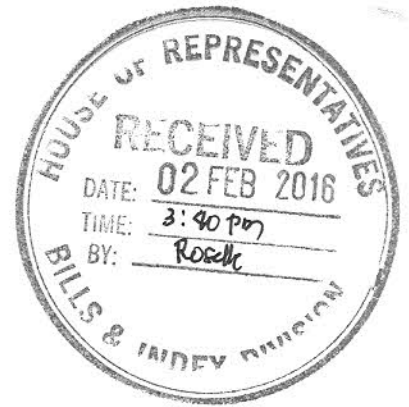


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
Third Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 6432



Introduced by Representative Jonathan A. Dela Cruz

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Everest Academy Inc. is the first Catholic international school in the Philippines and is part of a worldwide system of over 220 Catholic schools in 20 countries. The schools in this network are founded, owned and operated by Regnum Christi, a Catholic movement composed of lay people and priests from the Religious Congregation of the Legionaries of Christ. The first work of apostolate of the Regnum Christi was a school in Mexico City called the Cumbres Institute (Cumbres is a Spanish work for the Peaks or the Heights), which opened in 1954. Everest Academy Inc. is the first Regnum Christi School in Asia, and reports to the Regnum Christi headquarters in Rome.

All the Regnum Christi schools follow the educational philosophy and method developed by Regnum Christi and the Legion of Christ known as *Integral Formation*[®], the development of all aspects of the student's personality; the intellectual, human, spiritual, and apostolic, dimensions of the whole person.

Integral Formation[®], allows students to develop their full potential according to his or her unique gifts and talents, as mature, youth of character and integrity, authentic leaders, who live according to the Gospel values, leaders in the community, home, work place, and Church who have a genuine concern for others.

As an educational principle of *Integral Formation*[®], leadership training, at all levels from Kindergarten to high school, fosters in students a social responsibility towards others. Students are led to become responsible and compassionate leaders with the ability to recognize and identify the needs of their fellowmen, to understand how to solve problems and to implement solutions for the good of all members of society.

This unique pedagogical approach focused on holistic formation is achieved through faculty teamwork, low student-to-adult/teacher ratio and personalized attention. While the Catholic Church emphasizes integral formation in all Catholic schools, what makes Everest Academy and all Regnum Christi schools unique is the manner by which

Integral Formation is carried out and applied in order to successfully develop well-rounded individuals. RC schools have a comprehensive education program designed to achieve integral formation among all its students which is distinct from the basic methodologies prescribed by the Department of Education. These essential principles of Integral Formation® are offered through a highly specialized international team of religious, administration, faculty and staff for the formation of well-rounded individuals. Mentoring, allows the team to get to know the students over the course of their school years as well as their families. With a personalized and team approach, students come to know their strengths and talents, and to build on these, while overcoming their weaknesses.

Further, as the foundation of the student's integral formation, students are personally guided in their spiritual development. Daily access to the sacraments, and opportunities to grow in the spiritual life coupled with character formation; developing a disciplined will; learning to be master of oneself; acquiring virtue; formation of the conscience; and adherence to moral principles and values. This is achieved in a nurturing, joyful, Christ-centered environment that promotes respect, healthy peer relationships, friendships and a family spirit.

Overall the best elements of academic excellence, worldwide educational practices and research, and of both the progressive and traditional approaches are combined to develop the intellectual ability in our students; to enable them to understand and form opinions and to act positively on the challenges of the times; to be competitive and to know the truth; and to be able to face and resolve complex circumstances. The objective is to ensure that the students as exceptionally well-formed leaders are fully competent and effective in their professional or vocational field and prepared for a highly globalized society.

As an asset to the Philippine educational system, this proprietary system of Integral Formation® which has delivered excellent results in over 20 countries in the world was brought to the Philippines through Everest Academy Inc.

Since its opening in Manila in August 2007 and in order to prepare the students to face the challenges of the future in a globalized society, Everest Academy Inc. has been implementing an international curriculum developed and licensed by National Consultants for Education, an organization based in Atlanta, Georgia, USA. This international curriculum was developed encompassing the highest educational standards in the United States, Canada, Europe and Asia. It allows our typical student to develop as a person who is highly qualified and ready to successfully enter into university life and later scale the heights of professional life.

With an emphasis on academic excellence and leadership skills, this international curriculum allows for a solid in-depth and high level of intellectual preparation that goes beyond the acquisition of knowledge to arrive at an intellectually mature person. This is fundamental to the integral development of our students and required by the social responsibility they have. This curriculum was developed in accordance to the Regnum

Christi educational mission in the preparation of our students as leaders in a globalized world village, global citizens, with the capacity to renew society.

