

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **4941**



Introduced by **Representative AGATHA PAULA "AGAY" A. CRUZ**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Filipinos are among the world's most resilient and resourceful people. We can survive flooded streets, power outages, and traffic jams with ingenuity and often with humor. Many of our young people, however, reach adulthood without knowing how to budget their allowance, cook a healthy meal, or decipher a pay slip. They graduate armed with theories of the universe but puzzled by the price of electricity, the cost of loans, or the dangers of fake news.

Other countries have decided to stop leaving these skills to chance. Finland's "transversal competences" teach critical life skills from grade school to graduation.¹ Singapore's Character and Citizenship Education marries values, financial literacy, and digital citizenship.² South Africa's Life Orientation course blends health, civic, and career education.³ Studies from international organizations show that structured life-skills programs not only improve grades, but also boost resilience, employability, and civic engagement.⁴

We, on the other hand, have a patchwork: values education here, a financial-literacy week there, a sprinkling of disaster drills. What we lack is a single, comprehensive, age-appropriate Basic Life Skills curriculum that equips our youth for life beyond the classroom. In short, we teach them how to pass tests, but not how to pass through adulthood.

This bill offers a practical remedy. It establishes a comprehensive and age-appropriate framework for basic life skills education by integrating sequenced, evidence-based life skills modules into junior and senior high school curriculum. The course covers essentials domains, from managing money to managing emotions, from civic literacy to

¹ *How Finland's Education System Reduces Dropout Rates and Keeps Students Engaged*, TECHCLASS, 2025, available at <https://www.techclass.com/resources/education-insights/how-finlands-education-system-reduces-dropout-rates-and-keeps-students-engaged>

² *What Is Character and Citizenship Education and What Do Students Learn?*, MINISTRY OF EDUCATION SINGAPORE, 2024, available at <https://www.moe.gov.sg/news/edtalks/what-is-character-and-citizenship-education-and-what-do-students-learn>

³ André van Zyl, et. al., *Striving for equity: Life orientation resources in South African high schools*, SOUTH AFRICAN JOURNAL OF EDUCATION, 2021, available at <https://www.sajournalofeducation.co.za/index.php/saje/article/view/1830/1049>

⁴ *OECD Future of Education and Skills 2030: OECD Learning Compass 2030*, THE ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT (OECD), 2019; *Comprehensive Life Skills Framework: Rights based and life cycle approach to building skills for employment*, UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND INDIA;

digital citizenship, from household safety to environmental stewardship.

It creates an interagency Basic Life Skills Course Development and Review Committee with youth representation to design, update, and evaluate the curriculum every three years. It also provides for teacher training to set competency standards and develop appropriate assessments.

With this bill, we will not only produce graduates who know how to solve quadratic equations but also know how to solve everyday problems. They will not only memorize constitutional provisions but also understand their rights and obligations. They will not only navigate cyberspace but also safeguard their privacy and security.

The Philippines has always prided itself on producing bright minds. It is time we also produce capable, life-ready adults. By approving this measure, Congress will give our youth not just diplomas but a durable toolkit for adulthood. As a result, they will receive an education that teaches not only for making a living but for living itself.

In light of the foregoing, and with the conviction that diplomas should come with life's survival kit, the prompt enactment of this measure is fervently recommended.


AGATHA PAULA "AGAY" AGUILAR CRUZ
Representative, Fifth Legislative District of Bulacan



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Introduced by **Representative AGATHA PAULA “AGAY” A. CRUZ**

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR BASIC LIFE SKILLS
EDUCATION IN THE SECONDARY LEVEL, APPROPRIATING FUNDS
THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

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

1 **Section 1. Short Title.** – This Act shall be known as the “Basic Life Skills Education
2 Act of 2025.” For purposes of advocacy and public communication, it may also be referred
3 to as the “Life Skills for Life Act.”
4

