

Status of Senior High School Implementation: A Process Evaluation

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Abstract

The enactment of the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013 (RA 10533) put into law the major reforms proposed to improve the country's educational system. A key feature of this law is the Senior High School (SHS) program. This added Grades 11 and 12 making compulsory basic education 13 years in total. The primary goal of the reform is to produce holistically developed and well-prepared students equipped with 21st century skills. This study conducts a process evaluation to determine the extent of implementation of the SHS program and identify best practices, issues and areas for improvement. It looks at three specific components namely, program theory, service delivery and utilization, and program organization. To capture a wider range of school context and experiences related to the implementation of the SHS program, 25 schools were randomly chosen based on their size, tracks offered as well as area classification. Focus group discussions (FGDs) and key informant interviews (KIIs) with program implementers and program beneficiaries were conducted in the chosen schools. Interviews with current and past DepEd senior officials and policy makers were also conducted. To provide comprehensive background to the FGDs and KIIs, enrollment data at the school level were also processed. Findings of the study reveal notable gains foremost of which is enrollment exceeding expectations. It is to the credit of the Department of Education (DepEd) bureaucracy to have launched the SHS program to a very good start considering the enormity of the needs and challenges of implementing a new and nationwide program. The DepEd bureaucracy was found to have prepared well to implement the program and program support was conceptually well-organized. Several implementers, teachers, parents and students highlighted varying experiences and opportunities which are very instructive. Certainly, the program is facing many challenges which hopefully are mostly mere birthing pains which can be addressed soon as implementation procedures continue to stabilize and take root. These challenges are summarized in the study. The final section offers key recommendations to improve SHS program implementation.

Keywords: Senior High School, Enhanced Basic Education Act, K to 12, Education Reform

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	1
2. Literature Review	2
2.1. History of Education Reform in the Philippines	2
2.2. The K to 12 Program in Other Countries	4
3. Policy Background	6
3.1. Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013 (K to 12)	6
3.2. Senior High School Program	8
3.3. Senior High School Curriculum	8
3.4. Senior High School Voucher Program.....	11
3.5. Joint Delivery Voucher Program for the TVL Track (JDVP-TVL).....	12
4. Research Design and Methodology	13
4.1. Conceptual Framework	13
4.2. Research Design	14
4.2.1. Key Informant Interviews and Focus Group Discussions	15
4.2.2. Secondary Data Analysis	20
4.2.3. Scope and Limitations	20
5. Results and Discussions	21
5.1. Senior High School Profile	21
5.1.1. Schools and Enrollment.....	21
5.1.2. Track and Strand Availability at the Division, Municipality and School Levels 25	
5.2. Key Findings from KIIs and FGDs.....	28
5.2.1. Program Theory.....	28
5.2.2. Service Delivery and Utilization.....	31
5.2.3. Program Organization and Support.....	40
5.2.4. Good Practices, Success Factors, and Program Gains	45
6. Summary and Recommendations	47
6.1. Summary	47
6.1.1. Program Theory.....	49
6.1.2. Service Delivery and Utilization.....	49
6.1.3. Program Organization and Support.....	50
6.2. Recommendations	50
6.2.1. Program Theory.....	51
6.2.2. Service Delivery and Utilization.....	52
6.2.3. Program Organization.....	54
7. References	56
8. Appendices	58
Appendix A. List of Guide Questions for the KIIs and FGDs	58
Appendix B. The SHS Process Evaluation Research Team and the Ad hoc Discussion Groups.....	69

