

Republic of the Philippines  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
Quezon City

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS  
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 1064



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Introduced by **Honorable Neptali M. Gonzales II**

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It is enshrined in our Constitution that: *"The State shall give priority to education, science and technology, arts, culture and sports to foster patriotism and nationalism, accelerate social progress and promote total human liberation and development"* (Sec. 17, Art. II). Further, *"The State shall protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels and shall take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all."* (Sec. 1, Art. XIV).

Based on a recent report from UNESCO's Institute for Statistics, the Philippines is among the top five countries with the highest number of out of school children. The establishment of free public education alone can not address the problem of children dropping from schools. While poverty may be the main reason that parents either allow or force their children to drop from school in order to augment the family income, geographic location and prohibitive environment also deters children to continue their education.

In pursuit of the policy of the State to empower its people by giving priority to education, this bill seeks to provide an alternative mode of formal secondary education program for elementary school graduates and high school drop-outs. Through this measure, they shall be able to complete secondary education in a purely distance learning mode. The system shall utilize alternative modes of educational services that will allow students to study on their own without having to regularly attend classes in conventional classrooms. This also allows independent study, multi-channel learning and school-family-community partnership.

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

  
**NEPTALI M. GONZALES II**

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**AN ACT**  
**ESTABLISHING THE OPEN HIGH SCHOOL SYSTEM IN THE PHILIPPINES**  
**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 “Open High  
2 School System Act”.

3       SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared to be the policy of the  
4 State to broaden access to relevant quality education through the employment of  
5 an alternative learning system that would enable the youth, including adults, to  
6 overcome geographical, socioeconomic and/or physical constraints to encourage  
7 them to complete secondary education. To achieve this, the State recognizes that  
8 education must be accessible in its various modalities to all Filipino citizens,  
9 recognizing the importance of basic education through out-of-school study  
10 programs particularly those that respond to community needs in promoting the  
11 welfare of the nation.

12       SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* – The terms used in this Act are hereby defined  
13 as follows:

14       (a) *Open High School System (OHSS)* refers to a system of delivering  
15 educational services to high school students utilizing print, radio, television and

1 computer-based communications, satellite broadcasting, teleconferencing and  
2 other multi-media learning and teaching technologies that allow students to  
3 study on their own without having to regularly attend classes in conventional  
4 classrooms.

5 (b) *Distance Learning Program* refers to an educational program in which  
6 the teaching and learning processes are accomplished through self-  
7 instructional materials and allows independent study, multi-channel learning  
8 and school-family-community partnership.

9 (c) *Inang paaralan* or *mother high school* refers to a regular secondary school  
10 in the regional or division level that function, among others, as:

- 11 (1) Headquarters of the distance learners and teachers;
- 12 (2) Center for enrollment, evaluation, direct or face-to-face instruction  
13 and promotion of distance learning;
- 14 (3) Receiver of donations, instructional materials and reports relative to  
15 distance learning; and
- 16 (4) Coordinator of the different learning centers in the community.

17 (d) *Guro* refers to a regular secondary school teacher of the “inang paaralan”  
18 who is in charge of direct instruction, evaluation of student progress and keeping  
19 of the records of individual learners.

20 (e) *Gurong tagapatnubay* refers to a regular secondary school teacher of the  
21 “inang paaralan” who serves as guidance counselor to the distance learners,  
22 coordinates with the “guro” and “para guro” in evaluating the students’ progress,  
23 and prepares and submits reports to the authorities concerned.

1 (f) *Gurong kadluan* refers to a resource person with specialized skills in  
2 practical or industrial subjects such as farming, handicraft, auto-mechanics,  
3 tailoring and other skills.

4 (g) *Para guro* refers to a degree holder or a college level resident in the  
5 community who manages a learning center and facilitates the learning process of  
6 a group of distance learners.

7 (h) *Tagapayong pansamahan* refers to the adviser of a club in the community  
8 who helps learners harmonize study with community service and leisure.

9 SEC. 4. *Establishment of the OHSS.* - The OHSS is hereby established as  
10 part of the Department of Education's alternative secondary education program  
11 to provide access to secondary education through the distance learning modality.

12 SEC. 5. *Coverage.* - This Act shall apply to public secondary educational  
13 institutions with existing distance learning programs and all other such  
14 institutions that shall be authorized as qualified implementers of the OHSS.

15 All existing programs and projects of the Bureau of Secondary Education  
16 (BSE) regarding dropout intervention and poverty alleviation through education  
17 shall form part of the OHSS.

18 SEC. 6. *Clientele of the OHSS.* - The OHSS shall be open to all youth and  
19 adults who have finished elementary education and high school qualifiers of the  
20 Philippine Educational Placement Test (PEPT).

