

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Constitution Hills, Quezon City

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **2347**



Introduced by REPRESENTATIVE ERIC L. OLIVAREZ

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Pursuant to paragraphs 1, 4 and 5, Section 2 of Article XIV of the 1987 Constitution, the state shall establish, maintain, and support a complete, adequate, and integrated system of education relevant to the needs of the people and society and encourage non-formal, informal, and indigenous learning systems, as well as self-learning, independent, and out-of-school study programs particularly those that respond to community needs; and to provide adult citizens, the disabled, and out-of-school youth with training in civics, vocational efficiency, and other skills.

However, in spite of the presence of numerous formal educational institutions in our midst, it is common knowledge that there are significant portions of pupils or students who cannot finish their studies for one reason or another. Some

pupils or students are forced to dropout from school even before they could learn to read and write mostly due to lack of resources to defray the cost of their schooling brought by their extreme poverty. The answer to this problem is the Alternative Learning System or ALS that does not exclude the poor sectors or special groups of our society in the education ladder.

Alternative Learning System (ALS) is a ladderized, module based non-formal education program in the Philippines which primarily caters to elementary and high school dropouts, out-of-school youths, non-readers, working Filipinos and senior citizens who wish to obtain education but could not avail of the formal education system in the country. It is an alternative to the regular classroom studies by which a student is required to attend daily and allows the learners under it to choose schedules according to their choice and availability.

Alternative Learning System is a program that provides access to quality education for the Filipino people who otherwise could not afford the same because of various economic, financial and time constraints. As such, this program has a vital potential to effectively improve the competency and skills of the greater many and ultimately, contribute in the attainment, and more efficient at that, of the State's aim towards nation-building and development.

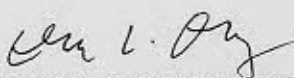
Consistent with the foregoing policies and objectives, Republic Act No. 9155 briefly mandates that:

"It is the policy of the State to protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality basic education and to make such education accessible to all by providing all Filipino children a free and compulsory education in

the elementary level and free education in the high school level. Such education shall also include alternative learning systems for out-of-school youth and adult learners. It shall be the goal of basic education to provide them with the skills, knowledge and values they need to become caring, self-reliant, productive and patriotic citizens."

The agency in charge of the ALS is the Bureau of Alternative Learning System of the Department of Education (DepEd). However, at present, there is no law supporting this kind of educational mechanism. There is therefore a compelling necessity to adopt and support an alternative system of education under the auspices of the DepEd.

This bill is hereby being introduced to fortify and institutionalize this Alternative learning program of the Department of Education.


ERIC L. OLIVAREZ

Republic of the Philippines
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SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
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House Bill No. 2347

Introduced by **REPRESENTATIVE ERIC L. OLIVAREZ**

**"AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE ALTERNATIVE LEARNING
SYSTEM IN THE PHILIPPINES"**

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* This Act shall be known as the
"Alternative Learning Act of the Philippines".

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* It is the policy of the
state to provide elementary and high school dropouts, out-of-
school youths, non-readers, working Filipinos and senior citizens
the opportunity to enhance their knowledge and competencies by
providing a system of non-formal education that is tailored to
meet their limited schedule and their incapability to attend to
traditional classroom learning experience due to time, physical,
financial, economic and other constraints.

SECTION 3. *Definition of Terms.* For purposes of this Act, the following terms are used to mean as follows:

1.) ***Alternative Learning System (ALS)*** – refers to the ladderized, modular non-formal education program for dropouts in elementary and secondary schools, out-of-school youths, non-readers, working Filipinos, senior citizens, indigenous peoples, Muslim communities, victims of armed conflicts, differently-abled, inmates, homeless, street children, single parents and other special groups of the same class.

2.) ***Applicant*** – an individual who is interested in availing or enrolling to any program or course being offered under the Alternative Learning System.

3.) ***Facilitator*** – pertains to the teachers of literacy programs and trainers of the livelihood programs under the Alternative Learning System, whether paid or remunerated or volunteers duly permitted or certified by the Department of Education to conduct or deliver instructions.

4.) ***Learners*** – pertains to individuals who are officially enrolled in any program under the Alternative Learning System.

SECTION 4. *Means of Conducting Instructions.* The Alternative Learning System shall be comprised of two different

means for conducting instructions: school-based and community-based.

On the school-based program, instructions are conducted in school campuses.

On the community-based program, formal instructions are conducted in barangay hall, community halls or any other place conducive for learning other than the school.

SECTION 5. *Classification of Programs.* A person who wishes to enroll in this alternative learning system may choose to attend either the literacy program, the livelihood program, or both if the class schedules will so permit.

A. LITERACY PROGRAM - The literacy program shall consist of three stages: basic, elementary and high school.

i. *Basic Education.* An applicant who has not attended any schooling at all and does not know how to read and write shall be automatically enrolled in the basic education stage where he or she will be taught to read, write and count.

ii. *Preliminary Assessment for Elementary and High school Level.* For applicants who do not have to undergo the basic education, an oral and written test shall be given to them to assess their

competency and aptitude. The result of the examination shall determine whether they shall be admitted to the elementary or high school level.

iii. Uniformity. The literacy program shall follow uniform lesson modules for all academic subjects covering the Sciences, English, Filipino, Mathematics, Social Studies, among others.

iv. Assessment. Learners enrolled in a literacy program shall be given periodic examinations to assess their understanding of the lessons and their overall progress. These tests shall be in oral and/or written form and may be of any type:

- multiple choice
- fill-in the blanks
- matching type
- essay questions
- combination of any of the above.

v. Completion and Certification. Learners who successfully completed a literacy program (by passing the periodic examinations and complying with other requirements) shall be eligible to graduate and shall take the *ALS Accreditation and*

Equivalency Test to entitle them of a certificate of completion equivalent to that of a diploma given to students under traditional or formal schooling.

