



Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila

**Twentieth Congress
First Regular Session**

HOUSE BILL NO. 6094



Introduced by Representative ARTHUR C. YAP

EXPLANATORY NOTE

**AN ACT ENHANCING THE PHILIPPINE BASIC EDUCATION SYSTEM BY
PROVIDING A FREE COMPUTER TABLET FOR EACH STUDENT IN PUBLIC
SCHOOLS**

Digital technologies and the use of the internet have emerged as essential tools to achieve quality education outcomes. In today's educational landscape with the future of work in mind, the use of technology and the development of digital skills are indispensable both for teachers and learners. The pandemic and the challenges of natural calamities further prompted a paradigm shift to institutionalize alternative learning modalities where learning is made accessible even from home - veering away from strictly classroom-based or onsite learning.

The more affluent private schools have modern facilities and their students generally have the resources for digital tools and internet access. Unfortunately, this is not the case for students enrolled in the public school system who mostly belong to low-income families where acquisition of digital devices such as computers, laptops or tablets, can be the least priority. While smart phones may be available to some students, they are not suitable for learning due to their less-than-ideal monitor size that can strain the eyes. The lack of appropriate digital device for students makes digital divide a continuing concern which may compromise learning outcomes.

The computerization program of the Department of Education (DepEd) is concentrated on the provision of laptops for teachers and desktop computers for the use of students while in school. Currently, the computer-learner ratio remains far from ideal with 1:18 for elementary and 1:7 for high school (Project Bukas, DepEd). To address this gap, the proposed measure aims to institutionalize government support to public school learners in promoting digital learning through the provision of

computer tablets that can be used in accessing various e-learning materials and enable students to participate in virtual learning when face-to-face classes are suspended or cancelled for reasons deemed necessary to ensure the safety and welfare of students (e.g. weather disturbance, calamities, transport strikes, etc.).

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. Yap', with a long, sweeping line extending upwards and to the right.

REP. ARTHUR C. YAP
Murang Kuryente Party-List

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**AN ACT ENHANCING THE PHILIPPINE BASIC EDUCATION SYSTEM BY
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*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 "Free Computer Tablets for
All Public Schoolchildren Act"

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. The State shall establish, maintain and support a
complete, adequate, and integrated system of education relevant to the needs of the
people, the country and society at large.

It is also the declared policy of the State to promote the right of all citizens to quality
education and to take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all.
Likewise, it is hereby declared the policy of the State that every graduate of basic
education shall be an empowered individual who has learned, through a program
that is rooted on sound educational principles and geared towards excellence,
the foundation for learning throughout life, the competence to engage in work and
be productive, the ability to coexist in harmony with local and global communities,
the capacity to engage in autonomous, creative and critical thinking, and the capacity
and willingness to transform others and one's self.

For this purpose, each student in all Philippine public schools shall be provided the
tools and connectivity to enhance his learning process and allow him to access
knowledge not only from the Department of Education curriculum but to
complementary knowledge available on the internet as well.

SECTION 3. Definition of Terms.

a) Computer Tablet. A mobile device with a mobile operating system and touchscreen

display processing circuitry, and a rechargeable battery. Tablets will have similar capabilities to smartphones, but larger with screens of at least 18 cm measured diagonally.

b) Connectivity. Connectivity is the ability to connect to the internet and to other devices through wired and wireless access to telecommunication services.

c) Public Schoolchildren. Refers to all students of public elementary and junior and senior high schools under the supervision of the Department of Education.

d) Department. Refers to the Department of Education.

e) Basic Education. Refers to elementary, junior high school and senior high school programs of the Department of Education.

f) Student. Refers to the individual enrolled in a basic education program of the Department of Education.

g) Securitization. The act of securing funds using funds from the future sale of an asset or property or from other future cash sources.

SECTION 4. Coverage. This Act shall apply for the benefit of all public-school children. For this purpose, the Department of Education shall provide each student enrolled in all public schools in the elementary, junior high school, and senior high school programs a free computer tablet device for the exclusive use of each student for the better delivery of school lessons and the enhancement of his learning process.

SECTION 5. Funding Source. The sum of P100 billion is hereby appropriated. The funding sources will come from the disposal and securitization of public lands and other properties, including the disposable land areas and privatization proceeds of the (Ninoy Aquino International Airport) NAIA, Clark Development Corporation, the Muntinlupa Penitentiary lands, and other Government and public lands and properties that the National Development Corporation may identify, including government share from reclamation projects.

SECTION 6. Government Agencies Mandated to Secure Funding Sources. The National Development Corporation (NDC) is hereby mandated to identify and expeditiously arrange for the disposal or securitization of the disposable government properties to raise the funds needed to purchase the computer tablets. As a more immediate measure, NDC is hereby authorized to float a bond issue up to P100 billion for this purpose. The Government Service Insurance System (GSIS), the Social Security System (SSS), the Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP), the Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP), the Maharlika Investment Fund (Maharlika), and other Government financial institutions are hereby authorized and enjoined to invest in this bond to be issued by the NDC. The NDC bond will be deemed guaranteed by the National Government. Payment for this bond will be secured from the government properties indicated in Section 6.

SECTION 7. International Public Bidding. The computer tablets shall be purchased through an international public bidding to be conducted by the NDC after consulting with the Department of Education as to the product specifications of the computer tablet device and with the authorized representatives from the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), Department of Finance (DOF), and Commission on Audit (COA) as observers in the public bidding process. After purchase, the computer tablets shall be turned over to the Department of Education for distribution to public school students.

SECTION 8. Ownership. The computer tablets will be owned by the Department of Education and will be returned to the Department upon the student's graduation or upon replacement by the Department with another device, whichever comes earlier.

The computer tablet devices shall be accordingly stamped as "Property of the Department of Education of the Philippines".

SECTION 9. Penalties. The computer tablets will be for the purpose of enhancing the student's learning process. Any unauthorized sale or disposal of the computer tablet device shall be deemed as theft and shall be punished accordingly based on the Philippine laws applicable.

SECTION 10. Separability Clause- If any provision or part of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining parts shall not be affected and shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 11. Repealing Clause- All other laws, executive orders, presidential decrees, administrative orders, rules and regulations, issuances, or parts thereof inconsistent with or contrary to the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

SECTION 12. Effectivity. This Act shall take effect 15 days after its publication in the Philippine Official Gazette.

Approved,