

Republic of the Philippines  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
Quezon City

**TWENTIETH CONGRESS**  
*First Regular Session*

**HOUSE BILL NO. 477**



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**Introduced by Representative Roman T. Romulo**

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**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

This bill aims to establish diverse educational pathways that address the distinct strengths and aspirations of our learners.

Article XIV, Section 1 of the 1987 Constitution mandates the State to protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels and take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all. It further charges the State to establish, maintain, and support a complete, adequate, and integrated system of education relevant to the needs of the people and society.

One of the objectives of the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013, more popularly known as the K-12 Law, is to broaden the goals of high school education. It shall no longer focus solely on college preparation but provide vocational and technical career opportunities, as well as creative arts, sports, and entrepreneurial employment.

However, in the National SHS Tracer Study conducted by the Bureau of Curriculum Development, among all the graduates of Senior High School in the school year 2017-2018, only 10.22% sought employment while 82.67% pursued higher education. Further, in a 2018 study conducted by the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS), most of the students were not entirely confident that they would easily get a job after SHS.<sup>1</sup> Industries and companies also stated that they will hire SHS on the condition that the internship hours will be longer.<sup>2</sup> The same study also cited a survey by Philippine Business for Education (PBE), which found that only one in five companies were initially ready to hire SHS graduates, while three out of five were willing to hire them in entry-level positions.<sup>3</sup> By 2024, this willingness increased to four out of five companies. However, this does not necessarily result in

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<sup>1</sup> Aniceto C. Orbeta Jr., et al., *Senior High School and the Labor Market: Perspectives of Grade 12 Student and Human Resource Officers* (Quezon City: Philippine Institute for Development Studies, 2018), page 20.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, p. 27

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, p. 9

better employment opportunities, as SHS graduates still face stiff competition from college graduates for the same entry-level positions.<sup>4</sup>

To ensure that students gain the most from their education and reach their full potential, it is necessary to prepare those who wish to pursue higher education through a strong academic foundation in Grades 11 and 12, while also equipping those who intend to enter the workforce with practical skills through well-implemented technical vocational programs.

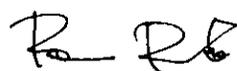
Hence, this measure proposes a structural reform in the Philippine basic education system by clearly delineating the purpose and direction of senior high school (Grades 11 and 12). Under this proposal, Grades 11 and 12 shall serve exclusively as the *University Preparatory Pathway*, designed to prepare students for higher education. Students in this track will be equipped with the foundational knowledge, academic skills, and discipline-specific preparation necessary to succeed in university-level programs.

For students who intend to pursue immediate employment or skilled professions, the proposal offers a distinct *Technical-Vocational Pathway* beginning after Grade 10. Rather than proceeding to Grades 11 and 12, these students will enroll in structured technical-vocational diploma programs or higher national certificate level, which may be administered by TESDA-accredited institutions, local colleges, or industry partners. These programs are aligned with the Philippine Qualifications Framework (PQF), ensuring the employability and career mobility of graduates. These graduates may pursue higher education, with their prior learning and skills formally recognized and credited through the Ladderized Education Program under Republic Act No. 10647 to support seamless academic progression.

To further promote academic excellence and merit-based progression, the proposed measure introduces an advanced placement test called Honors Examination at the end of Grade 10. This acceleration mechanism is designed to recognize high achievers and optimize educational resources, while maintaining rigorous standards for university admission.

By clearly aligning education pathways with either university preparation or immediate employment, the proposed reforms under this measure support national development goals, addresses educational mismatch, and respects the constitutional mandate to provide quality and accessible education tailored to the evolving needs of Filipino learners and society.

In view of the foregoing, the approval of the proposed measure is earnestly requested.



**ROMAN T. ROMULO**  
Lone District, Pasig City

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<sup>4</sup> Philippine Business for Education (PBE), *Towards Greater Decentralization of Philippine Basic Education Governance (2023)* <https://pbed.ph/resources/towards-greater-decentralization-of-philippine-basic-education-governance/> accessed April 2025.

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**AN ACT**  
**PROVIDING EDUCATION PATHWAYS FOR BASIC EDUCATION**  
**STUDENTS, 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 “Education Pathways  
2 Act”.

3  
4           **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** - It is the policy of the State to protect and  
5 promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels and shall take  
6 appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all. The State shall further  
7 establish, maintain, and support a complete, adequate, and integrated system of  
8 education relevant to the needs of the people and society.

9  
10           To this end, the State shall ensure opportunities for Filipinos, regardless of age,  
11 background, ethnicity, disability, and association, to attain their maximum potential  
12 and enhance their employability by establishing inclusive education pathways that  
13 empower and equip the learners with the competencies that are necessary for college  
14 or employment.

15  
16           **SEC. 3. Education Pathways for Completers of Junior High School.** – Upon  
17 completing junior high school, the students shall choose between two education

1 pathways: the University Preparatory Program under the Department of Education  
2 (DepEd) or the Technical-Vocational Program under the Technical Education Skills  
3 Development Authority (TESDA).

