



S E N A T E

S. No. 1604

PREPARED BY THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION JOINT
WITH THE COMMITTEES ON WAYS AND MEANS; AND
FINANCE WITH SENATORS GATCHALIAN, ANGARA,
VILLANUEVA, VILLAR (C.) AND ESTRADA AS
AUTHORS THEREOF

AN ACT ESTABLISHING AN ACADEMIC RECOVERY
AND ACCESSIBLE LEARNING (ARAL) PROGRAM,
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR
OTHER PURPOSES

*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
2 the “ARAL Program Act”.

3 SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy and Objectives.* – It is
4 the declared policy of the State to protect and promote the
5 right of all citizens to quality education at all levels and
6 shall take appropriate steps to make such education
7 accessible to all.

1 Towards this end, the State shall endeavor to support
2 learners by establishing a free and effective national
3 intervention program to provide learners who experienced
4 learning loss as a result of the pandemic school closures, as
5 well as other instances of loss of knowledge and skills due
6 to gaps or discontinuities in a learner's education, with
7 supplemental lessons to close learning gaps and enable
8 them to catch up to the standards required in their
9 respective grade levels.

10 SEC. 3. *Coverage.* – This Act shall apply to the
11 following learners under the public basic education
12 institutions of the Department of Education (DepEd):
13 (a) those who did not enroll starting School Year (SY) 2020
14 to 2021; or (b) those who are below the minimum
15 proficiency levels required in Language, Mathematics, and
16 Science.

17 Similarly situated learners who are enrolled in
18 private basic education institutions shall be provided the
19 same interventions under this Act upon request.

1 SEC. 4. *Establishment of the ARAL Program.* – The
2 ARAL Program is hereby established to provide a national
3 learning intervention program which shall be grounded on
4 the following premises:

5 (a) Well-systematized tutorial sessions which
6 demonstrate higher achievement gains;

7 (b) Well-designed intervention plans and learning
8 resources, following a learner-centered approach that is
9 supportive and empathetic of the learner’s needs,
10 motivation and behavior;

11 (c) Effective and accessible delivery modes for tutors
12 and learners;

13 (d) Careful determination and assessment of learners;

14 (e) Involvement of curriculum and reading specialists
15 and other stakeholders;

16 (f) Well-chosen and trained tutors and learning
17 facilitators; and

18 (g) Adequate development and provision of
19 nutritional, social and emotional, and mental health
20 programs to support and ensure the holistic well-being of

1 learners, and for them to prosper academically, build
2 resilience against adversity, and be equipped with skills
3 and confidence to seek help for early intervention during
4 their educational journey.

5 The program shall further ensure that learners are
6 provided optimal instructional time to ensure mastery of
7 essential competencies and make up for learning loss.

8 SEC. 5. *Essential Learning Competencies in*
9 *Language, Mathematics, and Science.* – The ARAL
10 Program shall cover the essential learning competencies
11 under the K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum covering
12 the subjects of Language and Mathematics for Grades 1 to
13 10, and Science for Grades 3 to 10. Essential learning
14 competencies are competencies needed by the learners and
15 are considered indispensable in the teaching-learning
16 process in building skills and equipping learners for
17 subsequent grade levels.

18 Reading and numeracy shall be prioritized in the
19 ARAL Program.

1 For Kindergarten learners, the ARAL Program shall
2 focus on building foundational skills aimed at
3 strengthening their literacy and numeracy competencies.

4 SEC. 6. *Determination and Assessment of Learners*
5 *Under the ARAL Program.* – The Learner Information
6 System (LIS) of the DepEd shall be used to determine
7 those who did not enroll starting SY 2020-2021 for
8 purposes of Section 3(a) of this Act.

9 The DepEd shall determine the learners to be covered
10 under Section 3(b) based on the results of the assessment
11 to be administered prior to the start of the ARAL Program.

12 To assess the progress of learners, appropriate
13 assessments shall be regularly administered.

14 Priority shall be given to learners from Kindergarten
15 to Grade 6.

16 SEC. 7. *Tutors Under the ARAL Program.* – Teachers
17 and para-teachers shall be responsible for tutoring
18 learners under the ARAL Program: *Provided, That*
19 teachers shall not be the tutors of their own learners.

1 Senior high school and tertiary level students may
2 volunteer as tutors provided that they are at or above the
3 75th percentile of their respective school cohorts in the
4 subject that they will be teaching and have passed a mock
5 tutoring session to be administered by the DepEd:
6 *Provided*, That pre-service teachers as defined under
7 Republic Act (R.A.) No. 11713 or the “Excellence in
8 Teacher Education Act” shall automatically qualify as
9 tutors under this program.

10 The DepEd may likewise engage the services of
11 pre-service teachers and other individuals whom it deems
12 qualified in accordance with its qualifications and
13 conditions to be stated under the Implementing Rules and
14 Regulations (IRR) of this Act.