5 **Section 2. Declaration of Policy.** – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to
6 provide age-appropriate, evidence-based, and practical education that equips students in
7 junior and senior high school with essential life skills for independent living, civic
8 participation, and workforce readiness. The State recognizes that beyond academic
9 knowledge, Filipino learners must acquire competencies that prepare them for adulthood,
10 responsible citizenship, and participation in national development.
11

12 **Section 3. General Objectives.** – This Act seeks to:
13

14 (a) Establish an age-appropriate and comprehensive Basic Life Skills curriculum
15 for junior and senior high school students, covering essential domains of
16 personal finance, health, interpersonal communication, civic literacy, legal
17 literacy, digital competence, and sustainable living;
18

19 (b) Guide educators and stakeholders in delivering a well-rounded, inclusive, and
20 practical life skills education that prepares students for independent living and
21 future challenges;
22

23 (c) Promote collaboration with private and public sectors to provide resources,
24 workshops, and real-world experiences that enhance the basic life skills

curriculum;

- (d) Foster alignment with national goals for education, workforce readiness, and civic responsibility, ensuring that students are equipped for personal and professional success; and
- (e) Support ongoing research and innovation in life skills education, incorporating new methods and technologies to meet the evolving needs of students and society.

Section 4. Definition of Terms. – As used in this Act:

- (a) *Basic life skills* refer to essential abilities and knowledge necessary for managing everyday living in modern society, not specific to any profession but fundamental for individuals entering adulthood, higher education, or the workforce.
- (b) *Basic life skills course* refers to a sequenced set of instructional modules integrated into the junior and senior high school curriculum, designed to equip students with essential skills for successful daily living and personal development.

Section 5. Content of the Basic Life Skills Course. –

- (a) *Coverage.* A course on basic life skills shall be integrated and age-appropriately sequenced into the curriculum of all public and private junior and senior high schools (Grades 7-12). The Department of Education (DepEd), in coordination with the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) and other relevant agencies, shall design and implement said course.
- (b) *Core Modules.* The course shall include, but not limited to, the following:
 - (1) Financial Literacy and Consumer Skills – understanding and managing personal finances, including budgeting, saving, responsible borrowing, consumer rights, and the basics of investing and insurance; Junior high shall focus on foundational money habits, while senior high shall cover advanced topics such as credit, contracts, and taxation.
 - (2) Digital Citizenship, Social Media and Data Privacy – responsible and ethical use of digital technologies, online safety, combating misinformation, and protection of personal data in accordance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012.

(3) Health, Well-Being and Nutrition – principles of balanced diet, mental health awareness, stress management, physical activity, and access to health services.

(4) Interpersonal Communication and Emotional Intelligence – developing empathy, managing emotions, effective communication, conflict resolution, teamwork, and leadership skills; Junior high focuses on self-awareness and communication, senior high on leadership and workplace dynamics.

(5) Civic Literacy and Government Services (“Government 101”) – understanding fundamental rights and duties, key government agencies and services, how to obtain essential government documents, and participation in democratic processes and volunteerism.

(6) Career Preparation and Job Search Strategies – exploring occupations, writing résumés and cover letters, preparing for interviews, networking, and basic entrepreneurship concepts, including social entrepreneurship.

(7) Basic Home and Community Safety – performing basic household maintenance, first aid, disaster preparedness and response, and safe driving and pedestrian practices consistent with existing road safety laws.

(8) Legal and Tax Literacy – basics of contracts, labor and human rights, and how the tax system works, including filing returns and understanding tax obligations.

(9) Environmental Stewardship and Sustainable Living – reducing waste, conserving energy and water, disaster resilience, and participating in community environmental programs.

(c) *Graduation Requirement.* Completion of the Basic Life Skills Course shall be a mandatory requirement for graduation at the senior high school level, subject to phased-in implementation. Current students enrolled prior to the effectivity of this Act shall be exempt.

(d) *Teaching and Assessment.* The DepEd, in coordination with TESDA and other stakeholders, shall provide teacher training, develop competency standards and learning outcomes, and establish age-appropriate assessment tools to measure student acquisition of life skills.

