



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



TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 8053

Introduced by **Representative KATRINA REIKO CHUA - TAI**
1st District, Zamboanga City

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING THE STUDENT SUPPORT PROGRAM IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS,
STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF GUIDANCE COUNSELORS, AND PROVIDING
FOR A SYSTEM OF MONITORING, INTERVENTION, AND ACCOUNTABILITY FOR
THE PSYCHOLOGICAL, BEHAVIORAL, AND ACADEMIC WELL-BEING OF
STUDENTS IN ALL BASIC EDUCATION LEVELS

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Constitution, in Article XIV, Section 1, enjoins the State to “protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels and to take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all.” This constitutional mandate envisions education not solely as the acquisition of knowledge but as the formation of the whole person’s intellectual, moral, social, and psychological. It is upon this constitutional foundation that the present bill is predicated.

Many students struggle with learning because of challenges outside the classroom. Globally, about fifteen percent of adolescents have mental health conditions that hinder their focus and success in school. Studies also show that over half of learners struggle to concentrate due to stress from family issues, community hardships, and other social problems. These are daily obstacles for thousands of Filipino children whose dreams are limited by matters beyond their control.

Guidance counselors are key support for students facing psychological and behavioral challenges, but there are too few in Philippine public schools. Often, one counselor handles more than a thousand students. This is far above global standards and students’ needs. Without enough support, students face academic, emotional, and lifelong setbacks.

This bill establishes a Student Support Program that provides each learner with professional guidance. It makes guidance counselors champions of students’ mental, emotional, and social health. They identify distress early, intervene when needed, and build resilience and life skills.

The bill establishes a robust monitoring system to track each student’s academic, behavioral, psychological, and physical status. Built on ethics and confidentiality, this system ensures every student’s needs are seen and addressed quickly. Guidance counselors’ regular reports to the Department of Education will help inform policy and resource adjustments to improve student welfare.

To operationalize the program, the bill creates a Task Force on Student Well-Being, a dedicated body charged with bringing this vision to life. This team will unite guidance counselors, teachers, parents, health experts, and community members to deliver comprehensive, responsive support. The bill ensures that guidance counselors receive ongoing training in psychology, behavior, and adolescent health, so they remain equipped to care for every student and secure a measurable return on the investment in education. By systematically supporting learners, schools can document tangible outcomes, such as higher graduation rates and lower dropout rates, demonstrating lasting benefits for individuals and society.

Passage of this bill is both a morally and legally imperative. It upholds the State's duty to support learners as whole persons and ensures access to education and support structures necessary for their holistic growth. By institutionalizing guidance services, monitoring systems, and a dedicated task force, the bill guarantees that the education system addresses students' intellectual, psychological, and behavioral needs.

This proposed measure advances accessible, holistic, and compassionate education for all Filipino learners while ensuring lasting, measurable benefits from the State's investment in education.

IN VIEW OF THE FOREGOING, immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



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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 “Student Support Program Act.”

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - It is the policy of the State to ensure the holistic development of students in all dimensions, including academic, psychological, behavioral, and social aspects. Education shall not be limited to intellectual growth alone but shall aim to nurture the full potential of every learner, enabling them to become well-rounded, responsible, and resilient members of society.

The State recognizes the essential role of guidance counselors in promoting the well-being and success of students. These professionals are vital in providing support that addresses not only academic needs but also emotional, social, and behavioral challenges, thereby ensuring that learners are equipped to navigate the complexities of school life and personal development.

In pursuit of these objectives, the State shall institutionalize a comprehensive system that monitors, evaluates, and responds to the diverse needs of every student in the public school system. This system shall provide timely interventions, promote mental health and positive behavior, and facilitate the creation of an inclusive and supportive educational environment where all learners can thrive.

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

“Guidance Counselor” shall refer to a licensed professional providing academic, career, and personal/social guidance in accordance with professional standards.

“Student Support Program (SSP)” shall refer to a DepEd-institutionalized program designed to address the psychological, behavioral, emotional, and academic needs of all students.

“Monitoring System” shall refer to a structured mechanism for tracking the academic, psychological, behavioral, and physiological status of students.

