



Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS

Second Regular Session

House Bill No. 11421



Introduced by Representative Jernie Jett V. Nisay

EXPLANATORY NOTE

In 2024, only 48.8%, of Filipino households had access to the Internet at home. While access was highest in the National Capital Region and Central Luzon at 68.7% and 61.3%, respectively, only 21.2% of households in the Zamboanga Peninsula and 27.7% in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao had access to the Internet at home. This disparity is reflected in public education, where 39,972, or 69.3%, of schools were reported to have below ideal student to device ratios.

These figures highlight the continuing need to bridge the digital divide and ensure that Filipino learners, regardless of where they live or their economic circumstances, have meaningful access to technology in education.

Hence, this proposed measure seeks to institutionalize the Public Schools of the Future in Technology Program by providing public schools with reliable Internet connectivity, appropriate ICT devices and equipment, digital learning resources, and adequately trained teachers. It likewise promotes digital literacy, online safety, and the responsible use of technology in teaching and learning.

Technology should serve as a tool to improve education, not become another source of inequality. By strengthening digital infrastructure and ensuring that teachers and learners are equipped to use technology effectively, this measure seeks to give every Filipino student a fairer opportunity to learn and prepare for the future.

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


REP. JERNIE JETT V. NISAY
Pusong Pinoy Partylist



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AN ACT
ESTABLISHING THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF THE FUTURE IN TECHNOLOGY
AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

Section 1. Short Title. — This Act shall be known as the “Public Schools of the Future in Technology (PSOFT) Act”

ARTICLE I
POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES

Sec. 2. Declaration of Policy. — Cognizant of the necessity of adopting innovative technologies to attain development in more positive and transformative ways, the State shall:

(a) Uphold the constitutional mandate to accord the highest priority to quality education by providing appropriate mechanisms and resources to ensure the enjoyment of quality education and services by all Filipino students, regardless of social and economic status;

(b) Harness technological innovations, approaches, and instruments in the teaching and learning processes that would enhance the performance of students and teachers;

(c) Provide all learners with the opportunity to enhance individual capabilities and knowledge through information and communications technology (ICT);

- (d) Create a system that shall promote and regulate the use of digital technology in public education;
- (e) Enhance the learning experience of students by providing them access to digitized copies of necessary reference materials and digital and online content through the use of ICT and other related technologies for the advancement of education in the country;
- (f) Provide an accessible complementary mode of learning to allow students to continue their education during national health emergencies;
- (g) Encourage the wider participation of private groups, local government units (LGUs), and community-based organizations in content generation and the utilization of the broader spheres of science and technology; and
- (h) Promote public and private partnership in improving access to quality education and lifelong learning.

Sec. 3. Objectives. — This Act shall pursue the following objectives:

- (a) Establish an Interagency Taskforce to craft and implement the road map for the PSOFT;
- (b) Institutionalize a program for the integration of digital technology and innovation in public basic education through the PSOFT Road Map;
- (c) Identify key components of the PSOFT Road Map; and
- (d) Provide a public-private partnership (PPP) mechanism to facilitate the attainment of the objectives of the PSOFT Road Map.

ARTICLE II DEFINITION OF TERMS

Sec. 4. Definition of Terms. — As used in this Act:

- (a) *Fourth Industrial Revolution* — refers to the ongoing automation of traditional manufacturing and industrial practices using modern smart technology by integrating advances in large-scale machine-to-machine communication, artificial intelligence, genetic engineering, the Internet of Things, and other technologies for increased automation, improved communication and self-monitoring, and production of smart machines that can analyze and diagnose issues without the need for human intervention;
- (b) *High Touch, High Tech Framework* — refers to a policy framework supported by the United Nations Education Commission that espouses the need for educators to find a balance between the more modern electronically-delivered and digitally-supported method of teaching and the traditional face-to-face mode, the latter being teaching

1 methods that are founded on a teacher's capability to identify, develop, and improve an
2 individual student's academic weakness;

3 (c) *Internet safety policy* — refers to an age-appropriate, research-based policy that
4 regulates the safe, ethical, and responsible use of the Internet in public education,
5 promotes an informed and critical understanding of the Internet, and the education of
6 children and communities about how to prevent or respond to problems or dangers
7 related to the Internet and new media; and

8 (d) *New media* — refers to emerging digital, computerized, or network information and
9 communication technologies that often have interactive capacities, which includes e-
10 mail, instant messaging, text messaging, web sites, blogs, interactive gaming, social
11 media, cellphones, and mobile devices.

