

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



TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 508

Introduced by **Representative Jaime R. Fresnedi**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to institutionalize support mechanisms for public school teachers and school personnel in matters of student discipline and classroom management. It ensures that children remain protected from abuse, exploitation, and violence while also equipping teachers with the necessary safeguards and institutional support to maintain and instill values in the classroom.

Article XIV, Section 1 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution mandates the State to protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education and to make education accessible to all. Under Section 2 (1), it provides that the State shall “establish, maintain, and support a complete, adequate, and integrated system of education relevant to the needs of the people and society”. In fulfilling this mandate, public school teachers play an indispensable role in guiding students in their academic and personal growth while shaping them into responsible and values-driven citizens.

Republic Act (R.A.) No. 4670 or “*The Magna Carta for Public School Teachers*” affirms the State’s recognition of the significant role of teachers in society. It guarantees their rights to professional development, decent working conditions, and protection against accusations in matters relating to professional conduct. However, while it lays out these broad guarantees, it does not include specific provisions on how teachers should be supported in maintaining student discipline and managing behavioral concerns in the classroom, especially in an era of evolving social norms and digital exposure.

In 2012, the Department of Education (DepEd) issued DepEd Order No. 40, s. 2012 or the “*DepEd Child Protection Policy*”, which establishes guidelines for strengthening the protection of children from abuse, bullying, violence, and discrimination within school settings. It has played a crucial role in promoting the rights and well-being of students. At the same time, teachers have expressed concerns about a growing hesitation to exercise disciplinary measures due to uncertainty about how such actions may be perceived or interpreted. Teachers’ groups have highlighted instances where educators, acting in good faith, have faced undue stress, legal battles, and reputational harm as a result of their efforts to maintain order in the classroom.

In one case in 2019, a teacher was publicly vilified and forced to resign after a classroom incident was taken out of context and went viral online.¹ Such incidents discourage teachers from exercising authority, ultimately undermining their ability to manage classrooms effectively.

This bill bridges the gap between existing policies by reinforcing the shared responsibilities of students, teachers, and schools in fostering a safe and disciplined learning environment. It affirms the special parental authority of educators, as recognized in Article 218 of the *Family Code*, ensuring that teachers can guide and discipline students in accordance with the law, ethical standard, and child-sensitive approaches.

Recognizing the vital role of guidance counselors in promoting student well-being, this bill also seeks to address the lack of support personnel by requiring the government to hire additional guidance counselors in public elementary and secondary schools to meet the recommended counselor-to-student ratio. According to DepEd's data presented in 2023, there are only roughly two thousand (2,000) guidance counselors and around twenty-eight (28) million students. This translates to a ratio of about one (1) guidance counselor for every 14,000 students², far from the ideal ratio of one counselor per 500 students recommended by the Philippine Guidance and Counseling Association.

Ultimately, this bill aims to restore dignity and respect to the teaching profession by providing the clarity, support, and protection that teachers need to carry out their duties effectively and confidently.

In view of the foregoing, the immediate approval of this bill is earnestly sought.


JAIME R. TRESNEDI
Representative
Lone District, Muntinlupa City

¹DepEd to investigate the case of teacher humiliated on TV for 'child abuse'

(<https://mb.com.ph/2019/11/22/depd-to-investigate-case-of-teacher-humiliated-on-tv-for-child-abuse>)

² Lack of Guidance Counselors hampers prevention of student suicides
(<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2023/02/01/2241784/lack-guidance-counselors-hampers-prevention-student-suicides>)

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 508

Introduced by **Representative Jaime R. Fresnedi**

AN ACT
INSTITUTIONALIZING SUPPORT MECHANISMS FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL
TEACHERS AND SCHOOL PERSONNEL IN MATTERS OF STUDENT DISCIPLINE
AND MECHANISMS FOR CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

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 "*Classroom Management Act.*"

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – In all actions relating to children, the State shall accord special protection to children from all forms of abuse, exploitation, cruelty, and other conditions prejudicial to their development. Furthermore, the State has the duty to establish and maintain a complete and adequate system of public basic education geared towards the holistic development of a child.

These policies are understood to encompass the State's responsibility to provide appropriate instruction and guidance to students about school discipline, their duties and responsibilities with respect to their peers, to their teachers and other persons of authority, to members of their community, and to society.

To this end, the State shall institutionalize measures to implement in all public schools clearly defined regulations on appropriate student behavior towards other students, teachers, and school staff and personnel, during classes, and within and outside school premises.

The State is also hereby bound to establish and maintain support systems, including training on classroom management and child discipline, for teachers and school staff and personnel, who come in daily direct contact with students, and thus find themselves in situations that could expose them to false accusations of child abuse in the course of the discharge of their duties.

