



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

20th CONGRESS
1st Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 4023



Introduced by **REPRESENTATIVE JENNIFER A. LAGBAS**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Education is a fundamental right. The Constitution mandates the State to “protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels and take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all.”¹ However, the frequent occurrence of disasters and emergencies, such as typhoons, floods, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, pandemics, and armed conflicts, has repeatedly disrupted the delivery of basic education in the Philippines, significantly affecting learners, teachers, and school personnel.

The COVID-19 pandemic exposed the vulnerabilities of the Philippine education system when face-to-face classes were suspended for extended periods, resulting in severe learning loss. Similarly, natural disasters, such as the recent typhoons that struck the country, have led to repeated class suspensions, depriving students of precious learning time.

Reliance on make-up classes as the primary response to class suspensions has proven to be burdensome to the young learners and their families. Make-up classes may extend the school calendar into vacation periods, which can negatively affect learners’ well-being, family schedules, and teachers’ workload. Moreover, it does not adequately allow students to absorb missed lessons, resulting in lower learning outcomes. This approach also fails to provide continuity of learning during the disruption itself, which is crucial during prolonged emergencies.

This bill seeks to address these disruptions by institutionalizing distance learning and alternative delivery modes (ADMs) as a permanent feature of the basic education system during disasters and emergencies. It requires all public and private schools to develop and regularly update Learning and Service Continuity Plans (LSCPs) to ensure that learning continues despite the suspension of face-to-face classes. The Department of Education (DepEd) will be tasked to set minimum standards for ADMs, provide teacher training, and coordinate with local government units (LGUs) and relevant agencies to guarantee access to learning resources and technologies.

¹ CONST., art. XIV, sec. 1.

By passing this measure, the State affirms its commitment to safeguarding the welfare, safety, and educational rights of Filipino learners and educators. It ensures that education remains accessible, inclusive, and resilient, even in the face of disasters and emergencies.

In view of the above, passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



HON. JENNIFER A. LAGBAS
Representative
First District, Misamis Oriental



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AN ACT
INSTITUTIONALIZING DISTANCE LEARNING AS AN ALTERNATIVE MODE OF
DELIVERY OF BASIC EDUCATION DURING DISASTERS AND EMERGENCIES,
MANDATING THE DEVELOPMENT OF LEARNING CONTINUITY PLANS, AND FOR
OTHER PURPOSES

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Distance Learning During Disasters and Emergencies Act.”

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to safeguard the welfare, safety, and security of learners, teachers, and education personnel during disasters and emergencies, while ensuring the continuity of education. Consistent with Article XIV, Section 1 of the 1987 Constitution, the State shall protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels and shall take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all. Towards this end, the State shall institutionalize the implementation of distance learning and alternative delivery modes (ADMs) of basic education when face-to-face classes are disrupted due to natural or human-induced hazards.

SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* –

- a) *Distance Learning* – shall refer to the mode of learning delivery where teachers and learners are physically separated, and learning takes place through online platforms, modular learning, television/radio-based instruction, or other applicable means;
- b) *Alternative Delivery Modes (ADMs)* – shall refer to learning strategies that allow flexibility in the time and place of learning, including online, modular, blended, or other approved learning systems;

- c) *Learning and Service Continuity Plan (LSCP)* – shall refer to to the comprehensive plan prepared by schools and education offices to ensure the delivery of learning during disruptions caused by disasters and emergencies; and
- d) *Disasters and Emergencies* – shall refer to natural or human-induced hazards that disrupt normal school operations, including but not limited to typhoons, floods, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, extreme heat, pandemics, armed conflicts, and other hazards.

SEC. 4. Institutionalization of Distance Learning. – Distance learning shall be adopted as the official alternative to face-to-face classes during disasters and emergencies. The Department of Education (DepEd), in coordination with local government units (LGUs), shall ensure the availability of appropriate learning resources, teacher training, and digital infrastructure to support distance learning.

SEC. 5. Alternative Delivery Modes of Basic Education. – ADMs shall include, but are not limited to, online distance learning, modular learning (printed or digital), blended learning, radio- and television-based instruction, and other modes as may be determined by the DepEd in consultation with stakeholders.

SEC. 6. Suspension of Classes and Activation of Distance Learning. – Class suspensions due to disasters and emergencies shall automatically trigger the activation of distance learning through ADMs. The DepEd, in coordination with local school heads and LGUs, shall issue guidelines on class suspensions and the other appropriate ADM to be adopted.

SEC. 7. Learning and Service Continuity Plan. – All public and private schools shall develop their Learning and Service Continuity Plans (LSCPs) and thereafter update the same every three (3) years. The LSCPs shall identify the following:

- a) Suitable ADMs for different types of disasters and emergencies;
- b) Access to learning resources and technologies;
- c) Measures for teachers' and learners' safety;
- d) Guidelines for make-up classes and assessment; and
- e) Community and stakeholder engagement strategies.

LSCPs shall be integrated into each school's School Improvement Plan (SIP) and submitted to the Schools Division Offices (SDOs) for review and approval.

SEC. 8. Conduct of Make-up Classes. – Make-up classes shall only be conducted when ADMs are not feasible. Make-up classes for all levels, except Kindergarten, shall be in consultation with teachers and parents/guardians. These classes can be held during extended hours or on Saturdays to maximize learning recovery.

SEC. 9. Support for Learners and Teachers. – The DepEd, in coordination with the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT), shall ensure internet access, digital devices, and learning materials for learners and teachers. Furthermore, the DepEd shall provide regular training and capacity-building for teachers on the effective use of distance learning and ADMs.

SEC. 10. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The DepEd, in consultation with relevant agencies, LGUs, and stakeholders, shall promulgate the implementing rules and regulations in consultation with various relevant stakeholders within sixty (60) days from the approval of this Act.

SEC. 11. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current appropriations of the DepEd. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the continued implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 12. *Separability Clause.* – Any portion of or provision of this Act that may be declared unconstitutional or invalid shall not have the effect of nullifying the other portions or provisions hereof as long as such remaining portion or provision can still subsist and be given effect in their entirety.

SEC. 13. *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 or modified accordingly.

SEC. 14. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or any two (2) newspapers of general circulation in the Philippines.

Approved,