

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

FIFTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 63

Introduced by HONORABLE LUIS R. VILLAFUERTE

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill reenacts House Bill No. 5367 which was approved by the 14th Congress of the House of Representatives on 09 December 2008 and was transmitted to and received by the Senate on 17 December 2008.

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. No. 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.

There are currently more than 50,000 day care centers nationwide staffed by 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 preschool education across the country. This bill in part intends to institutionalize preschool education in the country through the conversion of Barangay Day Care Centers into Barangay Pre-schools 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 (DepEd).

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 TO INSTITUTIONALIZE PRESCHOOL EDUCATION BY
INCORPORATING KINDER 1 FOR 3 TO 4 YEARS OLD,
KINDER 2 FOR 5 YEARS OLD, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS
THEREFOR**

*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
2 “Preschool Education Act of 2010”.

3 **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** – It is hereby declared the policy
4 of the State to provide equal opportunities for all children to avail of
5 free and compulsory preschool education that effectively promotes
6 physical, social, intellectual, emotional and skill stimulation and values
7 formation to sufficiently prepare them for formal elementary schooling.
8 This Act shall apply to elementary school system, being the first stage
9 of compulsory formal education.

10 Preschool education is vital to the academic and technical
11 development of the Filipino child for it is the period when the young
12 mind’s absorptive capacity for learning is at its sharpest.

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

3 (a) "BEE" refers to the Bureau of Elementary Education.

4 (b) "DepEd" refers to the Department of Education.

5 (c) "Preschool education" shall be understood in this Act to
6 mean one (1) year of schooling before Grade I, to be made available
7 and compulsory to all five (5)-year old children.

8 (d) "Preschool children" refers to five (5)-year old children
9 enrolled in preschool education.

10 (e) "Other school fees" refers to those charges which cover
11 other necessary costs supportive of instruction including, but not
12 limited to, medical and dental, athletics, library and laboratory fees.

13 (f) "Tuition fee" refers to the charge representing costs of
14 instructions, training and other related activities and for the pupils' use
15 of the instruction and training facilities.

16 **SEC. 4. Institutionalization of Preschool Education.** –
17 Preschool education is hereby institutionalized as part of basic
18 education and shall be made mandatory for all five (5)-year old
19 children. It shall be implemented on a staggered basis starting on the
20 school year immediately following the effectivity of this Act.

21 Prior to compliance with the mandatory preschooling of five (5)-
22 year old children as provided for under this Act, the national
23 government shall continue to support the day care program under
24 Republic Act No. 8980, otherwise known as the Early Childhood Care

1 and Development Act, subject to the financial assistance to be provided
2 by the local government units and the technical assistance and the
3 accreditation system to be extended by the Department of Social
4 Welfare and Development, in consultation with the DepEd.

5 On the third year following the effectivity of this Act, no child shall
6 be admitted to Grade I without having attended at least one (1) year of
7 preschool education, subject to the qualifications and guidelines to be
8 promulgated and prescribed by the DepEd.

9 **SEC. 5. *Implementing Agency.*** – The authority to regulate the
10 organization, operation and/or implementation of the preschool
11 education program shall be vested upon the DepEd, through the BEE.

12 **SEC. 6. *Duties, Powers and Functions.*** – The DepEd shall have
13 the following duties, powers and functions:

14 (a) To oversee and supervise the implementation of the
15 preschool education program throughout the country;

16 (b) To authorize the opening of preschool education classes in
17 all public and private schools, including the registration and
18 accreditation of private preschool institutions and order closure of the
19 same if found violating DepEd rules and regulations and/or found
20 operating without a permit or certificate of recognition;

21 (c) To develop the curriculum for preschool education
22 consistent with the universally accepted norms and standards, including
23 values formation, and to periodically review such for purposes of
24 upgrading;

1 (d) To conceive, develop and extend a regular training program
2 to preschool education teachers to ensure constant updating of their
3 knowledge in modern trends, methodologies and concepts on early
4 childhood education;

5 (e) To prescribe the necessary qualifications for the hiring and
6 accreditation of teachers who will handle the preschool education
7 program; and

8 (f) To formulate the necessary guidelines and regulatory
9 standards in connection with the operation of private preschool
10 institutions.

11 **SEC. 7. *Special Training for Preschool Teachers.*** – The DepEd
12 shall prescribe the standards and qualifications for preschool teachers
13 and afford for their necessary special training.

14 **SEC. 8. *Salary of a Preschool Teacher.*** – A public preschool
15 teacher shall receive a monthly basic salary based on the compensation
16 of public school teachers under the Salary Standardization Law, as
17 amended, in addition to other benefits prescribed by law.

18 In the case of a private preschool teacher, he/she shall receive the
19 salary and other benefits prescribed under the Labor Code of the
20 Philippines.

21 **SEC. 9. *Free Preschool Education.*** – The public preschool
22 education program shall be free from tuition and other school fees.

1 Tuition and other school fees imposed by private preschool
2 institutions shall be subject to the rules and regulations to be
3 promulgated by the DepEd.

4 **SEC. 10. Appropriations.** – The Secretary of Education shall
5 immediately include in the Department's program the operationalization
6 of the compulsory preschool education, the initial funding of which shall
7 be charged against the current appropriations for preschool education
8 of the Department. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the
9 continued implementation of the preschool program shall be included in
10 the annual General Appropriations Act.

11 **SEC. 11. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** – The DepEd,
12 in consultation with the Department of Social Welfare and
13 Development, the Department of Budget and Management, the
14 Department of the Interior and Local Government and both Houses of
15 Congress, shall promulgate the implementing rules and regulations
16 within ninety (90) days after the effectivity of this Act.

17 **SEC. 12. Separability Clause.** – If any provision of this Act is
18 held invalid or unconstitutional, the same shall not affect the validity
19 and effectivity of the other provisions hereof.

20 **SEC. 13. Repealing Clause.** – Pertinent provisions of Republic Act
21 No. 8980 and all other laws, decrees, executive orders and rules and
22 regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act
23 are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

1 **SEC. 14. *Effectivity Clause.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen
2 (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general
3 circulation.

Approved,