B. LIVELIHOOD PROGRAM – the livelihood program shall pertain to courses that will equip learners with practical skills that can be used in everyday situations and can be utilized for purposes of applying in jobs requiring expertise on the subject field. Depending on the complexity of the skill or craft, as to be determined by the Department of Education, a relatively difficult course under this program shall have two stages if necessary: basic training and advanced training.

i. *Basic Training.* All applicants with no background whatsoever on a specific craft or skill but wishes to learn the same shall start with the basic training.

ii. *Advanced Training.* Upon completion of the basic training, the continuing learners shall be admitted to the advanced level of the same program.

iii. *Uniformity.* The livelihood program shall follow a uniform general guideline if only to ensure that the learners are more or less improving or progressing and that the program is completed on time, but the facilitator shall be given reasonable freedom or discretion on the manner or method of teaching a certain craft, skill or expertise

and shall be given the freedom to be flexible in terms of pacing the training for each learner according to the latter's individual ability to learn and master the craft.

iv. Assessment. Learners enrolled in a livelihood program shall be given periodic practical tests to assess their mastery of a specific skill or craft and to ensure their general progress. However, a written examination may also be given in addition to a practical test if the facilitator deems it necessary in order to fully master the ins and outs of the skill or craft.

v. Completion and Certification. Learners who successfully completed a livelihood program (by passing the practical and/or written examinations and complying with other requirements) shall be eligible to graduate and are encouraged to take the ALS Accreditation and Equivalency Test to entitle them of a certificate of completion.

SECTION 6. *Duration of Programs.* Literacy programs shall take up a minimum of 800 hours to ensure that the learners enrolled therein are provided adequate and quality schooling and training at par with the traditional educational system. On the other hand, the period of completion of the livelihood programs may vary depending on the complexity of the specific craft or skill being taught and the ability of the student to learn or master the same.

SECTION 7. *Admission to College.* Learners who successfully completed the literacy program or the livelihood program and passed the *ALS Accreditation and Equivalency Test* may be admitted to college to pursue degree courses of their own choice provided that they pass the qualifying entrance examinations and other requirements given by the schools.

SECTION 8. *Admission of Applicants in the Alternative Learning Program.* Any person who wishes to enroll in the alternative learning system shall be admitted in the program unconditionally. No learning center shall refuse the admission of any applicant for reasons such as limited space, insufficiency of materials, unavailability of facilitators or the like. There shall also be no preference as to gender, religion, age or station in life.

SECTION 9. *Facilitators.* Each school-based of community-based learning center shall have at least one assigned teacher for a literacy program and at least one assigned trainer for each livelihood program, both to be officially called *facilitators*.

Without prejudice to the guidelines set by the Department of Education or the Committee so delegated by the former with respect to the qualifications of the facilitators, competent individuals, after obtaining the necessary permit or certification from the abovementioned department, may volunteer to teach either of the two programs even if they are not licensed teachers.

Except for justifiable reasons, said volunteers, once permitted to teach a certain course, shall be obliged to perform their task for the duration of the semester so as to ensure the completion of the program by the learners and avoid unnecessary interruptions that will hamper their learning.

SECTION 10. *Delivery of Instructions.* Instruction and manuals shall be provided by government-paid facilitators, accredited volunteers or by private non-government organization.

SECTION 11. *Unlawful fees.* It shall be unlawful for any learning center, and any officer or facilitator thereof, to solicit or require the payment of admission, enrollment and other kinds of fees from any interested applicant as a requisite for admission.

SECTION 12. *Establishment of Community Based Learning Centers in every Barangay.* There shall be at least one community-based learning center in every barangay of a city or municipality. These community learning centers can be set-up in a barangay hall, any public building, or any other available and vacant space in the area conducive for learning.

SECTION 13. *Bureau of Alternative Learning System.* There shall be a Bureau of Alternative Learning System (BALS) under the Department of Education which shall exercise general supervision and administration over the Alternative Learning System.

Subject to the control and supervision of the Secretary of the DepEd, the BALS shall have the overall authority to set, promulgate and implement the detailed rules, guidelines, terms, conditions, qualifications and regulations pertaining to the Alternative Learning System consistent with the provision of this Act.

The DepED through the BALS may delegate or assign the implementation of a module program of Alternative Learning System to a private non-government organization subject to the supervision of the said department.

SECTION 14. *Information Dissemination.* The DepEd through the BALS in coordination with the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) shall conduct a massive information campaign to enable the general public know the existence of the Alternative Learning Program.

Every local government unit shall inform its constituents of the availability of a community-based and/or school-based alternative learning system in each barangay (1) by posting bulletins and announcements in conspicuous places like barangay halls, public markets and/or streets that will reach a large group of underprivileged constituents and other special groups; (2) by making public announcements regarding such matter during barangay assemblies or any other public gatherings; and (3) in any other manner that the respective local government unit may deem proper and effective in making the general public aware of the existence of such program.

SECTION 15. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* The Department of Education (DepEd) shall promulgate the implementing rules and regulations for the effective and immediate implementation of this Act.

SECTION 16. *Repealing Clause.* All laws, decrees, executive orders, letters of instructions, rules and regulations or parts thereof, which are inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SECTION 17. *Separability Clause.* If any provision of this Act is judicially declared invalid or unconstitutional, the

remaining provisions of this Act not affected thereby shall be continue to be in full force and effect.

SECTION 18. *Effectivity Clause.* This act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its publication in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,