

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **5751**



Introduced by Representative LEILA M. DE LIMA

**AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE CLASSROOM-BUILDING ACCELERATION
PROGRAM (CAP), AUTHORIZING LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS AND PRIVATE
SECTOR ENTITIES TO UNDERTAKE CLASSROOM CONSTRUCTION
PROJECTS, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines is facing an education crisis. According to the Philippine Statistics Authority's Functional Literacy, Education, and Mass Media Survey, 24.8 million Filipinos aged 10-64 years old are functionally illiterate, with 5.8 million being basically illiterate.¹

In 2024, one out of five, or around 18.9 million, Filipino high school graduates were categorized as functionally illiterate, struggling with basic skills such as reading, writing, arithmetic, and comprehension skills.² More concerning, the figure of 24.8 million functionally illiterate Filipinos is nearly double the figure of 14.5 million back in 1993, revealing the inadequacies in the DepEd's strategies to improve basic education in the past 30 years.³ Multiple factors, including the underfunding, under-qualification, and under-development of the education sector, the increased mandates of the DepEd, and the country's social and economic conditions, contribute to this crisis.⁴

¹ Denya, T.S. (22 May 2025). The cost of illiteracy: Why the education system in Philippines is failing millions. Retrieved from <https://www.developmentaid.org/news-stream/post/195634/education-crisis-in-philippines>.

² Nga, M. (5 May 2025). Nearly 19 million Filipino high school graduates functionally illiterate: report. Retrieved from <https://e.vnexpress.net/news/news/education/nearly-19-million-filipino-high-school-graduates-functionally-illiterate-report-4881694.html>.

³ Cariaso, B. (1 November 2025). Functional illiterate Pinoys reach 24.8 million. PhilStar. Retrieved from <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2025/11/01/2484069/functional-illiterate-pinoys-reach-248-million>.

⁴ Ibid.

One of the most pressing and visible issues in the education sector is the classroom shortage. At present, the Philippines is facing a massive classroom backlog of 165,000.⁵ According to DepEd Secretary Juan Edgardo “Sonny” Angara, the classroom crisis may take about 55 years to resolve if the government sticks to its current pace of construction.⁶

In a Senate inquiry on October 22, 2025, DPWH Secretary Vince Dizon revealed that only 22 classrooms out of the 1,700 targeted for 2025 had been constructed.⁷ In 2024, only 605 classrooms out of the 1,628 targeted were completed.⁸ Even in the years prior, the government has consistently fallen short on completing the yearly classroom targets. Moreover, an audit conducted by DepEd Secretary Angara has exposed more than 1,000 classrooms nationwide that had been turned over by the DPWH despite being unfinished.⁹

Clearly, there is a need to take a whole-of-nation approach to come up with an innovative, progressive, and comprehensive solution to the classroom backlog that remains a primary contributor to the country’s education crisis. Since the passing of Republic Act No. 7880 or the “Fair and Equitable Access to Education Act” in 1995, the building of schools has been an exclusive mandate of the DPWH.

However, seemingly in response to the DPWH’s inability to address the classroom shortage and meet the yearly classroom targets, President Ferdinand Marcos, Jr. recently ordered that funds for classroom-building be funneled directly to local government units (LGUs) to expedite the construction of more classrooms and address the backlog.¹⁰ Moreover, the General Appropriations Bill (GAB) for fiscal year 2026 that passed on 3rd reading in the House of Representatives, included a special provision to decentralize the DepEd’s school-building program in response to revelations of the DPWH’s poor performance during the House deliberations of the GAB.

This bill seeks to establish the Classroom-Building Acceleration Program (CAP) to institutionalize mechanisms that shall enable capable LGUs and the private sector

⁵ Untalan, S. (13 June 2025). DepEd: 165K classroom shortage could take 55 years to solve. Retrieved from <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/topstories/nation/949303/dep-ed-165k-classroom-shortage-could-take-55-years-to-solve/story/>.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Magsambol, B. (27 October 2025). Why it’s the DPWH, not the DepEd, building classrooms. Rappler. Retrieved from <https://www.rappler.com/newsbreak/explainers/why-dpwh-not-deped-building-classrooms/>.

⁸ Chi, C. (13 August 2025). Classroom backlog could outlast 5 presidents, says Bam Aquino. PhilStar. Retrieved from <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2025/08/13/2465240/classroom-backlog-could-outlast-5-presidents-says-bam-aquino>.

⁹ Hernando-Malipot, M. (19 September 2025). DepEd: Over 1,000 classrooms nationwide turned over 'unfinished'. Manila Bulletin. Retrieved from <https://mb.com.ph/2025/09/19/dep-ed-over-1000-classrooms-nationwide-turned-over-unfinished>.

¹⁰ Cabalza, D. (23 October 2025). Classroom construction no longer DPWH domain. Inquirer. Retrieved from <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/2128764/classroom-construction-no-longer-dpwh-domain>.

to participate in the construction of classrooms in public schools within their jurisdiction. Under this bill, capacity building and technical assistance shall be provided by the DepEd and DPWH to empower LGUs and the private sector to participate in addressing the nationwide classroom backlog in their own localities and communities.

