



Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila
TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session
HOUSE BILL NO. **9946**



Introduced by Representative EDGAR R. ERICE

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippine education system is undergoing a profound transformation as digital technologies increasingly become integral to teaching and learning. The experience during the COVID-19 pandemic revealed both the potential of digital education and the deep digital divide that exists among Filipino learners. Millions of students in public schools and State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) struggled to participate effectively in remote and blended learning due to the lack of adequate devices and reliable internet connectivity. This disparity continues to hinder equal access to quality education and limits the capacity of learners to fully engage with modern educational tools and resources.

In the contemporary learning environment, access to digital devices is no longer a luxury but a necessity. Tablets and similar devices enable students to access digital learning materials, participate in online classes, conduct research, collaborate with peers, and develop the digital competencies required in the modern workforce. However, many Filipino families cannot afford to provide such devices for their children, resulting in unequal learning opportunities among students.

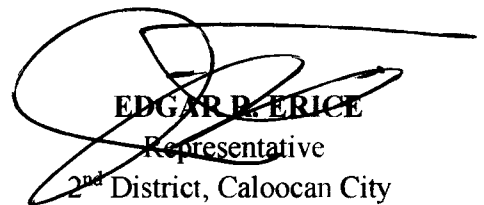
This proposed measure seeks to address this challenge by institutionalizing the “One Tablet, One Student” Program, which aims to provide every Filipino student enrolled in public schools and State Universities and Colleges with a tablet computer to support digital and technology-assisted learning. By ensuring that each learner has access to a personal learning device, the government strengthens the country’s commitment to inclusive, accessible, and future-ready education.

Recognizing that not all students face the same needs, the bill introduces a flexible and equitable mechanism in the distribution of assistance. Students who already own a functional tablet or device may instead receive educational support in the form of an internet or connectivity allowance, thereby ensuring that public funds are utilized efficiently while still supporting the learner's digital access needs. Furthermore, the measure encourages responsible participation by allowing students with sufficient financial capacity to voluntarily opt out of receiving assistance under the program, through mechanisms to be established by public schools and SUCs.

By promoting digital inclusion, this measure aims to empower Filipino students with the tools necessary to thrive in a technology-driven world, enhance the quality of learning, and bridge the digital gap that persists in the country's education sector. The institutionalization of this program also supports the long-term modernization of the Philippine education system and strengthens the capacity of learners to compete in the global knowledge economy.

Through this initiative, the State affirms its commitment to providing inclusive, equitable, and quality education by ensuring that every Filipino student is equipped with the necessary digital tools to thrive in the 21st century learning environment. The institutionalization of this program will help bridge the digital divide, promote digital literacy, enhance access to educational resources, and better prepare Filipino learners for the demands of a technology-driven society.

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



EDGAR B. ERICE
Representative
2nd District, Caloocan City



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AN ACT
INSTITUTIONALIZING THE 'ONE TABLET, ONE STUDENT' PROGRAM FOR
ALL STUDENTS ENROLLED IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND STATE UNIVERSITIES
AND COLLEGES, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

1

2 **SEC. 1. Short Title.** This Act shall be known as the “One Tablet, One Student Act.”.

3

4 **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** It is the policy of the State to protect and promote the right of
5 all citizens to quality, equitable, and accessible education at all levels. Towards this end, the
6 State shall adopt measures to enhance access to learning resources and technologies to ensure
7 inclusive, future-ready education. It recognizes the role of digital empowerment in improving
8 learning outcomes, bridging resource gaps, and preparing Filipino learners for success in an
9 increasingly technology-enabled world.

10

11 **SEC. 3. One Tablet, One Student Program.** There is hereby established the One Tablet, One
12 Student Program ("Program"), which shall provide all Filipino students enrolled in public
13 schools and state universities and colleges (SUCs) with a tablet computer ("tablet") to support

1 digital and technology-assisted learning. Provided, that students who already own a functional
2 personal tablet or device may instead receive educational assistance in the form of internet or
3 connectivity allowance; Provided, further, that all public schools and SUCs shall create a
4 mechanism whereby students with financial capacity to procure their own devices and secure
5 internet access may voluntarily opt out of receiving assistance under this Program.

