

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

FIFTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 4993

Introduced by **REP. ALFREDO "ALBEE" B. BENITEZ**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to institutionalize the implementation of a cyber education program for primary, secondary and tertiary education in the Philippines.

Recent reports have indicated the deteriorating quality of education in the Philippines. In the recent Global Competitiveness Report of the World Economic Forum (2010-2011), the Philippines ranked 99th out of 138 economies in the area of primary education, 69th in educational system, 112th in science and math and 76th on internet access. The Philippines ranked poorly in all categories, even falling behind its neighboring South East Asian countries including Singapore, Brunei, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, and Vietnam.

Moreover, Filipino students were among the lowest ranked in terms of performance as shown in the 2003 and 2008 Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study, trailing behind Malaysia and Indonesia.

At the national level, the results of National Achievement Tests administered to elementary and high school students, which were designed to determine what the students know, understand and can do at their level, show unsatisfactory results. At the secondary level, students' scores in five consecutive years registered the lowest score at 44.33% in school year (SY) 2005-2006 and highest at 49.26% in SY 2008-2009 which were far below from the passing rate of 75%.

One of the solutions to address the deteriorating quality of education is through the utilization of various information and communications technology (ICT) as a tool for

learning and teaching. Several studies have underscored the benefits of integrating ICT particularly in the education system. Utilizing ICT significantly contributed to the acquisition and absorption of knowledge among the students by increasing their motivation and engagement in classroom activities. Particularly, a computer with internet connectivity provides the learner an opportunity to connect with other people and provides them ready access to data.

The importance of technology in providing good quality education cannot be taken for granted. For one, the Philippines has a reputation for being a world-class ICT hub in Asia, a status that we have to uphold. Moreover, our country has become a major investment destination for business process outsourcing (BPO). As a matter of fact, our country is the third largest BPO destination next to India and Canada. It is therefore imperative for the country to continuously advance technologically to push our nation forward.

It is equally important to focus on the human resources which is one of the critical factors in achieving higher standards in education. Teachers themselves should be equipped not only with mastery of their subjects and leadership but also with ICT knowledge and skills and provide them opportunities and resources for learning to enable them to cope with the emerging knowledge-based society. With the fast evolving technology, continuous education studies and research should be done including, but not limited to, student learning, teacher training, pedagogy, and classroom dynamics.

To ensure the utilization and integration of various ICTs in the Philippine education system with the end goal of improving the quality of education in the country, a Cyber Education Program has to be put in place. Furthermore, all government agencies that will implement the program which includes the Department of Education, Commission on Higher Education, Department of Science and Technology, and the Department of Interior and Local Government, shall be tasked to develop and implement their own plans and programs consistent with the national goals and objectives.

In view of the foregoing considerations, approval of this bill is earnestly sought.


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AN ACT
INSTITUTIONALIZING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CYBER EDUCATION PROGRAM,
CREATING THE CYBER EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT
CORPORATION AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Be it 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 "*Cyber Education Act.*"

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to work towards the advancement of the quality of education in the country through the adoption of information and communications technology (ICT) as a tool in the teaching and learning process to enable students to achieve higher standards of learning. Likewise, the State shall also utilize ICT education in the development of its human resources.

SEC. 3. *Objectives.* – This Act shall have the following objectives:

- (a) Achieve higher standards of education and bring about significant improvements in the performance of students through the utilization of ICT;
- (b) Improve the quality of classroom lessons and the fundamental improvement of public education through the use of ICT;
- (c) Address the inequality in education by bringing the educational system even to the remotest barangay and to many underserved children, especially those who come from lower income families;
- (d) Improve the delivery of basic, secondary and tertiary education by enhancing the capabilities of teachers, school heads and other stakeholders in the public education system;
- (e) Improve the quality and efficiency of school administration through the effective management of information systems; and
- (f) Prepare Filipino students to become ICT literate and provide them unlimited opportunities for learning.

SEC. 4. *Cyber Education Development and Management Corporation.* – There is hereby created a Cyber Education Development and Management Corporation, hereinafter referred to as the "CyberEd Corp", under the Department of Education.

The CyberEd Corp shall be the primary policy-making, planning, and coordinating entity of the government that will be tasked to develop, coordinate and ensure the implementation of government programs and action plans relating to the cyber education program.

The Secretary of Education shall organize the CyberEd Corp within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act.

