

[REPUBLIC ACT NO. 896, June 20, 1953]

**AN ACT TO DECLARE THE POLICY ON ELEMENTARY EDUCATION
IN THE PHILIPPINES**

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

SECTION 1. This Act shall be known as the "Elementary Education Act of 1953."

SEC. 2. In pursuance of the aim of all schools expressed in section five, Article XIV of the Constitution, and as amplified by subsequent legislation, it shall be the main function of the elementary school to develop healthy citizens of good moral character, equipped with the knowledge, habits, and ideals needed for a happy and useful home and community life.

SEC. 3. To put into effect the educational policy established by this Act, the Department of Education is hereby authorized to revise the elementary-school system on the following basis: The primary course shall be composed of four grades (Grades I to IV) and the intermediate course of three grades (Grade V to VII). Pupils who are in the sixth grade of the time this Act goes into effect will not be required to complete the seventh grade before being eligible to enroll in the first year of the secondary school: *Provided*, That they shall be allowed to elect to enroll in Grade VII if they so desire.

SEC. 4. The Secretary of Education may, with the approval of the President, authorize, in the primary grades, the holding of one class, morning and afternoon, under one teacher. In the intermediate grades, classes may be authorized on the basis of two classes under three teachers or of three classes under five teachers. Where there is not enough number of children to meet the minimum requirements for organizing one-grade or two-grade combined classes, the Secretary of Education may authorize the organization of classes with more than two grades each.

SEC. 5. It shall be compulsory for every parent or guardian or other person having custody of any child to enroll such child in a public school, the next school year following the seventh birthday of such child, and such child shall remain in school until the completion of an elementary education: *Provided, however*, That this compulsory attendance shall not be required in any of the following cases: First, when the child enrolls in or transfers to a private school; Second, when the distance from the home of the child to the nearest public school offering the grade to which he belongs exceeds three kilometers or the said public school is not safely or conveniently accessible to the child: Third, when such child is mentally or physically defective in which case a certificate of a duly licensed physician or competent health worker shall be required; Fourth, when, on account of indigence, the child cannot afford to be in school; Fifth, when the child cannot be accommodated because of excess enrolment; and Sixth, when such child is being regularly instructed by its