4  
5 **SEC. 4. *Career Guidance and Assessments of Students.*** – Career guidance  
6 and counseling services, including aptitude and interest assessments to assist in  
7 selecting appropriate paths, as provided in Republic Act No. 11206, or the “Secondary  
8 School Career Guidance and Counseling Act”, shall be indispensable and crucial in  
9 aiding the students to make informed decisions about their preferred educational  
10 pathway.

11  
12 The Department of Education (DepEd) shall administer various relevant  
13 assessments, including literacy and numeracy assessments, and National  
14 Achievement Tests, to all elementary and secondary students across all levels. These  
15 assessments aim to evaluate their competencies and strengths. The results must be  
16 communicated to the students and their parents or parent-substitutes to provide them  
17 with ample time to consider their educational and career paths. These results shall  
18 also serve as a guide to the DepEd and teachers in adjusting and refining their  
19 teaching approaches to enhance effectiveness in student learning.

20  
21 The DepEd, TESDA, Commission on Higher Education (CHED), Department  
22 of Labor and Employment (DOLE), Department of Trade and Industry (DTI),  
23 Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT), Philippine  
24 Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Employers Confederation of the Philippines,  
25 Department of Economy, Planning and Development (DEPDev), and other concerned  
26 agencies shall develop a system or a portal where students can access data and  
27 information concerning higher and technical education, current career and industry  
28 trends and demands, and other tools that will guide the students in their educational  
29 and career choices.

30  
31 **SEC. 5. *University Preparatory Pathway.*** – The DepEd shall develop and  
32 implement a comprehensive curriculum for Grades 11 and 12 that prepares students  
33 for admission to colleges and universities.

1 This curriculum shall encompass fundamental subjects to improve and  
2 guarantee that students acquire functional literacy and practical skills, and elective  
3 courses to allow students to explore their interests and meet college and university  
4 admission requirements of their chosen undergraduate program leading to a  
5 bachelor's degree.

6  
7 The DepEd shall include the University Preparatory Pathway in its education  
8 roadmap and collaborate with the CHED, colleges, and universities to guarantee  
9 alignment between the curriculum and college admission standards. Colleges and  
10 universities must ensure that students can easily obtain information about their  
11 program of study or curriculum guide to adequately prepare for their college and  
12 university studies.

13  
14 **SEC. 6. *Technical-Vocational Pathway.*** – TESDA and the industry boards,  
15 partners, experts, and practitioners, including small and medium enterprises, shall  
16 develop and offer a variety of technical-vocational programs based on an industry-  
17 driven and industry-approved standards designed to equip students with practical  
18 skills and competencies that are at par with industry requirements. These programs  
19 must lead to a diploma or a higher national certificate level. The standards of these  
20 programs must further ensure that students develop functional literacy skills to  
21 guarantee their employability after completing their chosen program and passing the  
22 necessary assessment for certification.

23  
24 To effectively implement the programs, TESDA and its accredited technical-  
25 vocational institutions must have a sufficient number of partner enterprises to ensure  
26 that the standards and training for these programs are aligned with current industry  
27 needs and requirements. This collaboration will involve reviewing and evaluating the  
28 standards every three (3) years to ensure they remain relevant and responsive to  
29 current industry trends, allowing TESDA to promptly develop training regulations for  
30 emerging skill sets. TESDA shall likewise strengthen existing industry boards and  
31 establish industry boards for sectors that currently lack them, within two years from  
32 the effectivity of this Act.

1 In the development and issuance of training regulations or competency  
2 standards, TESDA and the industry boards shall focus on higher-skill level and  
3 diploma programs.

4  
5 TESDA shall give preference to enterprise-based training programs for National  
6 Certification levels III and IV, Philippine Qualifications Framework level 5, and new  
7 and emerging skills to enhance the skills and knowledge of technical-vocational  
8 learners in accordance with the industry demands, and to encourage industry  
9 stakeholders in providing enterprise-based training, apprenticeship opportunities, and  
10 skills development.

11  
12 The assessments and certifications of students under public technical-  
13 vocational institutions and TESDA-funded programs shall be free of charge. TESDA  
14 shall implement a system that provides subsidies to students in private education,  
15 industry, or enterprise for their assessments and certifications by their economic  
16 standing. No student who failed at least three (3) times may avail of the free or  
17 subsidized assessment and certification.

18  
19 **SEC. 7. Honors Examination.** – The Deped, in consultation with the CHED,  
20 shall develop and administer an advanced placement exam, to be taken voluntarily by  
21 Grade 10 students in the University Preparatory Pathway, in order to assess their  
22 aptitude and readiness to advance to an undergraduate program.

23  
24 This advanced placement exam shall give students a grade which shall  
25 correspond to their level of proficiency and determine their eligibility to enroll in their  
26 chosen undergraduate program in a college or university.