15 For purposes of this Act, teachers refer to all persons
16 engaged in teaching at the elementary and secondary
17 levels, whether on full-time or part-time basis, including
18 but not limited to technical-vocational teachers and
19 trainers, and all other persons performing supervisory or
20 administrative functions, or both, in all schools in the

1 aforesaid levels and qualified to practice teaching under
2 existing laws. Para-teachers are those who have taken the
3 Licensure Examination for Teachers but were unable to
4 qualify, and have been issued by the Board for Professional
5 Teachers a special permit indicating their area of
6 assignment. Pre-service teachers refer to students enrolled
7 in a teacher education degree program offered by Teacher
8 Education Institutions.

9 SEC. 8. *Capacity Building of Tutors.* – To successfully
10 improve learning outcomes as envisioned by the ARAL
11 Program, the DepEd shall ensure that the tutors receive
12 adequate training, as needed, focusing on effective
13 pedagogies, interpersonal skills, social-emotional learning,
14 and cultural competency, among others.

15 SEC. 9. *Campaigns for Learners to Return to School.* –
16 The ARAL Program shall create mass awareness
17 campaigns on media and through community engagement
18 to encourage learners under Section 3(a) to re-enroll and
19 return to school.

1 SEC. 10. *Updated Learner Information System (LIS).* –

2 The DepEd shall update its LIS which shall contain the
3 following additional information:

4 (a) Name and academic background of tutors;

5 (b) Name, grade level, and school of learners and
6 their corresponding pre- and post- assessment scores in
7 standardized measures of program effectiveness and
8 grades in the subjects where they are doing remediation;
9 and

10 (c) Assessment of learner performance on tasks and
11 activities administered during the tutorial sessions.

12 SEC. 11. *Free Access to All of DepEd’s Learning*
13 *Management Systems Applications; Subsidized Data Plans*
14 *for Learners and Tutors.* – Public Telecommunications
15 Entities (PTEs) shall provide free access to all of DepEd-
16 exclusively hosted learning management systems
17 applications with a static and public internet protocol (IP)
18 address. The learning management systems applications
19 shall include web-based applications, online educational
20 platforms, digital libraries, and other online knowledge

1 hubs exclusively hosted by DepEd. No data charges shall
2 also be incurred in the data downloaded from, or uploaded
3 to, these applications.

4 The DepEd shall determine the learners and tutors in
5 financial need and ensure that they are provided
6 subsidized data plans for the use of these applications.

7 As used in this Act, (1) PTEs shall refer to entities
8 duly authorized by the National Telecommunications
9 Commission to provide users or other entities with data
10 connection allowing access to the internet; and (2) free
11 access shall refer to the use of all learning management
12 systems applications without incurring any corresponding
13 data charges.

14 SEC. 12. *Allotment of Air Time for Supplemental*
15 *Tutorial Video Materials.* – Pursuant to R.A. No. 8370 or
16 the “Children’s Television Act of 1997”, a portion of the
17 daily total air time of each broadcasting network shall be
18 allotted for supplemental tutorial video materials within
19 the regular programming of all networks granted
20 franchises or as a condition of renewal of their broadcast

1 licenses hereinafter, to be included as part of the
2 responsibility of the network in serving the public.

3 The materials shall cover the essential learning
4 competencies under the K to 12 Basic Education
5 Curriculum covering the subjects of Language,
6 Mathematics, and Science.

7 The applicable provisions of the laws granting the
8 respective legislative franchises of these broadcasting
9 networks shall be used as basis to require them to provide
10 additional air time for the tutorial videos under the ARAL
11 Program.

12 SEC. 13. *Remuneration of Teachers and Para-teachers*
13 *Who Serve as Tutors.* – Teachers who serve as tutors shall
14 be compensated subject to the pertinent provisions of
15 R.A. No. 4670 or the “Magna Carta for Public School
16 Teachers” and the existing rules and regulations of the
17 DepEd and the Department of Budget and Management
18 (DBM). Said compensation for teachers shall be granted:
19 *Provided, That* they have already rendered the prescribed
20 six (6) hours of actual classroom teaching, and the amount

1 paid for the purpose shall not exceed the compensation for
2 two (2) hours based on the Prime Hourly Teaching Rate
3 consistent with DBM guidelines.

4 Para-teachers who serve as tutors under this Act
5 shall be compensated from the budget of the DepEd or the
6 Special Education Fund of the Local School Board of the
7 local government unit (LGU) where the schools of the
8 learners are located.

9 SEC. 14. *Equivalent Literacy Training Service Credits*
10 *for Senior High School and Tertiary Level Students Who*
11 *Serve as Tutors.* – Tertiary level students who serve as
12 tutors under the ARAL Program for a period of two (2)
13 semesters shall be given credits equivalent to their
14 Literacy Training Service under the National Service
15 Training Program, in accordance with R.A. No. 9163 or the
16 “National Service Training Program (NSTP) Act of 2001”.

17 Senior high school students who likewise serve as
18 tutors under the ARAL Program for the same period of
19 two (2) semesters shall be given credits equivalent to, but

1 not limited to, the Literacy Training Service under the
2 NSTP, once required to undertake the same.

