

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **5137**



Introduced by **Rep. MARIO VITTORIO "MARVEY" A. MARIÑO**
5th District, Batangas

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Nelson Mandela once said that education is the most powerful weapon which one can use to change the world. It is for this reason that education has always been a constant priority of the governments of the world. Education is seen as the key to fighting corruption. In this day and age, corruption is not just a problem. It can also be seen as the result of a much bigger problem—the lack of a strong moral foundation. The importance of character formation is evident in education. Thus, education has been deemed an effective tool in nurturing one's ethical behavior.

The primary purpose of schooling includes cognitive development and character formation.¹ The role of educational institution in cognitive development and character formation is expressly recognized in our own Constitution. Article XIV, Section 3 (2) of the 1987 Constitution provides:

All educational institutions shall inculcate patriotism and nationalism, foster love of humanity, respect for human rights, appreciation of the role of national heroes in the historical development of the country, teach the rights and duties of citizenship, strengthen ethical and spiritual values, develop moral character and personal discipline, encourage critical and creative thinking, broaden scientific and technological knowledge, and promote vocational efficiency.

It is the latter that this bill seeks to further develop. Character formation helps shape attitudes and behaviors, reflected in such values as honesty, integrity, respect, responsibility, self-discipline, and reliability; 'cognitive-academic' and 'character development' prepares students for work, for further education, for lifelong learning and for citizenship.²

¹ Michael, O. CHARACTER AND MORAL EDUCATION: A TOOL IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION, retrieved February 23, 2017 from <http://www.eacc.go.ke/PRESSRELEASES.ASP?ID=418&cat=speeches>

² *Ibid.*

It is clear, therefore, that schools are obliged to guarantee knowledgeable individuals of good character especially in an environment where not only is corruption a major problem but also one which is embedded in our culture. It is for this reason that reforms, like the adoption of programs for values education and anti-corruption modules for elementary and high school students, in our educational system were introduced. As time went by, however, these reforms were considered ineffectual.

This bill seeks to address the inefficacy of the previous reforms by creating a more defined course on Ethics and make it compulsory at all levels of elementary and secondary education, at every college, and a compulsory course for every profession.

In view of the foregoing, the early passage of this bill is earnestly requested.



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**AN ACT MAKING A SEPARATE COURSE ON ETHICS
COMPULSORY AT ALL LEVELS OF ELEMENTARY AND
SECONDARY EDUCATION, AND IN EVERY DEGREE COURSE IN
ALL COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES**

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as “Compulsory Teaching of
Ethics Act”.

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is the policy of the State to inculcate and
strengthen the ethics and values of its citizens through the educational system.

SECTION 3. *Definition of Terms.* – As used in this Act, the following terms
shall mean:

- A. *Ethics* – conformity to the accepted, honorable, and professional standards of
conduct in government and in private life;
- B. *Values* – normative standards which influence human beings in their choice
among their alternative courses of action;
- C. *DepEd* – Department of Education;
- D. *CHED* – Commission on Higher Education;
- E. *Elementary Education* – the second stage of compulsory basic education
which is composed of six (6) years. The entrant age to this level is typically
six (6) years old;
- F. *Bridge Program* – an intensive one-year program focused on three foundation
subjects namely English, Science, and Math. It enables students to become
fully prepared for secondary education curriculum;

G. *Secondary Education* – refers to the third stage of compulsory basic education. It consists of four (4) year junior high school education and two (2) years of senior high school education. The entrant age to the junior and senior high school levels are typically twelve (12) and sixteen (16) years old, respectively; and

H. *University* – all institutions for higher learning with teaching and research facilities constituting a graduate school and professional schools that award master's degrees and doctorates and an undergraduate division that awards bachelor's degrees.

SECTION 4. *Compulsory Teaching a Separate Subject Called Ethics* – The teaching of a separate subject called Ethics shall be compulsory at all levels of: elementary education; bridge program; secondary education; and in all degree programs offered by colleges and universities. All colleges and universities shall provide a compulsory 3-unit Ethics course for every profession, e.g., Legal Ethics for law schools, Medical Ethics for medical schools, Military Ethics for the Philippine Military Academy and other military schools, etc.

SECTION 5. *Ethics and Values formation Syllabus.* –

A. *Public Morality.* – The main syllabus should include the following six levels of public morality:

- a. *Basic Honest and Conformity to Law.* – This level describes the basic adherence to the constitution, laws, ordinances, and moral codes that is expected from all members of a group or society;
- b. *Conflicts of Interest.* – This level deals with the conflict between advancing the public interest which a public official is charged to do, and advancing one's self-interest;
- c. *Service Orientation and Procedural Fairness.* – This level deals with the responsibility of public officials to ensure that their actions serve the public and that the power they wield is used only for that purpose. This concentrates on procedural safeguards to prevent abuse of authority and on moral obligation of public servants;
- d. *Ethics of Democratic Responsibility.* – This level deals with the public officials, either elected or appointed, to make moral choices consistent with their own values and will of the people;
- e. *Ethics of Public Policy Determination.* – This level concerns making moral judgments about public policies in which equity and fairness are important considerations;
- f. *Ethics of Compromise and Social Integration.* – This level entails the necessity of give and take, and compromise in a society with irreconcilable differences on fundamental issues.

B. *Supplementary Topics.* – The curriculum should have additional topics and studies on the causes, issues, and effects of graft and corruption in the Philippines and in other parts of the world, and suggested measures to reform a corrupt environment.

- C. Other Subject Matters. – Other areas of Ethics and Values formation may be included in the syllabus, provided that it will not be made in preference of any religion and belief, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.

SECTION 6. *Implementing Agencies.* – The Secretary of Education and the Commissioners of CHED are hereby authorized and directed to adopt a system to implement and carry out the provisions of this Act. The Secretary of Education and the CHED Commissioners shall, within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, promulgate the rules and regulations, including those of a disciplinary nature, to carry out and enforce the provisions of this Act.

SECTION 7. *Educational Materials.* – It shall be obligatory on all schools, colleges, and universities to keep in their libraries and adequate number of copies of the textbooks, primers, and leaflets on Ethics to be issued by the DepEd and the CHED. The DepEd and CHED shall determine the adequacy of the number of books, depending upon the enrollment of the school, college, or university.

SECTION 8. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part thereof is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

SECTION 9. *Repealing Clause.* – Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative

Approved.