It is hereby also declared that the State shall promote and improve the working conditions of public school teachers and other school personnel, which are understood to determine whether or not the physical and emotional environments of children and teachers are conducive to learning and teaching.

SEC. 3. *Coverage.* – This Act shall be applicable to all teaching personnel of all public school institutions, including non-teaching personnel who stand in direct contact with students in the course of the discharge of their duties.

SEC. 4. *Classroom Management Guidelines.* – The Department of Education (DepEd) shall formulate guidelines for classroom management for teachers and school personnel. In formulating the guidelines, the DepEd shall, at all times, bear in mind the rights and best interests of the child, and shall under no circumstances include in said manual any form of punishment that would constitute a violation of Republic Act No. 7610. Said guidelines shall include the following:

- (1) The rules and regulations to be observed by teaching and non- teaching personnel who interact directly with students in the course of the discharge of their duties, with respect to students, whenever inside the premises of public schools, or even outside in case of school-sanctioned activities;
- (2) The rights and responsibilities of teaching and non-teaching personnel who interact directly with students, with respect to student discipline and classroom management, to the end of fostering a positive school climate and safe environment conducive to instruction and learning.
- (3) Permissible, appropriate, and effective responses and interventions that will address violations of school rules and regulations to be administered by teachers, the school head, and other school staff and personnel; and
- (4) A clear description of the disciplinary procedure and clear designation of the authorities competent to investigate, propose, and apply the responses and interventions.

SEC. 5. *Acts of Discipline vis-à-vis Republic Act No. 7610.* – Any act committed by teaching and non-teaching personnel constituting child abuse, cruelty, or exploitation as defined in the Republic Act No. 7610, otherwise known as the “*Special Protection of Children Against Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination Act*” shall be treated as such, regardless of whether said act was committed for the purpose of administering discipline.

SEC. 6. *Consultation with Stakeholders.* – Students, parents, teachers, other school personnel, and the community, represented by their respective organizations, as well as professionals in child behavior and social work, shall each have meaningful involvement in the formulation of the Guidelines.

SEC. 7. *Information Dissemination of the Guidelines.* – The DepEd shall provide training and workshops in order to familiarize teachers, students and families with the Guidelines, explain the expectations of various sectors involved, and describe the various preventive and positive responses and interventions that may be used.

At the beginning of each school year, copies of the Guidelines shall be provided to each student, as well as their parents or legal guardians, who have not yet received the updated copy of such guidelines. The DepEd shall ensure that the distributed copies of the guidelines shall be in a language widely understood by the local populace.

SEC. 8. *Training of Teachers and School Personnel on the Guidelines.* – All public school teachers and school personnel shall receive trainings and instructions related to the specific contents of the Guidelines.

SEC. 9. *Professional Development Relating to Student Discipline and Classroom Management.* – The DepEd shall provide teachers the appropriate pre-service and in-service training on child behavior and psychology, classroom management techniques, positive discipline, and other related fields, as well as the Guidelines under Section 4 and Section 5 of this Act and the scope of their duties and responsibilities with respect to student discipline and classroom management.

SEC. 10. *Support Personnel.* – The DepEd, with the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), shall also ensure that there is a sufficient number of items for guidance counselors, who will serve as support personnel to teachers and school administrators in matters of student discipline.

For purposes of this Act, the DepEd shall endeavor to meet the recommended ratios of guidance counselors to students in public elementary' and high schools.

SEC. 11. *Other Support Mechanisms for Student Discipline and Classroom Management.* – The DepEd shall provide such other mechanisms necessary to capacitate its teachers and other personnel on matters regarding child behavior and psychology, classroom management techniques, positive discipline, and other related fields. These measures shall include but not be limited to the conduct of periodic seminars and formulation of primers and other explanatory materials.

SEC. 12. *Confidentiality of Identity of Parties and Proceedings under this Act.* – No person, whether public or private and whether a party to the case or otherwise, shall publicize any information that may reasonably identify them, be disclosed to the public during the pendency of the proceedings.

Violation of this Section shall subject the person to the appropriate administrative, civil, criminal, and other liabilities.

The DepEd shall issue guidelines for the media with regard to the handling of cases within the contemplation of this Act.

SEC. 13. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety (90) days from the effective date of this Act, the DepEd, in coordination with other implementing agencies, shall promulgate the rules and regulations necessary for the implementation of this Act. The implementing rules and regulations (IRR) provided for under this Act shall be reviewed periodically, and revised, if necessary.

SEC. 14. *Separability Clause.* – If any portion or provision of this Act is subsequently declared invalid or unconstitutional, other provisions hereof which are not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 15. *Repealing Clause.* – Save for RA 7610, all laws, decrees, ordinances, administrative order, rules and regulations, or any part thereof, which are inconsistent with this Act are repealed or amended accordingly.

SEC. 16. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette and at least two (2) newspapers of national circulation.

Approved,