



Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS

First Regular Session

House Bill No. 5414



Introduced by Representative Jernie Jett V. Nisay

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The proposed Education Pathways Act seeks to provide clear and accessible educational pathways for Filipino students completing Junior High School. Recognizing that learners have diverse strengths, interests, and career aspirations, this bill establishes two main pathways: the University Preparatory Program under the Department of Education (DepEd) and the Technical-Vocational Program under the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA). These pathways aim to equip students either for higher education or for immediate employment by aligning curriculum and training standards with industry needs and university admission requirements.

The bill emphasizes the importance of career guidance and counseling services, including aptitude and interest assessments, to help students make informed decisions regarding their educational trajectories. By mandating inter-agency collaboration among DepEd, TESDA, CHED, DOLE, DTI, DICT, and other stakeholders, the bill ensures that students have access to real-time information about higher education, technical programs, emerging careers, and labor market trends. This holistic approach is designed to strengthen students' preparedness, foster informed choice, and enhance employability upon completion of their chosen pathways.¹

Furthermore, the bill institutionalizes advanced placement examinations, ladderized education programs, and scholarship opportunities to ensure inclusivity, particularly for marginalized learners, indigenous populations, and persons with disabilities. The Technical-Vocational Pathway emphasizes industry-driven training, enterprise-based apprenticeships, and free or subsidized assessments and certifications to make technical education accessible and relevant. Meanwhile, the University Preparatory Pathway ensures alignment with college and university standards, guaranteeing functional literacy, practical skills, and elective exploration to help learners meet higher education requirements.²

By establishing flexible, inclusive, and competency-based education pathways, the Education Pathways Act strengthens the country's education system, empowers students with practical and academic skills, and supports national workforce development in response to evolving societal and industry demands.³

¹ Technical Education and Skills Development Authority. (2020). TESDA programs and training regulations. <https://www.tesda.gov.ph>

² Commission on Higher Education. (2018). CHED policies on ladderized education programs. <https://ched.gov.ph>

³ World Bank. (2019). Skills development for inclusive growth in the Philippines. World Bank Group. <https://www.worldbank.org>

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

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AN ACT
PROVIDING EDUCATION PATHWAYS FOR BASIC EDUCATION STUDENTS,
AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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 Act shall be known as the “*Education Pathways Act*”.

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

To this end, the State shall ensure opportunities for Filipinos, regardless of age, background, ethnicity, disability, and association, to attain their maximum potential and enhance their employability by establishing inclusive education pathways that empower and equip the learners with the competencies that are necessary for college or employment.

1 **SEC. 3. *Education Pathways for Completers of Junior High School.*** – Upon
2 completing Junior High School, the students shall choose between two education
3 pathways: the University Preparatory Program under the Department of Education
4 (DepEd) or the Technical-Vocational Program under the Technical Education and Skills
5 Development Authority (TESDA).
6

7 **SEC. 4. *Career Guidance and Assessments of Students.*** – Career guidance
8 and counseling services, including aptitude and interest assessments to assist in
9 selecting appropriate paths, as provided in Republic Act No. 11206, or the “Secondary
10 School Career Guidance and Counseling Act”, shall be indispensable and crucial in
11 aiding the students to make informed decisions about their preferred educational
12 pathway.
13

14 The DepEd shall administer various relevant assessments, including
15 Early Language, Literacy and Numeracy Assessment and National Achievement
16 Tests, to all elementary and secondary students across all levels. These
17 assessments aim to evaluate their competencies and strengths. The results must
18 be communicated to the students and their parents or guardians to provide them
19 with ample time to consider their educational and career paths. These results
20 shall also serve as a guide to the DepEd and teachers in adjusting and refining
21 their teaching approaches to enhance effectiveness in student learning.
22

23 The DepEd, TESDA, Commission on Higher Education (CHED),
24 Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), Department of Trade and
25 Industry (DTI), Department of Information and Communications Technology
26 (DICT), Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Employers
27 Confederation of the Philippines, National Economic and Development Authority
28 (NEDA), and other concerned agencies shall develop a system or a portal where
29 students can access data and information concerning higher and technical
30 education, current career and industry trends and demands, and other tools that
31 will guide them in their educational and career choices.
32
33

1 **SEC. 5. *University Preparatory Pathway.*** – The DepEd shall develop and
2 implement a comprehensive curriculum for Grades 11 and 12 that prepares students
3 for admission to colleges and universities.

