

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5309



Introduced by **HON. JOSEPH "JOJO" L. LARA**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

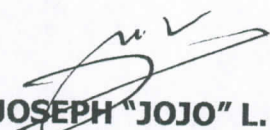
The Constitution states in Article XIV, Section 2., that the State shall: (1) Establish, maintain, and support a complete, adequate, and integrated system of education relevant to the needs of the people and society; and (4) Encourage non-formal, informal, and indigenous learning systems, as well as self-learning, independent, and out-of-school study programs particularly those that respond to community needs. To guarantee these opportunities equally for the out-of-school children, youth and adults, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, and other marginalized sectors of society, the Department of Education (DEPED) provided a program called Alternative Learning System in 2004.

The Alternative Learning System initially aims to build human capital from out of school youth and adults. ALS learners will be able to acquire a credential that enable them to access to higher education, vocational training, and better career opportunity in general.

According to the Publication of the World Bank in 2018, the learners enrolled in the Alternative Learning System have been increased by 8.81%, from 537,666 in 2016 to 641,584 in 2017. This study proves that the ALS is progressively reaching its objective which is helping learners to acquire technical skills that they can apply to earn for a living.

However, the DEPED is facing complex challenges in implementing the ALS both in financial and operational. As an advocate for basic education, this representation believes that it is timely that a law must be passed to strengthen its system through increasing the national budget allocated for ALS. This program also needs an expansion in order to reach more deserving learners from far-flung provinces of our country.

This bill was previously filed in the 17th Congress and its immediate passage in the 18th Congress is earnestly sought.


JOSEPH "JOJO" L. LARA

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5309

Introduced by **HON. JOSEPH "JOJO" L. LARA**

AN ACT
INSTITUTIONALIZING THE ALTERNATIVE LEARNING SYSTEM IN THE
BASIC EDUCATION FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL CHILDREN, YOUTH AND
ADULTS, PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES, INDIGENOUS PEOPLES, AND
OTHER MARGINALIZED SECTORS OF SOCIETY, 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 "Alternative Learning System Act."

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels and shall take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all. The State shall likewise give the highest priority to the enactment of measures that promote human development and the acceleration of social progress, thereby reducing social, economic and political inequalities.

Towards this end, the State shall provide the out-of-school children, youth and adults, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, and other marginalized sectors of society with opportunities to improve their knowledge, technical and vocational efficiency, and other skills through a system of informal, nonformal, and indigenous education which are tailored to meet their limited schedule and their incapacity to attend to formal classroom learning experience due to time, physical, emotional, economic, and other constraints.

SECTION 3. *Objectives.* — This Act aims to achieve the following objectives:

- (a) Provide adequate attention to the learning needs of the out-of-school children, youth and adults, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, and other marginalized sectors of society;
- (b) Guarantee equal opportunity for learners in every barangay, including residents of unreached, underserved and conflict-affected communities, to avail of

systematic and flexible alternative basic education program outside of the formal school system;

- (c) Promote lifelong learning in all streams of education to ensure the learners' sustainable future; and
- (d) Institute a mobile teacher program especially in far-flung, unserved, underserved, and conflict-affected communities.

SECTION 4. *The Alternative Learning System.* — The Alternative Learning System, hereinafter referred to as "ALS", is hereby established as a parallel learning system that provides an alternative learning arrangement to learners, who, for acceptable reasons to be determined by the Department of Education (DepEd), cannot be admitted to the existing formal basic education. It includes both the nonformal and informal sources of knowledge and skills.

The ALS shall cover out-of-school children, youth and adults, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, and other marginalized sectors of society, who either have none or limited access to formal schools, and who are usually located in far-flung communities, including those in areas with armed conflict.

