



Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City



TWENTIETH CONGRESS

First Regular Session

House Bill No. 8383

Introduced by Representative Maria Angela S. Garcia

EXPLANATORY NOTE

1 Republic Act No. 11650, or the "Inclusive Education Act," marked a landmark
2 step toward institutionalizing inclusive education for learners with disabilities and other
3 special needs. It established the policy framework for equitable access,
4 mainstreaming, and support services across basic education and beyond.

5
6 However, while RA 11650 strengthened the structural and institutional
7 mechanisms for inclusive education, significant financial barriers remain at the
8 household level.

9
10 Families of learners with special needs continue to shoulder substantial out-of-
11 pocket expenses, including:

- 12
13 • Speech, occupational, physical, and behavioral therapies;
14 • Assistive devices and adaptive learning materials;
15 • Transportation and mobility support;
16 • Nutritional supplementation and medical-related needs;
17 • Specialized instructional services not fully covered by existing programs.

18
19 For low-income households, these costs often result in interrupted schooling,
20 reduced therapy compliance, or complete withdrawal from formal education. In effect,
21 while inclusive education is guaranteed in law, meaningful participation remains
22 financially inaccessible to many.

23
24 This proposed measure seeks to **supplement and strengthen Republic Act**
25 **No. 11650** by institutionalizing a **Special Education Support Allowance (SESA)** —
26 a regular monthly financial assistance program for qualified learners with special
27 needs from low-income and vulnerable households.

28
29 The measure recognizes that inclusive education is not merely a pedagogical
30 issue but also a social protection concern. Without targeted financial assistance,
31 learners with disabilities remain disproportionately at risk of:
32

- Delayed educational attainment,
- Lower employment prospects,
- Intergenerational poverty,
- Social exclusion.

By providing a minimum monthly allowance of Two Thousand Pesos (₱2,000.00), the State affirms that inclusive education must be supported not only at the school level but also at the household level.

This bill:

1. Establishes a Special Education Support Allowance Program;
2. Designates the DSWD as lead implementing agency in coordination with DepEd and other agencies;
3. Creates a National Registry of Learners with Special Needs for proper targeting and monitoring;
4. Ensures safeguards against fraud and misuse; and
5. Provides for sustainable funding through annual appropriations.

This measure aligns with:

- Article XIV of the 1987 Constitution on the right to education;
- Article XIII on social justice and protection of vulnerable sectors;
- The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD);
- Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 on inclusive and equitable quality education.

Inclusive education must move beyond access to ensure actual participation and success. A learner cannot fully benefit from classroom inclusion without therapy, assistive tools, transportation, and adequate support at home.

The State has already taken the first step through RA 11650. This bill completes that commitment by providing direct, sustained financial assistance to learners with special needs and their families.

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


MARIA ANGELA S. GARCIA
Third District, Bataan



Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS

First Regular Session

House Bill No. _____

Introduced by Representative Maria Angela S. Garcia

AN ACT
PROVIDING REGULAR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO
LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS, INSTITUTIONALIZING A SPECIAL
EDUCATION SUPPORT ALLOWANCE PROGRAM, SUPPLEMENTING AND
STRENGTHENING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11650,
AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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 "Special Education Support Allowance Act."

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to:

- (a) Uphold the constitutional right of all citizens to quality and accessible education at all levels;
- (b) Promote inclusive education and ensure that learners with disabilities and other special needs receive adequate educational, therapeutic, and support services;
- (c) Reduce financial barriers faced by families of learners with special needs;
- (d) Provide targeted social protection measures to enable learners with special needs to meaningfully participate and succeed in the educational system; and
- (e) Supplement and strengthen Republic Act No. 11650, otherwise known as the "Inclusive Education Act," by institutionalizing direct financial support mechanisms for learners with special needs and their families.

SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* – For purposes of this Act:

- (a) **Learners with Special Needs (LSN)** refer to learners formally assessed and identified by the Department of Education (DepEd), Commission on Higher Education (CHED), Technical Education and Skills Development Authority

(TESDA), or duly licensed medical and allied health professionals as having disabilities, developmental delays, learning disabilities, autism spectrum disorder, sensory impairments, physical impairments, intellectual disabilities, psychosocial disabilities, or other conditions requiring special education services.

(b) **Special Education Support Allowance (SESA)** refers to the regular monthly financial assistance granted under this Act to qualified learners with special needs.

