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| **Document** | **My Blog, My Philippines** |

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**Philippine Education: An Introduction**(Former Title: My Country, The Philippines: Education)

**In the Philippines, there are three levels of education, namely: elementary, secondary and tertiary. Public and private elementary and secondary education fall under the jurisdiction of the Department of Education while tertiary education falls under the jurisdiction of the Commission on Higher Education. Specifically, program design, policy formulation and standardization, curriculum and staff development in the elementary level and the high school level are managed by the Bureau of Elementary Education and the Bureau of Secondary Education, respectively. Non-formal education exists, and this type of education is handled by the Bureau of Non-Formal Education.**

**The structural organization of the Department of Education consists of two main pillars: the central office, which carries out the overall administrative functions at the national level, and the field offices, which manage local and regional administration. The Department is headed by the Education Secretary. Next in rank are the Undersecretaries and Assistant Secretaries. As provided by law, the department can have a maximum of four Undersecretaries and four Assistant Secretaries**

**Constitutional Bases of Philippine Education**(Revised Version)

**There are three Articles in the Philippine Constitution of 1987 that deals, directly or indirectly, with the educational system in the Philippines. These are: Article II, Article XIV and Article XV.  Article II gives the declared policies of the State, Article XIV deals with education, science and technology, arts, culture and sports  and Article XV contains provisions for the family and Filipino children. What are the declared policies of the State insofar as education is concerned? The State declares in Article II, Sections 11, 12, 13, and 17 that:**

1. **it values the dignity of every human person and guarantees full respect for human rights;**
2. **it shall strengthen the family as a basic, self-governing social unit and protect the life of the mother and the life of the unborn from conception;**
3. **it shall provide support to parents in the rearing of their children for civic efficiency and the development of moral character;**
4. **it recognizes the vital role of the youth in the country's development;**
5. **it shall promote and protect the physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual and social well-being of the youth; and**
6. **it makes education, science and technology, arts, culture and sports a priority of the State.**

**With these declared policies, the State is mandated to provide a system of education for the Filipino children and the youth. The kind of education that is envisioned in the Constitution is "quality education," a "complete, adequate, and integrated system of education relevant to the needs of the people and society," and the State must ensure that all citizens can access this envisioned system of education (Article XIV, Section 1, and Article XIV, Section 2, Subsection 1).  To achieve these goals, the Constitution (Article XIV):**

1. **mandates that the State shall provide for a free public elementary and secondary education;**
2. **mandates that the State shall provide scholarship grants, student loan programs, subsidies and other incentives to deserving and poor students;**
3. **requires all educational institutions to include the study of the Constitution in their curricula, inculcate patriotism and nationalism, foster love for humanity, promote respect for human rights and the appreciation of the role of national heroes in the historical development of the country, teach the rights and duties of citizenship, and encourage critical and creative thinking;**
4. **mandates that the State shall manage and regulate, reasonably, all educational institutions;**
5. **orders the State to take into account regional and sectoral needs;**
6. **gives academic freedom to all institutions of higher learning;**
7. **ensures the right of all citizens to select a profession or course of study, subject to fair, reasonable and equitable academic requirements;**
8. **mandates that the State shall enhance the right of teachers to professional advancement;**
9. **mandates that the State shall give the highest budgetary priority to education;**
10. **provides that Filipino is the national language of the Philippines;**
11. **makes English and Filipino as the official languages;**
12. **mandates that the State shall give priority to research and development and innovation and protect the rights of scientists, inventors, artists and other gifted citizens to their intellectual property rights;**
13. **mandates that the State shall preserve and enrich the Filipino national culture based on the principles of unity in diversity and free expression;**
14. **designates the State as patron of the arts and letters;**
15. **mandates that the State shall protect the rights of indigenous cultural communities and use these rights as inputs for national plans and policies;**
16. **requires the State to support researches and studies on the arts and culture;**
17. **mandates that the State shall promote physical education and sports programs in order to instill self-discipline and foster teamwork and excellence for the development of a healthy and alert citizenry.**