The worsening education crisis in the country exacerbated by the reality of classroom shortage demands swift and decisive action from all government agencies and all sectors in society.

This bill fully adopts Senate Bill No. 121 filed by Senator Paolo Benigno “Bam” Aquino in the 20th Congress.

Early approval of this measure is requested.



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PROJECTS, 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 “Classroom-Building
2 Acceleration Program (CAP) Act.”
3

4 SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is the policy of the State to promote quality
5 education through adequate and accessible public school facilities. In recognition of
6 the persistent classroom backlog across the country, the State shall adopt a whole-of-
7 nation approach by enabling local government units (LGUs) and the private sector to
8 actively participate in the construction of school buildings, in coordination with the
9 Department of Education (DepEd), and supported by national government funding,
10 private sector participation, and technical assistance.
11

12 SEC. 3. *Creation of the Classroom-Building Acceleration Program (CAP).* –
13 There is hereby established a Classroom-Building Acceleration Program (CAP), which
14 shall enable and authorize qualified LGUs and private sector entities to propose, plan,
15 and access corresponding government funds for the implementation of classroom
16 construction projects in public schools within their respective jurisdictions, in
17 accordance with national standards and in coordination with DepEd.
18

19 SEC. 4. *Eligibility of Local Government Units and Private Sector Entities.* –
20 LGUs and private sector entities may participate in the CAP if they meet at least one
21 of the following criteria:

22 a) Demonstrated technical capacity to implement infrastructure projects;

- 1 b) Willingness to undergo technical assistance and capacity-building
2 support; or
3 c) Proven track record in the successful implementation of infrastructure or
4 education-related projects, as may be determined by the Department of
5 Education and relevant oversight agencies.

6
7 LGUs and private sector entities shall submit project proposals, including cost
8 estimates, site plans, implementation timelines, and compliance with DepEd
9 classroom design standards.

10
11 SEC. 5. *Program Management.* – The Department of Education shall serve as
12 the lead implementing agency of the CAP. A CAP Secretariat shall be established
13 within the DepEd Central Office to coordinate with stakeholders and to evaluate
14 proposals, recommend funding allocations, and monitor implementation.

15
16 SEC. 6. *Funding Sources.* – Funds for the implementation of classroom projects
17 under the CAP shall be drawn from:

- 18 a) The annual appropriations of DepEd for Basic Education Facilities;
19 b) Other national government sources, subject to budgetary rules;
20 c) Contributions from the private sector through corporate donations,
21 foundations, or Public-Private Partnership (PPP) modalities.

22
23 *Provided, That* the CAP may also accept official development assistance (ODA)
24 and other international grants and donations, subject to existing laws.

25
26 SEC. 7. *Downloading of Funds.* – Funds approved under the CAP may be
27 released directly to LGUs and private entities upon compliance with documentary
28 requirements and submission of approved project proposals. The use of funds shall
29 be subject to auditing rules of the Commission on Audit (COA) and guidelines to be
30 issued by DepEd and the Department of Budget and Management (DBM).

31
32 SEC. 8. *Public-Private Partnerships.* – LGUs may implement classroom
33 construction projects under the CAP through PPP arrangements in accordance with
34 the PPP Code of the Philippines or other applicable laws, rules, and regulations.
35 Technical assistance may be provided to LGUs to develop and manage PPPs for
36 education infrastructure.

37
38 SEC. 9. *Capacity Building and Technical Assistance.* – DepEd, in coordination
39 with the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), shall design and
40 implement a capacity-building program for LGUs and private sector entities to:

- 41 a) Ensure compliance with DepEd's classroom design standards;
42 b) Strengthen planning, procurement, and project management
43 capabilities; and

1 c) Enable LGUs and private sector entities to pursue PPPs for classroom
2 building projects.
3

4 SEC. 10. *Monitoring and Reporting.* – All LGU-implemented projects under the
5 CAP shall be subject to regular monitoring and evaluation. LGUs shall submit quarterly
6 progress reports to DepEd. A consolidated national report shall be submitted annually
7 by DepEd to Congress.
8

9 SEC. 11. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary to implement the initial
10 phase of the CAP shall be charged against the current appropriations of the DepEd.
11 Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the continued implementation of the
12 program shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act (GAA).
13

14 SEC. 12. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety (90) days from
15 the effectivity of this Act, DepEd, in coordination with DILG, DBM, and DPWH, shall
16 promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this
17 Act.
18

19 SEC. 13. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision of this Act is declared
20 unconstitutional or invalid, the remaining provisions not affected shall continue to be
21 in full force and effect.
22

23 SEC. 14. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, executive orders, presidential decrees,
24 presidential proclamations, letters of instruction, rules and regulations, or parts thereof
25 inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, modified, or amended
26 accordingly.
27

28 SEC. 15. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its
29 publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation in the
30 Philippines.

Approved,