

[REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11510, December 23, 2020]

AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING THE ALTERNATIVE LEARNING SYSTEM IN BASIC EDUCATION FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL CHILDREN IN SPECIAL CASES AND ADULTS AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* - This Act shall be known as the "Alternative Learning System Act".

SEC. 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 take the 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 in special cases and adults with opportunities to improve their knowledge, values, life, skills, and readiness for higher education, work or self-employment through a system of nonformal or indigenous education, or both which are tailored to respond to their learning needs and life circumstances. The State shall also ensure the close partnership and collaboration between the government and the private sector in achieving this goal.

SEC. 3. *Objectives.* - This Act aims to achieve the following objectives:

(a) Provide adequate, timely and quality attention and support to basic learning needs of out-of-school children in special cases and adults including indigenous peoples;

(b) Guarantee equitable access for all learners, including those who reside in the unreached, underserved, conflict-affected communities, and communities in emergency situations to avail of systematic, flexible and appropriate alternative basic education programs outside of the formal school system;

(c) Promote lifelong learning opportunities anchored on the Alternative Learning System (ALS) K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum (BEC) that takes a holistic, integrated and inter-sectoral approach, and provide pathways across modes of learning that will ensure learners will become caring, self-reliant, independent, productive, and patriotic citizens, by allowing such learners to pursue further education, after participating in ALS program and passing the accreditation and

equivalency assessments or certifications, or both required by the Department of Education (DepEd), or seek employment;

(d) Hire, capacitate and deploy ALS Teachers, Community ALS Implementors and Learning Facilitators to deliver a range of ALS programs especially in far-flung unserved, underserved, conflict-affected communities, and communities in emergency situations;

(e) Design specialized programs for learners with disabilities, taking into consideration their different levels of learning needs and other functional difficulties in the development of instructional materials and learning resources in accessible format;

(f) Develop, integrate, and utilize nonformal and informal education approaches and strategies in the delivery of the ALS programs and the assessment of learning outcomes and competencies of ALS learners by providing flexibility in the duration of learning programs, learning contents, and delivery strategies, among others;

(g) Improve access to education and other learning opportunities and raise the level of literacy to contribute to an individual's sustainable future; and

(h) Strengthen nonformal basic education programs while ensuring support to the policy of the DepEd that school age children should be enrolled in formal education, and that they should be able to return to the formal education system in the event that they drop out.

SEC. 4. *Definition of Terms.* - For the purposes of this Act:

(a) *Alternative Learning System K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum (ALS K to 12 BEC)* shall refer to the comprehensive curriculum indicating the competency, content, key stages, and standards for the ALS program under this Act. The ALS K to 12 BEC is benchmarked on the DepEd K to 12 formal school curriculum and focuses on the 21st Century Skills: information, media and technology skills, learning and innovation skills, communication skills, and life and career skills.

(b) *Alternative Learning System Teachers (ALS Teachers)* shall refer to DepEd employed teachers who implement the ALS programs.

(c) *Academic-Focused Bridging Programs* shall refer to ALS programs that provide continuing learning opportunities to accreditation and equivalency secondary level test passers who wish to better prepare for the academic demands and study skills requirements of tertiary level education or post-secondary vocational training, or both.

(d) *Accreditation and Equivalency Assessments and Certifications (A&E Assessments and Certifications)* shall refer to a process in ALS that comprise exams and other assessments deemed appropriate and anchored on the competencies of the ALS k to 12 BEC.

(e) *Accreditation and Equivalency Program (A&E Program)* shall refer to a program in ALS aimed at providing an alternative pathway of learning for out-of-school children in special cases and adults who have not completed basic education.

Through this program, school dropouts are able to complete elementary and secondary education outside the formal school system.

(f) *Adult* shall refer to a person at least eighteen (18) years of age and above.

(g) *Alternative Learning System (ALS)* shall refer to a parallel learning system that provides a viable alternative to the existing formal education instruction. It encompasses both nonformal and informal sources of knowledge and skills.

(h) *Basic Literacy Program* shall refer to a program component of ALS that is aimed at eradicating illiteracy among out-of-school children in special cases and adults by developing basic literacy skills of reading, writing, numeracy, and simple comprehension.

(i) *Community Alternative Learning System Implementors (Community ALS Implementors)* shall refer to persons engaged either by the DepEd or any local government unit (LGU) to deliver ALS programs to out-of-school children in special cases and adults.

(j) *Community Learning Center (CLC)* shall refer to a physical space to house learning resources and facilities of a learning program for out-of-school children in special cases and adults. It is a venue for face-to-face learning activities and other learning opportunities for community development and improvement of the people's quality of life.

(k) *Functional Education and Literacy Programs* shall refer to short-term nonformal education programs designed to help socioeconomically disadvantaged learners to upgrade a targeted set of skills, knowledge and selected competencies in the ALS to 12 BEC in order to improve their social, political and economic well-being and function more effectively as citizens, parents, workers and members of the community.

(l) *Indigenous Peoples* refer to a group of people or homogenous societies identified by self-ascription by others, who have continuously lived as organized community on communally bounded and defined territory, and who have under claims of ownership since time immemorial, occupied, possessed and utilized such territories, sharing common bonds of language, customs, tradition and other distinctive cultural traits or who have, through resistance to political, social and cultural inroads of colonization became historically differentiated from the majority of the Filipinos.

