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SENATE

P. S. RES. NO. 98

Introduced by Senator JOEL VILLANUEVA

RESOLUTION
DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION, ARTS, AND CULTURE AND OTHER APPROPRIATE COMMITTEE/S OF THE SENATE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE K-12 BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAM

WHEREAS, in 2013, Republic Act No. 10533, otherwise known as the "Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013" was passed into law (the "K-12 Law"). Among others, the K-12 Law declared that the policies of the State are to "establish, maintain and support a complete, adequate and integrated system of education;" and to ensure that "every graduate of basic education shall be an empowered individual;"[1]

WHEREAS, prior to the K-12 program, the Philippines had the shortest basic education cycle in Asia and one of the three countries (together with Djibouti and Angola) with a ten (10)-year pre-university education model, while other countries have at least twelve (12) years;[2]

WHEREAS, some of the cited reasons necessitating the K-12 program are: (a) decongesting the curriculum to ensure that students can comprehend and master programs, particularly core subjects; (b) prepare students for higher education as introductory courses taught at the tertiary level are already included in the high school curriculum; (c) prepare students to join the labor workforce as they have already reached the age of majority and are equipped with the necessary competencies; and (d) comply with global standards to meet requirements of foreign countries, particularly for those who wish to work abroad or pursue postgraduate studies;[3]

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[1] An Act Enhancing the Philippine Basic Education System by Strengthening its Curriculum and Increasing the Number of Years for Basic Education, Appropriating Funds Therefore and For Other Purposes [Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013], Republic Act No. 10533, §2 (2013).

[2] Senate Economic Planning Office, K to 12: The Key to Quality Education, *accessible at* https://legacy.senate.gov.ph/publications/PB%202011-02%20-%20K%20to%2012%20The%20Key%20to%20Quality.pdf, June 2011 (*last accessed* July 29, 2022).

[3] *Id.*

WHEREAS, despite the K-12 program and other reforms in the education sector over the past decade, the Philippines performed poorly in assessments, such as the 2018 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) administered by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) in 2019, and the Southeast Asia Primary Learning Metrics (SEA-PLM) in 2019;

WHEREAS, in the OECD Country Note for the Philippines,[4] the 2018 PISA reported the following:

a) **Reading Literacy**, defined as the "students' capacity to understand, use, evaluate, reflect on and engage with texts in order to achieve one's goals, develop one's knowledge and potential, and participate in society"; For this domain, Filipino students obtained an average score of 340 points, which was significantly lower than the OECD average of 487 points. About 80% of Filipino students were classified as having Proficiency Level below Level 2, revealing that "majority of students cannot identify the main idea in a piece of text of moderate length, and may have difficulty in making comparisons based on single features of text and in making connections between texts and outside knowledge;"[5]

b) **Mathematical Literacy,** defined as the "students' capacity to formulate, employ, and interpret mathematics in a variety of contexts. It includes reasoning mathematically and using mathematical concepts, procedures, facts and tools to describe, explain and predict phenomena"; For this domain, Filipino students achieved an average score of 353 points, which was significantly lower than the OECD average of 489 points, and is below Level 1 Proficiency. Majority of Filipino students were classified as having Proficiency Levels below Level 2, with 54.4% below Level 1 Proficiency (358 points), showing that Filipino students are unable to emplcy basic algorithms, formulae, procedures or conventions to solve problems involving whole numbers;[6]

c) **Science Literacy,** defined as the "students' ability to engage with science-related issues, and with the ideas of science, as a reflective citizen. A scientifically literate person is willing to engage in reasoned discourse about science and technology, which requires the competencies to explain phenomena scientifically, evaluate and design scientific enquiry, and interpret data and evidence scientifically." For this domain, Filipino students achieved an average score of 357 points, which was significantly lower than the OECD average of 489 points. Majority of Filipino students (77.97%) achieved proficiency levels below Level 2, showing that they are neither able to draw on everyday content knowledge, and basic procedural knowledge to identify the question being addressed in a simple experimental design, nor use basic or every scientific knowledge to identify a valid conclusion from a simple data set;[7]

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[4] PISA 2018 National Report of the Philippines, December 2019, *accessible at* https://www.deped.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/PISA-2018-Philippine-National-Report.pdf (*last accessed* July 29, 2022).
[5] *Id.*, p. vi-vii; 12.
[6] *Id.*, p. vi, viii; 26-28.
[7] *Id.*, p. vi, viii, 35-36.

WHEREAS, in the TIMSS 2019 International Results in Mathematics and Science, the Philippines only scored 297 in mathematics and 249 in science, both of which are below the Low Benchmark (400), and scored the lowest among all 58 participating countries for both tests;[8]

WHEREAS, in the SEA-PLM 2019 student learning assessment program which monitored learning outcomes in reading, writing, and mathematics of Grade 5 students in Vietnam, Malaysia, Myanmar, Cambodia, Lao PDR, and the Philippines, with the following findings:

a) For **Reading Literacy,** the Philippines scored 288 points, 12 points lower than the average score of 300 points, suggesting that the Philippines had much lesser students that can understand texts with familiar structures and manage competing information;[9]

b) For **Writing Literacy,** the Philippines also scored 288 points, 12 points lower than the average score of 300 points, suggesting that a typical Filipino Grade 5 student can produce very limited writing with fragmented ideas and inadequate vocabulary;[10]

c) For **Mathematical Literacy**, the Philippines also scored 288 points, 12 points lower than the average score of 300 points, which reveals that Filipino students cannot fluently solve arithmetic problems, such as reading numbers from a table and adding them, understanding the structure of a bar graph, and solving problems using frequency distribution;[11]