Students acquire a wealth of knowledge, the underpinnings of their own national culture, history and western ideals; a firm grounding in accelerated math and the sciences, the scientific method, and in technology, all of the STEM subjects. This is balanced and enhanced by the study of the humanities, foreign language, music, and the fine arts. Our athletics along with extracurricular clubs and events, allow students to explore personal interests and develop new skills and talents. Athletics are an important means for preparing students to maximize character and leadership skills, a spirit of personal and team effort, healthy competition, and sportsmanship.

Communication skills are a vital part of this international curriculum and emphasize an ability to think logically; speak and write clearly, coherently, precisely, attractively and persuasively. Students develop exceptional thinking, reasoning and communicating skills which are built upon a keen sense of perception and a sharp memory; a capacity for reflection and imagination; as well as those technological and inquiry skills intrinsic to the exact and social sciences' a critical mind that can tell right from wrong, fact from fiction, and truth from opinion. Students achieve and experience ease in public speaking, debate and declamation.

Everest Academy Inc. follows international standards and further uses international methods of evaluation and standardized testing to prepare them to qualify for universities abroad, particularly the United States. This includes the administration of the Stanford 10 a widely used and rigorous norm referenced test published in the USA. It is implemented from kindergarten through twelfth grade. Student progress is analyzed annually, both individually and by class to improve student learning.

High school students are prepared with the SAT and the ACT. The SAT is the Scholastic Aptitude Test, a standardized test for college admissions in the United States. It is published by the College Board. The ACT is the American College Test, a standardized college entrance exam. Each of these evaluation tools provide a measure of our students' progress in relation to their international counterparts abroad allowing for a competitive preparation.

At the High school level, Everest offers Honors level and Advanced Placement (AP) courses as means to academically challenge our students and to prepare them to successfully enter university and college levels locally and abroad. These classes challenge the more advanced students and allow them to work at a pace that is appropriate for their learning ability and style.

Honors courses are taught at an above-grade level standard and require above-average academic performance, application and aptitude in the subject areas. Advanced Placement courses are structured as college-level courses and are more rapidly-paced and cover a greater depth of content. Admission to an AP course requires proven high-level

academic performance on behalf of the student, above-average aptitude and student application and dedication.

Course electives are offered that allow students to extend and explore their specific interests and talents. Students may specialize in STEM, Humanities, Fine Arts, as a means of pursuing their post-secondary education choices.

Everest Academy Inc. also has international accreditation through AdvancEd, the largest community of educational professionals in the world committed to help schools achieve world class levels in educational practice. As an accrediting agency, AdvancEd is partner to 32,000 schools and school systems—employing more than four million educators and enrolling more than 20 million students—across the United States and 70 other nations.

When Everest Academy Inc. started with the help of the first Filipino members of Regnum Christi, it opened with only 19 students in Grades 1 and 2, which eventually became 33 by the end of the first school year in 2007-2008. The first batch of 8th Grade Middle Schoolers graduated in SY 2013-2014. The Kindergarten and High School opened in SY 2014-2015 as Everest Academy was created to accommodate a Lower School (Kinder to Grade 5), a Middle School (Grades 6 to 8) and a High School (Grades 9 to 12). The student population will be over 400 from Kindergarten to Grade 10 in SY 2015-2016.

The objective of Regnum Christi is to carry out the school's mission of delivering the Integral Formation and quality international education among Filipino and Philippine based foreign families. Everest Academy offers its services to the Archdiocese of Manila and the local Christian and surrounding communities, specifically Filipino and foreign families who seek quality international and Catholic education for their children. As such, the population is made up of approximately 70% Filipino students, 20% students of mixed Filipino and foreign descent and 10% foreign and expat families. Although the program has been implemented successfully for decades in other countries, it is very new here in the Philippines. Some existing students of the school have and will experience this as they have been able to take advantage of our international immersion programs allowing them to study in the Regnum Christi sister schools abroad, which carry out the same formation through the same approach as Everest Academy Inc.

Unfortunately, there are no local Filipino educators and administrators who have the level of experience implementing the Integral Formation program equal to the experience of their counterparts in the countries the Regnum Christi schools have been in operation for the past 50-60 years. For Filipino and Philippine based families to fully benefit and achieve the full potential that the program promises, it therefore requires that foreign experts with years of experience with Integral Formation and the NCE curriculum take active roles in the administration and management of Everest Academy. This is crucial for the school to be able to fulfil the Vision and Mission that it has set out to do. The achievement and realization of the Vision and Mission will benefit the country as a whole as Everest Academy Inc. graduates will be fully equipped and compelled to

respond to the needs the country faces as it strives to take an important role among other nations and lead the renewal of Philippine society in a global environment, not for personal gain but based on Catholic values.