12 **ARTICLE III** 13 **PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF THE FUTURE IN TECHNOLOGY**

14 **Sec. 5.** *Public Schools of the Future in Technology (PSOFT) Program.* — There
15 is hereby instituted a PSOFT Program in all public elementary and secondary schools.

16 The PSOFT Program shall adopt the following principles upon administering
17 basic education in the public school system:

18 (a) Establish a system of upgrading and replacing outdated technology;

19 (b) Broaden and maximize the use of ICT to aid learning;

20 (c) Provide technical support to maintain ICT and other technology;

21 (d) Train and support teachers and students on ICT and other technology;

22 (e) Develop educators to use ICT effectively in the classroom; and

23 (f) Ensure that the balance between modern and traditional methods of teaching
24 are equally utilized to obtain optimum learning outcomes.

25 **Sec. 6.** *Creation of the PSOFT Inter-Agency Task Force (PSOFT-IATF).* —
26 There is hereby created the PSOFT-IATF.

27 The PSOFT-IATF shall, in consultation with concerned non-government entities,
28 including private companies, non-profit organizations, and private education
29 institutions, develop the PSOFT Road Map, a consolidation of development plans,
30 programs, and projects to be implemented by various departments and agencies of the
31 national government for the purpose of advancing digital technology and innovation in
32 public basic education.

33 The PSOFT-IATF shall be composed of the Secretary of the Department of
34 Education (DepEd) as Chairperson and the following as members: (1) Secretary of the

1 Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT); (2) Secretary of
2 the Department of Science and Technology (DOST); (3) Secretary of the National
3 Economic and Development Authority (NEDA); (4) Secretary of the Department of
4 Budget and Management (DBM); and (5) Director General of the Philippine Space
5 Agency (PhilSA).

6 The PSOFT-IATF shall finalize the PSOFT Road Map within twelve (12) months
7 from the effectivity of this Act, in accordance with national development goals. The
8 PSOFT Road Map shall be incorporated in the Philippine Development Plan.

9 The Secretaries of the DepEd, DICT and the Director General of the PhilSA
10 may recommend for the creation of positions as they deem necessary for the effective
11 implementation of this Act, subject to the approval of the DBM, in accordance with civil
12 service laws, rules and regulations.

13 The Department of Social Welfare and Development shall formulate a program
14 extending assistance to marginalized and disadvantaged students to ensure that they
15 may fully participate in the PSOFT Road Map.

16 **Sec. 7. *PSOFT Road Map.*** — The PSOFT Road Map shall serve as the basis
17 for programs and projects aimed at improving the quality of education through the use
18 of digital technology.

19 The PSOFT Road Map shall be subject to review and amendment, if necessary,
20 every three (3) years.

21 **Sec. 8. *Components of the Roadmap.*** — The PSOFT Road Map shall include
22 the following:

23 (a) Physical and Technological Infrastructure

24 (1) Universal Access to Internet for Public Schools

25 (2) Annual Investment Program for ICT Devices, Tools, and Equipment

26 (b) Enhanced Digital Education Program

27 (1) National Human Resource Development

28 (2) Training and Development of DepEd personnel

29 (c) Digital Reforms in Public School Administration

30 (1) Internet Safety Policy

31 (2) Strengthening the Enhanced Basic Education Information System (EBEIS)

32 (3) Digital Alternative Learning System (ALS)

(d) Development of Online Learning Portals

(1) DepEd E-Learning Resources

(2) Public Online Library

ARTICLE IV PHYSICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Sec. 9. *Universal Access to the Internet in Public Schools.* — All public basic education schools shall be provided access to the Internet for the purpose of reducing the disparity in computing and information technology knowledge among public school learners and raising the standards of Philippine education.