3 Under R.A. No. 9163, the Literacy Training Service is
4 a program designed to train students to become teachers of
5 literacy and numeracy skills to school children,
6 out-of-school youth, and other segments of society in need
7 of their service.

8 SEC. 15. *Incentives for Pre-service Teachers.* –
9 Services rendered by pre-service teachers who serve as
10 tutors shall be considered relevant teaching experience
11 when applying for plantilla position in the DepEd, subject
12 to relevant rules and regulations of the Civil Service
13 Commission and the Merit Selection Plan and hiring
14 guidelines of the DepEd.

15 SEC. 16. *Local Government Support.* – The DepEd,
16 in collaboration with the LGU concerned, shall provide a
17 safe learning environment for face-to-face tutorials giving
18 due consideration to accessibility, cost-effectiveness and
19 health-safety risk. They may also collaborate on other
20 matters for the implementation of the ARAL Program,

1 such as the promotion of the program to potential tutors in
2 higher education institutions, identification and referral of
3 potential tutors to DepEd, and encouragement of parents
4 and parent-substitutes to include their children in the
5 ARAL Program.

6 The initiatives of an LGU in implementing learning
7 recovery strategies may be added as one of the
8 performance indicators under the criterion on Programs
9 for Sustainable Education under Section 7(e) of
10 R.A. No. 11292 or “The Seal of Good Local Governance
11 Act of 2019”.

12 SEC. 17. *Parental Involvement.* – Schools shall
13 develop linkages and maintain regular communication
14 with the parents of the learners, as well as their
15 parent-substitutes as defined under R.A. No. 11908 or
16 “The Parent Effectiveness Service Program Act”. The
17 parents and parent-substitutes, being a primary resource
18 and essential support in the education of their children,
19 shall enhance their parental roles by assisting their
20 children through home learning activities and making

1 significant contributions in their educational development
2 at home.

3 SEC. 18. *Implementing Agencies.* – The DepEd shall
4 coordinate with the Commission on Higher Education
5 (CHED), Technical Education and Skills Development
6 Authority (TESDA), Department of Information and
7 Communications Technology (DICT), Department of the
8 Interior and Local Government (DILG), and other
9 stakeholders in the implementation of the provisions of
10 this Act.

11 SEC. 19. *Tax Incentives.* – Any donation, contribution,
12 or grant, in cash or in kind, made by individuals or
13 organizations, public or private, local or foreign, to the
14 ARAL Program through the DepEd, shall be exempt from
15 the donor's tax and the cost of which shall be considered as
16 an allowable deduction from the gross income of the donor
17 in accordance with the provisions of the National Internal
18 Revenue Code of 1997, as amended, and the Bureau of
19 Internal Revenue Rules and Regulations.

1 SEC. 20. *Mandatory Review and Impact Evaluation.* –

2 An annual evaluation shall be designed to collect
3 comparable data for the purpose of determining the impact
4 of the program.

5 The impact evaluation report shall be submitted to
6 Congress not later than six (6) months after the end of
7 every school year of implementation.

8 SEC. 21. *Joint Congressional Oversight Committee.* –

9 There is hereby created a Joint Congressional Oversight
10 Committee to oversee, monitor and evaluate the
11 implementation of this Act. The Oversight Committee shall
12 be composed of five (5) members each from the Senate and
13 from the House of Representatives, including the
14 Chairpersons of the Committees on Basic Education and
15 Finance of the Senate, and the Chairpersons of the
16 Committees on Basic Education and Culture and
17 Appropriations of the House of Representatives. The
18 membership of the Oversight Committee for every chamber
19 shall have at least one (1) minority member. The other
20 two (2) members each from the Senate and the House of

1 Representatives shall be designated by the Senate
2 President and the Speaker of the House of
3 Representatives, respectively.

4 SEC. 22. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary for
5 the implementation of this Act shall be charged against
6 those authorized in the current appropriations of the
7 DepEd. Thereafter, the amount necessary for its
8 continuous implementation shall be included in the annual
9 General Appropriations Act.

10 SEC. 23. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* –
11 Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the
12 DepEd, in consultation with the CHED, TESDA, DICT,
13 DILG, and other relevant government agencies and private
14 stakeholders, shall issue the necessary rules and
15 regulations for its effective implementation. The rules and
16 regulations issued pursuant to this section shall take effect
17 thirty (30) days after its publication in a newspaper of
18 general circulation.

19 SEC. 24. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or
20 part of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the

1 remaining provisions or parts not affected shall remain in
2 full force and effect.

3 SEC. 25. *Repealing Clause.* – All other laws, executive
4 orders, presidential decrees, administrative orders, rules
5 and regulations, issuances, or parts thereof inconsistent
6 with or contrary to the provisions of this Act are hereby
7 repealed or amended accordingly.

8 SEC. 26. *Effectivity.* – Notwithstanding the
9 non-issuance of the IRR, this Act shall take effect fifteen
10 (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a
11 newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,