Section 6. Course Development and Review Committee. – There is hereby created a Basic Life Skills Course Development and Review Committee which shall be responsible for the design, periodic review, and updating of the Basic Life Skills Course.

1 The Committee shall be composed of the following:

- 2
- 3 (a) Secretary of Education (DepEd) or their designated representative, as
 - 4 Chairperson;
 - 5 (b) Director General of TESDA or their designated representative, as Co-
 - 6 Chairperson;
 - 7 (c) Chairperson of CHED or their designated representative;
 - 8 (d) One (1) representative from the University of the Philippines;
 - 9 (e) One (1) representative from an accredited national teachers' association;
 - 10 (f) One (1) youth representative from an accredited student or youth organization,
 - 11 selected by the National Youth Commission; and
 - 12 (g) Other members as may be necessary to represent private sector partners,
 - 13 subject-matter experts, or civil society organizations, as determined by the
 - 14 Committee.
- 15

16 The Committee shall:

- 17 (a) Formulate and recommend to DepEd and TESDA the detailed curriculum,
 - 18 content outlines, and instructional materials;
 - 19 (b) Provide guidelines for teacher training, competency standards, and assessment
 - 20 mechanisms;
 - 21 (c) Review and update the curriculum every three (3) years or as necessary, taking
 - 22 into account new evidence, evolving student needs, and technological
 - 23 developments;
 - 24 (d) Conduct or commission consultations, focus groups, and surveys among
 - 25 stakeholders;
 - 26 (e) Coordinate with government agencies and private partners for resource-
 - 27 sharing and real-world learning opportunities; and
 - 28 (f) Submit to the President and Congress an annual report on the status of the
 - 29 course, review findings, and policy recommendations.
- 30

31 The Committee shall submit to the President and Congress the completed course
32 description, suggested content, and recommended course hours within six (6) months
33 from effectivity. It shall also prepare and publish a phased implementation plan.

34

35 **Section 7. Periodic Evaluation and Reporting.** – The Committee shall conduct a
36 comprehensive evaluation of the Basic Life Skills Course every three (3) years from its
37 initial implementation. The evaluation shall cover student learning outcomes, teacher
38 capacity, adequacy of materials, alignment with national goals, and stakeholder feedback.

39

40 The Committee shall submit a written Evaluation Report to the President and
41 Congress within sixty (60) days after each evaluation cycle. The said Report shall be
42 published on the official websites of DepEd, TESDA, and CHED.

43

44 **Section 8. Research and Development.** – Research and Development shall be

1 pursued, and priority shall be given to the development of effective, appropriate, and
2 efficient instructional materials for the Basic Life Skills course. This will ensure that the
3 curriculum is continuously improved and adapted to meet the evolving needs of students,
4 equipping them with the essential skills required for adult life.// DepEd, TESDA, and
5 CHED shall prioritize research and development for effective and efficient instructional
6 materials, integrating innovations, technology, and best practices to continuously adapt
7 the curriculum.

8
9 **Section 9. Appropriations.** – The amount of Five Million Pesos (PhP 5,000,000.00)
10 is hereby appropriated for the initial development of course materials. Subsequent
11 funding requirements shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act of
12 DepEd, TESDA, and CHED.

13
14 **Section 10. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** – Within ninety (90) days from
15 the effectivity of this Act, DepEd, TESDA, in consultation with CHED, expert course
16 providers, and other stakeholders, shall formulate the necessary rules and regulations to
17 implement this Act.

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19 **Section 11. Separability Clause.** – If any part or provision of this Act is held
20 unconstitutional or invalid, the remainder thereof not otherwise affected shall remain in
21 full force and effect.

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23 **Section 12. Repealing Clause.** – All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders,
24 proclamations, or administrative regulations that are inconsistent with the provisions of
25 this act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

26
27 **Section 13. Effectivity.** – This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following
28 the completion of its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a national newspaper of
29 general circulation.

30
31 *Approved,*