27  
28 Students who successfully pass the advanced placement exam shall be  
29 deemed to have completed the full high school program without the need to undergo  
30 Grades 11 and 12, and shall be allowed to enroll in their chosen undergraduate  
31 program the following school year, subject to other requirements that colleges or  
32 universities may impose.

1           **SEC. 8. *Availment of the Ladderized Education Program under Republic Act***  
2 *No. 10647.* – Upon completion of the full technical-vocational program, the student  
3 may enroll in colleges or universities and avail of the ladderized education program for  
4 educational advancement. The CHED and TESDA shall strengthen existing policies  
5 and implementation of programs for the accreditation and recognition of prior learning  
6 of students.

7  
8           **SEC. 9. *Scholarship Programs.*** - To ensure that the two educational pathways  
9 are accessible to a broad range of students, the DepEd and TESDA shall maintain an  
10 educational support program including scholarships for their respective students that  
11 properly and sufficiently addresses the accessibility and availability of the pathways to  
12 the marginalized communities and learners.

13  
14           The DepEd and TESDA shall continue to make available to their respective  
15 students the scholarship programs currently implemented in their agencies.

16  
17           Scholarships in all pathways shall be made available to learners with  
18 disabilities, indigenous learners, and those from marginalized communities.

19  
20           Prioritization shall also be given to students enrolled in programs with higher  
21 skill levels or urgently needed by the industries.

22  
23           **SEC. 10. *Program Evaluation.*** – The DepEd and TESDA shall regularly assess  
24 and evaluate the effectiveness and quality of their respective education pathways. The  
25 findings of these assessments and evaluations shall be utilized to implement essential  
26 enhancements and modifications to ensure that the curriculum remains relevant to  
27 society.

28  
29           **SEC. 11. *Support from Other Government Agencies.*** The CHED, DOLE, DTI,  
30 DICT, Department of Agriculture, Department of Science and Technology, DEPDev,  
31 Philippine Qualifications Framework National Coordinating Council, Department of  
32 Budget and Management, and other related agencies are hereby mandated to extend  
33 the necessary support and resources towards the effective implementation of this Act.

34

1           **SEC. 12. *Transition Provisions.*** – The DepEd and TESDA shall develop and  
2 refine their respective curriculum and standards to ensure that such are highly relevant  
3 and aligned with the current and future needs of society and industry, including  
4 emerging technologies, skills, and workforce demands.

5  
6           An initial implementation phase for three (3) years shall be conducted in a  
7 selected number of schools from different regions, socioeconomic conditions, and  
8 both urban and rural settings to be determined by the agencies. To ensure the  
9 effectiveness of the newly developed curriculum and standards, the DepEd and  
10 TESDA shall conduct comprehensive assessments during this pilot phase. The  
11 assessments shall be accessible to the public and may undergo independent or third-  
12 party review. The DepEd and TESDA shall refine and enhance the curriculum and  
13 standards after considering the feedback from various sectors, and roll out the final  
14 curriculum and standards immediately thereafter.

15  
16           Upon attaining the qualification standards, the teachers and instructors under  
17 the current Technical-Vocational Track of the Senior High School of the DepEd shall  
18 be given preference in hiring of instructors and teachers by the TESDA for the  
19 implementation of this Act.

20  
21           **SEC. 13. *Appropriations.*** – The amount necessary for the implementation of  
22 this Act shall be included in the respective budget of DepEd and TESDA in the annual  
23 General Appropriations Act.

24  
25           **SEC. 14. *Joint Congressional Oversight Committee.*** – There is hereby created  
26 a Joint Congressional Oversight Committee (JCOC) to monitor and oversee the  
27 implementation of the provisions of this Act. The JCOC shall be composed of five (5)  
28 members each from the Senate and from the House of Representatives, respectively,  
29 including a member of the minority from each chamber, to be chaired jointly by the  
30 chairpersons of the Committees on Basic Education of both the Senate and the House  
31 of Representatives. The four (4) other members from each chamber shall be  
32 designated, respectively, by the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House  
33 of Representatives.

1           **SEC. 15. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – Within ninety (90) days from  
2 the approval of this Act, the DepEd, TESDA, and CHED, in consultation with other  
3 concerned stakeholders, shall formulate and issue the rules and regulations  
4 implementing the provisions of this Act.

5  
6           **SEC. 16. *Separability Clause.*** – If any part or provision of this Act is held invalid  
7 or unconstitutional, other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in force and  
8 effect.

9  
10           **SEC. 17. *Repealing Clause.*** – Sec. 4 of Republic Act No. 10533, or the  
11 “Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013”, is hereby amended to remove the  
12 compulsory requirement for Senior High School in basic education.

13  
14           All laws, orders, and rules and regulations contrary to, or inconsistent with the  
15 provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

16  
17           **SEC. 18. *Effectivity.*** – Notwithstanding the non-issuance of the IRR, this Act  
18 shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a  
19 newspaper of general circulation.

20  
21           Approved,