

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 8552



Introduced by Honorable Ma. Alana Samantha Taliño Santos

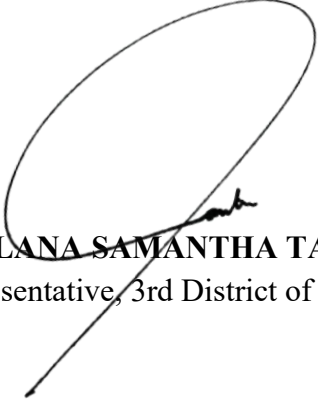
AN ACT ESTABLISHING PROGRAMS AND SERVICES FOR THE SUPPORT OF THE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS OF TEACHERS, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Section 2 of the Mental Health Act states that “the state affirms the basic right of all Filipinos to mental health as well as the fundamental rights of people who require mental health services.”

Teachers, who play a vital role in shaping the development of students, face significant levels of stress that impact their mental health and, in turn, their effectiveness in the classroom. According to a study, regression analysis showed that mental health status significantly impacts the learning resource development of teachers.¹ Common stressors for teachers include excessive paperwork, financial difficulties, large class size, and juggling of multiple responsibilities.² Teachers are often confronted with numerous paperwork and heavy workload. As a result, they are constrained to carry these at home.

Given this, it is imperative upon the state to provide mental health services to our teachers. This bill seeks to establish a holistic mental health care package to improve the well-being of our teachers. It also aims to provide regular mental health assessments, regular counselling sessions, stress-reduction programs and access to peer support groups and mentoring programs for teachers. It further establishes Mental Health and Wellness Liaisons to assist and connect teachers to mental health care providers as needed. By prioritizing the mental well-being of teachers, we can support their holistic role as educators and promote a healthier and more conducive learning environment for our students.



HON. MA. ALANA SAMANTHA TALIÑO SANTOS
Representative, 3rd District of Cotabato

¹ <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1287736.pdf>

² <https://www.dlsu.edu.ph/wp-content/uploads/pdf/conferences/research-congress-proceedings/2017/LLI/LLI-I-020.pdf>

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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 Teacher's Mental Health and Wellness Act of 2023.*"

Section 2. **Declaration of Policy.** – It is the policy of the State to provide holistic support to all educators in the country, recognizing the crucial role they play in nation-building. The State shall ensure that the teachers' mental, emotional, and psychological well-being is given the same importance as their professional development as their welfare directly affects the quality of education.

Section 3. **Programs and Services.** – The Department of Education (DepEd), in coordination with the Department of Health (DOH) and the Philippine Mental Health Association, shall establish and promote the following programs and services for the welfare and well-being of teachers:

- a) Regular mental health assessments of the teachers every school semester, conducted by registered and licensed psychologists or related professionals;
- b) Regular counseling sessions for teachers, focusing on stress management, emotional stability, and coping mechanisms;
- c) Stress-reduction programs, such as workshops that teach mindfulness, meditation, relaxation techniques, and time-management;
- d) Access to peer support groups and mentoring programs for teachers, with focus on creating a safe space for expression and collaboration;
- e) Periodic seminars led by mental health professionals to raise awareness and improve understanding about mental health issues among teachers;
- f) Establishment of Mental Health and Wellness Liaisons to assist and connect teachers to mental health care providers as needed, and to monitor the progress of well-being programs within their schools or regions;
- g) Promote work-life balance through the formation of interest-based clubs, sports competitions, and other recreational opportunities; and
- h) Any other programs and services as deemed necessary by the DepEd, the DOH, and the Philippine Mental Health Association.

In line with Section 24 of Republic Act No. 11036 otherwise known as the "*Mental Health Act*", all educational institutions shall ensure that the foregoing programs and services are integrated and established in their respective schools. These educational institutions shall likewise coordinate with DEPED for the development of appropriate policies and adoption of strategies to promote mental health among their teaching personnel.

Section 4. ***Monitoring and Evaluation.*** - The DepEd, in coordination with the DOH and Philippine Mental Health Association, shall conduct a yearly monitoring and evaluation of the programs and services under this Act.

Section 5. ***Funding*** – The financial assistance necessary for the effective implementation of the programs and services under this Act shall be included in the yearly General Appropriations Act (GAA) under the DepEd and DOH.

Section 6. ***Implementing Rules and Regulations*** – The DepEd and DOH shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this Act within ninety (90) days upon its effectivity.

Section 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.

Section 8. ***Repealing Clause.*** –Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, rule or regulation inconsistent or contrary to the provision of this Act is hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

Section 9. ***Effectivity Clause.*** – This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following its publication in the Official Gazette or a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,