SEC. 5. Powers and Functions. – The CyberEd Corp shall have the following powers and functions:

(a) Formulate and coordinate the development of national plans, policies and guidelines that will promote the utilization of various ICT and to advance an ICT-enabled learning environment towards the improvement of the quality of education in the country;

(b) Formulate a road map on cyber education to serve as the basis for cyber education planning, research and development, and monitoring of programs and activities;

(c) Review the existing programs of various government agencies on cyber education;

(d) Coordinate the implementation of the cyber education program to ensure the attainment of goals set in the road map on cyber education;

(e) Foster the widespread use and application of emerging ICT in the public education system including the curriculum, pedagogy, and student-centered learning and assessment;

(f) To have continuous succession under its corporate name until otherwise provided by law;

(g) To adopt and use a corporate seal and to change, alter or modify the same, if necessary;

(h) To sue and be sued;

(i) To enter into contract and execute any instrument necessary or convenient for the purpose for which it was created;

(j) To borrow funds from any source, whether public or private, foreign or domestic, and issue bonds and other evidence of indebtedness; Provided that in the case of bond issues, it shall be subject to the approval of the President of the Philippines upon the recommendation of the Secretary of Finance; Provided further, that foreign loans shall be obtained, for and behalf of CyberEd Corp, in accordance with law and the rule and regulations of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas;

(k) To maintain a provident fund which consists of contributions made by both the CyberEd Corp and its officials and employees and their earnings for the payment of benefits to such officials and employees or their heirs under such terms and conditions as its Board may prescribe;

(l) To do any act necessary or proper to carry out the purpose for which it is created, or which, from time to time, may be declared by the CyberEd Corp Board as necessary, useful, incidental or auxiliary to accomplish its purpose and objectives; and

(m) Generally, to exercise the powers of a corporation under the corporation law in so far as they are not inconsistent with this Act.

SEC. 6. Board of Trustees. –All the powers of the CyberEd Corp shall be vested in and exercised by a Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees shall be composed of a Chairman and seven (7) members. The Secretary of the Department of Education shall be

the ex-officio Chairman of the Board. The other members of the Board of Trustees of the CyberEd Corp shall include the Chairman of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), the Secretary of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), the Secretary of the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), the Executive Director of the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), and the President of the CyberEd Corp as ex-officio members; and two (2) representatives from the private sector. The President of the CyberEd Corp and the two (2) representatives from the private sector shall be appointed by the President of the Philippines and shall serve for a term of one (1) year, as provided for by Republic Act No. 10149 (GOCC Governance Act of 2011) provided that any person appointed to fill-in a vacancy shall serve only the unexpired term of his/her predecessor in office.

SEC. 7. Powers and Duties of the Board – The following are the powers of the Board:

(a) To provide strategic direction for CyberEd Corp, and formulate medium and long-term strategies pursuant to the vision, mission and objectives of CyberEd Corp;

(b) To develop and adopt policies and measures for the efficient and effective management and operation of CyberEd Corp;

(c) To organize, re-organize and determine the organizational structure and staffing pattern of CyberEd Corp; abolish and create offices and positions; fix the number of its officers and employees; transfer and re-align such officers and personnel; fix their compensation, allowance and benefits, provided that such compensation and position classification shall be in pursuant to the provisions of Sec. 8, Sec. 9, and Sec. 10 of Republic Act No. 10149; and;

(d) To fix the compensation of the President of CyberEd Corp and to appoint and fix the compensation of other corporate officers;

(e) For cause, to suspend or remove any corporate officer appointed by the Board; pursuant to Sec. 22 of Republic Act No. 10149; and

(f) To adopt and set guidelines for the employment of personnel on the basis of merit, technical competence and moral character.

SEC. 8. Board Meetings. – The Board shall meet as often as maybe necessary upon the call of the Chairman of the Board or by majority of the Board members.

SEC. 9. Board Per Diems and Allowances – The members of the Board shall receive per diem for each regular or special meeting of the Board actually attended by them, and, pursuant to existing accounting and auditing rules and pertinent provisions under Sec. 23 of Republic Act No. 10149 .

SEC. 10. Quorum – The presence of at least four (4) members of the Board shall constitute a quorum, which shall be necessary for the transaction of any business. The affirmative vote of a majority of the members present in a quorum shall be adequate for the approval of any resolution, decision or order except when the Board shall agree that a greater vote is required.