In addition to traditional means of accessing the Internet, such as commercially available connections or existing land-based initiatives of government programs to expand access to the Internet, the PSOFT Road Map shall exhaust all options in ensuring internet connectivity for all public schools.

In order to provide the remote areas with digital connectivity, the PSOFT Road Map shall provide cost-effective options for establishing a telecommunication satellite or installing fiber optic technology infrastructure as part of the National Government Program under the DICT, DOST, and PhilSA.

The necessary funding for the conduct of studies to determine the feasibility of implementing a Telecommunication Satellite Program, through building, purchasing, or leasing of a satellite, shall be appropriated in accordance with the PSOFT Road Map.

Sec. 10. *ICT Devices, Tools, and Equipment.* — The DepEd shall provide the following equipment and services in all public elementary and secondary schools: personal computers (PCs), laptops, tablets, learning devices, digital classroom equipment, and internet and hybrid intranet connectivity.

The PSOFT Road Map shall include a plan for the procurement of PCs, laptops or tablets for the educational needs of all elementary and secondary public schools. All learners shall be provided with the necessary learning devices as stipulated in the PSOFT Road Map. Should budgetary constraints prevent the attainment of such target, the national government shall endeavor to meet a ratio of one (1) device for every two (2) learners from Grades 4-6 to ensure that learners can make use of productivity tools in the conduct of regular classes. The national government shall also maintain one (1) device for every fifteen (15) learners from Grades 7-12 to ensure that learners can avail of weekly classes on ICT topics that require higher computing power.

The PSOFT Road Map shall provide for the establishment of functional digital classrooms in all public schools. Digital classrooms shall be equipped with digital boards, computers, wireless router, multimedia projector, printer, and other necessary tools and devices.

1 The PSOFT Road Map shall likewise provide for stable and reliable internet and
2 hybrid intranet connectivity. Educators in public schools shall make use of ICT and
3 hybrid intranet connectivity as presentation tools to complement traditional teaching
4 methods. The DepEd shall, with the technical assistance of DICT, develop an
5 administrative system in all public schools utilizing hybrid intranet connectivity in order
6 to enhance organizational management and administration, and streamline front office
7 procedures.

8 **Sec. 11. PSOFT Pilot Schools.** — The national government shall establish
9 PSOFT pilot schools in the academic year following the effectivity of this Act. The pilot
10 schools shall be located in Metro Manila, Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao and shall fully
11 comply with the requirements of Article IV in this Act, as follows:

12 (a) The pilot school shall have full, unrestricted access to the internet and for this
13 purpose shall be equipped with wireless technology or such other modes of
14 connectivity that may be developed: Provided, That school administrators shall
15 closely supervise the access of learners to content in order to protect them from
16 inappropriate, violent, or immoral material;

17 (b) Teachers shall be adequately trained in all technologies that the pilot schools
18 shall adopt for the use of learners;

19 (c) All pilot schools shall employ trained information technology specialists to
20 assist faculty and learners; and

21 (d) All pilot schools shall provide each teacher and learner with the appropriate
22 ICT devices, tools, and equipment to ensure optimum satisfaction in both the
23 teaching and learning experiences.

24 The DepEd shall, in coordination with NEDA, conduct an impact study of the
25 pilot schools to determine its potential in improving the quality of education. Additional
26 pilot schools may be established in the following years, subject to the availability of
27 funds and through cooperative arrangements with LGUs and the public sector.

28 **ARTICLE V** 29 **ENHANCED DIGITAL EDUCATION**

30 **Sec. 12. National Human Resource Development.** — Students in public
31 elementary and secondary schools must be prepared for the disruptive technologies
32 that come with the Fourth Industrial Revolution and have a significant impact on skills
33 requirements and on creating a range of opportunities for them in the future.

34 To better equip students to overcome the challenges enabled by ever-
35 increasing technological change and to improve student engagement and achievement,
36 they shall be provided with introductory courses on foundational technology that will
37 enhance their future competencies. The DepEd shall determine the content and mode
38 of delivery of such foundational technology courses and shall introduce them in the
39 curriculum in the school year following the effectivity of this Act.

