

TWENTIETH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
HOUSE BILL No. 2732

Introduced by **REP. CLAUDINE DIANA D. BAUTISTA-LIM**

AN ACT
ADVANCING THE WELFARE OF LEARNERS, STRENGTHENING FOR THIS
PURPOSE THE SCHOOL-BASED MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM BY MANDATING
A MENTAL HEALTH LITERACY AND TRAINING PROGRAM FOR TEACHERS

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Teachers play a profound and multifaceted role in shaping learners — not just academically, but as individuals.

Teachers are often the unsung heroes when it comes to supporting learners' mental health. While they are not therapists, they are uniquely positioned to notice early signs of distress among their students and can foster environments that promote emotional well-being.

The teachers are the early detectors of distress among their students. Because of the time they spend with their students, teachers can easily spot changes in their students' mood and behavior. They often serve as the first point of contact for struggling students, and are therefore in the best position to offer a safe space for their students to express themselves.

To strengthen teachers' roles in advancing learners' welfare, particularly in promoting their mental health, this measure proposes that the Department of Education, in collaboration with the Department of Health, develop a training program for teachers to strengthen their skills as mental health advocates for their students. As frontline mental health advocates, the training will assist teachers in recognizing indicators of anxiety, depression, or social disengagement among students. Through the training, teachers will be guided on how to effectively serve as a bridge to professional aid in circumstances where students may require counseling from the school's care center, or in the case of private schools, the guidance counselor or other mental health specialists.

Teachers serve as vital link to support systems. They need to be empowered with practical tools for dealing with student crises and referral pathways. In view of the foregoing, immediate approval of this bill is earnestly sought.


REP. CLAUDINE DIANA BAUTISTA-LIM
DUMPER PTDA Party-List

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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 “*Mental Health Literacy and Training Program for Teachers Act.*”

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. – The State recognizes the vital role of children and the youth in nation-building and shall foster and protect their holistic well-being. The State also affirms its policy to promote mental health and well-being in educational institutions.

To this end, the State shall ensure that learners receive the necessary support that addresses both their academic performance and overall well-being by strengthening the important role of teachers in empowering and providing emotional support and guidance to learners.

SEC. 3. Coverage. – All basic education institutions, both public and private, shall hold periodic training for teachers on mental health.

SEC 4. Mental Health Training Program for Teachers. – The Department of Education (DepEd), in coordination with the Department of Health (DOH) and the National Center for Mental Health (NCMH), shall develop a training program for teachers that shall include, but not limit to, special courses on child psychology, mental health care, implications of academic stress, and emotional skills enhancement of learners.

SEC. 4. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, DepEd, in coordination with DOH and NCMH, shall promulgate the corresponding implementing rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SEC. 5. *Appropriations.* – The funds necessary to implement the provisions of this Act shall be sourced from the respective budgets of DepEd in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 6. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision, section, or part of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, such judgement shall not affect, invalidate, or impair any other provisions, sections, or parts hereof.

SEC. 7. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, orders, issuances, circulars, rules and regulations or parts thereof, which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 8. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,