SEC. 11. Powers of the President of CyberEd Corp – The President of the CyberEd Corp shall be the Chief Executive Officer of CyberEd Corp. In the absence of the Chairman, the President of the CyberEd Corp shall preside over all Board meetings.

The President of CyberEd Corp shall have the following powers and duties:

- (a) To execute and administer the policies and measures approved by the Board, and take responsibility for the efficient and effective discharge of management functions;
- (b) To oversee the preparation of the budget of CyberEd Corp;
- (c) To direct and supervise the operation and internal administration of CyberEd Corp and, for this purpose, may delegate some or any of his administrative responsibilities and duties to other officers of CyberEd Corp;
- (d) Subject to the guidelines and policies set up by the Board, to appoint and fix the number and compensation of subordinate officials and employees of CyberEd Corp; and for cause, to remove, suspend or otherwise discipline any subordinate employee of CyberEd Corp;
- (e) To submit an annual report to the Board on the activities and achievements of CyberEd Corp at the close of each fiscal year and upon approval thereof, submit a copy to the President of the Philippines and to such other agencies as maybe required by law as provided for in Sec. 16 of this Act;
- (f) To represent Cyber Ed Corp in all dealings and transactions with other offices, agencies, and instrumentalities of the Government and with all persons and other entities, private or public, domestic or foreign; and
- (g) To exercise such other powers and duties as maybe vested in him by the Board from time to time.

SEC. 12. *Fiduciary Duties of the Board and Officers.* *The members of the Board of Trustess and Officers of the CyberEd Corp have the fiduciary functions to always act in the best interest of the CyberEd Corp pursuant to the provisions of Sec. 19, Sec. 20, and Sec. 21 of Republic Act No. 10149.*

SEC. 13. *Road Map on Cyber Education.* – The CyberEd Corp shall coordinate with the DOST, CHED, and TESDA, in formulating the road map on cyber education within six (6) months from the effectivity of this Act. The road map on cyber education shall serve as basis for cyber education planning, research and development, and monitoring of activities.

It shall be formulated based on the existing strategic plan on ICT, current and future capacities and the potentials for adopting the emerging technologies, in accordance with the national development goals.

The formulation of the Road Map on Cyber Education shall be guided by the following principles:

- a) Responsive policies for the effective implementation of the cyber education program;
- b) Coordination and mainstreaming of the cyber education program;
- c) Efficient resource mobilization and funding generation;
- d) Provision of technical and infrastructure requirements including reliable, accessible and affordable hardware and high-speed connectivity to all public schools and State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) nationwide;

- e) Establishment and management of user-centered knowledge and information resources for teachers and the students and the development of user-centered digital learning materials for use in classrooms;
- f) Continuous advancement of teachers and school administrators' knowledge and skills on ICT through professional trainings and development and assessment of their competency, among others;
- g) Active role of the private sector in ICT research and development;
- h) Development and management of knowledge and information resources for teachers and the students as well as ICT integration in public schools and SUCs nationwide;
- i) Technical and financial support and capacity building for local planning, implementation and monitoring of cyber education programs in the respective LGUs; and
- j) Efficient program monitoring and evaluation of the cyber education program.

The road map on cyber education shall be reviewed every five (5) years, or as may be deemed necessary.

SEC. 13. *Components of the Road Map on Cyber Education.* – The road map on cyber education shall include but not be limited to the following program components:

a) *National Education and Research Internet Network.* – The program aims to establish a nation-wide education and research network infrastructure to support education and research in all public elementary, secondary schools and SUCs using up-to-date ICT.

A nationwide internet network shall be established which will connect seventeen (17) regional network nodes. It is aimed at providing 100% internet and intra-net connectivity to all public elementary, secondary schools and all SUCs nationwide.

b) *Online Regional Teaching and Learning Center.* – There shall be established in each region a Regional Teaching and Learning Center equipped with up-to-date ICT equipment and will serve as an in-service professional development center for teachers. It will promote excellent teaching and facilitate student learning and growth. It will provide an opportunity for teachers, faculty, school administrators, and teaching assistants to improve their teaching skills, acquire ICT skills, and update their knowledge and skills as the school curriculum changes and as technologies advance. Access to professional development materials and in-school "virtual" training from certified experts shall be made available to all public school teachers. The teaching and learning center shall apply blended learning which will also promote collaborative learning.

