

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC
OF THE PHILIPPINES

First Regular Session



Senate
Office of the Secretary

'16 NOV 17 A8:39

SENATE
S.B. No. **1244**

RE

BY: 

Introduced by Senator Poe

AN ACT
MODERNIZING ALL PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND STATE COLLEGES AND
UNIVERSITIES IN THE PHILIPPINES, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR,
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Explanatory Note

In recent years, the national government has gradually embraced information and communications technology (ICT) as a tool for good governance and inclusive growth. The pinnacle, so far, was the enactment of Republic Act No. 10844, otherwise known as the “Department of Information And Communications Technology Act of 2015”.

This bill seeks to further contribute to the integration of ICT in the business of government. Specifically, this bill aims to modernize all public schools and state universities and colleges (SUCs) in the country. This measure, if enacted, shall provide all public schools and SUCs with the following:

- a) Forty (40) thin-client computers with open source software, connected to a central server in each school;
- b) A well-equipped library with two (2) thin-client computers;
- c) A multimedia classroom with one (1) large format digital display;
- d) One laptop for each teacher;
- e) Internet connectivity; *and*
- f) A steady supply of electricity;

The measure also seeks to create a coordinating committee which will implement the Act over a ten (10) year period. The Act shall be operationalized in a “Public School and SUC Modernization Plan”, which shall contain the standards for all hardware and software to be procured and maintained, and the operational plans and budgetary requirements of member agencies.

I am also submitting this bill in fulfillment of my promise from the past campaign to “digitalize” education. My obligation to keep promises as well as my crusade for a better country will continue, wherever political winds may blow.

Speedy approval of this measure is eagerly sought.


GRACE POE



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

CHAPTER I
GENERAL PROVISIONS

SECTION 1. Short Title- This act shall be known as the “Public School and State
University and College Modernization Act of 2016”

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy - 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. As such, the State embraces the role of information and
communications technology in improving the learning process and shall strive to mainstream
its provision and use in all public schools and state universities and colleges.

SECTION 3. Definition of Terms- For purposes of this act:

- a) “*CHED*” refers to the Commission on Higher Education;
- b) “*Committee*” refers to the Coordinating Committee established under this Act;

- 1 c) “*DBM*” refers to the Department of Budget and Management;
2
3 d) “*DepEd*” refers to the Department of Education;
4
5 e) “*DICT*” refers to the Department of Information and Communications
6 Technology;
7
8 f) “*DOE*” refers to the Department of Energy;
9
10 g) “*Information and Communications Technology*” or “*ICT*” refers to the totality of
11 electronic means to access, create, collect, store, process, receive, transmit,
12 present and disseminate information;
13
14 h) “*Modernization Program*” refers to the Public School and SUC Modernization
15 Program created under this Act;
16
17 i) “*Public Schools*” refers to all public elementary and secondary schools in the
18 country;
19
20 j) “*SUC*” refers to all State Universities and Colleges in the country; and
21
22 k) “*Thin Client*” refers to computer machines that rely on a central server to perform
23 data processing.
24

25 **SECTION 4.** *Public School and SUC Modernization Program.* - There is hereby
26 created a “Public School and State University and College Modernization”. The program
27 shall have the following objectives:
28

- 29 a) To provide the most effective ICT equipment and content to all public schools and
30 state universities in a cost-effective manner;
31
32 b) To achieve real-time distribution of learning materials to public schools and
33 SUCs;
34

- 1 c) To mainstream the use of ICT as a tool in the delivery of basic and higher
2 education;
- 3
- 4 d) To promote effective pedagogical methods that fully utilize ICT equipment and
5 content;
- 6
- 7 e) To set standards for the introduction, utilization and maintenance of ICT in public
8 schools and SUCs;
- 9
- 10 f) To enable teachers in public schools and SUCs to effectively use ICT in the
11 learning process;
- 12
- 13 g) To ensure that students of public schools and SUCs are aware and capable of
14 using ICT; and
- 15
- 16 h) To facilitate up-to-date updating of the accomplishments of public schools and
17 SUCs.

