

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 9719



Introduced by Representative Kenneth T. Gatchalian

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Literacy Coordinating Council (LCC) was established under Republic Act No. 7165 in 1991 to lead the country's efforts in eradicating illiteracy, and was later strengthened by Republic Act No. 10122 in 2010 to expand its coordination and partnership functions.

Despite these measures, universal literacy remains unmet. Based on the 2024 Functional Literacy, Education and Mass Media Survey (FLEMMS), 93.1% of Filipinos aged 10 to 64 are basically literate, leaving about 5.87 million unable to read, write, or perform basic computations. More notably, only 70.8% are functionally literate, meaning around 24.8 million Filipinos lack higher-order comprehension and critical thinking skills.

These gaps highlight persistent challenges in literacy and education outcomes, underscoring the need for stronger coordination and more responsive institutional mechanisms.

This bill seeks to repeal Republic Act No. 7165 and transform the LCC into the National Literacy Council, with strengthened powers, a streamlined structure, and better alignment with Republic Act No. 11510 (Alternative Learning System Act) and Republic Act No. 11315 (Community-Based Monitoring System Act). It transfers the Council's secretariat to the Bureau of Alternative Education and designates Local School Boards as local literacy bodies to strengthen community-level implementation.

The measure also mandates a three-year national literacy roadmap, with clear targets and data-driven strategies, to be mirrored at the local level.

By improving coordination, strengthening local support, and institutionalizing long-term planning, this measure aims to accelerate the achievement of universal literacy.

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



KENNETH T. GATCHALIAN

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AN ACT
RENAMING THE LITERACY COORDINATING COUNCIL TO THE
NATIONAL LITERACY COUNCIL, STRENGTHENING ITS POWERS AND
FUNCTIONS, STREAMLINING ITS MEMBERSHIP STRUCTURE,
PROVIDING ITS LOCAL SUPPORT MECHANISMS, REPEALING FOR
THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7165, AS AMENDED, 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 “National
2 Literacy Council Act”.

3 **SEC. 2.** *Declaration of Policy.* – Pursuant to Article II, Section 17 of the
4 1987 Constitution, it is hereby declared the policy of the State to give priority to
5 education to foster patriotism and nationalism, accelerate social progress, and
6 promote total human liberation and development. Article XIV, Section 2(4)
7 likewise mandates the State to encourage non-formal, informal, and indigenous
8 learning systems, as well as self-learning, independent, and out-of-school study
9 programs particularly those that respond to community needs.

10 To this end, the State shall give priority to the adoption of measures for the
11 universalization of literacy.

1 **SEC. 3. *Renaming of the Literacy Coordinating Council.*** – The name of
2 the Literacy Coordinating Council (LCC), established pursuant to Republic Act
3 (R.A.) No. 7165, as amended, is hereby changed to National Literacy Council,
4 hereinafter referred to in this Act as the “Council”.

5 The Council shall serve as the lead inter-agency coordinating and advisory
6 body to the various National Government Agencies (NGAs), the Local
7 Government Units (LGUs), and the private sector on matters pertaining to the
8 formulation of policies and the adoption and implementation of measures for the
9 universalization of literacy.

10 The Council shall be attached to the Department of Education (DepEd).

11 **SEC. 4. *Composition of the Council.*** – The Council shall be governed by
12 the following:

- 13 (a) The Secretaries of Education and the Interior and Local Government,
14 as Co-Chairpersons, who may designate their respective
15 undersecretaries as permanent representatives;
16 (b) The National Statistician and Civil Registrar General of the Philippine
17 Statistics Authority (PSA) or a duly designated representative;
18 (c) The Director of the Bureau of Alternative Education (BAE) of the
19 DepEd;
20 (d) The President of the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines; and
21 (e) One (1) representative from the non-government organizations
22 (NGOs).

23 The NGO representative must be a citizen of the Philippines with
24 demonstrated personal or professional commitment and advocacy in the
25 propagation of literacy.

26 Through the adoption of a resolution, the Council shall approve and
27 confirm the election of the NGO representative who shall serve for a term of
28 three (3) years, subject to reappointment on the basis of merit and performance.

1 **SEC. 5. *Council Meetings.*** – The Council shall conduct its regular
2 meetings quarterly and may hold special meetings to consider urgent matters upon
3 the call of the Chairperson or a majority of its members.

4 The Council shall meet at any agreed location within the Philippines, and
5 the presence of a majority of all its incumbent members shall constitute a quorum.

6 The members of the Council shall serve without compensation, but shall be
7 entitled to an appropriate honorarium for attendance at meetings as well as
8 reasonable allowances and reimbursement of expenses related to their participation
9 in the official activities of the Council, in accordance with pertinent laws, rules and
10 regulations.