The teaching and learning center is aimed at promoting excellence in teaching at all levels and ensuring that utilization of various ICT shall be accepted and practiced as a pedagogical tool inside and outside the classroom. The teaching methods to be employed are research-based and courses shall be taught by experts from the national and regional centers.

c) *Digital School.* – A Digital School Project aimed at providing all public elementary, secondary schools and SUCs nationwide with the necessary physical and ICT infrastructure for ICT-based teaching and learning will also be established.

The program will advance the current computerization and internet connectivity program of the DepEd. It shall involve the progressive upgrading of physical and technology infrastructure in all public elementary and secondary schools which shall be implemented in phases. The infrastructure upgrading shall be consistent with the road map on cyber education.

d) *Teachers' Education in ICT.* – This program will promote the integration of ICT in teacher education and pre-service training. This will enable teachers, especially those who are just starting their teaching profession, to be familiar with ICT and be more open in learning how to infuse technology into instruction.

All SUCs shall include in the Bachelor of Education curriculum the integration of ICT in developing their pedagogical, language, and technology skills. A scholarship program shall be launched to be offered to public school teachers who will pursue Master's Degree on ICT in Education. These teachers will be the future leaders on integrating ICT in education.

e) *Laptop for Public School Teachers and School Administrators.* – In partnership with the private sector, a mechanism will be established where all qualified public school heads, administrators, and teachers shall have access to quality and affordable laptops. This is in support of the current Laptop for Teachers (LT4T) program of the Department of Education. For this purpose, ten million (10,000,000) laptops under this scheme shall be distributed by the CyberEd Corp for the next ten (10) years.

f) *Digital Education and Research Information Service (DERIS) Website.* – A dedicated website shall be created and managed which will serve as an academic information sharing service among SUCs, private educational institutions, and libraries. It will provide access to source information and full texts of published journal articles and dissertations in the country and abroad. It will also provide online educational resources and services for teachers, students, and the general public.

It aims to promote sharing and distribution of research information to advance our country in the field of academic research.

g) *Digital Education Administration Information System (DEAIS) Website.* – A dedicated website shall be created and managed which will serve as an integrated administration system designed to provide access to school administrative information all over the country.

It aims to enhance the efficiency of public school administration through the provision of education administration information systems and resources. It will also provide a cost-effective monitoring system for the public education sector.

h) *Digital Library Support Center.* – All public schools and SUCs nationwide shall have a digital learning center equipped with necessary infrastructure to fully integrate ICT in public schools and libraries of SUCs nationwide. It aims to encourage the active use of the libraries among the students and promote interdisciplinary and cross campus research, teaching, and services among public schools and SUCs.

i) *Blended and Collaborative Learning.* – The cyber education program will apply a blended type of learning where students will learn through a combination of different delivery methods of teaching that includes the traditional classroom learning and technology-enhanced learning such as learning online. The use of various ICT such as, but not limited, to the computer and the internet will be utilized for optimum teaching and learning from among the students and the teachers.

j) *Development of Digital Materials.* – Digital teaching materials for use in the classrooms shall be developed and made available to all public elementary, secondary schools and SUCs nationwide.

k) *Certification Exams and Accreditation of ICT Schools.* – TESDA shall, in coordination with CHED and the private sector, develop a standards-based training and certification program for basic computing and internet knowledge and skills for teachers, school administrators and students. Moreover, CHED, DepEd and TESDA shall formulate guidelines and established accreditation standards for both public and private educational institutions nationwide on ICT.

l) *Cyber Education Research and Technology Development.* – The CyberEd Corp shall undertake to promote education research and technological development including policy research, technology assessment, feasibility and technical studies related to ICT in education among SUCs and the private education institutions.

m) *Curriculum Development.* – DepEd and CHED shall undertake to implement the digitization of curriculum content and the creation of ready-to-use and customizable ICT-based resources.

n) *ICT in Education Excellence Award.* – The government through the CyberEd Corp shall launch the ICT in Education Excellence Award to give recognition to individuals and educational institutions for exemplary performance and innovation in the utilization of ICT in teaching and learning.

This program, which will be held annually, will encourage individuals and educational institutions to advance the utilization of ICT in education.

o) *ICT Officers.* – Trained ICT officers who will be charged with the maintenance and basic repair of the ICT equipment shall be assigned in every elementary and secondary school.