**In addition to all of these, the State is also mandated to protect and defend the "right of children to assistance, including proper care and nutrition, and special protection from all forms of neglect, abuse, cruelty, exploitation, and other conditions prejudicial to their development" as well as the "right of families or family associations to participate in the planning and implementation of policies and programs that affect them." (Article XV, Section 3, Subsections 3 and 4).**

**Some Legal Bases of Philippine Education**

**EDUCATIONAL DECREE OF 1863: The decree provided for the establishment of primary school for boys and girls in each town of the country.**

**ACT NO. 74 OF 1901: Enacted into law by the Philippine Commission, the Act created the Department of Public Instruction, laid the foundations of the public school system in the Philippines, provided for the establishment of the Philippine Normal School in Manila and made English as the medium of instruction. (In 1949, the Philippine Normal School was made a teachers' college by virtue of Republic Act <RA> 416 and, in 1991, it became a full-pledge university by virtue of RA 7168.)**

**ACT NO. 1870 OF 1908: The law served as the legal basis for the creation of the University of the Philippines.**

**VOCATIONAL ACT OF1927: Also known as Act No. 3377, the Vocational Act as amended by other acts laid the foundations of vocational education in public schools and made provisions for its support.**

**EDUCATION ACT OF 1940: Also known as Commonwealth Act No. 586, the Education Act laid the foundations for the present six-year elementary course and made provisions for its support.**

**REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1947: The Act placed public and private schools under the supervision and control of the Bureau of Public and Private Schools.**

**REPUBLIC ACT 5250 OF 1966: The Act provided the legal basis for the implementation of a ten-year teacher education program in special education.**

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SPORTS (DECS) ORDER NO. 25 OF 1974: Popularly known as the Bilingual Education Program of 1974, the Order required the use of English as medium of instruction for science and mathematics subjects and the use of Filipino as medium of instruction for all other subjects in the elementary and high school levels.**

**PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 1006 OF 1976: The Decree was a legal and formal recognition of teachers as professionals and teaching as a profession.**

**REPUBLIC ACT NO. 5698: The Act created the Legal Education Board whose task was to regulate and improve the quality of law schools in the Philippines in order to stop the increasing number of examinees who fail to pass the bar examinations given every year.**

**REPUBLIC ACT 6655 OF 1988: Popularly known as the Free Public Secondary Education Act of 1988, the Act created a system of free education in public high schools.**

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SPORTS (DECS) ORDER NO. 49 OF 1992: This Order serves as the guideline for the selection of honor students in all public and private high schools. All these schools were required to choose one (1) "valedictorian" and one (1) "salutatorian," and to set the limit of the number of "honorable mention" to one percent of the graduating students. The "eligibility requirements" for becoming an honor student are the following: 1) No grade below 80 in any subject and no failing grade in any subject in the first two curriculum years; 2) Completed third and fourth year studies in the same secondary school; 3) Completed the high school curriculum within the prescribed year; 4) Active membership in two clubs during the third and fourth years in high school; and 5) Conformed to school rules and policies.**

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SPORTS (DECS) ORDER NO. 1 OF 1994: This Order increased the number of school days to 200 days (42 calendar weeks) inclusive of examination days for public and private schools. (This department order is similar to RA 7791 which increased the number of school days from 185 to 200 days.)**

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SPORTS (DECS) ORDER NO. 37 OF 1994: The Order required all Grade VI elementary students to take the National Elementary Assessment Test (NEAT) that is given on the 13th Tuesday following the opening of the school year. The assessment test consists of a battery of tests of the multiple choice type. There are four subject areas: English, mathematics, science and heograpiya/kasaysayan/sibika (geography/history/civics).**

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SPORTS (DECS) ORDER NO. 38 OF 1994: The Order required all senior high school students to take the National Secondary Assessment Test (NSAT) that is given on the 13th Friday following the opening of the school year, or three days after the NEAT has been given. The assessment test consists of a battery of tests and there are four subject areas: English and Filipino proficiencies, mathematics, vocational aptitude and science & technology. (The test is not a requirement for college admission.)**

**REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7731: The Act abolished the National College Entrance Examinations or NCEE to give the marginalized students a greater chance to gain access to college education.**

**REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7722: Also known as the Higher Education Act of 1994, the Act created the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) whose main task is to regulate and develop tertiary education in the Philippines.**

**REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7796: Also known as the Technical Education and Skills Development Act (TESDA) of 1994, the Act's objective was to provide relevant and quality technical education that is accessible to all  and to create the agency that will manage technical education and skills development in the Philippines.**

**REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7836 OF 1994: Known as the Philippine Teachers Professionalization Act of 1994, the Act made it mandatory for people pursuing a career in teaching to take the licensure examinations that are administered and regulated by the Professional Regulatory Commission.**

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (DEPED) ORDER NO. 34 OF 2001: The Order required all public elementary and high school students to read at least one book in the vernacular and one book in English per year before they can be promoted to the next higher level.**

**Provisions on Education Found in Three Philippine Constitutions**

**The last decade of the 19th century was a turbulent period in Philippine history. It was a period of rapid transition brought about by the revolution which the katipunero (Filipino revolutionaries) started. The revolution against the Spanish colonial administration erupted in August, 1896, and it continued until 1898. By this time, the Filipinos have achieved the independence they were fighting for their country, and in 1899, the first Philippine constitution was penned. This was known as the Malolos Constitution of 1899, which declared that the Philippines was a free and independent state. Naturally, the provisions of the Constitution were centered on the promotion of this declaration; one of these provisions dealt with the creation of the council of government. The Malolos Constitution mandated the State to create seven cabinet positions that included Public Education, Finance, Interior, Communications and Public Works,   Agriculture, Industry and Commerce,  Foreign Relations,  and  War and Marine (Article IX, Section 73).**

**A new war broke out in 1901 when the Americans started to occupy the country. This was the war for independence waged by Filipinos against the American imperialist forces. The Americans won because of their superior firepower, and they became the new foreign masters and ruled the country until 1946. It was during the American occupation of the Philippine Islands that a new constitution was created. This was the Philippine Constitution of 1935, and it reaffirmed the existence of the Public Education Department as legal (Article VII, Section 11, Sub-section 1). It also contained two new provisions related to education. One was a declared principle of the State which was to provide aid and support to parents in their natural right and duty in rearing the youth for civic efficiency (Article II, Section 4). The other involved exemption from taxation of cemeteries, churches, convents, lands, buildings and improvements used exclusively for religious, charitable or educational purposes (Article VI, Section 22, Sub-section 3).**

**World War II broke out in 1941 and the Japanese imperial forces became the new colonizers of the Philippines. The war ended in 1945, and in 1946, the Philippines, once more, became a free and independent state. More than twenty-five years later, a new constitution was written. This was the Philippine Constitution of 1973, and it contained a good number of provisions on education. Most of these provisions were stated in Article XV on General Provisions but some provisions were placed in Article II which was the "Declaration of Principles and State Policies." It was the declared principles and policies of the State (Article II, Sections 4-7) to:**

1. **strengthen the family as a basic social institution;**
2. **aid and support parents in their natural right and duty in rearing the youth for civic efficiency and the development of moral character;**
3. **recognize the vital role of the youth in nation-building and promote their physical, intellectual, social, moral and spiritual well-being;**
4. **promote social justice; and**
5. **establish, maintain and ensure adequate social services in education.**

**Article XV (General Provisions) contained the envisioned system of Philippine education, which was "a complete, adequate, and integrated system of education relevant to the goals of national development." The Philippine Constitution of 1973 (Article XV, Sections 8-11):**

1. **mandated the State to regulate all educational institutions;**
2. **granted academic freedom to all institutions of higher learning;**
3. **required the study of the Constitution in all schools;**
4. **mandated the State to maintain a system of free public elementary education, provide citizenship and vocational training to adult citizens and out-of-school youth, and establish and maintain a system of scholarship to poor and deserving students;**
5. **mandated the State to promote scientific research and invention and to give priority to science and technology;**
6. **made it essential to preserve and develop the Filipino culture for national identity;**
7. **designated the State as patron of the arts and letters;**
8. **ensured the protection of the rights of investors, authors and artists to their inventions, writings and artistic creations;**
9. **mandated the State to provide scholarships, grants-in-aid or other forms of incentive to specially gifted children; and**
10. **mandated the State to take into account the customs, traditions, beliefs and interests of cultural communities in the formulation and implementation of state policies.**