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SENATE

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Introduced by SENATOR WIN GATCHALIAN

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**RESOLUTION**

**DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, TO ASSESS THE PREPAREDNESS OF BASIC EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS TO CONDUCT CLASSES FOR SCHOOL YEAR 2023 TO 2024, TOWARDS THE FORMULATION OF POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS AND COMPLEMENTARY OR AMENDATORY LEGISLATION TO ENSURE THE EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT DELIVERY OF QUALITY EDUCATION**

1           **WHEREAS**, the Department of Education (DepEd) issued Department  
2 Order (DO) No. 034, s. 2022 prescribing the School Calendar and Activities  
3 for the recently concluded School Year (SY) 2022-2023 to start on August 22,  
4 2022 and end on July 7, 2023. The same DO likewise pre-determined the  
5 school period for the next two (2) years, unless otherwise amended,  
6 specifically:

7           (1) SY 2023-2024 – from August 28, 2023 to June 28, 2024, and

8           (2) SY 2024-2025 – from August 26, 2024 to June 27, 2025;

9  
10           **WHEREAS**, considering that DO No. 034, s. 2022 was primarily issued  
11 for SY 2022-2023, it stated that a separate DO shall be issued for the  
12 succeeding school years. However, the DepEd has yet to release a DO for SY  
13 2023-2024;

14  
15           **WHEREAS**, the Philippine basic education sector has been facing  
16 several challenges, as further exacerbated by the COVID-19 outbreak which

1 caused school closures all over the world. According to UNICEF, schools in  
2 the Philippines have been closed since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic  
3 which the country had: (1) one of the longest school breaks in the world  
4 without any type of formal classes from March 2020 to October 2020,<sup>1</sup> and  
5 (2) remained closed for the longest time among countries in the Asia-Pacific  
6 region;<sup>2</sup>

7  
8 **WHEREAS**, as a consequence of the school closure in 2020, the DepEd  
9 issued DO No. 012, s. 2020,<sup>3</sup> or the “Adoption of the Basic Education Learning  
10 Continuity Plan (BE-LCP) for School Year 2020-2021 in Light of the COVID-  
11 19 Public Health Emergency” which provided a package of education  
12 interventions that will respond to basic education challenges brought about  
13 by COVID-19. To ensure learning continuity, DepEd has instructed schools  
14 to implement a distance learning approach through the use of printed or  
15 offline modules, online, and television and radio-based instruction. Schools  
16 were allowed to combine or “blend” these modalities depending on the  
17 capability of the learners and their parents;<sup>4</sup>

18  
19 **WHEREAS**, the implementation of blended learning faced many  
20 complications. The difficulties of access to information and communications  
21 technology (ICT) were felt most by learners. Children from impoverished areas  
22 were put at a disadvantage at the start of classes. Moreover, increasing  
23 internet subscription costs also affected learners and instructors. Hardware  
24 and software were costly to everyone — educators, learners and parents. In  
25 addition, issues on errors in learning modules and lessons had drawn  
26 attention to the capability of DepEd to implement blended learning;<sup>5</sup>

27  
28 **WHEREAS**, DepEd resumed face-to-face classes for public schools in  
29 SY 2022-2023 in accordance with DepEd’s commitment to the resumption of

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/philippines/reopening-schools-safely>

<sup>2</sup> <https://mb.com.ph/2021/02/24/unicefph-has-longest-closure-of-schools-in-asia-pacific/>, February 25, 2021

<sup>3</sup> Dated June 19, 2020

<sup>4</sup> <https://mb.com.ph/2020/10/08/dep-ed-to-issue-reminders-on-the-implementation-of-alternative-delivery-modes/>, October 9, 2020; Based on the Learner Enrolment Survey Form (LESF) gathered, there are 9,424,925 students who chose modular distance learning.

<sup>5</sup> <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1362497/the-promises-and-pitfalls-of-blended-learning-in-ph>, November 20, 2020

1 5 days in-person classes despite the health crisis brought on by the COVID-  
2 19 pandemic;<sup>6</sup>

3

4 **WHEREAS**, the World Health Organization Director-General, Dr.  
5 Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, issued a statement<sup>7</sup> on May 5, 2023,  
6 determining that COVID-19 is now an established and ongoing health issue  
7 which no longer constitutes a public health emergency of international  
8 concern (PHEIC);<sup>8</sup>

9

10 **WHEREAS**, another unintended outcome of the COVID-19 pandemic  
11 that challenged the delivery of quality education is the shift in the school  
12 calendar. The conduct of classes during the summer months of SY 2022-2023  
13 prompted calls to revert to the old school calendar due to the extreme heat  
14 experienced by teachers and learners in public schools during the dry  
15 season;<sup>9</sup>