6
7 **SEC. 4. Implementing Agencies.** The Department of Education (DepEd) and the Commission
8 on Higher Education (CHED) shall be the primary implementing agencies of this Act. In
9 coordination with the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT),
10 and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), they shall:

11 (a) Develop a secure and verifiable system of beneficiary identification, including the
12 assessment of eligibility for device or connectivity support and management of opt-out
13 procedures;

14 (b) Establish an efficient, transparent, and accountable mechanism for the procurement and
15 distribution of tablets, with priority given to disadvantaged, geographically isolated, or high-
16 need areas;

17 (c) Formulate clear and standardized guidelines for use, maintenance, reporting of loss or
18 damage, and return of devices, including protocols for inventory, asset tagging, repair,
19 replacement, and eventual disposal;

20 (d) Provide digital orientation, training, and support to students, teachers, and parents or
21 guardians to ensure the responsible use of tablets and promote digital literacy;

22 (e) Maintain and regularly update a centralized asset tracking system, in coordination with the
23 DICT;

24 (f) Integrate digital literacy, media and information literacy, cybersecurity, data privacy, and
25 responsible use of emerging technologies into the basic education and higher education
26 curricula.

27
28 **SEC 5. Accountability and Device Use.** For students below eighteen (18) years of age, the
29 tablet shall be issued under a shared responsibility arrangement between the school or SUC
30 and the student's parent or guardian. The parent or guardian shall sign a simplified Device
31 Custody and Use Agreement ("Agreement"), written in a language known to them, affirming
32 their responsibility to safeguard the device and ensure its proper use and return. Students,
33 including parents or guardians, are prohibited from selling, leasing, pawning, or misusing the
34 tablets for any purpose other than those expressly stated in the Agreement. Any such act shall
35 result in the forfeiture of the device and may entail administrative or criminal liability under
36 existing laws, as applicable.

1 All incidents of loss, theft, or irreparable damage must be reported to the designated school or
2 SUC official or program focal person within five (5) working days, using a standardized
3 incident report form.

4
5 **SEC. 6. Device Custody, Inventory, and Tracking.** - All tablets distributed under this
6 Program shall remain government property. DepEd and CHED, with support from DICT, shall
7 ensure that all devices are entered into a centralized inventory and tracking system, assigned
8 unique asset codes, and monitored from issuance to return, reallocation, or disposal.

9 Orientation on proper device handling, digital safety, and care shall be mandatory for all
10 beneficiaries prior to issuance.

11
12 **SEC. 7. Environmental Sustainability.** - In partnership with the Department of Environment
13 and Natural Resources (DENR), DepEd and CHED shall develop environmentally sustainable
14 protocols for e-waste management, device recycling, and safe disposal of obsolete or
15 irreparable units. Devices that are no longer usable may be repurposed for training or other
16 educational purposes where appropriate.

17
18 **SEC. 8. Appropriations.** The amount necessary to implement the provisions of this Act shall
19 be included in the annual General Appropriations Act (GAA).

20
21 **Section 9. Other Sources of Funds.** - DepEd, CHED, and DICT may also mobilize additional
22 funding support from local government units (LGUs), private sector donors, and international
23 development partners through official development assistance (ODA) and public-private
24 partnerships.

25 The implementing agencies shall issue guidelines to facilitate cost-sharing arrangements,
26 donation acceptance, and project-based contributions, provided that such support does not
27 compromise procurement integrity, beneficiary selection, or compliance with the provisions of
28 this Act.

29
30 **SEC. 10. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** - Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity
31 of this Act, DepEd and CHED, in coordination with the DICT, DSWD, and DENR, shall
32 promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for its effective implementation.

33
34 **SEC. 11. Separability Clause.** If any provision of this Act is declared invalid or
35 unconstitutional, the remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect.

1 **SEC. 12. Repealing Clause.** All laws, executive orders, issuances, or parts thereof inconsistent
2 with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

3

4 **SEC. 13. Effectivity Clause.** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication
5 in the Official Gazette or in a newspapers of general circulation.

6

7 Approved,