18

19 **Chapter II**

20 **Program Components**

21

22 **SECTION 5. *Computerization Program.*** - At least one computer laboratory with a
23 minimum of forty (40) computers shall be established in each public schools and SUC.
24 Whenever feasible, each computer shall be a thin client and shall be connected to a central
25 server which shall process computer intensive operations. The software needed for the
26 operation of this system shall be open source and shall be developed by the DICT. The DICT
27 shall ensure that all hardware procured under this Act are well-maintained.

28

29 **SECTION 6. *One Teacher One Laptop.*** - Each teacher shall be provided with a
30 laptop. Teachers using their laptops shall be encouraged to use educational software
31 developed by the Committee and to develop and share their own educational modules.

32

1 **SECTION 7. *Educational Software.*** - The concerned members of the Committee
2 shall develop educational software for the use of students and teachers alike. The DICT shall
3 ensure that all educational software is open source.
4

5 **SECTION 8. *Upgrading of Libraries.*** - A well-equipped library shall be established
6 in every public elementary and secondary high school. It shall contain at least two (2) thin-
7 client computers which shall be connected to each school's central server.
8

9 **SECTION 9. *Multimedia Classroom.*** - Each public school and SUC shall be
10 provided with one (1) large format digital display.
11

12 **SECTION 10. *School Electrification Program.*** - Within one (1) year from the
13 effectivity of this Act, the DepEd, CHED and DOE shall conduct a comprehensive inventory
14 of public schools and SUCs that do not have access to electricity. Thereafter, the DOE shall
15 ensure that all public schools and SUCs have access to electricity; *Provided*, that public
16 schools and SUCs which have no access to the national transmission grid shall be included
17 under the missionary electrification program of the National Power Corporation (NPC) as
18 mandated under Republic Act No. 9136, otherwise known as the "Electric Power Industry
19 Reform Act of 2001". Whenever it is physically and financially impractical, the NPC shall
20 consider the use of solar panels as an energy source.
21

22 **SECTION 11. *Internet Connectivity.*** - The DepEd, CHED and DICT, in coordination
23 with private internet providers, shall ensure that all public schools and SUCs shall be
24 connected to the internet. In cities and municipalities in which there is no access to internet
25 services, the DICT shall explore and provide alternative means of internet connectivity.
26

27 **SECTION 12. *Donations.*** - Private investment and Public-Private Partnerships in
28 this program shall be encouraged. However, all public schools and SUCs shall coordinate
29 with the Committee before accepting any donations of hardware or software to ensure their
30 compatibility with those installed under this Act.

31 **SECTION 13. *Training Program.*** - The DepEd, CHED, and DICT shall develop a
32 training program for teachers in public schools and SUCs to ensure their capacity to utilize
33 ICT in the learning process.

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2
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4

CHAPTER III
PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

5 **SECTION 14.** *Coordinating Committee.* - A coordinating committee to implement
6 the provisions of this Act shall be established. It shall be composed of the following
7 members:

- 8
- 9 a) The DepEd Secretary or his permanent representative;
 - 10
 - 11 b) The CHED Chairperson or his permanent representative;
 - 12
 - 13 c) The DICT Secretary or his permanent representative;
 - 14
 - 15 d) The DOE Secretary or his permanent representative; and
 - 16
 - 17 e) The DBM Secretary or his permanent representative.
 - 18

19 The Committee shall be attached, for administrative and budgetary purposes, to the
20 DICT. The Council shall meet at least once (1) every quarter. The presence of at least three
21 (3) members shall constitute a quorum to do business. The Secretary of the DICT or his
22 permanent representative shall be the chairperson of the Committee.