11 The duly designated representatives to the Council shall be afforded equal
12 opportunity to vote and participate in any deliberation during meetings of the
13 Council. They shall likewise be afforded, whenever necessary, reimbursement of
14 any actual expenses incurred during the performance of Council-related functions
15 and duties, subject to the provisions of existing laws, rules, and regulations.

16 **SEC. 6. *Powers and Functions of the Council.*** – The Council shall
17 exercise the following powers and functions:

18 (a) Act as the lead advisory and coordinating body of the government and
19 initiate, promote and recommend the adoption of policies for all
20 literacy endeavors in the country, as well as the formulation of
21 legislative agenda related to literacy;

22 (b) Formulate a three-year roadmap that shall incorporate strategies on
23 how to achieve zero illiteracy, including relevant measurable targets
24 and indicators for the introduction of interventions that are based on
25 empirical results, and which shall be subject to annual review and
26 updating to determine its implementation status and ensure that the
27 objectives of this Act are achieved;

- 1 (c) Set up and adopt schemes on how to organize and strengthen support
2 structures for the LGUs identified as literacy advocates at the
3 provincial, city, municipal, and barangay levels, including the
4 adoption of strategies to maximize private sector support, cooperation
5 and involvement on literacy programs, projects, and other related
6 activities;
- 7 (d) Promote and coordinate with NGAs, LGUs, NGOs, and academic
8 institutions on matters concerning local community literacy mapping
9 activities, consistent with the local generation and mapping of data
10 related to education under R.A. No. 11510, otherwise known as the
11 Alternative Learning System Act”, and come up with a database for
12 out-of-school children, youth and adults, including persons with
13 disabilities, indigenous peoples, and other marginalized and vulnerable
14 members of society, who may not have availed of or completed their
15 basic education and in need of intervention and support;
- 16 (e) Coordinate with the PSA for the regular conduct of literacy surveys,
17 such as the Functional Literacy Education and Mass Media Survey
18 (FLEMMS), every two years pursuant to Section 9 of this Act;
- 19 (f) Evaluate the literacy situation in the country, propose ways and means
20 for expanding educational opportunities to citizens of varied socio-
21 economic origins, and adopt modern communications technology and
22 other innovative modes of transmitting knowledge to support literacy
23 endeavors at the national and local levels;
- 24 (g) Promote and support initiatives for the conduct of research studies and
25 similar undertakings aimed at enhancing and strengthening the crafting
26 of relevant and timely policy recommendations and for the effective
27 implementation of literacy-related programs, projects, and other
28 activities;

1 (h) Organize periodic assemblies such as, among others, literacy
2 conferences and awards, discover and help strengthen good literacy
3 practices, and engage close partnerships with literacy advocates
4 throughout the country; and

5 (i) Perform such other functions as may be necessary in furtherance of the
6 purposes of this Act.

7 **SEC. 7. *The Secretariat.*** – The BAE shall provide secretariat support and
8 render the following administrative support and technical assistance to the
9 Council:

10 (a) Prepare policy recommendations, plans, and other Council priorities
11 and measures necessary for the advancement of basic and functional
12 literacy, and other basic capabilities of out-of-school children, youth
13 and adults, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, and
14 other marginalized and vulnerable members of society, who may not
15 have availed of or completed their basic education and in need of
16 intervention and support;

17 (b) Consult and coordinate with NGAs, LGUs, NGOs, academic
18 institutions, and other stakeholders on matters relating to the functions
19 of the Council and other matters pertaining to the propagation of
20 literacy endeavors;

21 (c) Provide technical assistance to literacy implementers relative to the
22 programs and projects on literacy;

23 (d) Initiate, organize, and promote the holding of research activities,
24 workshops, conferences, national literacy awards and the like, subject
25 to the approval of the Council;

26 (e) Set up, maintain, and update a management information system on
27 literacy programs and projects, policies, best practices, research

1 studies, statistical data and other relevant information relative to the
2 literacy situation in the country;

3 (f) Coordinate with the PSA in the conduct of the FLEMMS and other
4 similar surveys for purposes of providing a quantitative framework
5 that will serve as one of the bases in the formulation of policies and
6 programs on the improvement of literacy and education status in the
7 country;

8 (g) Recommend programs, projects, and other activities to be included for
9 funding in the annual budget proposal of the Council, including
10 support services in the preparation of the Council's annual budget
11 proposal; and

12 (h) Perform other tasks as may be directed by the Council.

