

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



Senate
Office of the Secretary

20 JAN 29 P 3 04

SENATE
S. No. 1301

RECEIVED BY: _____

Introduced by Senator Francis "Tol" N. Tolentino

AN ACT
INSTITUTIONALIZING
GOVERNMENT SUPPORT TO GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS,
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Article XIV, Section 2 (3) of the 1987 Constitution provides that: "The State shall: [e]stablish and maintain a system of scholarship grants, student loan programs, subsidies, and other incentives which shall be available to deserving students in both public and private schools, especially to the underprivileged."

In this regard, state support is an important factor in enabling students to pursue excellence in the fields of math, science, humanities, arts and sports, which would then translate to high-valued skills and intellectual capital. Incentivizing and subsidizing the education of deserving students not only recognizes the vital role of the youth in nation building but also opens up avenues for innovation and occupational specialization.

Gifted and talented learners can become the source of national pride in different fields as they represent the country in competitions and showcases. Once they reach their potentials, they may even provide creative solutions to pressing development issues. The first step in capacity-building is to create a conducive atmosphere for learning that takes into account their specific needs. This is where the current government paradigm falls short.

At present, there is no institutionalized system that aptly caters to the academic demands of gifted and talented learners. Such students require a different treatment and certain adjustments in educational programs as the lack of challenging learning opportunities may cause stagnation that would inhibit them from fully developing.

Gifted education in the Philippines has been limited to a few science and mathematics programs offered by the Philippine Science High School System under the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) and music and arts programs offered by the Philippine High School for the Arts under the National Commission of Culture, and Arts (NCCA). Elite private schools in urban areas mostly monopolize gifted education across the country and access to these institutions can be difficult for marginalized learners.


In sum, there is no unifying body or organization advocating and supervising gifted education in the Philippines. While science schools all over the country have become the current haven for gifted and talented learners, there is much to be desired in terms of access to opportunities and state support.

Now therefore, to give effect to the Constitutional mandate and to institutionalize state sponsorship for gifted learning, this bill aims to provide the following:

- a) A system of acceleration in academic curriculum and student engagement with external mentors from concerned fields of study;
- b) Scholarships, grants and incentives for gifted and talented learners as well as sponsorships in local or international competitions and showcases to enhance competitiveness;
- c) Fellowship placements in various governmental institutions to address the "brain drain" debacle.

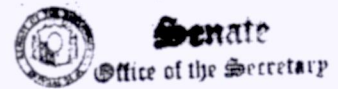
Verily, the potential of gifted and talented learners to create meaningful solutions that could fuel job creation, improve lives and increase efficiency in government services is limitless. It is in the national interest of the Government to hone the brightest minds and give them the opportunity to contribute in addressing

the Nation's challenges. Considering the foregoing, the immediate enactment of this bill is respectfully requested.



FRANCIS "TOL" N. TOLENTINO

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

1 Section 1. *Short Title.* This Act shall be known as the "Henyong Kabataan Pinoy
2 Act of 2020."

3 Section 2. *State Policy.* It is hereby declared the policy of the State to establish
4 and maintain a system of scholarship grants, student loan programs, subsidies, and
5 other incentives which shall be available to deserving students in both public and
6 private schools, especially to the underprivileged.

7 The State affirms the role of students who are gifted and/or talented in different
8 intellectual, physical, creative or social domains in nation building and recognizes their
9 potential to significantly contribute to national development through innovative
10 strategies and creative solutions.

11 The State endeavors to increase the access of gifted and/or talented learners
12 to rigorous, relevant and engaging learning opportunities aligned with their individual
13 learning needs, strengths, interests and goals.

14 Section 3. *Scope and Limitations.* The Act shall be limited in scope, application,
15 and effectivity to Filipino students in primary, secondary and tertiary education.

1 Section 4. *Definition of Terms.* For purposes of the Act, the following terms
2 shall mean:

- 3 a) Government Fellows Program - refers to the program that enables gifted
4 and/or talented learners who are beneficiaries of scholarships, grants, and
5 other such benefits to devote prescribed years to work in the public sector
6 to be able to bring back to the community;
- 7 b) Gifted Learner - refers to those students whose potential is distinctly above
8 average in one or more areas of human cognition. Gifted students have
9 exceptional abilities in one or more academic subjects such as mathematics,
10 science, history and geography;
- 11 c) Talented Learner - refers to those students whose skills are distinctly above
12 average in one or more areas of human performance. Talented learners
13 have exceptional abilities in one or more practical subjects such as dance,
14 music, arts, sports, among others;
- 15 d) Mentorship Program - refers to a system where in a mentor or a partner
16 with specific skills and knowledge are connected with gifted or talented
17 learners who need or want the same skills and advantages to move up in
18 work, skill level, or school performance;
- 19 e) Service Obligation Contract - refers to an undertaking by the gifted and/or
20 talented learners, who enjoyed any of the benefits under this Act, to serve
21 in the public sector for a specific number of years after completion of tertiary
22 education;

23 Section 5. *Gifted and Talented Learners Development Program.* A "Gifted and
24 Talented Learners Development Program" (Program) shall be created to address the
25 special needs of gifted and/or talented learners. This shall include comprehensive and
26 aligned services that use individualized, consultative and collaborative methods to
27 enhance student performance in cognitive and affective areas.

28 Gifted and/or talented learners shall have access to learning resources such as
29 technology infused learning, internships, acceleration, enrichment programs,
30 mentorships or individual projects based on student interest and areas of giftedness
31 or talent. Provided that, to ensure the proper educational approach, the Department
32 of Education (DepEd), the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and all other

1 concerned agencies shall formulate and adopt policies geared towards the full
2 development of gifted and/or talented learners.

