

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Batasan Hills, Quezon City



TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 5517

Introduced by Abang Lingkod Party-list Representative
Manuel "Manman" O. Ko

EXPLANATORY NOTE

In today's increasingly digital society, the ability to access, evaluate, and utilize information through technology has become essential for learning, employment, and participation in civic life. Yet, many Filipino students, particularly those in rural and underprivileged areas, continue to face barriers in acquiring basic digital skills. This digital divide limits not only their academic performance but also their capacity to compete and thrive in a technology-driven economy.

The Department of Education (DepEd) has taken initial steps toward integrating technology in education through initiatives such as the Digital Rise Program and ICT Literacy Training, while the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) continues to expand connectivity and digital training under Project CLICK. However, these programs remain largely policy-based and programmatic in nature, lacking a clear statutory mandate to ensure sustainability, uniformity, and nationwide implementation.

This bill seeks to institutionalize digital literacy education as a core component of the basic education curriculum in both public and private schools. It aims to equip every Filipino learner with the knowledge, skills, and values needed to use digital tools responsibly and effectively, from understanding online safety and data privacy to developing creativity, problem-solving, and critical thinking through technology.

Specifically, the bill mandates the Department of Education, in coordination with DICT, CHED, and TESDA, to develop and implement a Digital Literacy Curriculum across grade levels. The proposed curriculum will cover basic computer operations, information and media literacy, responsible online behavior, cybersecurity awareness, and introduction to coding and emerging technologies such as coding and Artificial Intelligence (AI). It also ensures teacher training, infrastructure development, and public-private partnerships to promote equitable access to digital learning resources.

By institutionalizing digital literacy education, the State acknowledges that technological competence is no longer optional but fundamental to education, employment, and civic engagement in the 21st century. This measure supports the constitutional mandate to “establish, maintain, and support a complete, adequate, and integrated system of education relevant to the needs of the people and society,” and aligns with national development goals under the Philippine Digital Transformation Strategy.

In view of the foregoing, the early passage of this measure is earnestly sought.


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**AN ACT MANDATING THE INTEGRATION OF DIGITAL LITERACY EDUCATION IN
THE BASIC EDUCATION CURRICULUM, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR,
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

SECTION 1. Short Title. - This Act shall be known as the “*Digital Literacy Education Act*.”

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. - It is hereby declared the policy of the State to promote and enhance digital literacy among Filipino learners, in recognition of the vital role of technology in education, employment, communication, and national development. The State shall ensure that all learners in the basic education system acquire the knowledge, skills, and values necessary to navigate, participate in, and contribute to the digital society safely, responsibly, and effectively.

SECTION 3. Definition of Terms. - For purposes of this Act, the following terms are defined as follows:

a. Digital Literacy – refers to the set of knowledge, skills, and values that enable an individual to access, understand, evaluate, create, and communicate information using digital technologies in a safe, responsible, ethical, and effective manner. It encompasses the ability to navigate online and offline digital

environments, use information and communication technologies (ICT) for learning and productivity, and exercise critical judgment in the use of digital content and platforms.

b. *Digital Citizenship* – refers to the recognized status and responsibility of an individual as a member of the digital community, encompassing the knowledge, skills, and ethical values necessary to engage safely, responsibly, and respectfully in the use of digital technologies, online platforms, and social media.

c. *Basic Education* – refers to Kindergarten, Elementary, and Secondary Education, including alternative learning systems for out-of-school youth and learners with special needs, as provided under the Enhanced Basic Education Act (R.A. 10533).

SECTION 4. Integration of Digital Literacy in the Curriculum. - The Department of Education (DepEd) shall develop, design, and implement a Digital Literacy Curriculum to be integrated into all grade levels of basic education in both public and private schools.

The curriculum shall include, but not be limited to, the following core competencies:

1. *Basic Computer and Device Operations;*
2. *Online Safety, Cybersecurity, and Data Privacy;*
3. *Information and Media Literacy;*
4. *Responsible Use of Social Media;*
5. *Digital Communication and Collaboration;*
6. *Creative and Productive Use of Digital Tools; and*
7. *Introduction to Coding, Artificial Intelligence, and Emerging Technologies.*

DepEd shall ensure age-appropriate progression of competencies from elementary to secondary levels.

SECTION 5. Teacher Training and Capacity Building. - DepEd, in coordination with the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT), Commission

on Higher Education (CHED), and Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), shall:

- a. Design and implement continuous professional development programs on digital literacy for teachers and school administrators;*
- b. Integrate digital pedagogy into teacher education and pre-service training programs; and*
- c. Provide digital literacy training and certification to educators.*

SECTION 6. Infrastructure and Access. - The DICT, in partnership with DepEd, shall ensure that all public schools have reliable Internet connectivity, ICT laboratories, and digital learning devices sufficient to support digital literacy education.

Priority shall be given to geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas (GIDAs) and schools with limited connectivity.

SECTION 7. Partnerships with the Private Sector. - DepEd and DICT may enter into partnerships with private institutions, technology companies, and civil society organizations for the development of content, provision of devices, teacher training, and community-based digital literacy programs, consistent with Republic Act No. 8525 or the “Adopt-a-School Act.”

SECTION 8. Monitoring and Evaluation. - DepEd shall establish a monitoring and evaluation mechanism to assess the effectiveness of the Digital Literacy Curriculum and teacher training programs. An annual report on the implementation of this Act shall be submitted to Congress.

SECTION 9. Appropriations. - The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current appropriations of DepEd and DICT. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act (GAA).

SECTION 10. Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR). - Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, DepEd, DICT, CHED, and TESDA shall, in consultation

with relevant stakeholders, promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SECTION 11. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or otherwise invalid, the validity of the other provisions shall not be affected thereby.

SECTION 12. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 13. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,