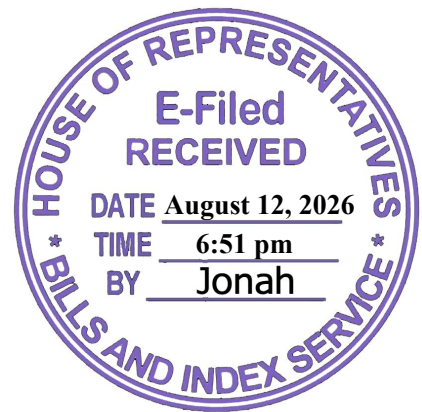


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 10761



Introduced by **Representative AGATHA “AGAY” CRUZ**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Philippine education has long relied on a tri-focalized structure, with the Department of Education (DepEd), Commission on Higher Education (CHED), and Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) exercising distinct statutory mandates. While specialization has its virtues, without sustained coordination, it can also lead to fragmentation.

This concern lies at the heart of the findings of the Second Congressional Commission on Education (EDCOM II). In its Final Report *Turning Point: A Decade of Necessary Reforms*¹, EDCOM II described a systemic “proficiency collapse.” Only 30.5% of Grade 3 students meet proficiency standards. This low baseline declines sharply to 0.40% by Grade 12.² The Philippine Statistics Authority likewise reported that while 93.1% of Filipinos aged 10 to 64 possess basic literacy, only 70.8% are functionally literate³, revealing a substantial gap between the ability to read words and the ability to understand and use information.

This documented learning crisis cannot be solved through isolated reforms within individual agencies. Early learning affects later achievement; teacher preparation affects classroom instruction; curriculum must connect with further education and training; qualifications must translate across learning pathways; and education itself must ultimately respond to the skills Filipinos need to participate meaningfully in society and the economy.

EDCOM II found that while tri-focalization brought greater focus to the respective education subsectors, it did not produce corresponding improvements in learning outcomes.⁴ Research found no statistically significant improvement in education

¹ Available at https://edcom2.gov.ph/media/2026/01/EDCOM-II-Y03-for-web-012626_final.pdf

² Student proficiency rates plunge from 30% in Grade 3 to 0.47% in Grade 12, SECOND CONGRESSIONAL COMMISSION ON EDUCATION, 16 January 2026, available at <https://edcom2.gov.ph/student-proficiency-rates-plunge-from-30-in-grade-3-to-0-47-in-grade-12/>

³ For every 10 Filipinos, 9 have Basic Literacy, while 7 have Functional Literacy, PHILIPPINE STATISTICS AUTHORITY, 4 April 2025, available at <https://psa.gov.ph/content/every-10-filipinos-9-have-basic-literacy-while-7-have-functional-literacy>

⁴ Fixing the Foundations: A matter of national survival, EDCOM II Year Two Report, SECOND CONGRESSIONAL COMMISSION ON EDUCATION, 2025, available at <https://edcom2.gov.ph/media/2025/01/EDCOM-2-Year-2-Report-Fixing-the-Foundations-2025.pdf>

outcomes attributable to tri-focalization and underscored the need for stronger coordination and oversight. The problem is not the absence of coordinating bodies. It is the absence of a permanent center of coordination with sufficient authority and continuity to make policies, plans, data, investments, and reforms pull in the same direction.

The Executive Branch has already recognized this need through the creation of the Education and Workforce Development Group under Administrative Order No. 36 (s. 2025). This bill seeks to institutionalize that whole-of-government approach through the creation of the National Coordinating Council for Education (NCCE) under the Office of the President, so that education reform does not depend on temporary administrative arrangements or begin anew with every change in leadership.

Anchored on the National Education and Workforce Development Plan 2026–2035, the NCCE shall serve as the primary mechanism for strategic coordination, policy alignment, convergence planning, and monitoring of education and workforce development reforms. It shall promote coherent policies across the education continuum, strengthen human resource and labor market planning, facilitate seamless learner pathways and lifelong learning, improve education-to-employment linkages, coordinate complementary programs, and advance secure and interoperable education and workforce data.

