent with their own
3 values and will of the people;

4 (5) Ethics of Public Policy Determination. - This level concerns making moral
5 judgments about public policies in which equity and fairness are important
6 considerations;

7 (6) Ethics of Compromise and Social Integration. - This level entails the necessity
8 of give and take, and compromise in a society with irreconcilable differences on
9 fundamental issues.

10 (B) Supplementary Topics. - This curriculum should have additional topics and studies
11 on the causes, issues, and effects of graft and corruption in the Philippines and in other parts of
12 the world, and suggested measures to reform a corrupt environment.

13 (C) Other Subject Matters. - Other areas of Ethics and Values formation may be included
14 in the syllabus, provided that it will not be made in preference of any religion and belief, or
15 prohibiting the free exercise thereof.

16 SECTION 6. *Implementing Agencies.* - The Secretary of Education and the
17 Commissioners of the CHED are hereby authorized and directed to adopt a system to implement
18 and carry out the provisions of this Act. The Secretary of Education and the CHED
19 Commissioners shall, within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, promulgate the rules
20 and regulations, including those of a disciplinary nature, to carry out and enforce the provisions
21 of this Act.

22 SECTION 7. *Educational Materials.* - It shall be obligatory on all schools, colleges, and
23 universities to keep in their libraries an adequate number of copies of the textbooks, primers, and
24 leaflets on Ethics to be issued by the DepEd and the CHED. The DepEd and CHED shall
25 determine the adequacy of the number of books, depending upon the enrollment of the school,
26 college, or university.

1 SECTION 8. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision or part hereof is held invalid or
2 unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain
3 valid and subsisting.

4 SECTION 9. *Repealing Clause.* - Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive
5 order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to, or inconsistent
6 with, the provision of this Act is hereby repealed, modified, or amended accordingly.

7 SECTION 10. *Effectivity Clause.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen days (15) days after
8 its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,