

13th CONGRESS OF THE
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
Second Regular Session

6 JUN -7 P2:46

SENATE

RECEIVED BY: 

Senate Bill No. 2301

INTRODUCED BY SEN. MANNY VILLAR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Education demonstrably makes a difference in the growth and development of a country. The Philippines makes for a telling example: during the years immediately before and some years after the Second World War, when our country was proudly no. 2 in Asia in the quality of our education, we were, as well, the second-best performing economy among our ASEAN neighbors.

Things have changed very fast however. Now that the country's quality of education has fast deteriorated, our economy today has made a serious turn for the worse. While there are other factors that may have caused our current economic problems, the poor quality of education could be a contributing factor.

Information experts calculate that from the 1970's, knowledge, information and the progress of technology has been doubling every fifteen years. As the information highway is accelerating faster every year, the younger generations are in effect being burdened more and more with a vast and still increasing body of knowledge and information they have to access.

Given this increasing body of knowledge and information; learners have to begin learning earlier to stay competitive. It is as much an advantage as it is a necessity that students become adept at learning earlier in childhood just to be able to learn all the fundamentals that enable them to become competitive players in adult economy and society.

Amazingly though, while even English-speaking countries like the United Kingdom and the USA have generally two-to-three years of Early Childhood Education; and our ASEAN and Pacific Rim neighbors, led by Singapore and Malaysia, Thailand and New Zealand; with four years of pre-school, the Philippines has pre-school mostly in private institutions. In the public system however, a pre-school system is invariably inaccessible to the vast majority of those in the public schools.

Republic Act No. 6972, otherwise known as the "Barangay-Level Total Development and Protection of Children Act", enacted into law November 1990, declares it a policy of the State "to defend the rights of children to assistance, including proper care and nutrition, and to provide them with special protection against all forms of neglect, abuse, cruelty, exploitation and other conditions prejudicial to their development" and the Day Care program was thus established to implement this policy.


The Day Care program of the government provides a place for children younger than school age; community-based facilities provide temporary care for children during the day thus allowing parents to pursue other productive activities. The Day Care Centers are also by design, under the provisions of R.A. 8990 also known as the "Early Childhood Care and Development Act" became learning facilities with the intent of preparing these children for eventual entry into the formal school system.

The approximately 29,399 Day Care Centers throughout the country are staffed by about 29,072 day care workers; who are on the whole volunteers who also assist the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) during calamities and facilitate the referral of cases of child abuse to the DSWD.

These Day Care Centers provide an opportunity for the government to provide pre-school education across the country. This bill in part intends to institutionalize pre-school education in the country through the conversion of Barangay Day Care Centers into Barangay Pre-school thereby providing entry-level preparatory education for our nation's children.

This bill proposes a two-level compulsory preparatory public education, which will be named Kindergarten 1 and Kindergarten 2 respectively (Kinder 1 and 2 for short). Kinder 1 will be provided by the converted Day Care Centers into Community Pre-schools financed in part by their respective Local Government Units with assistance from the Local School Board among other stakeholders; and Kinder 2 will be provided by the public elementary schools under the Department of Education (Dep. Ed.)

In the spirit of our Constitution that mandates the government to promote the rights of all citizens to quality education and to take appropriate actions to make such education possible to all; and to establish, maintain and support a completely adequate and integrated system of education relevant to the needs of the people of society, the immediate passage of this bill is requested.



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AN ACT
INSTITUTIONALIZING PRE-SCHOOLS AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF BASIC
EDUCATION

*Be 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 "National Education Act."

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - It is hereby declared the policy of the Government to provide pre-school education for children by institutionalizing the Day Care Learning Centers into Pre-schools to provide Kindergarten 1 education for children three (3) to four (4) years of age; and to provide a school-based Kindergarten 2 education for children five (5) years of age in the Public School System.

SECTION 3. *Two-Level Structure of Preparatory Education.* - To fully provide the necessary preparation for the nation's students to enter public elementary education, there shall be two (2) levels of public preparatory education to wit:

1. Kindergarten One (Kinder 1), provided to children three (3) to four (4) years of age.

2. Kindergarten Two (Kinder 2), provided to children five (5) years of age or children who have not yet reached the age of six (6) years old.

By the beginning of School Year 2007-2008, no student may be admitted a public elementary school without completing at least one (1) year of preparatory school, *Provided*, That the public elementary school offering admission provides at Kindergarten classes and/or there is a public pre-school offering admission within a reasonable distance from the public elementary school offering admission.

SECTION 4. *Community Pre-Schools.* – Community Day Care Centers shall be converted into Community Pre-Schools. These Pre-Schools shall provide at least Kinder 1 between the two preparatory education levels. The funding of these schools should be provided by their respective Local Government Units (LGUs) with the assistance of their respective municipal or city school board, their respective Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) and/or other stakeholders

SECTION 5. *Pre-Schools in Public Elementary Schools.* – Public Elementary Schools shall be provided at least Kinder 2 among the two preparatory education levels; the funding of which shall be provided by the annual budget of the Department of Education (Dep. Ed.) as incorporated in the annual General Appropriations Act or other funding sources as the National Government shall provide or arrange.

SECTION 6. *Implementation of Policy.* – In order to ensure that the declared policy of this Act shall be implemented in an appropriate and efficient manner:

- (a) The Department of Education (Dep. Ed.), not later than December 31, 2006 shall formulate and prescribe the standardized curricula for the two levels of preparatory education, including the formulation and development of the teachers' and pupils' materials and general

guidelines for the organization and operation of pre-schools as well as determine and approve textbooks and instructional materials necessary for the effective implementation of preparatory public education, as part of the Implementing Rules and Regulations of this Act.

(b) The Dep. Ed. shall also formulate and prescribe the qualifications of preparatory education teachers.

(c) The Dep. Ed. Shall design and conduct a training program for public school teachers that will enable them to effectively function as pre-school teachers.

(d) The Dep. Ed. Shall design and conduct a training program for the Day Care Center Workers presently serving as volunteer teachers without the necessary qualifications and training for pre-school teaching.

SECTION 7. *Salary of Pre-school teachers.* – A pre-school teacher shall receive a monthly basic salary based on the compensation of teachers as shall be determined by the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) as recommended by the Dep. Ed.

SECTION 8. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 9. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect immediately upon its approval.

Approved,