“Task Force on Student Well-Being” shall refer to a dedicated team responsible for monitoring, evaluating, and responding to the needs of students.

SECTION 4. *Mandatory Assignment of Guidance Counselors.* - The Department of Education (DepEd) shall ensure that every public elementary and secondary school is provided with at least one full-time guidance counselor. Schools with more than five hundred (500) students shall be allocated additional counselors, according to a ratio to be determined by DepEd, to adequately meet the psychosocial and academic needs of their learners. Guidance counselors shall actively participate in regular student consultations, engage in school activities, assemblies, and wellness programs, and provide academic and career guidance initiatives, thereby serving as key facilitators of both the personal and educational development of every student.

SECTION 5. *Establishment of the Student Support Program.* - The Department of Education (DepEd) shall institutionalize the Student Support Program in all public schools to ensure that the psychological, behavioral, and emotional needs of students are properly addressed. The program shall provide targeted interventions, counseling services, life skills training, and wellness programs to support learners in overcoming challenges and developing resilience. Moreover, it shall promote mental health awareness and implement preventive initiatives, fostering a school environment that prioritizes the well-being of every student and equips them to succeed both academically and personally.

SECTION 6. *System of Monitoring and Reporting.* - The Department of Education (DepEd) shall establish a comprehensive monitoring system for all students that encompasses academic performance, behavioral patterns, psychological and emotional well-being, physiological health indicators, and other legally acceptable forms of mental well-being assessments. This system shall enable schools to systematically assess the overall development and needs of learners, ensuring timely identification of challenges and the provision of appropriate interventions.

Guidance counselors shall submit periodic reports on the status of students to DepEd, providing a reliable basis for policy formulation, program adjustments, and resource allocation. The confidentiality of all student information shall be strictly maintained, with access limited only to authorized personnel, thereby safeguarding the privacy and dignity of every learner while supporting effective monitoring and responsive action.

SECTION 7. *Task Force on Student Well-Being.* - DepEd shall establish a Task Force on Student Well-Being tasked with monitoring, evaluating, and responding to the multifaceted needs of learners. The Task Force shall coordinate with school guidance counselors, educators, parents, health professionals, and community stakeholders, ensuring that interventions are holistic, timely, and responsive. The Task Force shall submit an annual report to DepEd and the Department of Health (DOH) detailing trends, interventions, and recommendations to further strengthen student welfare programs.

SECTION 8. *Continuing Education and Training.* - Guidance counselors shall undergo mandatory continuing professional development in psychological, behavioral, and adolescent health domains, as well as in modern counseling practices and ethics. DepEd, together with DOH, shall provide or coordinate annual training programs, workshops, and refresher courses to ensure that counselors remain competent and responsive to the evolving needs of students.

SECTION 9. *Accountability and Sanctions for Guidance Counselors.* - Guidance counselors shall be held accountable for the proper and diligent performance of their duties, including student consultations, participation in school activities, implementation of the Student Support Program, and submission of periodic reports to DepEd. Failure to perform these tasks satisfactorily, whether due to negligence, dereliction of duty, or repeated non-compliance with established policies, shall render the guidance counselor liable to administrative sanctions. Such sanctions may include written reprimand, suspension, mandatory retraining, or other disciplinary measures consistent with civil service and DepEd regulations. DepEd shall ensure that due process is observed, and that sanctions are proportionate to the gravity of the infraction, with the ultimate goal of safeguarding student welfare and maintaining the integrity of the Student Support Program.

SECTION 10. *Congressional Oversight and Sunset Review.* - Three (3) years after the effectivity of this Act, Congress shall conduct a comprehensive review of the implementation and effectiveness of the Task Force to determine whether the Act should be maintained, amended, or strengthened.

SECTION 11. *Funding.* - The funds necessary for the initial implementation of this Act, including the hiring of additional guidance counselors, development of monitoring systems, training programs, and Task Force operations, shall be charged against the current appropriations of concerned agencies. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 12. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - DepEd, in coordination with professional counseling associations and the DOH, shall issue the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) within six (6) months from the enactment of this Act.

SECTION 13. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the remainder shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SECTION 14. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws inconsistent with this Act are hereby amended or repealed accordingly.

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

Approved,