4
5 This curriculum shall encompass fundamental subjects to improve and
6 guarantee that students acquire functional literacy and practical skills, and elective
7 courses to allow students to explore their interests and meet college and university
8 admission requirements of their chosen degree.

9
10 The DepEd shall include the University Preparatory Pathway in its education
11 roadmap and collaborate with the CHED, colleges, and universities to guarantee
12 alignment between the curriculum and college admission standards. Colleges and
13 universities must ensure that students can easily obtain information about their program
14 of study or curriculum guide to adequately prepare for their college studies.

15
16 **SEC. 6. *Technical-Vocational Education Pathway.*** – TESDA and the industry
17 boards, partners, experts, and practitioners, including micro, small and medium
18 enterprises, shall develop a variety of technical-vocational programs based on an
19 industry-driven and industry-approved standards designed to equip students with
20 practical skills and competencies that are at par with industry requirements. These
21 programs must lead to a diploma or a higher national certificate level. The standards of
22 these programs must further ensure that students acquire functional literacy skills to
23 guarantee their employability upon completion of their chosen program and undergoing
24 the necessary assessment for certification.

25
26 To effectively implement the programs, TESDA and its accredited Technical
27 Vocational Institutions must have a sufficient number of partner enterprises to ensure
28 that the standards and training for these programs are aligned with current industry
29 needs and requirements. This collaboration shall include the conduct of a review and
30 evaluation of the standards every three (3) years to maintain its relevance and
31 responsiveness to the prevailing trends in the industry. For TESDA to undertake the
32 prompt issuance of training regulations or competency standards, whichever is
33 applicable, for new and emerging skill sets, they shall likewise strengthen existing

1 industry boards and establish within two (2) years from the effectivity of this Act industry
2 boards for sectors without one.

3
4 In the development and issuance of training regulations or competency
5 standards, TESDA and the industry boards shall focus on higher-skill level and diploma
6 programs.

7
8 TESDA shall give preference to enterprise-based training programs for National
9 Certification levels III and IV, Philippine Qualifications Framework level 5, and new and
10 emerging skills for technical-vocational learners to enhance their skills and knowledge
11 according to industry needs to encourage industry stakeholders to provide enterprise-
12 based training, apprenticeship opportunities, and skills development.

13
14 The assessments and certifications of students under public technical-vocational
15 institutions and TESDA-funded programs shall be free of charge. TESDA shall
16 implement a system that provides subsidies to students in private education, industry,
17 or enterprise for their assessments and certifications by their economic standing. No
18 student who failed at least three (3) times may avail of the free or subsidized
19 assessment and certification.

20
21 **SEC. 7. Honors Examination.** – The DepEd, in consultation with the CHED,
22 shall develop and administer an advanced placement exam, to be taken voluntarily by
23 Grade 10 students in the University Preparatory Pathway, in order to assess their
24 aptitude and readiness to advance to a college degree.

25
26 This advanced placement exam shall give students a grade which shall
27 correspond to their level of proficiency and determine their eligibility to enroll to their
28 chosen degree in a college or university.

29
30 **SEC. 8. Availment of the Ladderized Education Program under Republic**
31 **Act No. 10647.** – Upon completion of the full technical-vocational program, the student
32 may enroll in colleges or universities and avail of the ladderized education program for
33 educational advancement. The CHED and TESDA shall strengthen existing policies

1 and implementation of programs for the accreditation and recognition of prior learning
2 of students.

3
4 **SEC. 9. *Scholarship Programs.*** – To ensure that the two educational pathways
5 are accessible to a broad range of students, the DepEd and TESDA shall maintain an
6 educational support program including scholarships for their respective students that
7 properly and sufficiently addresses the accessibility and availability of the pathways to
8 the marginalized communities and learners.

