

Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **5375**



Introduced by Representative Kenneth T. Gatchalian

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The K to 12 education reform under Republic Act No. 10533 was envisioned to produce globally competitive graduates by equipping them with sufficient knowledge, skills, and training to be employable, entrepreneurial, or prepared for higher education. Senior High School (SHS) was intended to provide job-specific skills without the need for a college degree.

However, seven years after the first SHS graduates in 2018, outcomes remain concerning. A Jobstreet.com survey showed that only 24% of employers were willing to hire SHS graduates, citing lack of qualifications, insufficient training, and minimal work experience¹. Industry leaders likewise expressed low confidence, noting that the required 80-hour on-the-job training is inadequate to prepare students for industry demands².

Unemployment among SHS graduates has sharply increased—from 1.8% in 2018 to 10.3% in 2025³. Compared to ASEAN neighbors, Filipino youth

¹ JobStreet Philippines. <https://www.jobstreet.com.ph/career-resources/fresh-graduate-hiring-shows-shifts-demand-preferences/>

² Yee, J. (April 7, 2018). SPECIAL REPORT: Jobs a hit or miss for senior high school graduates. INQUIRER.net. <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/980738/special-report-jobs-a-hit-or-miss-for-senior-high-school-graduates>

³ PSA Preliminary Results of the April 2025 Labor Force Survey (LFS). June 6, 2025. See <https://psa.gov.ph/statistics/labor-force-survey/latest-press-release>

labor force participation remains low, with less than 60% engaged versus over 70% in Vietnam. Studies by the Philippine Institute for Development Studies confirm that most SHS graduates pursue further studies, while those who join the workforce show no clear advantage over Grade 10 or two-year college completers⁴.

This legislation seeks to strengthen the employability and competitiveness of SHS graduates through the following reforms:

1. Institutionalize the Batang Magaling National and Local Councils to enhance collaboration between DepEd, LGUs, academe, and industry.
2. Involve industry partners and stakeholders in designing Work Immersion Programs (WIPs).
3. Develop national and local Batang Magaling Roadmaps to set clear targets for graduate employability.
4. Require labor market demand studies every three years to align the SHS curriculum with industry needs.
5. Establish a centralized nationwide database of skills information for SHS graduates.
6. Promote affirmative hiring of SHS graduates in both public and private sectors.
7. Provide tax incentives to industry partners that invest in training SHS learners.

Through these measures, we aim to realize the promise of K to 12—producing Batang Magaling: graduates who are competitive, employable, and ready to contribute to national development.



KENNETH T. GATCHALIAN

⁴ Orbeta, A. & Potestad, M. (2020). On the Employability of the Senior High School Graduates: Evidence from the Labor Force Survey, Discussion Paper Series No. 2020-40. <https://pidswebs.pids.gov.ph/CDN/PUBLICATIONS/pidsdps2040.pdf>

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AN ACT
ENSURING THAT SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES UNDER THE
K TO 12 PROGRAM ARE EQUIPPED WITH THE KNOWLEDGE,
TRAINING, AND SKILLS DEMANDED IN THE LABOR MARKET,
ENHANCING THEIR EMPLOYABILITY AND COMPETITIVENESS,
CREATING THE BATANG MAGALING COUNCILS TO STRENGTHEN
MULTI-STAKEHOLDER COLLABORATION AND SUPPORT FOR THEIR
EMPLOYMENT, ALLOWING DEDUCTION OF TRAINING EXPENSES
INCURRED FOR THEIR SKILLS DEVELOPMENT, AND APPROPRIATING
FUNDS THEREFOR

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

1 **SECTION 1.** *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “*Batang*
2 *Magaling Act*”.

3 **SEC. 2.** *Declaration of Policy.* – It is the policy of the State to establish,
4 maintain, and support a complete, adequate, and integrated system of education
5 relevant to the needs of the people and society.

6 This Act likewise reiterates a declared State policy that every graduate of
7 basic education shall be an empowered individual who has learned, through a
8 program that is rooted on sound educational principles and geared towards
9 excellence, the foundations for learning throughout life, the competence to engage

1 in work and be productive, the ability to coexist in fruitful harmony with local and
2 global communities, the capability to engage in autonomous, creative, and critical
3 thinking, and the capacity and willingness to transform others and one's self.

4 **SEC. 3. Objective.** – This Act shall ensure that the Philippine basic
5 education system, as enhanced under Republic Act (R.A.) No. 10533 or the
6 “Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013”, will produce Senior High School (SHS)
7 graduates who are equipped with knowledge, training, and skills demanded in the
8 labor market, whether they have chosen the higher education, middle-level skills
9 development, employment, or entrepreneurship exit, thereby enhancing their
10 employability and competitiveness in the workforce.

11 **SEC. 4. Creation of the Batang Magaling National and Local Councils;**
12 *Strengthening Multi-Stakeholder Linkages and Collaboration; The Batang*
13 *Magaling Roadmap.* – To align the tracks of the K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum
14 under R.A. No. 10533 with the needs of the labor market, a National Batang
15 Magaling Council (National Council) shall be created composed of the Department
16 of Education (DepEd), the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority
17 (TESDA), the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), three (3) national
18 industry partners, one (1) national labor group, and the Union of Local Authorities
19 of the Philippines.