WHEREAS, based on a 2018 study conducted by the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) through key informant interviews with Human Resource Managers/Officers in 26 firms, 24 out of 26 firms stated that they are willing to hire Senior High School (SHS) graduates.[12] However, out of this number, 22 out of 26 companies have preconditions for hiring, such as requiring certain competencies or skills, improved work immersion, and offering only low positions;

WHEREAS, the PIDS also reported in 2020 that only a little over 20% of Senior High School Graduates participate in the labor market and more than 70% proceeded to pursue further studies.[13] However, the study further revealed that K-12 graduates "have poorer outcomes in terms of labor force participation, employment, and underemployment rates."[14] While it acknowledges that the study "merely scratched the surface of understanding the labor outcomes for SHS graduates,"[15] there is a need

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[8] TIMSS 2019 International Results in Mathematics and Science, *accessible at* https://www.iea.nl/sites/default/files/2021-01/TIMSS%202019-International-Results-in-Mathematics-and-Science.pdf, p. 9; 80 (*last accessed* July 31, 2022).

[9] SEA-PLM 2019 National Report of the Philippines, *accessible at* https://www.unicef.org/philippines/media/2556/file/Southeast%20Asia%20Primary%20Learning%20Metrics%202019%20National%20Report%20of%20the%20Philippines.pdf, p. 11. (*last accessed* July 31, 2022).

[10] *Id.*, p. 18.

[11] *Id.*, p. 23.

[12] Aniceto C. Orbeta, Jr., et al. Philippine Institute for Development Studies, Senior High School and the Labor Market: Perspectives of Grade 12 Students and Human Resource Officers, *accessible at* *https://pidswebs.pids.gov.ph/CDN/PUBLICATIONS/pidsdps1849_rev.pdf* (last accessed July 4, 2022).

[13] Aniceto C. Orbeta, Jr. and Maropsil V. Potestad, Philippine Institute for Development Studies, On the Employability of the Senior High School Graduates: Evidence from the Labor Force Survey, *accessible at* *https://pidswebs.pids.gov.ph/CDN/PUBLICATIONS/pidsdps2040.pdf* (*last accessed* July 4, 2022).

[14] *Id.*

[15] *Id.*

to improve on existing programs to allow more access to opportunities and decent work for all, including K-12 graduates;

WHEREAS, in a 2019 report by the PIDS, teachers who participated in focus group discussions assessed the SHS curriculum as "too ambitious" in relation to the time allotted and the level where students are. Furthermore, some remarked that the curriculum seemed to be designed for advanced learners, and more applicable in an urban setting;[16]

WHEREAS, in the same 2019 PIDS report, a respondent at the Department of Education (DepEd) Central Office relayed that while there are sufficient funds for learning resources such as textbooks, as well as tools, equipment, and construction of school buildings, procurement issues hamper and cause delays in the delivery of such materials. Likewise, instances of delivery of learning materials, tools, and equipment with incorrect specifications also takes place;[17]

WHEREAS, while the foregoing, and many other existing issues are associated with the K-12 Program implementation, the same report identified some notable gains, such as obtaining a 93% transition rate from Grade 10 to Grade 11, while previous high school to college transition rate was only at 50% in 2016, which includes Grade 10 completers, those who finished high school under the Alternative Learning System program, and those who previously discontinued schooling. Furthermore, good practices such as teachers' efforts and resourcefulness, as well as the quality of school leadership and management have been crucial in the delivery of the curriculum;[18]

WHEREAS, the DepEd launched its reforms to achieve quality in basic education through "*Sulong EduKalidad*", citing four (4) key reform areas:

a) K-12 curriculum review and update;
b) Improvement of learning environment;
c) Teachers' upskilling and reskilling; and
d) Engagement of stakeholders for support and collaboration.[19]

WHEREAS, in view of the foregoing, there is a need to review the implementation of the K-12 Program and relevant laws, rules and regulations to determine the necessary adjustments and efforts required to ensure that the objectives of the said program are achieved, and for the benefit of all stakeholders in the education sector;

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[16] Karen Domingo Brillantes, et al., Philippine Institute for Development Studies, Status of Senior High School Implementation: A Process Evaluation, *accessible at* https://pidswebs.pids.gov.ph/CDN/PUBLICATIONS/pidsdps1913.pdf (*last accessed* July 31, 2022).
[17] *Id.*
[18] *Id.*, 45-46.
[19] Department of Education, Sulong Edukalidad: DepEd's battlecry moving forward, Dec. 19, 2019, *accessible at* https://www.deped.gov.ph/2019/12/03/sulong-edukalidad-depeds-battlecry-moving-forward/ (*last accessed* July 31, 2022).

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE PHILIPPINES, that the Committee on Basic Education, Arts and Culture and other appropriate Committee/s of the Senate, conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the implementation of the K-12 program.

Adopted,

SENATOR JOEL VILLANUEVA