

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Philippines

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
Third Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **8162**

Introduced by **Representative "KUYA" JOSE ANTONIO R. SY-ALVARADO**



EXPLANATORY NOTE

According to Mentalhealth.gov, mental health includes emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how an individual think, feel, act and interact with his fellow being. Most educational institution often focus on academic or curricular development but fails to provide adequate mental health services that will improve the intellectual and emotional aspect of the child. There are limited number of counselling professional, school counsellor psychologist and social workers deployed in academic institutions.

The purpose of this bill is to employ and train school-based counsellor and mental health personnel and professional in order to address the need of the students in their mental and emotional needs.

The immediate approval of this bill earnestly sought.

"KUYA" JOSE ANTONIO R. SY-ALVARADO
Representative
First District of Bulacan

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HOUSE BILL NO. _____

Introduced by **Representative “KUYA” JOSE ANTONIO R. SY-ALVARADO**

AN ACT
TO RECRUIT, HIRE, AND TRAIN ADDITIONAL SCHOOL-BASED GUIDANCE
COUNSELORS, PSYCHOLOGISTS, SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS AND
MENTAL HEALTH PERSONNEL

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

SECTION 1. **Short Title.** - This Act shall be known as the "Students' Guidance Counseling Act.

SEC 2. **Purposes.** - The purposes of this Act are to:

(1) Help elementary and secondary institutions to recruit, train, and hire additional school-based mental health personnel, counselors, social workers, and school psychologists;

(2) Help adequately address the mental, emotional, and developmental needs of elementary and secondary school students;

(3) Remove the emotional, behavioral, and psycho-social barriers to learning so as to enhance the classroom preparedness and ability to learn of students;

(4) Support school staff and teachers in improving classroom management, conducting behavioral interventions to improve school discipline, and developing the awareness and skills to identify early warning signs of violence and the need for mental health services; and,

(5) support parents in improving the school behavior and academic success of their children.

SEC 3. **Definitions.** - For purposes of this Act –

(1) "Mental Health and Student Service Provider" includes a qualified school counselor, school psychologist, or school social worker.

(2) "Mental Health and Student Services" includes direct, individual, and group services provided to students, parents, and school personnel by mental health

and student service providers, or the coordination of prevention strategies in schools or community-based programs. "School Counselor" refers to an individual who has documented competence in counseling children and adolescents in a school setting and who:

(A) Possesses licensure or certification granted by a professional regulatory authority;

(B) In the absence of such licensure or certification, possesses national certification in school counseling or a specialty of counseling granted by an independent professional organization; or,

(C) Holds a minimum master's degree in school counseling.

(3) "School Psychologist" refers to an individual who possesses a minimum of sixty (60) graduate semester hours in school psychology from an institution of higher education and has completed one thousand two hundred (1,200) clock hours in a supervised school psychology internship, of which six hundred (600) hours shall be in the school setting; "School Social Worker" refers to an individual who holds a master's degree in social work. Additional school-based counselors, psychologists and social workers. - The Secretary of Education shall, subject to existing rules and regulations of the Department of Education, the Civil Service Commission and the Department of Budget and Management, provide for hiring of additional school based counselors, psychologists and social workers such that each public elementary and secondary school will have at least three (3) counselors, one (1) psychologist, one (1) social worker, and other mental health and students service providers when the need arises.

SEC 5. **Guidelines.** - The Secretary of Education shall, one hundred twenty (120) days after the enactment of this Act, issue the necessary guidelines in the selection, recruitment and hiring of personnel and the nature and scope of the mental health and services to be offered to students.

SEC 6. **Appropriations.** - There shall be appropriated from the National Treasury such sums as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act.

SEC 7. **Separability Clause.** - If any provision or part hereof is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

SEC 8. **Repealing Clause.** - Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act is hereby modified or amended accordingly.

SEC 7. **Effectivity.** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,