20 Local Batang Magaling Councils (Local Councils) shall likewise be formed
21 at the provincial, city and municipal levels to ensure that SHS graduates are
22 equipped with education, training and skills demanded by industry partners and
23 government agencies. The Local Councils shall be composed of the provincial, city
24 or municipal local school boards (LSBs), the Public Employment Service Office
25 (PESO), at least two (2) industry partners in the locality, a representative of the
26 TESDA provincial office, and a local employee organization or association.

27 Every education institution offering the SHS Program shall regularly consult
28 with the Local Council at least twice a year to be guided by the actions of the

Council, especially the roadmap in paragraph e hereunder. The Council shall serve as a mechanism for active collaboration and meaningful communication for the fulfillment of the following purposes:

- a. provision of information to the education institutions for the updating and alignment of the curricular offerings and the work immersion component of the SHS Program with the market needs as identified by industry partners and government agencies;
- b. increase in the awareness and commitment of industry partners and government agencies to accept learners in Work Immersion Programs (WIPs), ensure that their deployment is done according to their tracks or specialization courses, and enable them to acquire specialized skills and competencies to advance in their chosen path;
- c. enabling the LSBs to provide relevant data and information to the stakeholders, increase their awareness of their mutual issues and concerns on the employability of SHS graduates in the locality, discuss and analyze the duties and risks involved in WIPs, and give local incentives to recognize best practices on collaboration;
- d. crafting of the WIPs of education institutions offering the SHS Program within a province, city, or municipality and ensuring that the curriculum is aligned with industry needs, learners meet the minimum requirements of the work immersion industry partners and government agencies, and learners develop competencies and acquire skills that are industry-based to improve their work readiness and employability; and
- e. development of local Batang Magaling Roadmaps, to be evaluated and updated every three years, at the provincial, city, and municipal levels that shall introduce interventions and set measurable goals on enhancing the employability, competitiveness, and productivity of

1 SHS graduates, including but not limited to an increase or
2 improvement in the following: the number of industry partners and
3 government agencies participating in the WIPs; the number of SHS
4 learners deployed under the WIPs according to their tracks or
5 specialization courses; and the rate of employment of SHS graduates
6 in jobs aligned to their skills. As such, the local roadmap shall include
7 the skills demanded by industry partners in the locality vis-à-vis the
8 needed knowledge, training, and skills of SHS graduates to match the
9 said demand, using the labor market demand forecast under Sec. 6,
10 and the skills database under Sec. 7 hereof.

11 Taking into consideration the local roadmaps developed at the
12 provincial, city, and municipal levels, the National Council shall craft
13 a parallel craft a parallel National Batang Magaling Roadmap to
14 achieve the objective under Sec. 3 of this Act. The provincial Local
15 Councils shall similarly craft their respective Provincial Batang
16 Magaling Roadmaps based on the Municipal and Component Cities
17 Batang Magaling Roadmaps, while the city Local Councils shall base
18 their respective City Batang Magaling Roadmaps on the WIPs within
19 the locality under their jurisdiction.

20 **SEC. 5. *Work Immersion Programs.*** – The WIPs that are mandated to be
21 offered by education institutions offering the SHS Program shall develop in learners
22 the competencies, skills, work ethic, and values relevant to pursuing further
23 education or joining the world of work.

24 The WIP shall be based on the Batang Magaling Roadmap and designed to
25 match the needs of the learners and the capabilities of the education institutions vis-
26 à-vis the demands of the work immersion industry partners.

27 The Schools Division Offices of the DepEd shall approve the WIP as
28 proposed in these provinces, cities, or municipalities, in accordance with DepEd

1 policies and issuances, and with due compliance to legal and administrative
2 prescriptions on the number of hours and delivery models, among others.

3 **SEC. 6. *Labor Market Demand and Forecasting.*** – To align the WIP with
4 market demand and ensure that the knowledge, training, and skills of SHS graduates
5 match the in-demand and projected in-demand jobs of industry partners in the
6 locality, the Councils are hereby mandated to conduct labor market demand studies
7 every three (3) years, using quarterly local labor market data collected by the PESO.

8 The data derived from such demand forecast shall serve as the basis for the
9 work immersion component of the SHS Program, the Batang Magaling Roadmaps,
10 the WIPs, the trainings to be conducted, the resources to be procured, and the skills
11 to be developed among the learners, among others. The demand forecast will also
12 allow education institutions to focus on employable skills as determined by medium-
13 to long-term labor market demand.

14 **SEC. 7.** The Secretary of Education shall issue such rules and regulations
15 as may be necessary to carry out the purpose of this Act.

16 **SEC. 8. *Separability Clause.*** – If any provision or part of this Act is held
17 invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not affected shall
18 remain in full force and effect.

19 **SEC. 9. *Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, executive orders, presidential
20 decrees or issuances, letter of instruction, administrative orders, rules, and
21 regulations as well as local ordinances contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions
22 of this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

23 **SEC. 10. *Effectivity.*** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after
24 publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) national newspapers of general
25 circulation.

Approved,