(m) *Indigenous Peoples Education* shall refer to the program that supports education initiatives undertaken through formal, nonformal, and informal modalities with emphasis on any of, but not limited to, the key areas of indigenous knowledge systems and practices and community history, indigenous languages , indigenous learning system (ILS), and community life cycle-based curriculum and assessment, educational goals, aspirations and competencies specific to the indigenous cultural community (ICC), engagement of elders and other community members in the teaching-learning process, assessment, and management of the initiative, recognition and continuing practice of the community's ILS, and the rights and responsibilities of ICCs.

(n) *Informal Education* shall refer to diverse forms of learning that are intentional or deliberate but are not institutionalized. It is a lifelong process of learning by which

every person acquires and accumulates knowledge, skills, attitudes and insights from daily experiences at home, at work, at play and from life itself towards literacy.

(o) *Learners with Disabilities* shall refer to those who have long-term physical mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on equal basis with others.

(p) *Learning Facilitators* shall refer to teachers financed by the private sector who implement ALS programs. The private sector shall include nongovernment organizations or association, civil society organizations, or individuals.

(q) *Micro-certification*, also known as micro-credentialing, shall refer to a flexible means of certifying attainment of specific elements of ALS K to 12 minimum competencies which can be used by the holder as credential such as in job application, recruitment and selection.

(r) *Nonformal Education (NFE)* shall refer to any organized and systematic activity carried outside the framework of the formal education system to provide selected types of learners to a segment of the population.

(s) *Out-of-School Children in Special Cases* shall refer to children in the official school age who are not enrolled in the elementary or secondary schools due to special cases such as economic, geographic, political, cultural or social barriers, including learners with disabilities or conditions, indigenous peoples, children in conflict with the law, learners in emergency situations, and other marginalized sectors.

SEC. 5. *Institutionalizing the ALS.* - The ALS is hereby institutionalized to strengthen and expand the ALS program to provide increased opportunities for out-of-school children in special cases and adult learners, including indigenous peoples, to develop basic and functional literacy and life skills, and pursue an equivalent pathway to complete basic education.

SEC. 6. *Bureau of Alternative Education (BAE).* - The Bureau of Alternative Education (BAE) shall be created to serve as the focal office for the implementation of the ALS programs of the DepEd. It shall be headed by a Director.

SEC. 7. *Powers and Duties of the BAE.* - The BAE shall serve as the focal office for the policy formulation, curriculum development, learning program delivery and learning materials development for the ALS program. To ensure the effective implementation of the ALS, the BAE shall establish quality assurance and support system undertake regular learner assessment activities. It shall have the following powers and functions:

(a) Establish minimum quality standards in the development of the ALS curriculum and learning materials, program planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and management, including certification of learning outcomes, recognition of service providers, competency standards for ALS personnel, and requirements for ALS learning environments, among others;

(b) Promote and ensure the certification and accreditation of learners through alternative learning programs, both nonformal and informal in nature, as anchored on the competencies of the ALS K to 12 BEC;

(c) In partnership with other government agencies, LGUs, and the private sector, ensure access to educational opportunities for learners of difficult interests, learning needs, capabilities, demographic characteristics, and socioeconomic status, who have been unable to complete formal basic education;

(d) Coordinate with various agencies and industries for skills development to promote the learners' employability, efficiency, productivity, and competitiveness in the labor market, as well as assist the learners to become entrepreneurs;

(e) Coordinate, encourage close partnerships, and establish linkages with LGUs and the private sector on matters pertaining to the sustainable implementation of ALS programs, post-program support activities and community mapping, and manage a nationwide database for out-of-school children in special cases and adults; and

(f) Such other powers and functions as may be necessary for the effective and efficient implementation of ALS programs, projects, and activities.

SEC. 8. *ALS Programs.* - The DepEd shall strengthen the implementation of a range of priority NFE programs including, but not limited to, the following:

(a) Basic Literacy Program;

(b) A&E Programs;

(c) Indigenous Peoples Education Program;

(d) Academic-Focused Bridging Programs; and

(e) Functional Education and Literacy Programs.

To effectively deliver the NFE programs, the DepEd may utilize appropriate, relevant, and responsive learning modalities, such as:

(a) Modular instruction;

(b) Online, digital or mobile learning;

(c) Face-to-face learning sessions and tutorials;

(d) Radio or television-based instruction;

(e) Blended learning or a combination of various modalities;

(f) Workshops, simulations, and internship, to inculcate life skills, work readiness, and entrepreneurship; and

(g) Provision of inclusive and safe learning environments.

SEC. 9. *Duration of ALS Programs.* - The DepEd shall prescribe the appropriate minimum number of months required for the completion of each of the different ALS programs to ensure that the learners enrolled therein are provided with adequate and quality basic education and skills to complete the required competencies of the ALS K to 12 BEC.

SEC. 10. *A&E Assessment and Certification for ALS Learners.* - The DepEd shall regularly conduct ALS A&E assessments and certifications as a means to measure and certify competencies of ALS program completers and other learners who opt to