

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL No. 203



Introduced by
ACT Teachers Party-List Rep. ANTONIO L. TINIO
and **KABATAAN Party-List Rep. RENEE LOUISE M. CO**

AN ACT
INCREASING THE MINIMUM SALARIES OF PUBLIC SCHOOL
TEACHERS TO ₱50,000 AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The *Salary Standardization Law* was amended in 2020 and 2024 but the struggle of public school teachers for salaries that can afford decent lives for them and their families is far from over.

These latest adjustments by no means addressed the disparity between the salaries of those in the low- and middle-level salary grades—who comprise majority of the civil service—and those in the managerial levels and especially of top officials. As always, the rank-and-file are at the losing end in this set-up. As one goes lower in salary grade—clerks, administrative aides, down to the janitorial positions—the poorer they get. Those who need additional finances most are given mere loose change. Even with the latest salary adjustment, the monthly pay of even mid-level personnel like public school teachers (Salary Grade 11, ₱30,024 for Step 1)—estimated to be about 803,272 occupying Teacher I to Teacher III positions per latest data released by the Department

of Budget and Management and Department of Education (2022 Manpower Information System)—remains insufficient for a family living wage of ₱1,217 per day or ₱36,510 per month for a family of five to have a decent and humane condition of living.

On the other hand, top officials like those in SG 31 to SG 33, including members of the cabinet and of Congress and the President, are paid ₱293,191 up to ₱438,844.

Even after the last tranche of SSL V and the 2025 installment of SSL VI, the frontliners in education will still be no better off than the police and soldiers in uniform, whose salaries the Duterte administration increased by 50% to 100%. Public school teachers, for instance, are given increases of just 4.95% to 5.6% (increases from SSL V to SSL VI of Teacher III and Teacher I, respectively). They might not bear arms, but they are professionals with qualifications higher than police and soldiers. Teachers cannot enter and remain in the service without the training and fortitude required of the daily and myriad battles in public education—and it must never be alleged that their qualifications, training, and fortitude are less than those of the police and the military.

These measly increases are quickly eaten away by inflation and excise taxes — especially those brought by the TRAIN Law. For mid-level personnel like teachers, income taxes further reduce their take-home pay, as their salaries go past the ₱250,000-cap for exempt incomes. The disparity between the salary and the family living wage continues to widen, as inflation steadily rises without corresponding timely increases in salaries. With the measly salaries that public school teachers are receiving, they could not afford their families' basic needs.

At present, their dire financial woes only worsened, considering the COVID-19 pandemic and several slaps of increases in the prices of fuel and basic commodities. Indeed, how far can ₱30,024 take a Teacher I and his or her family at a time when fuel prices rise almost weekly? It must be stressed that this level of pay of the main frontliners of education—professionals who went through long years of academic and practical training—amounts to less than the family living wage. No wonder most teachers would rather work abroad despite the risks and hazards to earn almost thrice or eight times the entry-level salary.

Moreover, the economic crisis post-COVID-19 as well as the international oil crisis, the Filipino people, including government employees, are suffering from rising prices of food and basic goods and services, and oil price hikes. Philippine Statistics

Authority data shows that prices of goods and services in the National Capital Region have increased, with the May 2025 consumer price index at 123.9. This means that what one can buy in 2018 (the base year) for ₱100 now costs ₱123.90. In real-life terms: a full, heavy basket or bag from the *palengke* seven years ago could nowadays be just half-full and heartbreakingly easy to take home.

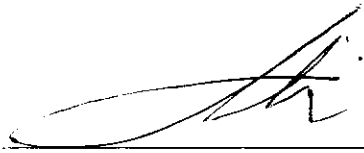
Hence, this bill proposes substantial salary increases for public school teachers to close the gap between their salaries and the cost of living. It will also address the distortion created by the doubling of entry-level pay of military and uniformed personnel. It also proposes the annual adjustment of salaries to ensure that these keep pace with the cost of living. This bill mandates the Department of Budget and Management, in consultation with public sector unions, to recommend to Congress the appropriation of the necessary funds.

This bill parallels the demand of the rest of those dutifully toiling in the civilian bureaucracy for substantial salary increases, as well as the demand of workers in the private sector for a national minimum daily wage.

Heeding the demand for substantial salary increases promotes and protects the rights of the majority of our frontliners in education to decent lives, to be fully compensated for their hard work, and to a just return of the taxes they are faithfully paying. It is a matter of justice, one that must be granted at the soonest possible time for public school teachers.

Again, teachers fear that the final adjustment of the Salary Standardization Law will follow the trend of past adjustments of giving paltry increases to those in the rank-and-file, thus further distorting the salary scales to their disadvantage, which are not followed for several long years by new adjustments after the last tranche. Indeed, there is an urgent need for salary increases for public school teachers, along with other government employees.

For the foregoing reasons, the passage of this bill is sought.



Rep. ANTONIO L. TINIO
ACT Teachers Party-List



Rep. RENEE LOUISE M. CO
KABATAAN Party-List

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL No. 203

Introduced by
ACT Teachers Party-List Rep. ANTONIO L. TINIO
and **KABATAAN Party-List Rep. RENEE LOUISE M. CO**

AN ACT
INCREASING THE MINIMUM SALARIES OF PUBLIC SCHOOL
TEACHERS TO ₱50,000 AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

SECTION 1. *Declaration of policy.* It is hereby declared the policy of the State to alleviate the living conditions of government employees and to guarantee employees' rights to living wage.

The State policies of ensuring that education receives the highest budgetary priority and that teaching will attract and retain its rightful share of the best available talents through adequate remuneration and other means of job satisfaction and fulfillment are hereby reiterated.

In the formulation of decisions with regard to education reforms, the State shall likewise hold paramount the protection and promotion of the right of citizens to quality education at all levels and the rights of education workers to human conditions of work and a living wage.

SEC. 2. *Raising of minimum salaries for public school teachers in basic education.* The present minimum monthly salary for public school teachers shall be equivalent to Fifty Thousand Pesos (₱50,000) per month or equivalent to salary grade (SG) 15 of the Salary Standardization Law, as amended, or whichever is higher, *Provided*, That salaries of those occupying higher positions shall be adjusted accordingly.

SEC. 3. *Annual adjustment of salaries.* Salaries of public school teachers shall be adjusted annually to keep pace with the cost of living. The Department of Budget and Management (DBM), upon consultation with the unions and organizations of public school teachers, shall recommend to Congress the appropriation of the necessary funds.

SEC. 4. *Rules and regulations.* The Department of Education, the Commission on Higher Education, and the DBM shall, upon consultation with the unions and organizations of public school teachers, promulgate the necessary rules and regulations of the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 5. *Appropriations.* The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be taken from current appropriations. Thereafter, funds needed in subsequent years shall be included in the General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 6. *Separability clause.* Should any provision herein be declared unconstitutional, the same shall not affect the validity of the other provisions of this Act.

SEC. 7. *Repealing clause.* All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations or other issuances or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed.

SEC. 8. *Effectivity.* This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,