9
10 The DepEd and TESDA shall continue to make available to their respective
11 students the scholarship programs currently implemented in their agencies.

12
13 Scholarships in the Technical-Vocational Education Pathway shall be made
14 available to learners with disabilities, indigenous learners, and those coming from
15 marginalized communities.

16
17 Prioritization shall also be given to students enrolled in programs with higher skill
18 levels or urgently needed by the industries.

19
20 **SEC. 10. *Program Evaluation.*** – The DepEd and TESDA shall regularly assess
21 and evaluate the effectiveness and quality of their respective education pathways. The
22 findings of these assessments and evaluations shall be utilized to implement essential
23 enhancements and modifications to ensure that the curriculum remains relevant to
24 society.

25
26 **SEC. 11. *Support from Other Government Departments and Agencies.*** –
27 The CHED, DOLE, DTI, DICT, Department of Agriculture, Department of Science and
28 Technology, NEDA, Philippine Qualifications Framework National Coordinating
29 Council, Department of Budget and Management, and other related agencies are
30 hereby mandated to extend the necessary support and resources towards the effective
31 implementation of this Act.

32
33 **SEC. 12. *Transition Provisions.*** – The DepEd and TESDA shall develop and
34 refine their respective curriculum and standards to ensure that such are highly relevant

1 and aligned with the current and future needs of society and industry, including
2 emerging technologies, skills, and workforce demands.

3
4 To ensure the effectiveness of the newly developed curriculum and standards,
5 32 an initial implementation phase for three (3) years shall be conducted in a selected
6 number of schools from different regions, socioeconomic conditions, and both urban
7 and rural settings to be determined by the agencies. The DepEd and TESDA shall
8 conduct comprehensive assessments during this pilot phase to evaluate the
9 effectiveness of the curriculum and standards in preparing the students for university
10 and college or the workforce, and ensuring that it meets the intended goals. The
11 assessment shall be accessible to the public and may undergo independent or third-
12 party review. The DepEd and TESDA shall refine and enhance their respective
13 curriculum and standards after considering the feedback from various sectors and roll
14 out the final curriculum and standards within one (1) year from the assessment.

15
16 Upon attaining the qualification standards, the teachers and instructors under 44
17 the current Technical-Vocational Track of the Senior High School of the DepEd shall be
18 given preference in hiring of instructors and teachers by the TESDA for the
19 implementation of this Act.

20
21 **SEC. 13. Appropriations.** – The amount necessary for the implementation of
22 this Act shall be included in the respective budgets of DepEd and TESDA in the annual
23 General Appropriations Act.

24
25 **SEC. 14. Joint Congressional Oversight Committee.** – There is hereby
26 created a Joint Congressional Oversight Committee (JCOC) to monitor and oversee the
27 implementation of the provisions of this Act. The JCOC shall be composed of five (5)
28 members each from the Senate and from the House of Representatives, respectively,
29 including a member of the minority from each chamber, to be chaired jointly by the
30 chairpersons of the Committees on Basic Education of both the Senate and the House
31 of Representatives. The four (4) other members from each chamber shall be
32 designated, respectively, by the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House
33 of Representatives.

1 **SEC. 15. *Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR)*.** – Within ninety (90)
2 days from the approval of this Act, the DepEd, TESDA, and CHED shall, in consultation
3 with other concerned stakeholders, formulate and issue the rules and regulations
4 implementing the provisions of this Act.

5
6 **SEC. 16. *Separability Clause*.** – If any part or provision of this Act is held invalid
7 or unconstitutional, other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in force and
8 effect.

9
10 **SEC. 17. *Repealing Clause*.** – Section 4 of Republic Act No. 10533, or the
11 “Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013”, is hereby amended to remove the compulsory
12 requirement for Senior High School in basic education.

13
14 All other laws, orders, and rules and regulations contrary to, or inconsistent with
15 the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

16
17 **SEC. 18. *Effectivity*.** – Notwithstanding the non-issuance of the IRR, this Act
18 shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a
19 newspaper of general circulation.

20
21 Approved,