1 To allow students to acquire the appropriate aptitudes and competencies on
2 these courses, the PSOFT Road Map shall provide for the establishment of innovation
3 hubs in every school to enable students to hone their skills and techniques using a wide
4 variety of physical and digital tools and equipment. The innovation hubs shall allow
5 teachers and learners to carry out technology-based projects that address local
6 problems in the community.

7 In addition to the standard ICT curriculum taught for basic education in the public
8 schools, the DepEd shall endeavor to include the following subject matters in its
9 curriculum:

- 10 (a) Respect for and protection of personal information on the Internet;
- 11 (b) Understanding computer security systems;
- 12 (c) Online gender sensitivity;
- 13 (d) Proper use of social media and social networking;
- 14 (e) Responsible and ethical use of the Internet, photographic equipment, smart
15 phones, and other equipment of similar nature; and
- 16 (f) Insights of Republic Act No. 10175, or the "Cybercrime Prevention Act of
17 2012" and other related legislation.

18 The DepEd shall, in coordination with the DICT, enjoin the use of the latter's ICT
19 Literacy Competency and Development Bureau and its relevant specialized ICT
20 subjects to be utilized as elective courses in Grades 11-12.

21 **Sec. 13. *Training and Development of DepEd Personnel.*** — The PSOFT Road
22 Map shall determine the training and development needs of school administrators,
23 teachers, and personnel with respect to ICT.

24 To ensure that teachers are technologically knowledgeable and well-equipped
25 with the right aptitudes and competencies, the DepEd shall establish an Education
26 Technology Division that shall implement teaching programs and utilize technology-
27 based instruction aids for the effective and efficient performance of teachers under the
28 PSOFT Road Map. The DICT shall extend its support in the implementation of training
29 for teachers on ICT, through its ICT Literacy Competency and Development Bureau.

30 The National Educators Academy of the Philippines shall carry out training
31 programs for educators in public schools and integrate ICT in classroom learning and
32 instruction to highlight the professional and educational benefits that may be derived
33 from personally investing in ICT.

34 **ARTICLE VI**

35 **DEVELOPMENT OF ONLINE LEARNING PORTALS**

36

37 **Sec. 14. *DepEd E-Learning Resources.*** — The DepEd shall develop an online
38 portal that provides access or links to Internet learning resources. The online portal shall
39 include e-books and videos, learning materials and teachers guides, materials for senior
40 high school subjects ranging from math, disaster readiness, and science, materials on
41 science, agriculture, livelihood and information technology, interactive exercises on
42 math, science, history, and economics.

43 The DepEd shall develop its own library to ensure the quality and safety of
44 knowledge and information made available to learners.

1 **Sec. 15. *Public Online Library.*** — The PSOFT Road Map shall include the
2 establishment of the Public Online Library.

3 The DepEd, DICT, DOST, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), and
4 the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) shall, in partnership
5 with the National Library of the Philippines (NLP), the National Book Development
6 Board (NBDB), and other concerned government agencies, develop and maintain the
7 Public Online Library, a repository of educational materials and digitized copies of books
8 and publications suitable for Filipino students and researchers that shall enrich the
9 learning experience by complementing the textbooks and reference materials
10 prescribed for the elementary and secondary levels. The Public Online Library shall be
11 directly connected to the website of the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA). The DepEd
12 and the NLP shall have joint custody over the digitized copies of textbooks and
13 references in the Public Online Library which shall be jointly managed by the DepEd
14 and the DICT. In this regard, the DICT shall ensure the security of the online repository
15 system to guarantee its integrity.

16 The DepEd may solicit additional reference materials and publications from the
17 NLP, other agencies of the government, and the private sector to augment its
18 resources.

19 The authors of the digitized books and publications shall be covered by the
20 protection provided for in R.A 8293, as amended, otherwise known as the “Intellectual
21 Property Code of the Philippines.” The DepEd and all concerned agencies shall ensure
22 that the authors of the digitized books and publications shall be properly remunerated
23 in accordance with law.

