

TWENTIETH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Second Regular Session)



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

House Bill No. 10265

Introduced by Hon. Antonio B. Legarda Jr.

AN ACT
ENHANCING THE SAFETY OF SCHOOLS BY REQUIRING EMERGENCY
RESPONSE AND PARENTAL NOTIFICATION PROTOCOLS, ENSURING THE
SAFETY OF THE SCHOOL PREMISES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

A school should be a place where children learn, grow, and feel safe. Yet recent events have exposed serious gaps in the country's ability to protect students from emergencies, particularly those arising from acts of violence. While Philippine schools routinely conduct earthquake and fire drills, many remain unprepared to respond to incidents such as shootings, stabbings, and other security threats.

The need to strengthen school safety has become increasingly urgent. On June 2026, three students were killed and at least twenty others were injured after two students, aged 14 and 15, opened fire inside San Jose National High School in Tacloban City.¹ The tragedy shocked the country because of its unprecedented nature and because the school community was ill-prepared to respond. According to authorities, the school, which has nearly 2,000 students, had no protocols in place for such an incident. Students panicked and ran for safety, inadvertently exposing themselves to the shooters instead of taking cover.²

Disturbingly, the Tacloban shooting was not an isolated incident. Days earlier, a Grade 11 student in Cavite was stabbed multiple times inside a school campus, while in another incident, a Grade 8 student entered a Grade 5 classroom carrying a kitchen

¹ Reuters, *Philippines rethinks school safety after rare shooting kills three*, 23 June 2026, accessed at: <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/philippines-rethinks-school-safety-after-rare-shooting-kills-three-2026-06-23/>

² *Id.*

knife and attacked several younger students.³ These incidents have exposed critical gaps in school safety and emergency preparedness, highlighting the urgent need to strengthen existing protocols and equip schools to respond effectively to both natural disasters and human-induced emergencies before more lives are put at risk.

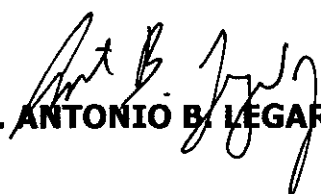
In response, the Department of Education (DepEd) has begun strengthening campus security by reviewing stricter measures such as mandatory bag inspections, tighter control of school access points, and closer coordination with law enforcement agencies to prevent similar incidents.⁴ While these steps are necessary, they remain administrative measures that may be implemented inconsistently across schools. Given the increasing incidence of school-related violence, there is a clear need for a statutory framework that establishes uniform, enforceable, and sustainable standards for school safety nationwide.

This bill institutionalizes comprehensive safety and emergency preparedness measures in all public and private basic education institutions. It requires schools to establish emergency hotlines with nearby responders, implement mass notification systems for parents and legal guardians, provide essential emergency equipment, and secure school premises through appropriate safety infrastructure and CCTV systems.

The measure likewise requires regular training for school personnel and students to prepare them for both natural disasters and human-induced emergencies. It also creates a School Safety Council in every city and municipality to strengthen coordination among local government units, emergency responders, and school administrators in implementing and monitoring school safety measures.

By setting uniform standards for prevention, preparedness, and response, this bill seeks to ensure that every school is equipped to protect its students and provide a safe learning environment.

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


HON. ANTONIO B. LEGARDA, JR.

³ Philippine Daily Inquirer, *DepEd, PNP alarmed by 2 school stabbing incidents in Cavite*, 22 June 2026, accessed at: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/2250252/deped-pnp-alarmed-by-2-school-stabbing-incidents-in-cavite>; Philippine News Agency, *Schools urged to tighten security after Cavite stabbing incident*, 17 June 2026, accessed at: https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1277425?_cf_chl_f_tk=fHje9Q0DjEmBFZ8xvX60lBcOUTFbZkEugJCdvEPXRLY-1782782010-1.0.1.1-3XYMgkA1f6kglicraU8hNbs5T7Wr6g2S3K5bvjXyDW4

⁴ Philippine News Agency, *DepEd tightens school safety, anti-bullying measures nationwide*, 26 June 2026, accessed at: <http://pna.gov.ph/articles/1278143>

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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 referred to as the "*Safer Schools Act*".
- 2 Section 2. ***Declaration of Policy.*** – It is the policy of the State to ensure a safe
3 learning environment through the implementation of physical safeguards, emergency
4 preparedness measures, and response protocols for natural and human-induced
5 emergencies. To this end, the State shall implement a uniform set of emergency
6 response procedures to be adopted and observed by all basic education schools.
- 7 Section 3. ***Definition of Terms.*** – For purposes of this Act, the following terms shall
8 be defined as follows:
- 9 a) ***Emergency*** refers to a serious, unexpected, and often dangerous situation
10 requiring immediate action, including both natural and human-induced
11 incidents, such as earthquakes, fire, medical emergencies, crimes, acts of
12 violence, security threats, and other similar incidents involving outsiders,
13 students, teachers, school personnel, or any other person; and

1 b) *Hotline* refers to a dedicated communication channel that enables schools to
2 immediately contact police stations, fire stations, hospitals, and other
3 emergency response units during emergencies.

