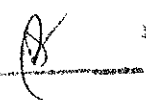


THIRTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC)
OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)

'04 DEC 16 P3:40

SENATE
S.B. No. 18 RECEIVED BY: 

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Constitution, Article XIV, Section 3 (2) provides:

[All educational institutions] shall inculcate patriotism and nationalism, foster love of humanity, respect for human rights, appreciation of the role of national heroes in the historical development of the country, teach the rights and duties of citizenship, **strengthen ethical and spiritual values, develop moral character and personal discipline**, encourage critical and creative thinking, broaden scientific and technological knowledge, and promote the vocational efficiency. (Emphasis supplied)

Schools are tasked with creating knowledgeable individuals of good character. In the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., *"We must remember that intelligence is not enough. Intelligence, plus character, that is the goal of true education."*

The root of the crisis facing the Filipinos in the past decades is moral in nature. Since the People Power Revolution of 1986, public and private sectors have responded to the call for social transformation and value recovery by introducing reforms in education. Various groups and institutions such as the Association of Philippine Colleges of Arts and Sciences (APCAS), the Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines (CEAP), not to mention the DepEd, have produced various programs for values education.

In 1988, a need was felt by the Philippine Association for Philosophical Research (PAPR) to lay down the theoretical philosophical foundations of values education. Many teachers at the elementary and high school levels were then practitioners of various programs and projects on values education without being aware of the philosophical underpinnings of the practice. In January 1989, DepEd and the Ateneo de Manila University, with the encouragement of George F. McLean, O.M.I., of the Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, held a roundtable discussion on "The Philippine Context of Values Education." The forum gathered experts from various disciplines and focused on the value resources of the Filipino people, the contemporary transformation of values and their implications for education.

In 1995, the Office of the Ombudsman signed a memorandum of agreement with the DepEd for the development and publication of "anti-corruption" modules for elementary and high school students.

In 2000, the Office of the Ombudsman and DepEd have finally produced two volumes of "Graft and Corruption Prevention Modules," one each for the elementary and secondary levels. The modules, as provided in the memorandum of agreement, are intended to "awaken the students' consciousness towards being honest and responsible citizens of their community." The development of the modules was based on the concepts and values specified in Republic Act No. 6713 or the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees. These

concepts, as defined in the volumes, include commitment to public interest, professionalism, justness and sincerity, political neutrality, responsiveness to the public, nationalism and patriotism, commitment to democracy, and simple living.

At present, the DepEd has plans of formulating a curriculum specifically for values formation. The proposed character education program shall absorb or replace the current "Makabayan" subject in basic education. The new course takes the cue from the Presidential Council on Values Formation (PCVF), made up of top religious and moral leaders. In its first meeting on 13 September 2004 chaired by President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, the PCVF urged a return to basics in values education by giving it special attention in the elementary and high school.

Lack of strong moral foundation breeds corruption in the government. It is high time to inquire into the strengths and weaknesses of the Filipino people with a view to solving social ills and strengthening our nation's moral fiber. Grave problems require grave solutions. Nothing less than the intensive absorption of ethical values, through an educational system, can stem the continuing dominance of the culture of corruption in the Philippines today.

Accordingly, this bill seeks to make a separate course on Ethics compulsory at all levels of grade school, high school, and at every college, with a compulsory Ethics course for every profession.


MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO


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AN ACT
TO MAKE A SEPARATE COURSE ON ETHICS COMPULSORY
AT ALL LEVELS OF GRADE SCHOOL, HIGH SCHOOL, AND EVERY DEGREE COURSE
IN ANY COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY

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 “Compulsory Teaching of Ethics Act of 2004.”

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* — It is the policy of the State to inculcate and strengthen the ethics and values of its citizen through the educational system.

SECTION 3. *Definition of Terms.* — As used in this Act, the following terms shall mean:

1. “Ethics” – conformity to the accepted, honorable, and professional standards of conduct in government and in private life;
2. “Values” – normative standards which influence human beings in their choice among the alternative courses of action which they perceive;
3. “DepEd” – the Department of Education;
4. “CHED” – the Commission on Higher Education.
5. “Elementary school” – Grades 1 to 7 of primary education.
6. “Bridge Program” - an intensive one-year program focused on three foundation subjects namely English, Science and Math. It enables students to become fully prepared for the regular four-year high school curriculum.
7. “High School” – first year to fourth year of secondary education.

8. “University” – all institutions for higher learning with teaching and research facilities constituting a graduate school and professional schools that award master’s degrees and doctorates and an undergraduate division that awards bachelor’s degrees.

SECTION 4. *Compulsory Teaching of a Separate Subject Called Ethics.* – The teaching of a separate subject called Ethics shall be compulsory at all levels of: elementary school from Grade 1 to Grade 7; bridge program; high school from first to fourth year; and in all degree programs offered by colleges and universities. All colleges and universities shall provide a compulsory 3-unit Ethics course for every profession, e.g., Legal Ethics for law schools, Medical Ethics for medical schools, Military Ethics for the Philippine Military Academy and other military schools, etc.

SECTION 5. *Ethics and Values formation Syllabus.* —

1. PUBLIC MORALITY. – The main syllabus should include the following six levels of public morality:

- a. BASIC HONESTY AND CONFORMITY TO LAW. – This level describes the basic adherence to the constitution, laws, ordinances, and moral codes that is expected from all members of a group or society;
- b. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST. – This level deals with the conflict between advancing the public interest, which a public official is charged to do, and advancing one’s self-interest;
- c. SERVICE ORIENTATION AND PROCEDURAL FAIRNESS. – This level deals with the responsibility of public officials to ensure that their actions serve the public and that the power they wield is used only for that purpose. This concentrates on procedural safeguards to prevent abuse of authority and on moral obligation of public servants;

- e. THE ETHICS OF PUBLIC POLICY DETERMINATION. – This level concerns making moral judgments about public policies in which equity and fairness are important considerations;
 - f. THE ETHICS OF COMPROMISE AND SOCIAL INTEGRATION. – This level entails the necessity of give and take, and compromise in a society with irreconcilable differences on fundamental issues.
2. SUPPLEMENTARY TOPICS. – This curriculum should have additional topics and studies on the causes, issues, and effects of graft and corruption in the Philippines and in other parts of the world, and suggested measures to reform a corrupt environment.
3. OTHER SUBJECT MATTERS. – Other areas of Ethics and Values formation may be included in the syllabus, provided that it will not be made in preference of any religion and belief, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.

SECTION 6. *Implementing Agencies.* — The DepEd Secretary and CHED Chairperson are hereby authorized and directed to adopt a system to implement and carry out the provisions of this Act. DepEd and CHED shall, within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, promulgate rules and regulations, including those of disciplinary nature, to carry out and enforce the provisions of this Act.

SECTION 7. *Educational Materials.* — It shall be obligatory on all schools, colleges, and universities to keep in their libraries an adequate number of copies of the textbook, primer, and leaflet on Ethics to be issued by the DepEd and the CHED. The DepEd and CHED shall determine the adequacy of the number of books, depending upon the enrollment of the school, college or university.

SECTION 8. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision or part hereof is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

SECTION 9. *Repealing Clause.* - Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to, or inconsistent with, the provision of this Act is hereby repealed, modified or amended accordingly.

SECTION 10. *Effectivity Clause.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen days (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,

/alp, aea, jpa