(c) **Qualified Beneficiary** refers to a learner with special needs enrolled in a public school, state university or college (SUC), local university or college (LUC), TESDA institution, or recognized private institution offering inclusive or special education programs, whose household income falls within thresholds to be determined in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

(d) **Responsible Person** refers to the parent, legal guardian, or primary caregiver authorized to receive the allowance on behalf of the qualified beneficiary.

SEC. 4. Establishment of the Special Education Support Allowance Program. – There is hereby established a Special Education Support Allowance Program (SESA Program) to provide regular financial assistance to qualified learners with special needs to support disability-related educational expenses, including but not limited to:

1. Therapy services (speech, occupational, physical, behavioral, and related services);
2. Assistive devices, adaptive technologies, and learning materials;
3. Transportation and mobility support;
4. Nutritional and medical supplementation directly related to the disability; and
5. Other necessary disability-related educational expenses as may be defined in the IRR.

SEC. 5. Amount of Assistance. – Qualified beneficiaries shall receive a monthly allowance of not less than Two Thousand Pesos (₱2,000.00). The amount shall be reviewed every two (2) years by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), in consultation with DepEd, DBM, and the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), taking into account inflation and consumer price index data.

The amount may be increased by Congress through the annual General Appropriations Act (GAA).

SEC. 6. Eligibility Criteria. – To qualify, a beneficiary must:

- (a) Be formally identified as a learner with special needs;
- (b) Be enrolled in a recognized educational institution;
- (c) Belong to a household classified as low-income or vulnerable, subject to income thresholds defined in the IRR; and
- (d) Comply with reasonable monitoring and documentation requirements.

1 Priority shall be given to indigent households, solo parents of children with
2 disabilities, and geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas (GIDAs).
3

4 **SEC. 7. Lead Implementing Agency.** – The Department of Social Welfare and
5 Development (DSWD) shall serve as the lead implementing agency, in close
6 coordination with:
7

- 8 • Department of Education (DepEd)
- 9 • Commission on Higher Education (CHED)
- 10 • Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA)
- 11 • National Council on Disability Affairs (NCDA)
- 12 • Department of Budget and Management (DBM)
- 13 • Local Government Units (LGUs)
- 14

15 DepEd shall ensure alignment with programs and policies under Republic Act
16 No. 11650.
17

18 **SEC. 8. Mode of Payment.** – The monthly allowance shall be released through:
19

- 20 (a) Direct cash transfer;
- 21 (b) Electronic transfer to accredited financial institutions or digital platforms; or
- 22 (c) Other secure and efficient delivery systems as may be determined in the
23 IRR.
24

25 No service fees shall be charged against beneficiaries.
26

27 **SEC. 9. Registry and Validation.** – DepEd, in coordination with DSWD and
28 NCDA, shall establish and maintain a **National Registry of Learners with Special**
29 **Needs** for purposes of targeting, monitoring, and evaluation. LGUs shall assist in
30 annual validation and updating of beneficiary records.
31

32 All data collection and processing shall comply with Republic Act No. 10173 or
33 the Data Privacy Act of 2012.
34

35 **SEC.10. Safeguards Against Abuse.** – Any fraudulent claim, falsification, or
36 misrepresentation shall result in disqualification, refund of improperly received
37 benefits, and possible civil and criminal liability.
38

39 Public officials or employees found guilty of misuse, diversion, or corruption
40 related to this Program shall be subject to administrative, civil, and criminal liability
41 under existing laws.
42

43 **SEC. 11. Appropriations.** – The amount necessary for the initial implementation
44 of this Act shall be charged against the current appropriations of the DSWD and
45 DepEd.
46

47 Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for its continued implementation
48 shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.
49
50

1 **SEC. 12. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – Within ninety (90) days
2 from the effectivity of this Act, the DSWD, in coordination with DepEd, NCDA, DBM,
3 CHED, TESDA, and other concerned agencies, shall promulgate the necessary
4 Implementing Rules and Regulations.

5
6 **SEC. 13. *Separability Clause.*** – If any provision of this Act is declared
7 unconstitutional or invalid, the remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect.

8
9 **SEC. 14. *Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, decrees, executive issuances, rules,
10 and regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified
11 accordingly.

12
13 **SEC. 15. *Effectivity.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
14 publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

15
16 *Approved,*
17