

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

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session



HOUSE BILL NO. 6501

Introduced by
ACT Teachers Party-List Rep. ANTONIO L. TINIO and Rep. FRANCE L. CASTRO

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Guidance and counseling play an important part in the holistic development of a child. They address the basic psychological needs of children and strengthen the educational program of schools.

School's guidance and counseling seek to provide for the realization of students' potentialities, to help children with developing problems, to contribute to the development of the school's curriculum, to provide teachers with technical assistance, and to contribute to the mutual adjustment of students and the school.¹ Guidance counselors and guidance-related personnel even aim to increase school participation and to lessen drop-out incidences by determining addressing factors for absences, failures, drop-outs, and others, as well as conducting targeted interventions for learners suffering from such factors.

The Philippine public school system is flooded with challenges including classroom management, student discipline, and the necessity to address the needs of underachieving students and children with learning and other disabilities. These challenges demonstrate the pressing need for a sufficient number of guidance counselors who have the professional expertise and training to help the youth not only in their present lives as students, but also with their future—college and career aspirations, personal and social development, and more.

Republic Act 9258 or the *Guidance and Counseling Act of 2004* provides for a policy of promoting the "improvement, advancement, and protection of the guidance and counseling services profession by undertaking and instituting measures that will

¹ Gibson, R.L., *Introduction to Guidance and Counseling* (2008)

result in professional, ethical, relevant, efficient, and effective guidance and counseling services for the development and enrichment of individuals and group lives.”²

However, this need is unmet, as the Guidance Counselor and guidance-related positions (Guidance Coordinator, Guidance Services Associate, and Guidance Services Specialist) are rare within the Department of Education. First, the government provides Guidance Counselor items only for high schools—there are none for elementary schools. Most elementary schools assign guidance counseling and coordinating duties to public school teachers despite their lack of qualifications and training for the job, and notwithstanding the fact that guidance counselling is an additional load or burden to the teachers. As of August 2017, the DepEd has only 1,457 Guidance Counselor I-III and Guidance Coordinator I-III items nationwide.

Second, the few guidance-related items provided are not being filled up because of the low compensation offered (minimum of Salary Grade 11) despite the high qualifications (a masteral degree, among others), expertise and the heavy case load. When the Salary Standardization Law took effect in 1989, the guidance counselors’ salary grade became equivalent to Teacher III despite their specialty and higher qualifications. As a result, most licensed guidance counselors are found in private schools that can offer good compensation.

This bill therefore seeks to increase the number of guidance counselors and guidance-related personnel in the public school system by mandating the creation of sufficient plantilla positions for our public schools and to attract more of them by increasing their salaries.

For these reasons, passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



Rep. ANTONIO L. TINIO
ACT Teachers Party-List



Rep. FRANCE L. CASTRO
ACT Teachers Party-List

² Article 1, Section 2

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AN ACT
CREATING IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION THE PLANTILLA POSITIONS OF
GUIDANCE COUNSELORS IN EVERY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AND ADDITIONAL
PLANTILLA POSITIONS OF GUIDANCE COUNSELOR FOR HIGH SCHOOL, INCREASING
THE SALARIES OF GUIDANCE COUNSELORS AND GUIDANCE-RELATED POSITIONS,
AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

SECTION 1. *Creation of plantilla positions.* The Department of Education, with the Department of Budget and Management, shall ensure that there is sufficient number of plantilla positions for guidance counselors in every public elementary and high school.

For purposes of this Act, the Department of Education shall endeavor to meet the recommended ratios of one guidance counselor for every 200 students in the public elementary and high schools.

SECTION 2. *Increase in Salary Grades of Guidance Coordinators, Guidance Counselors, Guidance Services Associates, and Guidance Services Specialists.* The present minimum salary grade levels of guidance coordinators, guidance counselor, guidance services associates, and guidance services specialists shall be increased in the following manner:

Current Position Classification	Current Salary Grade	Increased Salary Grade
Guidance Counselor I	11	16

Guidance Counselor II	12	17
Guidance Counselor III	13	18
Guidance Coordinator I	14	19
Guidance Coordinator II	15	20
Guidance Coordinator III	16	21
Guidance Services Associate I	12	17
Guidance Services Associate II	14	19
Guidance Services Specialist I	16	20
Guidance Services Specialist II	18	21
Guidance Services Specialist III	20	22
Guidance Services Specialist IV	22	23
Guidance Services Specialist V	24	24

SECTION 3. *Appropriations.* The amounts necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current year's appropriations of the Department of Education. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the continued implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 4. *Separability Clause.* Should any provision herein be declared unconstitutional, the same shall not affect the validity of the other provisions of this Act.

SECTION 5. *Repealing Clause.* All other laws, decrees, orders, issuances, rules and regulations which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SECTION 6. *Effectivity.* This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days from the publication in the Official Gazette or in any newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,