Considering the above, the author of this bill finds it necessary to transform the present Everest Academy Inc. into an educational institution of international character, to be known as the Everest Academy International School, so as it may be granted by law certain prerogatives such as, but not limited to the election of members of the Board who may or may not be foreign citizens, appoint of a school head who need not be a Filipino and employment of foreign educators all of whom are recognized experts having years of experience with Integral Formation and the NCE curriculum, conducive for its growth and to achieve its laudable objective to educate both Filipino and foreign students to become well-rounded, creative, and passionate leaders able to effectively communicate and collaborate with others, strong in character and virtue, guided in their actions and choices by ethical principles and respect for the human person, and develop mature Christians who understand, value, live and share their faith, forge socially-concerned individuals responsive to the spiritual and material needs of others.

For this purpose, the bill aims to recognize the Everest International Academy the status as an international school and granting certain prerogatives conducive to its growth like the Southville International School and the Cebu International School.

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


JONATHAN A. DELA CRUZ

Republic of the Philippines
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HOUSE BILL NO. 6432

Introduced by Representative Jonathan A. Dela Cruz

“AN ACT
RECOGNIZING EVEREST ACADEMY INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL AS AN
EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION OF INTERNATIONAL CHARACTER,
GRANTING CERTAIN PREROGATIVES TO HASTEN ITS GROWTH AS
SUCH, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.”

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

1 SECTION 1. Everest Academy, herein referred to as the School, is hereby
2 declared an educational institution of international character authorized to operate
3 educational programs that primarily and principally adhere to universally accepted and
4 recognized educational policies.

5
6 SEC. 2. The Everest Academy International School ., shall be the registered
7 name of the School and shall have as its members the school management and the parents
8 or guardians, whether of Philippine or foreign nationality, of the children who have
9 enrolled and attended the School for at least one (1) school year: *Provided*, that the
10 school year shall be determined in accordance with the School's own calendar of studies
11 and work schedule: *Provided, further*, That the School shall be governed by a Board of
12 Trustees, herein referred to as the “Board”, elected at large from among the corporation's
13 members of good standing.

14

SEC. 3. To enable the School to continue carrying out its educational program, improve its standard of instruction and meet the special needs of the foreign temporary resident community for quality education, it shall:

(a) Be able to accept provisions and donations of every kind to carry out the purposes of the Everest Academy International School and be entitled to use properties, real or personal, so donated and to construct and own buildings thereon exclusively for educational purposes: Provided, That for any reason, Everest Academy International School, ceases to occupy and/or use real properties it may acquire by virtue of this Act, the properties and all improvements thereon of permanent nature shall accrue to the Government of the Republic of the Philippines;

(b) Whenever necessary to carry out its objectives, have the right to obtain leases on real properties, acquire personal properties, tangible or intangible, or any interests in such properties other real, by purchase, lease, barter, donation, gift or otherwise, and dispose of, mortgage or encumber them for the benefit of the school concerned;

(c) Accept applicants for admission, regardless of nationality, in accordance with its own eligibility standards, and rules for admission and grade placement: *Provided*, That no single alien nationality shall consist more than thirty percent (30% of the entire student population in a given school year, as stated in the records of the School.

(d) be managed and administered by a President/ Principal/Superintendent, who may or not be a Filipino citizen and who possess the qualifications prescribed by the Board;

(e) Upon consultation with the Secretary of Education, determine its own curriculum and teach whatever language or languages it may deem proper and determine the amount of fees and assessments which may be reasonably

imposed upon its pupils and/or students, to maintain or conform to Everest Academy International School's standard of education

(f) Maintain the international standards of education compatible with those obtained in similar schools of generally recognized standing; and

(g) employ its own teaching and management personnel selected by the Board either locally or abroad, from the Philippines or other countries or nationalities, such foreign personnel being exempt from laws that impose nationality restrictions on control and administration of educational institutions, except laws that have been or will be enacted for the protection of employees: *Provided*; That such exemption shall not extend to their liability for income taxes, unless otherwise provided by a bilateral agreement;

(h) Promote international friendship, goodwill and understanding among members of the foreign community and citizens of the Philippines; and

(i) Not to teach anything derogatory to the prestige and well-being of the Philippines and its people, nor those which will subvert its institutions and government

SEC. 4. The Secretary of Education, in consultation with the members of the Board of the Everest Academy International School, shall issue such rules as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act.

SEC 5. If any clause, sentence, paragraph or part of this Act is subsequently declared unconstitutional, the validity of the remaining provisions hereof shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 6. This act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette.

Approved,