21 SEC. 7. *Administration and Functions.* - The Department of Education  
22 (DepED), through the BSE, shall administer the OHSS. An OHSS Unit shall be  
23 attached to the BSE to assist in performing the following functions:

24 (a) Formulate the basic policies of the OHSS;

(b) Formulate, adopt and supplement programs that will make the OHSS effective and productive;

(c) Monitor and evaluate existing distance learning programs for integration with the OHSS;

(d) Develop and validate prototype instructional distance learning materials;

(e) Consult and collaborate with other DepED divisions, local government units (LGUs), civil society organizations and other private agencies for the effective operation of the OHSS;

(f) Promulgate the necessary guidelines, rules and regulations for the effective implementation of the OHSS;

(g) Recommend to the DepED the annual budget of the OHSS for inclusion in the annual General Appropriations Act; and

(h) Perform such other tasks as may be necessary to attain the objectives of the OHSS.

**SEC. 8. Curriculum Content.** – The OHSS shall adopt the National Secondary Education Curriculum (NSEC) using the Philippine Secondary Schools Learning Competencies (PSSLC).

The DepED's BSE Curriculum Development Division, in collaboration with the University of the Philippines (UP) – Open Educational System, may modify the curriculum and devise a separate rating system and develop appropriate instructional strategies and materials to suit the psycho-social needs and physical condition of anti-social learners who are detained in correctional institutions. In the discharge of this function, the BSE shall consult with professional psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers and other experts in dealing with children who are in conflict with the law.

1        SEC. 9. *Personnel Recruitment and Incentives.* – The DepED shall determine  
2        the qualifications of personnel recruited to work under the OHSS.

3        The teachers or “guros” and “gurong tagapatnubay” shall receive incentives  
4        and monetary compensation as determined by the BSE-DepED, while the “para  
5        guro”, “gurong kadluan” and “tagapayong pansamahan” shall receive honoraria,  
6        to be arranged with the local school board.

7        In accordance with the guidelines it shall issue on the hiring of personnel,  
8        the LGUs concerned shall hire the “para guro”, “gurong kadluan” and  
9        “tagapayong pansamahan”: *Provided*, That said guidelines shall be prepared in  
10       consultation with the DepED.

11       SEC. 10.        *Training of Teaching Staff.* – The DepED shall take charge of  
12       the training of the “guro”, “gurong tagapatnubay”, “para guro”, “gurong kadluan”  
13       and “tagapayong pansamahan”. The training of the “para guro”, “gurong  
14       kadluan” and “tagapayong pansamahan” shall be in coordination with the LGUs  
15       and the nongovernment organizations concerned.

16       Nonteaching stakeholders such as parents and LGU personnel, among  
17       others, who are needed to provide support to the OHSS, shall likewise be  
18       included in the training program.

19       SEC. 11.        *Establishment of Distance Learning Centers.* – Pending the  
20       establishment of distance learning centers in the “inang paaralan” in the  
21       community, the DepED shall establish at least two (2) pilot centers in each  
22       region.

23       A center shall be housed in a room or a building where the distance learners  
24       can conduct researches or gather additional information on topics under study.

1 It may also serve as a venue where the “gurong kadluan” can conduct hands-on  
2 activities.

3 SEC. 12. *Memorandum of Agreement.* – The DepED, the UP – Open  
4 Educational System and the Department of the Interior and Local Government  
5 (DILG) are encouraged to adopt a Memorandum of Agreement defining their  
6 respective roles in the operation of the OHSS to ensure maximum cooperation  
7 towards the success of the OHSS.

8 SEC. 13. *Private Sector Participation.* – Private educational institutions  
9 may establish their own privately-funded distance learning centers following the  
10 standards and criteria provided for in this Act for the OHSS, subject to the  
11 approval of the DepED.

12 The DepED shall encourage and promote close partnership with concerned  
13 civil society organizations and other service providers in order to sustain an  
14 enabling environment for participatory planning, budgeting and implementation  
15 of the OHSS related programs and projects.

16 SEC. 14. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary for the initial  
17 implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current year’s  
18 appropriations of the Distance Learning Program of the DepED. Thereafter, the  
19 amount necessary for the continued operation of the OHSS shall be included in  
20 the DepED’s budget in the annual General Appropriations Act.

21 SEC. 15. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety (90)  
22 days after the effectivity of this Act, the DepED, in consultation with the DILG  
23 and the UP – Open Educational System, shall promulgate the rules and  
24 regulations needed for the effective implementation of this Act.

1        SEC. 16.        *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act is held  
2        invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions not so declared shall remain in  
3        force and effect.

4        SEC. 17.        *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, orders, rules and  
5        regulations and other issuances or parts thereof which are inconsistent with this  
6        Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

7        SEC. 18.        *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days  
8        after its publication in the *Official Gazette*.

Approved,