This measure does not create another bureaucratic layer. It favors the use of existing mechanisms, provides for the rationalization of overlapping bodies, and succeeds to the coordinating functions of the existing Education and Workforce Development Group. The answer to fragmented government is not necessarily more government, but government that works together.

Education is a continuum—from the first word a child learns to read to the skills a young person carries into work and adult life. Government should govern it with the same continuity. Our education system must learn to work as one system.

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


AGATHA "AGAY" CRUZ
Representative, Fifth Legislative District of Bulacan



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
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HOUSE BILL NO. 10761

Introduced by **Representative AGATHA “AGAY” CRUZ**

AN ACT
CREATING THE NATIONAL COORDINATING COUNCIL FOR EDUCATION,
DEFINING ITS MANDATE, POWERS AND FUNCTIONS, INSTITUTIONALIZING
COORDINATED EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
GOVERNANCE, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

1 **Section 1. *Short Title.*** – This Act shall be known as the “National Coordinating
2 Council for Education (NCCE) Act.”
3

4 **Section 2. *Declaration of Policy.*** – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to
5 protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels and to take
6 appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all.
7

8 Consistent with the constitutional mandate to establish, maintain, and support a
9 complete, adequate, and integrated system of education relevant to the needs of the
10 people and society, the State shall promote a coherent, learner-centered, inclusive,
11 equitable, evidence-based, and outcome-oriented education and workforce development
12 system.
13

14 Toward this end, the State shall establish a permanent mechanism for strong,
15 effective, and sustained coordination among agencies responsible for education, training,
16 skills development, employment, and national development to ensure continuity of
17 reforms, coherence of policies and public investments, seamless learner pathways, and
18 accountability for education and workforce outcomes across administrations.
19

20 **Section 3. *Creation of the National Coordinating Council for Education.*** – There
21 is hereby created under the Office of the President a high-level inter-agency body to be
22 known as the National Coordinating Council for Education (NCCE), hereinafter referred
23 to as the Council.

1
2 The Council shall serve as the primary whole-of-government mechanism for
3 strategic coordination, policy alignment, convergence planning, and monitoring of
4 education and workforce development reforms across the Executive Branch. It shall
5 promote coherence among agency policies, plans, programs, performance targets, and
6 proposed resource allocations in accordance with the National Education and Workforce
7 Development Plan (NEWDP) and subsequent national education and workforce
8 development plans.
9

10 **Section 4. *Composition of the Council.*** – The President of the Philippines shall
11 serve as Chairperson of the Council. The President may designate the Executive Secretary
12 or a member of the Cabinet as Vice Chairperson to oversee operational coordination and
13 preside over meetings in the absence of the President.
14

15 The following shall be members of the Council:
16

- 17 (a) Secretary of the Department of Education (DepEd);
- 18 (b) Chairperson of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED);
- 19 (c) Director General of the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority
20 (TESDA);
- 21 (d) Secretary of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST);
- 22 (e) Secretary of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE);
- 23 (f) Secretary of the Department of Economy, Planning, and Development
24 (DEPDev);
- 25 (g) Secretary of the Department of Migrant Workers (DMW); and
- 26 (h) Secretary of the Department of Budget and Management (DBM).
27

28 All Members, in their capacity as heads of their respective agencies, shall extend
29 full and prompt assistance and cooperation to the Council, and shall furnish such
30 information and data as may be necessary for the discharge of its mandates. They shall
31 likewise be responsible for ensuring the proper and efficient implementation, within their
32 respective jurisdictions, of programs, projects, and activities aligned with the NEWDP.
33

34 **Section 5. *Powers and Functions.*** – The Council shall have the following powers
35 and functions:
36

- 37 (a) Coordinate and harmonize policies, plans, programs, performance targets,
38 and major cross-agency initiatives involving education and workforce
39 development;
- 40 (b) Oversee, monitor, and periodically review the coordinated implementation
41 of the NEWDP and promote coherence between such Plan and other national
42 development plans;
- 43 (c) Identify policy, institutional, regulatory, financing, and implementation gaps
44 affecting learner progression from early childhood education through basic

