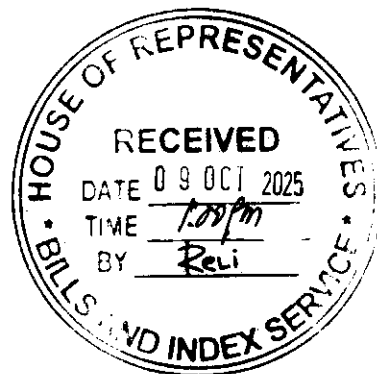




Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila
TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session
HOUSE BILL NO. **5404**

Introduced by Representative EDGAR R. ERICE

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The global shift toward digitalization has fundamentally changed how education is delivered, accessed, and experienced. Yet, a large portion of the Philippine public school system remains disconnected from the digital world. Many students and teachers still lack access to reliable internet, digital devices, and basic digital literacy training — worsening educational inequality, especially in remote and disadvantaged communities.

According to the Department of Education, the digital divide exposed by the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the urgent need for a more resilient, inclusive, and tech-enabled education system.

This bill seeks to respond to that need through the Smart Public Schools and Digital Literacy Act of 2025, which aims to transform our public schools into digitally capable, future-ready learning environments. It proposes the creation of a National Digital Public Education Program that will:

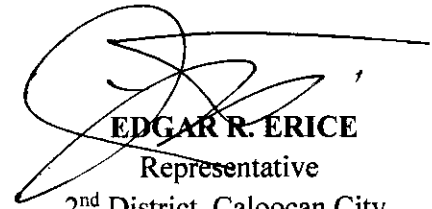
- Equip public schools with internet connectivity, digital learning tools, and smart classroom infrastructure;
- Institutionalize digital literacy training for students, teachers, school heads, and parents;
- Integrate digital citizenship, basic coding, and cyber safety into the K-12 curriculum;

- Promote partnerships with the private sector and local government units to accelerate implementation and sustainability.

Through this measure, we empower all education stakeholders — especially in the most underserved areas — to access quality education and develop essential 21st-century skills. More than just deploying gadgets and internet, this bill seeks to build a digitally literate, critically thinking, and socially responsible generation of Filipinos.

The development of Smart Public Schools is not only an investment in infrastructure, but a necessary reform in building a more equitable, tech-savvy, and competitive nation.

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



EDGAR R. ERICE
Representative
2nd District, Caloocan City



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HOUSE BILL NO. 5404

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AN ACT
PROMOTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF SMART AND DIGITALLY-ENABLED
PUBLIC SCHOOLS NATIONWIDE, INSTITUTIONALIZING DIGITAL LITERACY
TRAINING FOR EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS
THEREFOR

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

1

2 **Section 1. Short Title.** This Act shall be known as the “Smart Public Schools and Digital
3 Literacy Act of 2025”.

4

5 **Section 2. Declaration of Policy.** It is the policy of the State to promote inclusive, equitable,
6 and quality education by embracing digital transformation in the public school system. The
7 State shall ensure that students, teachers, parents, and education leaders are equipped with the
8 digital tools and competencies necessary to thrive in a knowledge-based, technology-driven
9 society.

10

11 **Section 3. Objectives.** This Act aims to:

12 1. Develop a nationwide network of Smart and Digitally-Enabled Public Schools;

2. Provide reliable internet connectivity, digital infrastructure, and learning management systems (LMS) to public schools;
3. Institutionalize digital literacy training for students, teachers, school administrators, and parents;
4. Promote the safe and responsible use of digital technologies in education;
5. Integrate digital citizenship and information technology into the K–12 curriculum.

Section 4. Definition of Terms. For the purposes of this Act:

- 1. Smart Public School** – A public elementary or secondary school equipped with ICT infrastructure, internet access, digital content, and e-learning platforms to enhance teaching, learning, and school governance.
- 2. Digital Literacy** – The ability to use digital tools, access information, communicate online, and evaluate content effectively and ethically.
- 3. Education Stakeholders** – Students, teachers, school heads, education supervisors, and parents or guardians.
- 4. Digital Citizenship** - Refers to the responsible and ethical use of technology and the internet.

Section 5. National Digital Public Education Program (NDPEP). There is hereby created a National Digital Public Education Program (NDPEP) under the Department of Education (DepEd), in coordination with:

1. Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT)
2. Department of Science and Technology (DOST)
3. Local Government Units (LGUs)
4. Private sector and tech partners

Section 6. Components of the NDPEP. The NDPEP shall include the following components:

1. Smart Public School Infrastructure Development

- a. Provision of internet connectivity in all public schools by 2030;
- b. Procurement of computers, tablets, digital whiteboards, and learning management systems;
- c. Deployment of solar or alternative energy for remote areas.

1 **2. Digital Literacy Training Program**

2 a. Mandatory training modules for:

3 i. Students (starting Grade 4)

4 ii. Teachers and administrators (pre-service and in-service)

5 iii. Parents/guardians (through community sessions)

6 b. Focus areas: digital citizenship, cyber safety, online collaboration, e-learning tools,
7 and basic coding.

8 **3. Integration of Digital Subjects**

9 a. DepEd shall revise the K–12 curriculum to integrate:

10 i. Digital literacy and media education (Grades 4–10)

11 ii. ICT skills development and online research (Grades 11–12)

12 iii. Responsible use of AI, data, and social media

13 **4. School Digitalization Fund.** A dedicated fund to assist schools in acquiring and
14 maintaining digital tools, managed by DepEd in partnership with LGUs.

15
16 **Section 7. Public-Private Partnerships.** The government may enter into public-private
17 partnerships to:

18 1. Co-develop educational software or platforms;

19 2. Implement device donation or leasing programs;

20 3. Provide tech support and teacher training.

21
22 **Section 8. Monitoring and Evaluation.** The DepEd and DICT shall establish a joint Smart
23 Schools Monitoring and Evaluation Unit to:

24 1. Track digital readiness and infrastructure per school;

25 2. Evaluate training outcomes and learner performance;

26 3. Submit an Annual Digital Education Report to Congress.

27
28 **Section 9. Appropriations.** The amount necessary to implement this Act shall be charged
29 against the current appropriations of DepEd and DICT. Thereafter, such sums as may be
30 necessary shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act (GAA).

1 **Section 10. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** Within ninety (90) days from the
2 effectivity of this Act, the DepEd, in coordination with DICT and other agencies, shall issue
3 the necessary rules and regulations.

4
5 **Section 11. Separability Clause.** If any provision of this Act is declared invalid or
6 unconstitutional, the remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect.

7
8 **Section 12. Repealing Clause.** All laws, executive orders, issuances, or parts thereof
9 inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

10
11 **Section 13. Effectivity Clause.** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication
12 in the Official Gazette or a newspaper of general circulation.

13
14 Approved,