23

24 **SECTION 15.** *Powers and Functions.* - The Committee shall have the following
25 powers and functions:

- 26
- 27 a) Formulate and regularly update the ten (10) year Public School and SUC
28 Modernization Plan for the implementation of this Act;
 - 29
 - 30 b) Coordinate, monitor and ensure timely implementation of the Public School and
31 SUC Modernization Plan;

- 1 c) Ensure that all software created and infrastructure constructed under this Act
2 remains updated and well-maintained;
3
- 4 d) Ensure that all public schools and SUCs have internet connectivity and access to
5 electricity;
6
- 7 e) Promote technological literacy among teachers and students; *and*
8
- 9 f) Submit quarterly and annual reports to Congress and the Office of the President;
10

11 **SECTION 16.** *Public School and SUC Modernization Plan.* - The committee shall
12 formulate the ten (10) year Public School and SUC Modernization Plan. The Plan shall
13 include the following:
14

- 15 a) The standards for all hardware and software to be developed, procured and
16 maintained;
17
- 18 b) The programs and policies, and their corresponding timelines and budgetary
19 requirements to ensure the training of teachers and students in using such
20 educational technologies; *and*
21
- 22 c) The operational plan, and their timelines and budgetary requirements of the
23 member agencies in implementing the Act over a ten (10) year period.
24

25 **SECTION 17.** *Integration of Existing PPAs.* - The implementation of existing
26 computerization and internet connectivity programs of the DepEd and the Free Wi-Fi Internet
27 Access in Public Places project of the DICT and other relevant programs, projects, and
28 activities (PPAs) shall be integrated in the Public School and SUC Modernization Plan.
29

30 **SECTION 18.** *Program Roll Out and Phasing.* - The program shall be implemented
31 over a span of ten (10) years. The first three (3) years of this program shall be dedicated to
32 the implementation of this program among SUCs. The next three (3) years shall be dedicated
33 to the implementation of this program in all public secondary schools. The final four (4) years

1 shall be dedicated to the implementation of this program in all public elementary schools.
2 After such period, the Committee shall be *functus officio* unless extended by Congress
3 through subsequent legislation.

4
5 The DICT shall assume the coordination, monitoring, and evaluation of all PPAs
6 previously under the Committee and ensure the full and continuing implementation of this
7 Act. All concerned government agencies shall extend their cooperation and support to
8 effectively transfer the functions of Committee and wind-down its affairs, which shall
9 include, among others, the proper inventory and transfer of its assets, equipment, and relevant
10 documents, and the termination or return to the mother units of the Committee officers and
11 personnel.

12
13 The DICT shall be authorized to call on the agencies formerly part of the Committee
14 as well as any other government agency, including government owned or controlled
15 corporations, and government financial institutions, for assistance as they may deem
16 necessary to ensure the timely and cost-effective implementation of the priority projects.

17
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19 **CHAPTER IV**
20 **TRANSITORY AND FINAL PROVISIONS**

21
22 **SECTION 19.** *Exemption from Republic Act No. 7880.* - The implementation of this
23 Act shall be exempted from the provisions of Republic Act 7880, otherwise known as the
24 "*Fair and Equitable Access to Education Act*".

25
26 **SECTION 20.** *Appropriations.* - The funds necessary to implement this Act shall be
27 charged against the individual appropriations of the member agencies under the annual
28 General Appropriations Act and shall be sourced from the following:

- 29
30 a) The funds allocated for the DepEd Computerization Program, DepEd's Internet
31 Connectivity Project;
32
33 b) The funds allocated to the Free Wi-Fi Internet Access in Public Places project of
34 the DICT;

1 c) The equivalent of ten percent (10%) annual share on the total gross collections of
2 the travel tax; *and*

3
4 d) The equivalent of ten percent (10%) of the sales of the lotto operations of the
5 Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Offices

6
7 The appropriations for the implementation of this Act shall be indicated as a separate
8 line-item under the annual budget of the DICT.

9
10 **SECTION 21.** *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - The members of the
11 Committee shall promulgate the implementing rules and regulations of this Act within thirty
12 (30) days from the effectivity of this Act.

13
14 **SECTION 22.** *Separability Clause.* - If any provision of this Act is held invalid or
15 unconstitutional, the same shall not affect the validity and effectivity of the other provisions
16 hereof.

17
18 **SECTION 23.** *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, decrees, executive orders and rules and
19 regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or
20 modified accordingly.

21
22 **SECTION 24.** *Effectivity Clause.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
23 publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,