SEC. 14. Local Cyber Education Plan. –The local government units (LGUs) shall, in partnership with the CyberEd Corp, DOST, CHED and TESDA, formulate plans and implement local cyber education programs in their respective LGUs, consistent with the provisions of the Local Government Code and the road map on cyber education.

LGUs shall update their respective action plans annually. The LGUs shall furnish the CyberEd Corp with copies of their action plans and all subsequent amendments, modifications and revisions thereof, within one (1) month from their adoption. The LGUs shall mobilize and allocate necessary personnel, resources and logistics to effectively implement their respective action plans.

The local chief executive shall appoint a local cyber education program officer who will be responsible for the formulation and implementation of the local cyber education program and shall be authorized to provide additional staff as may be deemed necessary.

SEC. 15. *Role of Government Agencies.* - To ensure the effective implementation of the cyber education program, concerned agencies shall perform the following functions:

- a) The DOST shall have the following functions:
 - i. Undertake education research and technological development including policy research, technology assessment, feasibility and technical studies related to ICT in education;
 - ii. Provide technical services needed in integrating ICT in education such as but not limited to the provision of a nation-wide education and research network infrastructure and high-speed connectivity and; and
 - iii. Assist the DepEd and CHED in the digitization of curriculum content and creation of ready-to-use and customizable ICT-based resources.
- b) The CHED shall have the following functions:
 - i. Formulate, recommend, and implement plans, policies, programs and projects on integrating ICT in higher education including administration and management of SUCs;
 - ii. Ensure the integration of ICT in teachers' academic programs;
 - iii. Promote education research among SUCs and the private education institutions;
 - iv. Ensure the integration of ICT in libraries of SUCs nationwide;
 - v. Monitor and evaluate the program and its implementation; and
 - vi. Accredite ICT schools.
- c) The DILG shall have the following functions:
 - i. Formulate and implement local action plans;
 - ii. Mainstream promotion and implementation of the program; and
 - iii. Monitor and evaluate the program in their area of jurisdiction.

SEC. 16. *Annual Report on the Cyber Education Program.* - The CyberEd Corp shall, through the Secretary of Education, submit to both Houses of Congress, or upon the request of the Congressional Oversight Committee, a report giving a detailed account of the status of the implementation of this Act. All LGUs shall submit annual progress reports on the implementation of their respective local action plans to the CyberEd Corp within the first quarter of the following year.

SEC. 17. *Authority to Receive Donations or Grants.* - The CyberEd Corp is authorized to accept grants, contributions, donations, endowments, bequests, or gifts in cash, or in kind from local and foreign sources in support of the development and implementation of the cyber education program: *Provided*, That such donations shall not be used to fund personal services expenditures and other operating expenses of the CyberEd Corp or of DepEd.

The proceeds of such grants, contributions, donations, endowments, bequests, or gifts in cash, or in kind shall be used to finance the following:

- (a) Research, development and utilization of emerging technologies;
- (b) Improvement of ICT infrastructure including hardware and internet connectivity;
- (c) Training and capacity building;
- (d) Conduct of such other activities reasonably necessary to carry out the objectives of this Act, as may be defined by the CyberEd Corp.

SEC. 18. *Funding Allocation for Cyber Education Program.* – The DepEd, CHED, DOST, TESDA and LGUs shall allocate from their annual appropriations adequate funds for the formulation, development and implementation of the cyber education program including the purchase of ICT hardware and capacity building. In subsequent budget proposals, the DepEd, CHED, DOST, TESDA and LGUs shall appropriate funds for program implementation including continuing training and education on emerging technologies, as well as project monitoring and evaluation.

The Government Services Insurance Commission (GSIS) shall set aside the amount of Two Hundred Million pesos (Php200,000,000.00) for loans/advances to public school teachers, school heads and administrators exclusively for financing their expenses pursuing advance studies in ICT.

SEC.19. *Appropriations.* – The amount of Five Hundred million pesos (P500,000,000.00) is hereby appropriated as initial capitalization of the CyberEd Corp . Thereafter, amounts approximately equivalent to one per cent (1%) of the appropriation for the Department of Education shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act as additional capitalization of the Cyber Ed Corp.

SEC. 20. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the CyberEd Corp shall, in coordination with the DepEd, DOST, CHED, TESDA and ICTO, prepare and promulgate the rules and regulations necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 21. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, orders, proclamations, rules and regulations, or parts thereof, which are inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SEC. 22. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,