24 **ARTICLE VII**

25 **DIGITAL REFORM IN PUBLIC SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION**

26 **Sec. 16. *Internet Safety Policy.*** — To advance the objective of providing a safe
27 and secured education program under the PSOFT Road Map, the DepEd shall, within
28 six (6) months after the effectivity of this Act, formulate and enforce an internet safety
29 policy in order to regulate students’ access to content especially against visual
30 depictions that are obscene, pornographic, and harmful to minors. In this regard, the
31 internet safety policy shall be implemented to accomplish the following objectives:

- 32 (a) Development and implementation of Internet safety education, including safe
33 access to educational technology, multimedia and interactive applications, and
34 online resources;
- 35 (b) Development of online risk interventions for learners and children;
- 36 (c) Training and support to stakeholders on peer-driven Internet safety education
37 initiatives;
- 38 (d) Undertaking of researches on online risks to form the bases for Internet safety
39 education syllabi and instructional material development;
- 40 (e) Development and implementation of a public education campaign to promote
41 awareness of online risks to learners and children; and
- 42 (f) Education of parents to augment school initiatives on safe Internet use.

43 **Sec. 17. *Strengthening the Enhanced Basic Education Information System***
44 **(EBEIS).** — The EBEIS shall be the central school database of the DepEd and it shall

1 contain pertinent personal data and school records of students. It shall be continually
2 improved to ensure the efficient management of school records.

3 School administrators and personnel shall be trained on the operation and
4 access of the EBEIS and be given access to student records and other related data in
5 the EBEIS such as a student's school attendance record, records pertaining to the
6 character of a student, the level of the student's digital literacy and proficiency, grade
7 level, examination scores, school performance, immunization and health records,
8 among others, for purposes of recording student biographical data, handling
9 admissions and discharges, and transferring to other schools.

10 Any person who is caught illegally altering, falsifying, or misusing student
11 information in the EBEIS shall be sanctioned in accordance with R.A. 10173, otherwise
12 known as the "Data Privacy Act of 2012."

13 **Sec. 18. *Digital Alternative Learning System.*** — The DepEd shall institute a
14 digital format of the ALS in the PSOFT Road Map. To attain this objective, the DepEd
15 shall provide professional training to teachers and non-teaching personnel involved in
16 this program and formulate the necessary guidelines for its implementation.

17 **ARTICLE VIII**

18 **PARTNERSHIP MECHANISM AND ROLES OF PARTNERS**

19 **Sec. 19. *Partnership Mechanism and Roles of Partners.*** —In the furtherance of
20 the PSOFT Road Map, the DepEd may coordinate and enter into an agreement or
21 contract with other government agencies, LGUS, private and non-profit agencies,
22 institutions or organizations duly accredited or recognized by the government, civil
23 society, business and industrial sector, and other concerned sectors.

24 The PSOFT Road Map shall define and delineate the areas of responsibility of
25 government agencies in conformity with their respective charters and mandates. For
26 purposes of this Act, these agencies shall have the following roles:

27 (a) The DepEd shall be the lead government agency responsible for the proper
28 and effective implementation of the various provisions of this Act and ensure
29 coordination and collaboration among agencies of the government.

30 (b) The DICT shall provide advice on matters relating to ICT and closely
31 coordinate and collaborate in the implementation of this Act. It shall undertake the
32 installation, maintenance, and operation of hybrid intranet connectivity in all public basic
33 education schools, provide an efficient and reliable broadband connection, assist in the
34 implementation of training and development for teachers concerning ICT and
35 ICT-assisted instructions, and coordinate and collaborate in the provision of digital
36 connectivity in public schools.

37 (c) The PhilSA shall advise and collaborate with the DepEd on matters
38 concerning the use of space technology and relevant space-enabled services to
39 implement the provisions of this Act.

40 (d) The DOST, CHED, TESDA, DILG, NLP, NBDB, PSA, the LGUs, and other
41 concerned government agencies mentioned in this Act shall provide support and
42 assistance for the attainment of the purposes of the PSOFT.