SECTION 5. *Implementation.* — The Secretary of Education, through the appropriate DepEd office, shall exercise general supervision and administration over the ALS programs. It shall:

- (a) Establish an appropriate governance mechanism to ensure the efficient and effective coordination and management of the ALS covering policy, curriculum, learning program delivery, learning materials, learner assessment and certification, quality assurance and support systems;
- (b) Provide the appropriate ALS curriculum assimilating culture and gender-sensitive formulations that meet the minimum requirements of basic education, training of teachers and coordinators, and the mechanism to implement the program in every city and municipality throughout the country;
- (c) Coordinate with local government units (LGUs), non-government organizations (NGOs), and other government agencies on matters pertaining to community mapping activities and come up with a centralized database for out-of-school children, youth and adults, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, and other marginalized sectors of society who have not yet completed their basic education;
- (d) Address the learning needs of the marginalized groups of the population including the deprived, depressed, unserved, and underserved citizens through nonformal and informal education programs;
- (e) Ensure access to educational opportunities for learners of different interests, capabilities, demographic characteristics and socioeconomic origins and status;

- (f) Promote certification and accreditation through alternative learning programs, both nonformal and informal in nature, for basic education;
- (g) Coordinate with various agencies for skills development to ensure the learners' employability, efficiency, productivity, and competitiveness in the labor market; and
- (h) Establish minimum quality standards for ALS program implementation and management including certification of learning outcomes, accreditation of service providers, competency standards for ALS personnel, and requirements for ALS learning environments, among others, to help promote quality assurance of the ALS.

SECTION 6. *The ALS Programs.* – The DepEd shall strengthen the implementation of Non-Formal Education (NFE) and Informal Education (InfEd) Programs.

- (a) The NFE Program shall be modular and flexible in nature, which means learning can take place anytime and in any place, depending on the convenience and availability of the ALS learners. This program is subdivided into a:
 - (1) Basic Literacy Program (BLP), for illiterates; and
 - (2) Continuing Education Program, called Accreditation and Equivalency (CE: A&E) Program, for elementary education dropouts.
- (b) The InfEd Program includes skills and livelihood training, entrepreneurship, personal interest, and community development sessions. To deliver the ALS programs, the DepEd may utilize the following learning resources:
 - (1) Learning modules which contain learning activities, and pre- and post-assessments; and
 - (2) Supplementary materials like text and non-text based modules, self-learning instructional materials, learning activity 18 packages, online or digital modules, textbooks, e-modules, or 19 blended technology learning materials from various sources.

SECTION 7. *Duration of ALS Programs.* – The DepEd shall prescribe an appropriate minimum number of session hours or days required for the completion of ALS programs to ensure that the learners enrolled therein are provided with adequate and quality schooling and training at par with the formal educational system.

SECTION 8. *Accreditation and Equivalency Examinations for ALS Learners.* – The ALS Accreditation and Equivalency (ALS A&E) Test shall be a paper and pencil test designed and administered by the DepEd to measure the competencies of those who have neither attended nor finished elementary or secondary education in the formal school system.

Passers of the ALS A&E Test are given a certificate or diploma bearing the DepEd seal, and the signature of the Secretary of Education, certifying their competencies as comparable graduates of the formal school system. Passers are qualified to enroll in junior high school or senior high school education, as appropriate.

SECTION 9. Admission to Senior High School. — Learners, who successfully complete the required ALS program and pass the appropriate ALS A&E Test for junior high school level, may be admitted to senior high school to pursue courses of their own choice: Provided, That they comply with the other basic documentary requirements set by the school as requisite for enrollment.

The DepEd shall develop supplemental learning programs for passers of the ALS A&E Test to help the learners cope with and be acquainted with the kind of academic, technical, or vocational subjects being offered in senior high school education.

SECTION 10. The Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA). — The TESDA, in coordination with the DepEd, shall assist ALS A&E Test passers equivalent to Grade 10 in taking up technical vocational education and training (TVET) programs. This shall serve as an option to enrolling in senior high school.

The DepEd shall also encourage ALS graduates in possession of skills to undergo competency assessment and certification being administered by TESDA.

SECTION 11. The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE). — The DOLE, in partnership with the DepEd, shall promote gainful employment opportunities to ALS passers, who will eventually graduate from senior high school education, through coordination with prospective employers for job placement in the industry sector.

SECTION 12. Hiring and Training of ALS Learning Facilitators. — The DepEd shall hire ALS Mobile Teachers, Literacy Volunteers, and Instructional Managers, who shall serve as ALS Learning Facilitators, in order to augment the manpower resources needed in the implementation of the ALS programs throughout the country.

