

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5480



Introduced by: **REP. SALVADOR A. PLEYTO, SR.**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippine Constitution mandates the State to protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels. A crucial component of quality education is the provision of safe, adequate, and conducive learning environments.

Despite significant national budget allocations, the country continues to face a persistent classroom shortage and challenges in the timely repair and maintenance of existing school facilities. This deficit is often exacerbated by bureaucratic delays, where the centralized system for school infrastructure projects, primarily managed by the Department of Education (DepEd) and the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), often involves long planning and procurement cycles that delay the start and completion of projects.

Further, national agencies, while capable, are often geographically distant from the actual school sites, leading to project designs that may not be perfectly suited to the specific needs, terrain, or immediate weather conditions of the locality. Minor repairs and emergency maintenance, especially after natural calamities, are frequently delayed while waiting for centralized funds and approval, leading to prolonged disruption of classes.

This Bill seeks to address these systemic issues by embodying the principle of decentralization and promoting local autonomy in educational infrastructure. This measure specifically authorizes and empowers Local Government Units (LGUs) to directly undertake the construction, repair, and maintenance of public school buildings within their respective jurisdictions.

By transferring direct implementation authority to the LGUs, procurement processes will be streamlined, resulting in the quicker completion of school buildings.

To ensure the successful execution of this mandate, the Bill establishes a clear and stable funding mechanism. A defined minimum percentage of the Special Education Fund (SEF) shall be exclusively earmarked for school infrastructure projects. This ensures that a local, dedicated funding source is consistently available for construction and major repairs.

A portion of the national budget for school buildings be released directly to the LGUs instead of being channeled solely through national line agencies is also mandated by this measure. This allocation will be determined based on a transparent, needs-based formula to ensure equitable distribution.

By empowering LGUs with both the authority and the dedicated resources, it is envisioned to accelerate the closing of the classroom gap and ensure that every Filipino child has access to a safe, modern, and high-quality public school facility. The State's commitment to education will be tangibly realized at the grassroots level.

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



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**AN ACT AUTHORIZING LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS TO UNDERTAKE
THE CONSTRUCTION, REPAIR, AND MAINTENANCE OF PUBLIC
SCHOOL BUILDINGS, PROVIDING FOR A MECHANISM OF FUNDING,
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

*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 "Local School Building Empowerment Act of 2025".

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. - It is hereby declared the policy of the State to decentralize governance, promote local autonomy, and ensure the immediate provision of safe, adequate, and conducive learning facilities for all students. To this end, the Local Government Units (LGUs), being the government entity closest to the constituents, shall be empowered to directly implement school building projects.

SEC. 3. Definition of Terms. - For the purpose of this Act, the following terms shall mean:

1. Local Government Unit (LGU): Refers to the Province, City, Municipality, or Barangay, as defined by the Local Government Code.
2. School Building Project: Refers to the construction of new school buildings, the repair, rehabilitation, retrofitting, or expansion of existing school buildings, and the development of related facilities (e.g., washrooms, perimeter fences, and site development) for public basic education schools.
3. Basic Education: Refers to kindergarten, elementary, and secondary education, including alternative learning systems.

SEC. 4. Authority to Undertake School Building Projects. - Notwithstanding any existing laws or executive orders to the contrary, all LGUs are hereby authorized and mandated to undertake, implement, and

supervise School Building Projects within their respective territorial jurisdictions. This authority shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Determining the prioritization of school construction needs in coordination with the local School Division Office and the Local School Board (LSB).
2. The preparation of plans, specifications, and technical designs.
3. The procurement of contractors and the supervision of construction works.
4. The direct disbursement of funds allocated for such projects.

SEC. 5. *Funding Mechanism.* - The funding for School Building Projects undertaken by the LGUs shall be sourced from the following:

1. **Mandatory Allocation from the Local School Board (LSB) Funds:** A minimum percentage, to be determined by the Local School Board (LSB) but not less than [Insert Percentage, e.g., twenty percent (20%)] of the total Special Education Fund (SEF) shall be exclusively earmarked for School Building Projects.
2. **Annual General Appropriations Act (GAA) Allocation:** The Department of Budget and Management (DBM), in coordination with the Department of Education (DepEd), shall allocate a specific amount in the annual General Appropriations Act (GAA) to be directly released to the LGUs for School Building Projects based on a needs-based formula.
3. **Local Government Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) / National Tax Allotment (NTA):** LGUs are encouraged to utilize a portion of their annual IRA/NTA for school infrastructure projects, in accordance with their local development plans.

SEC. 6. *Coordination and Technical Standards.*

1. The Department of Education (DepEd), through its regional and division offices, shall retain the authority to set and enforce the national standard specifications, designs, and building codes for all public school infrastructure.
2. The LGUs shall adhere strictly to the DepEd's approved designs and technical standards to ensure uniformity, safety, and durability. DepEd shall furnish all LGUs with the necessary standard plans and technical guidelines.

SEC. 7. *Monitoring and Accountability.* - The Local School Board (LSB) shall be primarily responsible for the monitoring and oversight of all school building projects implemented by the LGU.

1. The LGU shall submit quarterly reports on the status of projects to the DepEd and the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG).
2. Any misuse of funds or non-compliance with the technical standards shall subject the responsible local officials to penalties as prescribed by the Local Government Code and other relevant laws.

SEC. 8. *Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).* - Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), and the Department of Education (DepEd) shall jointly formulate and issue the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SEC. 9. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 10. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations, or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 11. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,