1 **Sec. 20. *Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) for PSOFT Program.*** — The DepEd
2 may pursue PPPs from any of the modalities under R.A. 6957, as amended by R.A.
3 7718, entitled, “*An Act Authorizing the Financing, Construction, Operation and*
4 *Maintenance of Infrastructure Projects by the Private Sector, and For the Other*
5 *Purposes.*”

6 To this end, the DepEd shall, in consultation with the PPP Center of the
7 Philippines created under Executive Order No. 8, series of 2010, entitled, “*Reorganizing*
8 *and Renaming the Build-Operate and Transfer (BOT) Center to the Public-Private*
9 *Partnership (PPP) Center of the Philippines and Transferring its Attachment from the*
10 *Department of Trade and Industry to the National Economic and Development Authority*
11 *and For Other Purposes,*” establish a PPP Unit to coordinate all matters relating to PPP,
12 in accordance with the PSOFT Road Map. It shall likewise coordinate with the Project
13 Development and Monitoring Facility of the PPP Center in the conduct of feasibility
14 studies and the preparation of tender documents for the PPP projects of the DepEd.

15 **ARTICLE IX** 16 **AUTHORITY TO RECEIVE DONATIONS**

17 **Sec. 21. *Authority to Receive Donations.*** — The DepEd is authorized to accept
18 grants, contributions, donations, endowments, or bequests in cash or in kind from local
19 and foreign sources in support of the development and implementation of this Act,
20 subject to the regular auditing guidelines and procedures: Provided, That in case of
21 donations from foreign sources, acceptance thereof shall be subject to existing
22 government rules and regulations. The proceeds of such grants, contributions,
23 donations, endowments, or bequests shall be used to finance the following:

- 24 (a) Establishment of pilot schools as provided in Section 11 of this Act;
25 (b) Research, development, and utilization of emerging digital technologies;
26 (c) Provisions of computer laptop units and improvement of ICT infrastructure,
27 including hardware and Internet connectivity;
28 (d) Training and capacity building; and
29 (e) Conduct of other activities necessary to carry out the objectives of this Act.

30 31 **ARTICLE X** 32 **THE JOINT CONGRESSIONAL OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE AND REPORTORIAL** 33 **RESPONSIBILITIES**

34
35 **Sec. 22. *Joint Congressional Oversight.*** — Upon the effectivity of this Act, a
36 joint congressional oversight committee to be known as the Joint Oversight
37 Committee on the PSOFT Program or JOC-PSOFT, is hereby constituted. The JOC-
38 PSOFT shall be composed of ten (10) members with the chairpersons of the
39 Committee on Basic Education, Arts and Culture and the Committee on Finance of
40 the Senate, and the Committee on Basic Education and Culture and the Committee
41 on Appropriations of the House of Representatives as members and three (3)
42 additional members from each House to be designated by the Senate President and
43 the Speaker of the House of Representatives, respectively. The members of the

1 Committee from each House shall have at least one (1) member from the minority
2 party or coalition.

3 **Sec. 23. *Annual Report.*** — The DepEd shall submit a report to both Houses of
4 Congress, or upon the request by the JOC-PSOFT, providing a detailed account of
5 the status of the implementation of this Act.

6 **ARTICLE XI**
7 **FINAL PROVISIONS**

8 **Sec. 24. *Appropriations.*** — The Secretaries of Education and Information and
9 Communications Technology and the Director General of PHILSA shall immediately
10 include in their respective programs the implementation of this Act, the funding of
11 which shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

12 The funding for the implementation of PSOFT Pilot Schools under Section 11
13 hereof shall be charged against the current year's appropriation of the DepEd.

14 **Sec. 25. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** — Within one hundred-twenty
15 (120) days from the effectivity of this Act, the DepEd and DICT shall, in coordination
16 with other concerned agencies of the government and the private stakeholders,
17 promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of
18 this Act.

19 **Sec. 26. *Separability Clause.*** — If any provision of this Act is declared
20 unconstitutional, the remainder of this Act or any provision not affected thereby shall
21 remain in full force and effect.

22 **Sec. 27. *Repealing Clause.*** — All laws, executive orders, presidential decrees,
23 proclamations, rules, regulations, issuances and enactments or parts thereof
24 inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

25 **Sec. 28. *Effectivity.*** — This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
26 publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

27
28 *Approved,*