16

17 **WHEREAS**, in response thereto, DepEd reiterated that public schools  
18 may shift to Alternative Delivery Modes (ADMs), online or modular, should  
19 classroom setup be no longer ideal for learning amid the scorching heat;<sup>10</sup>

20

21 **WHEREAS**, despite the announcement of the Philippine Atmospheric,  
22 Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) on the start  
23 of rainy season on June 2, 2023, the Philippines is expected to experience a  
24 higher chance of El Niño persisting up to the first quarter of 2024.<sup>11</sup>  
25 Previously, the 2019 El Niño phenomenon caused Angat Dam's water level to  
26 plunge to record lows, causing a water shortage in Metro Manila and nearby

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<sup>6</sup> DO No. 034, s. 2022 dated July 11, 2022

<sup>7</sup> With this statement, the WHO Director General concurred with the advice offered by the International Health Regulations (2005) Emergency Committee.

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.who.int/news/item/05-05-2023-statement-on-the-fifteenth-meeting-of-the-international-health-regulations-\(2005\)-emergency-committee-regarding-the-coronavirus-disease-\(covid-19\)-pandemic?adgroupsurvey={adgroupsurvey}&gclid=CjwKCAjw2K6lBhBXEiwA5RjtCUo6nmzdUlfk2W7k8QgLrv\\_J9AW81jO\\_L3kjjwFiF4mSZkrnSvGeixoCwSwQAvD\\_BwE](https://www.who.int/news/item/05-05-2023-statement-on-the-fifteenth-meeting-of-the-international-health-regulations-(2005)-emergency-committee-regarding-the-coronavirus-disease-(covid-19)-pandemic?adgroupsurvey={adgroupsurvey}&gclid=CjwKCAjw2K6lBhBXEiwA5RjtCUo6nmzdUlfk2W7k8QgLrv_J9AW81jO_L3kjjwFiF4mSZkrnSvGeixoCwSwQAvD_BwE), May 5, 2023

<sup>9</sup> <https://mb.com.ph/2023/5/19/reverting-to-old-school-calendar-still-being-studied-deped>, May 19, 2023

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1200034>, April 24, 2023

<sup>11</sup> <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1778705/fwd-pagasa-declares-start-of-rainy-season-in-ph#ixzz878Zi17uN>, June 2, 2023

1 provinces. Up to 61% of the country suffered a drought where there were three  
2 consecutive months of over 60% less rainfall.<sup>12</sup> Presently, more than half a  
3 million households within the concession area of water distributor Maynilad  
4 Water Services Inc. will have to endure service interruptions of as long as 11  
5 hours as the water level of Angat Dam continues to drop amid the El Niño  
6 weather phenomenon;<sup>13</sup>

7

8 **WHEREAS**, another challenge to the school preparation brought about  
9 by the shift in the school calendar is the shortening of the school break to less  
10 than two (2) months or for only fifty-one (51) days, particularly from July 8,  
11 2023 to August 27, 2023. During this break, remedial classes will also be  
12 conducted in public schools from July 17, 2023 to August 26, 2023;<sup>14</sup>

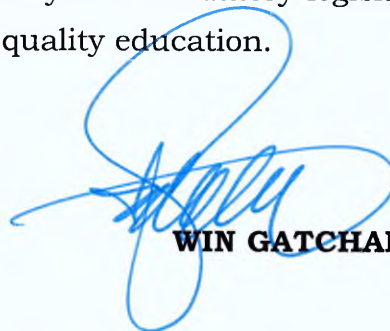
13

14 **WHEREAS**, an immediate assessment of both the effectiveness and the  
15 challenges in the preparation of classes using face-to-face classes and ADMs  
16 for SY 2023 to 2024 is necessary, taking into consideration the following  
17 issues: (1) COVID-19 pandemic is no longer considered a public health  
18 emergency; (2) conduciveness and risks posed by the learning environment  
19 due to unfavorable weather conditions; and (3) limited time to prepare for the  
20 incoming opening of classes;

21

22 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE**  
23 **PHILIPPINES**, to direct the Senate Committee on Basic Education to conduct  
24 an inquiry, in aid of legislation, to assess the preparedness of basic education  
25 institutions to conduct classes for SY 2023 to 2024, towards the formulation  
26 of policy recommendations and complementary or amendatory legislation to  
27 ensure the effective and efficient delivery of quality education.

*Adopted,*



**WIN GATCHALIAN**

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<sup>12</sup> <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1754318/maynilad-manila-water-urged-to-gear-up-for-water-crisis#ixzz8798ta8RR>, April 10, 2023

<sup>13</sup> <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1799861/metro-households-facedaily-water-supply-cut#ixzz87CqivC7k>, July 11, 2023

<sup>14</sup> DO No. 034, s. 2022, dated July 11, 2022