4 Section 4. **Coverage.** – This Act shall apply to all basic education institutions teaching
5 Kinder to Grade 12 students.

6 Section 5. **Emergency Response Infrastructure.** – All schools shall establish and
7 maintain dedicated emergency communication channels with the nearest police
8 station, fire station, hospital, and other emergency response units. Such
9 communication channels shall be maintained in operational condition at all times and
10 shall be used exclusively for emergencies.

11 Section 6. **Notification of Parents and Legal Guardians.** – All schools shall
12 establish and maintain a reliable means of immediately communicating with affected
13 parents or legal guardians, or with all parents and legal guardians when warranted by
14 the nature of the emergency, regarding emergencies involving students. Such
15 communication system shall be capable of simultaneously disseminating messages
16 simultaneously to a large number of recipients, clearly identifying the school as the
17 sender, and incorporating appropriate measures to ensure the authenticity of official
18 communications.

19 Section 7. **Safety Equipment.** - All schools shall have the necessary equipment for
20 emergency use, including but not limited to emergency lights, fire extinguishers, first-
21 aid kits, protective equipment, and other appropriate emergency supplies, sufficient
22 and appropriate for the size of the school's student population.

23 Section 8. **Safety Infrastructure.** - In addition to complying with applicable laws,
24 rules, and regulations on the structural safety and disaster resilience of school
25 buildings, all schools shall implement appropriate physical security measures to protect
26 students, school personnel, and visitors from human-induced threats. To this end, all
27 schools shall be required to have:

28 a) Appropriate perimeter security measures, including gates, perimeter walls,
29 fencing, or other physical barriers, as may be suitable to the school's location,
30 layout, and operational requirements, to regulate access to school premises

1 and enhance the safety of students until the arrival of emergency responders;
2 and

- 3 b) Closed-circuit television systems (CCTVs) or other comparable security
4 monitoring systems to monitor all entrances, exits, critical access points and
5 other appropriate common areas within the school premises, subject to
6 applicable laws on data privacy and the protection of personal information.

7 Section 9. ***School Safety and Emergency Response Plan.*** – Every school shall
8 prepare, adopt, implement, and periodically update a School Safety and Emergency
9 Response Plan appropriate to its size, location, and risk profile. The Plan shall include,
10 at a minimum:

- 11 a) Emergency communication procedures;
12 b) Evaluation and lockdown protocols;
13 c) Coordination procedures with emergency response units;
14 d) Procedures for the reunification of students with their parents or legal
15 guardians;
16 e) Designation of responsible school personnel during emergencies; and
17 f) Such other measures as may be prescribed by the Department of Education.

18 Section 10. ***Staff Training.*** - All school staff shall undergo regular training on threat
19 identification, risk assessment, emergency response, coordination with emergency
20 responders, and other appropriate safety and security measures. Such training shall
21 include identifying possible cases of kidnapping, bullying, harassment, self-harm
22 indicators, violent behavior, and other situations that may pose a threat to students.
23 All schools shall establish protocols for identifying and reporting potential threats to
24 the appropriate authorities.

25 Section 11. ***Student Training.*** - All schools shall ensure that students regularly
26 undergo age-appropriate emergency preparedness and response training drills
27 covering both natural disasters and human-induced emergencies.

28 Section 12. ***School Safety Council.*** - All cities and municipalities shall have a School
29 Safety Council, hereafter referred to as the Council, consisting of the following:

- 30 a) The Mayor as Chair;
31 b) The Schools Division Superintendent as Vice-Chair;

- c) The Chief of Police;
- d) The City Fire Director or Municipal Fire Marshal;
- e) Principals of all public and private basic education institutions; and
- f) The Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Officer (LDRMO).

Heads of departments in the local government unit may also be included as members by the Mayor.

Section 13. ***Duties and Responsibilities of the Council.*** - The Council shall have the following duties and responsibilities:

- a) Formulate and implement all policies and protocols necessary for the proper implementation of this Act in their city or municipality;
- b) Monitor compliance of all schools with the policies and protocols provided;
- c) Identify failures of compliance and recommend corrective actions;
- d) Recommend appropriate administrative action to the relevant regional office of the Department of Education.
- e) Conduct an annual review of the implementation of this Act within their respective jurisdictions and recommend improvements to school safety policies and emergency response protocols.

Section 14. ***Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – The Department of Education (DepEd) shall, in consultation with the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), the Philippine National Police (PNP), the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP), the Department of Health (DOH), the Office of Civil Defense (OCD) and representatives of public and private basic education institutions, promulgate the rules and regulations for the proper implementation of this Act within ninety (90) days from its effectivity.

Section 15. ***Appropriations.*** – The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current year's appropriations of the departments, agencies, and local government units concerned. Thereafter, such amount shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act and the local appropriations ordinance of local government units.

1 Section 16. ***Separability Clause.*** – If any part or provision of this Act is held invalid
2 or unconstitutional, the other provisions not affected shall remain in full force and
3 effect.

4 Section 17. ***Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, executive orders, issuances, decrees, rules
5 and regulations or any part thereof which are inconsistent with or contrary to the
6 provisions of this Act are deemed amended, modified, or repealed accordingly.

7 Section 18. ***Effectivity.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
8 publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,