- 1 education, technical-vocational education and training, higher education,
2 lifelong learning, and employment;
- 3 (d) Recommend to the President and, upon approval, coordinate common
4 government-wide priorities and measurable outcomes for education and
5 workforce development, without prejudice to the respective statutory
6 mandates of implementing agencies;
- 7 (e) Coordinate the development of a comprehensive human resource
8 development strategy for the education sector, including projections and
9 measures relating to the supply, deployment, specialization, professional
10 development, and welfare of teaching, academic, training, and essential non-
11 teaching personnel;
- 12 (f) Strengthen, through the appropriate agencies, the national labor market and
13 skills information system to provide timely and reliable evidence on current
14 and projected occupations, skills demand, employment outcomes, wage
15 trends, geographic labor demand, emerging industries, and other relevant
16 indicators for education, training, career guidance, scholarship, and
17 workforce planning;
- 18 (g) Promote seamless learner pathways, credit transfer, recognition of prior
19 learning, qualifications comparability, and lifelong learning, in coordination
20 with the Philippine Qualifications Framework-National Coordinating
21 Council and pursuant to existing laws;
- 22 (h) Coordinate, through the appropriate agencies, scholarships, grants, student
23 financial assistance, research, teacher and faculty development, skills
24 training, and other capacity-building programs to reduce unnecessary
25 duplication and address priority gaps;
- 26 (i) Facilitate, through the appropriate agencies, skills-gap analyses and
27 partnerships among government, educational institutions, industry,
28 employers, workers, professional organizations, and other relevant
29 stakeholders, including partnerships for internships, apprenticeships,
30 enterprise-based training, and other lawful forms of work-based learning;
- 31 (j) Coordinate the adoption and implementation of common standards and
32 arrangements for the secure and interoperable exchange of education and
33 workforce data, consistent with standards prescribed by agencies authorized
34 by law to issue the same and subject to the provisions of this Act;
- 35 (k) Coordinate responses to issues requiring action by two or more agencies
36 involved in education and workforce development;
- 37 (l) Monitor priority reforms identified in the NEWDP, the recommendations of
38 the Second Congressional Commission on Education, and such subsequent
39 reforms as may be adopted by the Government;
- 40 (m) Review existing inter-agency mechanisms involving education and
41 workforce development and, subject to the provisions of this Act and
42 Republic Act No. 12231, recommend to the appropriate authority their
43 retention, consolidation, restructuring, deactivation, or abolition;
- 44 (n) Recommend to the President priority legislative measures relating to

- 1 education and workforce development and, when appropriate, endorse such
2 measures for consideration through the Legislative-Executive Development
3 Advisory Council;
- 4 (o) Monitor and evaluate the implementation and outcomes of coordinated
5 education and workforce development reforms in accordance with Section 14
6 of this Act; and
- 7 (p) Perform such other functions as may be necessary to carry out the purposes
8 of this Act, consistent with existing laws and without diminishing or
9 transferring powers vested by the Constitution or by law in another agency
10 or institution.
11

12 **Section 6. *National Education and Workforce Development Plan.*** – The NEWDP
13 2026–2035, as adopted by Congress as the ten-year policy framework of the National
14 Government, shall serve as the initial strategic framework for the coordinated
15 implementation of education and workforce development policies under this Act.
16

17 The Council shall promote the effective and coordinated implementation of the
18 NEWDP and establish an appropriate framework for monitoring its outcomes, targets,
19 responsibilities, and resource requirements.
20

21 The Council shall periodically review the implementation and continuing
22 relevance of the NEWDP and may recommend such adjustments as may be necessary in
23 light of emerging education, workforce, demographic, technological, social, and economic
24 conditions.
25

26 Prior to the expiration of the existing NEWDP, the Council shall coordinate the
27 preparation of a successor NEWDP. The preparation and substantial revision of the
28 NEWDP shall include appropriate consultation with relevant government agencies,
29 educational institutions, industry, labor, local government units, learners, educators, civil
30 society, and other stakeholders.
31

32 **Section 7. *Education and Workforce Data Governance and Interoperability.*** – The
33 Council shall coordinate, through the appropriate agencies, the development and
34 implementation of an interoperable education and workforce data architecture capable of
35 supporting longitudinal analysis of learner participation, progression, completion,
36 qualifications, training, and employment outcomes.
37

38 Interoperability among existing government information systems shall be
39 preferred over the creation of new or duplicative centralized databases.
40

41 The collection, processing, sharing, retention, and disclosure of personal data
42 pursuant to this section shall comply with Republic Act No. 10173, otherwise known as
43 the “Data Privacy Act of 2012,” its implementing rules and regulations, and other
44 applicable laws and issuances.