13 **SEC. 8.** *Establishment of Local Literacy Councils through the Local*
14 *School Boards.* – The Council shall promote the establishment of Local Literacy
15 Councils (LLCs) at the provincial, city, and municipal levels, which shall serve as
16 the coordinating and advisory bodies at the local level on matters pertaining to the
17 adoption and implementation of measures for the universalization of literacy.

18 For this purpose, the Local School Boards (LSBs) established pursuant to
19 R.A. No. 7160 or the “Local Government Code of 1991”, as amended, shall act as
20 the de facto LLCs in the provinces, cities and municipalities, with the following
21 functions in addition to Section 9 thereof:

22 (a) Formulate a local roadmap, anchored on the Council's three-year
23 roadmap under Section 6 of this Act, to guide its strategies on how to
24 achieve zero illiteracy in the community, based on empirical data and
25 determined by relevant measurable targets and indicators, and subject
26 to an annual implementation review and assessment;

27 (b) Implement literacy programs and endeavors at the local level,
28 including the identification of priority literacy programs, provision of

1 technical assistance to literacy volunteer workers, program monitoring
2 and evaluation, and coordination with government and non-
3 government partners for program support activities, among others;

4 (c) Ensure the implementation of community literacy mapping activities
5 within the local level through a community-based monitoring system,
6 consistent with R.A. No. 11315 or the “Community-Based Monitoring
7 System Act”, to generate updated and disaggregated data on literacy
8 and introduce literacy interventions and allocate resources based on
9 empirical data; and

10 (d) Coordinate with partner NGOs and other agencies of the government
11 in the identification of out-of-school children, youth and adults,
12 including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, and other
13 marginalized and vulnerable members of the community who are in
14 need of literacy intervention and support, consistent with the local
15 generation and mapping of data related to education under R.A. No.
16 11510, as well as the Child Find System under R.A. No. 11650.

17 The Council shall issue the guidelines necessary for the establishment,
18 monitoring, and evaluation of the LSBs as *de facto* LLCs.

19 **SEC. 9. PSA Literacy Surveys.** – To ensure an evidenced-based
20 formulation of policies and programs on the improvement and universalization of
21 literacy in the country, the PSA is hereby mandated to:

22 (a) Conduct the FLEMMS every two years;

23 (b) Strengthen its core unit that is dedicated to the generation, analysis,
24 utilization, and dissemination of all education and literacy statistics
25 and information under R.A. No. 11315;

26 (c) Develop and manage a nationwide database of such statistics and
27 information; and

(d) Coordinate with other government agencies whose mandates require the conduct of community mapping programs that are relevant to the education sector such as the Department of the Interior and Local Government and the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

SEC. 10. *Transfer of Existing LCC Secretariat and its Appropriations to the BAE.* – Pursuant to Section 7 of this Act, the existing secretariat of the LCC, including the appropriations corresponding to their salaries and other benefits, shall be transferred to and absorbed by the BAE of the DepEd: Provided, That such transfer shall neither cause any diminution in the salaries of the personnel concerned nor loss of rank and seniority: Provided, Further, That the transfer of positions and corresponding appropriations to the BAE shall be subject to the guidelines to be jointly issued by the DepEd and the Department of Budget and Management.

SEC. 11. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary to cover the initial implementation of this Act shall be sourced from the appropriation of the LCC under the current General Appropriations Act (GAA). Thereafter, the amount necessary for its continuous implementation shall be included in the budget of the DepEd under the annual GAA.

SEC. 12. *Submission of Annual Report.* – The Council shall submit to the Senate Committee on Basic Education, and the House of Representatives Committee on Basic Education and Culture a detailed annual report of its accomplishments which shall include, among others, its accomplishments, programs and projects, and policy recommendations for the universalization of literacy in the country.

SEC. 13. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Chairperson of the LCC, in consultation with the members of the Council and other stakeholders, shall issue the rules and regulations implementing its provisions.

1 **SEC. 14. *Repealing Clause.*** – R.A. No. 7165, as amended by R.A. No.
2 10122 otherwise known as “An Act Strengthening the Literacy Coordinating
3 Council by Amending R.A. No. 7165, Otherwise Known as ‘An Act Creating the
4 Literacy Coordinating Council, Defining Its Powers and Functions, Appropriating
5 Funds Therefor and for Other Purposes’”, is hereby repealed. All other laws,
6 executive orders, presidential decrees, administrative orders, rules and regulations,
7 issuances, or parts thereof contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this
8 Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

9 **SEC. 15. *Separability Clause.*** – If any part or provision of this Act is
10 declared invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions not otherwise affected
11 shall remain in force and effect.

12 **SEC. 16. *Effectivity.*** – Notwithstanding the non-issuance of the IRR, this
13 Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or
14 in a newspaper of general circulation.

15
16 *Approved,*