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Senate of the Philippines  
Pasay City

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SIXTEENTH CONGRESS  
First Regular Session

S.B. No. 2156

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SENATOR SONNY ANGARA

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**AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE OPEN HIGH SCHOOL SYSTEM IN THE PHILIPPINES AND  
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

Several economic, geographic and time-bound factors constrain, even discourage outright, many of our young from receiving the quality education they are rightfully entitled to. In fact, the 2010 Annual Poverty Indicators Survey (APIS) reported that lack of personal interest, on top of the high cost of education and the desire of work, was a top reason 6.24 million of our youth were out of school or had never been enrolled before.

Such a figure points to glaring policy gaps on providing our youth adequate access to educational opportunities, and thereby, wider chances at building better lives for themselves. This runs counter to the constitutional mandate of the state to "*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,*" found under Article XIV, Section 1.

Finishing high school alone opens up thousands more opportunities for individuals. And with the roll-out of the K to 12 system, such opportunities are assured more and more.

When entering a specific field within the job market, it is often required that the applicant at least possess a high school diploma, pointing to how a high school education is vital for individuals to become productive citizens.

The Open High School System delivers educational services to high school students. It utilizes alternative means of instruction such as print, radio, television, and other multi-media learning and teaching technologies to allow students to study on their own without having to be constrained by the conventional classroom setup.

Incorporating such a program into the country's alternative education systems widens accessibility and further empowers the state toward fulfilling its goals of education for all.

The swift passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



SENATOR SONNY ANGARA

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SENATE

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SB. No. 2156

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INTRODUCED BY SENATOR SONNY ANGARA

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**AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE OPEN HIGH SCHOOL SYSTEM IN THE PHILIPPINES  
AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

*Be it enacted by the Senate and 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”.

**SEC 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, socioeconomic and physical constraints, to encourage them to complete  
secondary education. To achieve this, the State recognizes that education must be  
accessible in its various modalities to all Filipino citizens, recognizing the importance of  
basic education through out-of-school study programs, particularly those that respond to  
the needs of the community and promote the nation’s welfare.

**SEC. 3 *Definition of Terms.*** – The terms used in this Act are hereby defined as  
follows:

- (a) *Open High School System (OHSS)* refers to 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* refers to an educational program in which the  
teaching and learning process are accomplished through self-instructional

materials and allows independent study, multi-channel learning and school-family-community partnership.

(c) *Inang paaralan or mother high school* refers to a regular secondary school in the regional or division level that function, among others, as:

- (1) Headquarter of the distance learners and teachers;
- (2) Center for enrolment, evaluation; direct or face-to-face instruction and promotion of distance learning;
- (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* refers to 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* refers to a regular secondary school teacher of the *inang paaralan* who serves as guidance counsellor to the distance learners, coordinates with the *guro* in evaluating the students' progress, and prepares and submits reports to the authorities concerned.

(f) *Gurong kadluan* refers to a source person with specialized skills in practical or industrial subjects such as farming, handicraft, auto-mechanics, tailoring and other skills.

(g) *Para guro* refers to a degree holder or a college level resident in the community who manages a learning center and facilitates the learning process of a group of distance learners.

(h) *Tagapayong pansamahan* refers to the adviser of a club in the community who helps learners harmonize study with community service and leisure.

**SEC. 4 Establishment of the OHSS.** – The OHSS is hereby established as part of the Department of Education's alternative secondary education program to provide access to secondary education through the distance learning modality.

**SEC. 5. Coverage.** – This Act shall apply to public secondary educational institutions with existing distance learning programs and all other such institutions that shall be authorized as qualified implementors of the OHSS.

All existing programs and projects of the Bureau of Secondary Education (BSE) regarding dropout intervention and poverty alleviation through education shall form part of the OHSS.

**SEC. 6. Clientele of the OHSS.** – The OHSS shall be open to all youth and adults who have finished elementary education, as well as high school qualifiers of the Philippine Educational Placement Test (PEPT).

**SEC. 7. Administration and Function.** – The Department of Education (DepEd), through the BSE, shall administer the OHSS. An OHSS Unit shall be attached to the BSE to assist in performing the following functions:

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

**SEC.8. Curriculum Content.** – The OHSS shall adopt the National Secondary Education Curriculum (NSEC) using the Philippine Secondary Schools Learning Competencies (PSSLC).

The DepEd's BSE Curriculum Development Division, in collaboration with the University of the Philippines Open University (UPOU), may modify the curriculum,

devise a separate rating system, and develop appropriate instructional strategies and materials to suit the psycho-social needs and physical condition of 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 experts in dealing with children who are in conflict with the law.

**SEC. 9. *Personnel Recruitment and Incentives.*** – The DepEd shall determine the qualifications of personnel recruited to work under the OHSS.

The teachers or *guro* and *gurong tagapatnubay* shall receive honoraria, to be arranged with the local school board.

The LGUs concerned shall hire the *para guro*, *gurong kadluan* and *tagapayong pansamahan*, in accordance with the guidelines it shall issue on the hiring of personnel. *Provided*, that said guidelines shall be prepared in consultation with the DepEd.

**SEC. 10. *Training of Teaching Staff.*** – The DepEd shall take charge of the training of the *guro*, *gurong tagapatnubay*, *para guro*, *gurong kadluan* and *tagapayong pansamahan*. The training of the *para guro*, *gurong kadluan* and *tagapayong pansamahan* shall be in coordination with the LGUs and the non-government organizations concerned.

Non-teaching stakeholders such as parents and LGU personnel, among others, who are needed to provide support to the OHSS, shall likewise be included in the training program.

**SEC. 11. *Establishment of Distance Learning Centers.*** – Pending the establishment of distance learning centers in the *inang paaralan* in the community, the DepEd shall establish at least two (2) pilot centers in each region.

A center shall be housed in a room or a building where the distance learners can conduct research or gather additional information on topics under study. It may also serve as a venue where the *gurong kadluan* can conduct hands-on activities.

**SEC. 12. *Memorandum of Agreement.*** - To ensure maximum cooperation towards the success of the OHSS, the DepEd, the UPOU and the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) are encouraged to adopt a Memorandum of Agreement defining their respective roles in the operation of the OHSS.

**SEC.13. *Private Sector Participation.*** – Private educational institutions may establish their own privately-funded distance learning centers following the standards and criteria provided for in this Act for OHSS, subject to the approval of the DepEd.

The DepEd shall encourage and promote close partnership with concerned civil society organizations and other service providers in order to sustain an enabling environment for participatory planning, budgeting and implementation of the OHSS related programs and projects.

**SEC. 14. *Appropriations.*** – The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current year's appropriations of the Distance Learning Program of the DepEd. Thereafter, the amount necessary for the continued operation of the OHSS shall be included in the DepEd's budget in the annual General Appropriations Act.

**SEC. 15. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – Within ninety (90) Days after the effectivity of this Act, the DepEd, in consultation with the DILG and the UPOU, shall promulgate the rules and regulations needed for the effective implementation of this Act.

**SEC. 16. *Separability Clause.*** – If any provision of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions not so declared shall remain in force and effect.

**SEC. 17. *Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations and other issuances or parts thereof which are inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

**SEC. 18. *Effectivity Clause.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette*.

Approved,