

SENATE
S. No. 1889

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The best safeguard to our democratic political system is an enlightened citizenry who cannot be cowed nor dictated upon. These are the citizens who would fight for their right to a better life; who would struggle individually and collectively to develop the country's economy and make it globally competitive. These are the citizens who would farm and manufacture, manage businesses, build and lead organizations, run the government and uphold the country's independence. These are the citizens our laws must serve and protect. These are the citizens whose right to education the State must guarantee.

Among these citizens are the underprivileged out-of-school youth and adults who have graduated from the elementary but are unable to go to high school because of geographic and socio-economic constraints. 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."*

Miriam Defensor Santiago
MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO
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* This bill was originally filed in the Fifteenth Congress, First Regular Session.

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1 AN ACT
2 ' INSTITUTIONALIZING THE OPEN HIGH SCHOOL SYSTEM IN THE PHILIPPINES
3 AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

4 SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the "Open High School System
5 Act."

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

10 SECTION 3. *Definition of Terms.* – For purposes of this Act, the following terms are
11 hereby defined:

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

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

1 (C) “*Inang Paaralan* or Mother High School” is a regular secondary school in the
2 regional or division level that functions, among others, as:

3 (1) Headquarters of the distance learners and teachers;

4 (2) Center for enrolment, evaluation, direct or face-to-face instruction and
5 promotion of distance learners;

6 (3) Receiver of donations, instructional materials and reports relative to
7 distance learning; and

8 (4) Coordinator of the different learning centers in the community.

9 (D) “*Guro*” is a regular secondary school teacher of the *Inang Paaralan* who is in
10 charge of direct instruction, evaluation of student progress and keeping of the records of
11 individual learners.

12 (E) “*Gurong Tagapatnubay*” is a regular secondary school teacher of the *Inang*
13 *Paaralan* who serves as guidance counselor to the distance learners; coordinates with the *Guro*
14 and *Para Guro* in evaluating the students' progress; and prepares and submits reports to the
15 authorities concerned.

16 (F) “*Gurong Kadluan*” is a resource person with specialized skills in practical or
17 industrial subjects such as farming, handicraft, auto-mechanics, tailoring and other skills.

18 (G) “*Para Guro*” is a degree holder or college level citizen/resident in the community
19 who manages a learning center and facilitates the learning process of a group of distance
20 learners.

21 (H) “*Tagapagpayong Pansamahan*” is the adviser of a club in the community who
22 helps learners harmonize study with community service and leisure.

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

1 SECTION 5. *Coverage.* – This Act shall apply to public secondary educational
2 institutions with existing distance learning programs and all other such institutions that shall later
3 be authorized as qualified implementers of the System.

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

7 SECTION 6. *Clientele of the System.* – The System shall be open to all youth and adults
8 who have finished elementary education and secondary school qualifiers of the Philippine
9 Educational Placement Test (PEPT).

10 SECTION 7. *Administration and Supervision.* – The Department of Education (DepEd)
11 shall administer and supervise the System. An Open High School Unit shall be attached to the
12 Bureau of Secondary Education (BSE) to assist the Bureau in performing the following
13 functions:

14 (A) Formulate the objectives and basic policies of the System;

15 (B) Formulate, adopt and supplement programs that will make the System effective
16 and productive;

17 (C) Monitor and evaluate existing distance learning programs for integration With
18 the System;

19 (D) Develop and validate prototype instructional distance learning materials;

20 (E) Consult and collaborate with other DepEd divisions, local government units
21 (LGUs), non-government organizations (NGOs) and other private agencies for the effective
22 operation of the System;

23 (F) Promulgate the necessary guidelines, rules and regulations for the effective
24 implementation of the System;

25 (G) Recommend to the DepEd the annual budget of the System for inclusion in the
26 General Appropriations Act for the year; and

1 (H) Perform such other tasks as may be necessary to attain the objectives of the
2 System.

3 SECTION 8. *Establishment of Distance Learning Centers.* – Distance learning centers
4 shall be established in the *Inang Paaralan* or in the community. The center is a room or building
5 where the distance learners can conduct research or gather additional information on topics under
6 study. It can also serve as a venue where the *Gurong Kadluan* can conduct hands-on
7 exercises/activities.

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

13 SECTION 10. *Role of Government Broadcast Stations and Telecommunication*
14 *Networks.* – Government broadcast stations and telecommunication networks shall provide the
15 necessary assistance and support to the System; *Provided,* That private stations and networks
16 shall also be encouraged to provide the same.

17 SECTION 11. *Role of Parents.* – Parents of distance learners shall be provided with
18 adequate information on the System as well as for sharing experiences to enable them to
19 competently assist their children in their distance learning.

20 SECTION 12. *Personnel Recruitment and Incentives.* – All personnel involved in the
21 System shall have adequate and appropriate education and training to be determined by the BSE-
22 DepEd. Teachers or *Guros* and *Gurong Tagapatnubay* shall receive incentives and/or monetary
23 compensation as determined by the BSE-DepEd while *Para Guro*, *Gurong Kadluan* and
24 *Tagapayong Pansamahan* shall receive honoraria, to be arranged with the local school board.

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

4 SECTION 13. *Training of the System's Teachers.* – The Open High School Unit attached
5 to the Bureau of secondary education shall take charge of the training of the *Guro*, *Gurong*
6 *Tagapatnubay*, *Gurong Kadluan*, *Para Guro* and *Tagapayong Pansamahan*.

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

9 SECTION 14. *Curriculum Content.* – The System shall adopt the National Secondary
10 Education Curriculum (NSEC) using the Philippine Secondary Schools Learning Competencies
11 (PSSLC).

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

19 SECTION 15. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The Secretary of Education, upon
20 prior consultation with the Committees on Education of the Senate and the House of
21 Representatives, shall issue the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation
22 of this Act within a period of ninety (90) days after the approval of this Act.

23 SECTION 16. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary for the initial implementation of
24 this Act shall be charged against the current year's appropriation of the Distance Learning
25 Program of the BSE-DepEd. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for its continued

1 implementation shall be included in the annual appropriations of the Department of Education in
2 the General Appropriations Act.

3 SECTION 17. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act or part thereof is
4 declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the Act or the provision not otherwise
5 affected shall continue to be in full force and effect.

6 SECTION 18. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and
7 regulations and other issuances or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are
8 hereby repealed, modified, or amended accordingly.

9 SECTION 19. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
10 publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,