1
2 The Council shall coordinate with the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA),
3 Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT), National Privacy
4 Commission, and other concerned agencies in promoting common definitions, data
5 standards, interoperability protocols, cybersecurity safeguards, and data sharing
6 arrangements.

7
8 **Section 8. *Technical and Inter-agency Mechanisms.*** – The Council may establish
9 such technical working groups, committees, advisory bodies, or other mechanisms as may
10 be necessary to carry out its mandate.

11
12 To the extent practicable, the Council shall utilize existing inter-agency
13 mechanisms and avoid the creation of bodies whose functions substantially duplicate
14 those of existing government entities.

15
16 The Council may call upon the assistance of departments, agencies, government
17 instrumentalities, educational institutions, local government units, industry, labor, civil
18 society, research institutions, professional organizations, and other relevant stakeholders
19 as may be necessary in the performance of its functions.

20
21 **Section 9. *Rationalization and Convergence of Inter-Agency Bodies.*** – The Council
22 shall, in coordination with DBM and other concerned agencies, review existing inter-
23 agency councils, committees, task forces, and similar mechanisms relating to education
24 and workforce development for purposes of identifying duplicative, overlapping,
25 obsolete, or substantially similar functions and improving policy coherence and
26 administrative efficiency.

27
28 The Council may recommend to the President, the Committee on Optimizing the
29 Executive Branch (COEB) established pursuant to Republic Act No. 12231, otherwise
30 known as the “Government Optimization Act,” or such other competent authority, as
31 appropriate, the retention, consolidation, restructuring, deactivation, abolition, or other
32 rationalization of such mechanisms in accordance with law.

33
34 Nothing in this Act shall authorize the Council, by itself, to abolish, merge,
35 consolidate, transfer, deactivate, reorganize, or otherwise modify the statutory mandate
36 of any government agency, office, council, committee, or body.

37
38 **Section 10. *Council Secretariat.*** – There shall be a Council Secretariat under the
39 Office of the President, which shall serve as the central technical, analytical, monitoring,
40 and program management arm of the Council.

41
42 The Secretariat shall be headed by an Executive Director with the rank of
43 Undersecretary, who shall be appointed by the President and shall possess demonstrated
44 competence and experience in education policy, public administration, economics,

workforce development, or related fields.

Section 11. *Transition from the Education and Workforce Development Group.* – The Council established under this Act shall succeed to the coordinating functions of the Education and Workforce Development Group (EWDG) established under Administrative Order No. 36, series of 2025.

Upon the organization and first meeting of the Council, the EWDG shall cease to operate as a separate inter-agency body.

The records, data, ongoing coordinating initiatives, and other resources specifically assigned or made available to the EWDG that are necessary for the implementation of this Act shall be transferred or otherwise disposed of in accordance with applicable laws, rules, and regulations.

The Office of the President shall ensure the continuity of ongoing education and workforce development reforms during the transition.

Upon the organization of the Council, Administrative Order No. 36, series of 2025, shall be deemed superseded to the extent that its provisions have been incorporated into or are inconsistent with this Act.

Section 12. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current appropriations of the Office of the President and such other funds as may be legally available for the coordinating functions of the existing Education and Workforce Development Group, subject to applicable budgeting, accounting, and auditing laws, rules, and regulations.

Thereafter, the amounts necessary for the continued implementation of this Act, including the authorized staffing and operational requirements of the Council Secretariat, shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

Section 13. *Separability Clause.* – If any part or provision of this Act is held unconstitutional or invalid, the remainder thereof not otherwise affected shall remain in full force and effect.

Section 14. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, executive orders, presidential decrees, administrative orders, rules and regulations, issuances, or parts thereof inconsistent with or contrary to the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or amended 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,