The ALS Learning Facilitators shall undergo the necessary training regularly throughout the calendar year to upgrade their teaching skills to the standards expected for the ALS curriculum.

SECTION 13. Establishment of ALS Community Learning Centers. — There shall be established at least one (1) ALS Community Learning Center (CLC) in every municipality and city throughout the country. As much as possible, the ALS CLC shall be situated at the place within the municipality or city that is conducive for learning and accessible to the public.

Each ALS CLC shall be constructed in accordance with the specifications, criteria, and other details provided and approved by the DepEd, in consultation with the municipal or city mayor or a duly authorized LGU representative, to ensure the orderly implementation of the project.

SECTION 14. *The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG).* – The DILG shall help enlist the support of LGUs as DepEd partners in the operation of the ALS. It shall coordinate with the DepEd on matters requiring LGU participation and shall issue and disseminate to the LGUs concerned ALS-related 6 memoranda or advisories, as necessary.

SECTION 15. *Participation of LGUs.* – The Secretary of Education shall initiate partnerships with the Chief Executives of LGUs to encourage them to contribute available resources to the ALS 10 programs within the LGUs' respective areas of jurisdiction.

SECTION 16. *Local ALS Committee.* – The Local School Board may create a local ALS Committee and provide for its composition, as necessary. The local ALS Committee shall perform the following functions:

- (a) Oversee the ALS implementation at the city or municipal level, including the identification of priority ALS programs, establishment of ALS CLC, provision of technical assistance to ALS Learning Facilitators, program monitoring and evaluation, and coordination with government and nongovernment partners for post-program support activities;
- (b) Recommend to the local school board, in accordance with the criteria set by the DepEd, the determination of the annual supplementary budgetary needs for the operation and maintenance of ALS within the city or municipality, and the supplementary local cost of meeting such needs, which shall be reflected in the form of an annual ALS budget corresponding to its share of the proceeds of the special levy on real property constituting the Special Education Fund and such other sources of revenue as this Act and other laws or ordinances may provide;
- (c) Ensure the implementation of community literacy mapping activities within the city or municipality and coordinate with the barangays, nongovernment organizations and other agencies in the identification of out-of-school children, youth and adults, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, and other marginalized sectors of society who have not yet completed their basic education;
- (d) Coordinate with the DepEd in regard to the establishment, operation and maintenance of ALS CLC; and
- (e) Serve as an advisory committee to the Sangguniang Panlungsod or Sangguniang Bayan concerned on the ALS implementation in the city or municipality.

SECTION 17. *Special Education Fund Allocation.* – Notwithstanding the provision of Section 272 of Republic Act No. 7160, otherwise known as the "Local Government Code of 1991", the local school boards shall set aside a portion of the proceeds of the Special Education Fund for the utilization of ALS programs within the LGUs' respective areas of jurisdiction.

SECTION 18. *Private Sector Participation.* – The Secretary of Education shall encourage and promote close partnerships with the private sector whose support in the form of cooperative or collaborative arrangements may be harnessed to ensure the sustainable implementation of ALS programs.

SECTION 19. *Unlawful Fees.* – It shall be unlawful for any DepEd-administered ALS CLC, its officers, or Learning Facilitators to solicit or require the payment of admission, enrollment and other kinds of fees from any interested learner as requisite for admission.

SECTION 20. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary for the implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current year's appropriations for Flexible Learning Options of the DepEd. Thereafter, such amount as may be necessary for the continuous implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 21. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety (90) days from the approval of this Act, the Secretary of Education, in consultation with the DILG, TESDA, DOLE, the Coordinating Council for Private Educational Associations, NGO, and other concerned government agencies, shall formulate the rules and regulations implementing the provisions of this Act. The implementing rules and regulations issued pursuant to this section shall take effect thirty (30) days after its publication in a national newspaper of general circulation.

SECTION 22. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions not so declared shall remain in force and effect.

SECTION 23. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, orders and rules and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

SECTION 24. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,