3 Section 6. *Local and International Scholarships.* Gifted and Talented Learners
4 who meet the requirements of the selection process shall enjoy any or all of the
5 following scholarship grants:

6 (A) Primary and Secondary Education - Gifted and/or talented learners shall
7 have immediate access to specialized high schools such as the Philippine
8 Science High School and the Philippines High School for the Arts, among
9 others.

10 In cases wherein the student chooses a private educational institution,
11 scholarship grants including, but not limited to, the cost of tuition and
12 miscellaneous fees shall be subsidized.

13 (B) Tertiary Education and Vocational Education - Tertiary and Vocational
14 Education, scholarship grants, aids and other assistance shall be governed
15 by Republic Act No. 10687 otherwise known as the "Unified Student
16 Financial Assistance System for Tertiary Education (UniFAST) Act of 2015"
17 and Republic Act No. 10648 otherwise known as the "Iskolar ng Bayan Act
18 of 2014". Provided, that the high school graduation requirement for
19 application shall be waived for exceptionally gifted and/or talented
20 students.

21 Provided further, that enjoyment of benefits under the aforementioned
22 laws shall not prejudice the conferment of additional benefits and
23 incentives given to gifted and/or talented learners under this Act.

24 Provided finally, that in the event that the UniFast Program or the Iskolar
25 ng Bayan Program shall not be applicable to selected gifted and/or talented
26 learners, the Committee shall formulate the necessary scholarship
27 program/s that would allow such learners access to quality education and
28 training relevant to their needs.

29 (C) International Education and Programs - If international scholarships and
30 programs are available to qualified students, the Committee shall
31 encourage and assist in the application process of gifted and/or talented

1 learners. All fees pertinent thereto, including the cost of the program, shall
2 be shouldered by the State.

3 Section 7. *Additional Benefits.* In addition to scholarship grants, gifted and/or
4 talented learners shall be entitled to the following monthly benefits:

5 (1) Educational Expenses Allowance in the amount of Five Thousand Pesos
6 (Php5,000);

7 (2) Medical Allowance in the amount of Two Thousand Pesos (Php2,000);

8 (3) Transportation Allowance in the amount of One Thousand Pesos
9 (Php1,000);

10 (4) Board and Lodging Allowance in the amount of Ten Thousand Pesos
11 (Php10,000) for underprivileged and/or marginalized learners from far flung
12 areas who will be dislocated from their residences;

13 (5) Subsidies and Sponsorships for Local and International Competitions and
14 Showcases shall be available to learners representing the Philippines.
15 Application fees, transportation fees, board and lodging for the learner and
16 one (1) parent or guardian shall be shouldered by the State. Furthermore,
17 Competition or Showcase Allowance for local and international events shall
18 be determined by the Committee.

19 Section 8. *Acceleration Program.* The DepEd, CHED and other concerned
20 agencies shall devise an "Acceleration Program" to address the advanced learning
21 requirements of gifted and/or talented learners. Such as entrance to school at a
22 younger age than their peers, grade-skipping or early entry to tertiary education
23 regardless of their age.

24 Section 9. *Mentorship Program.* A Mentorship Program shall be made available
25 to gifted and/or talented students. The Committee shall facilitate in the appropriate
26 matching of an in-school and external mentor, who may come from the private or
27 public sector. The designated mentor shall supervise the content enrichment, transfer
28 of knowledge and specific gift-based or talent-based skills development of the learner.

29 Section 10. *Government Fellows Program.* To encourage participation in policy
30 development, all gifted and/or talented learners who enjoyed any of the scholarships,
31 grants and other benefits under this Act shall enter into a "Government Fellows
32 Program" requiring public service for a specific number of years after completing

1 tertiary education. They shall be bound by a Service Obligation Contract and the terms
2 therein shall be equitably determined by the Committee.

3 Section 11. *Gifted and Talented Education Committee.* To carry out the
4 purposes of this act, a Gifted and Talented Education Committee (Committee) shall
5 be created. It shall be attached to the DepEd, composed of the Secretary of the DepEd
6 as ex officio Chairperson, the CHED Commissioner, and other heads of concerned
7 agencies as may be determined by the Implementing Rules and Regulations.

8 The Committee shall formulate and approve policies and strategies for gifted
9 and/or talented learners and review existing policies to ensure consistency with policy
10 framework under this Act. It shall also promulgate the minimum guidelines, rules and
11 regulations for determining qualified Beneficiaries for the Gifted and Talented Learners
12 Education Program.

13 Section 12. *Appropriations.* The amount of One Hundred Million (Php
14 100,000,000) necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act, specifically for the
15 creation of the Committee and the initial implementation of this Act, shall be charged
16 against the current year's appropriation of the DepEd. Thereafter, such amount as
17 may be necessary for the continued implementation of this Act shall be included in the
18 Annual General Appropriations Act.

19 Section 13. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* For the purpose of
20 establishing an institutionalized government support system for gifted and/or talented
21 learners, a committee composed of the Department of Education, Commission on
22 Higher Education, Department of Science and Technology, National Center for Culture
23 and the Arts, National Sports Commission and other concerned government agencies
24 shall formulate and prescribe, after public hearing and publication as required by law,
25 the Implementing Rules and Regulations in order to carry out the provisions of this
26 Act within 90 days from its effectivity.

27 Section 14. *Separability Clause.* If any provision of this Act shall be held
28 unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions not otherwise affected shall remain in
29 full force and effect.

30 Section 15. *Repealing Clause.* All laws, decrees, executive orders,
31 proclamations and other executive issuances which are inconsistent with or contrary
32 to the provisions of this Act are hereby amended or repealed accordingly.

1 Section 16. *Effectivity Clause.* This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days
2 following its complete publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) national
3 newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,