List of Tables

Table 1. The Senior High School curriculum	8
Table 2. Senior High School core subjects.....	9
Table 3. Descriptive statistics from DepEd enrollment data, SY 2017-2018	16
Table 4. Distribution of schools according to categories.....	17
Table 5. Number of schools per category in each island cluster	17
Table 6. Number of participants per island cluster.....	18
Table 7. Descriptive statistics of SHS teacher and non-teaching staff respondents.....	18
Table 8. Descriptive statistics of grades 11 and 12 respondents	19
Table 9. Number of schools and enrollment in grades 11 and 12, SY 2017-2018	21
Table 10. Distribution of the number of strands offered by school type, SY 2017-2018.....	22
Table 11. Frequencies of strands offered by school type, SY 2017-2018.....	22
Table 12. Share of enrollment by track, strand and school type, SY 2017-2018.....	24
Table 13. Completion rates by track, SY 2017-2018	25
Table 14. Number of Divisions with no schools offering track, strand by Region, SY 2017-2018.....	26
Table 15. Number of municipalities/cities with no schools offering track, strand by Region, SY 2017-2018.....	27
Table 16. Number of schools not offering track, strand by Region, SY 2017-2018.....	28
Table 17. Summary of program inputs	29

List of Figures

Figure 1. Comparisons of the basic education structure of the Philippines	7
Figure 2. Implementation and transition management of the Enhanced Basic Education reform	7
Figure 3. Theory of Change narrative.....	14
Figure 4. Theory of Change indicators	14
Figure 5. Enrollment in grades 11 and 12 by school type, SY 2017-2018.....	21
Figure 6. Distribution of enrollment by track, SY 2017-2018.....	23
Figure 7. Distribution of enrollment by strand under the Academic track, SY 2017-2018.....	23
Figure 8. Distribution of enrollment by strand and school type, SY 2017-2018.....	24
Figure 9. Distribution of enrollment by track and sex, SY 2017-2018	25
Figure 10. SHS stakeholder map	41

List of Boxes

Box 1. Stakeholder support and school leadership at work in SHS implementation	47
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1. Introduction

The role of education in achieving economic growth is well-recognized in the literature. As acknowledged in an ADB report¹, high-quality education is not just a “pathway to opportunity, but a prerequisite for success.” The Philippines’ quality of education, however, has been declining in recent years. The result of the 2008 National Achievement Test (NAT) revealed Filipino students’ weak mastery of Mathematics (42.9%) and Science (46.7%). Furthermore, the country’s competitive advantage in human capital appears to be waning. In 2014, the country was top 3 in terms of current mean years of schooling (8.9) among ASEAN countries. Yet, its ranking fell four notches below, at 7th place, in 2015.²

One of the factors identified as a main contributor to the low mastery and academic performance of students is the Philippines’ 10-year basic education structure. A report shows that the country has a relatively shorter duration for basic education when compared with other Asian countries³. In fact, around 139 economies⁴ are currently implementing or are in the process of adopting the 12-year basic education model or the K to 12 (Sarvi, Munger and Pillay, 2015), which has become the international benchmark for pre-tertiary education. An early study (Hunt and McHale, 1965) notes that the Philippines’ 10-year structure is forcing Filipino students to learn the same academic content in a shorter period, as compared with counterparts from other countries. Likewise, several studies that assessed the state of education in the Philippines have consistently suggested extending the duration of the country’s basic education, pointing out the ineffectiveness of the current system in preparing students for real life⁵.

The literature also highlights another advantage of extending the years of schooling. Previous studies (Heckman, Lochner, and Todd, 2006, Psacharopoulos and Patrinos, 2004, Card, 1999) show that more years of schooling leads to higher level of income. Consistent with these studies, a more recent report (ADB, 2014) finds that years of schooling beyond Grade 10 for

* Consultant, Senior Research Fellow, and Consultants, respectively, of the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS). All opinions expressed here are of the authors and not of the institution they are affiliated with. This paper has benefitted from the comments of the participants at the PIDS internal research workshops. This project was implemented under the guidance of an ad hoc discussion group consisting of personnel of the Planning Service and the different relevant Bureaus of the Department of Education, the Social Development Staff of the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA), and PIDS. We would like to especially mention Karla Sio, Mariel Bayangos, and Director Roger Masapol of DepEd, and Edgardo Aranjuez II of NEDA who acted as point persons for each of the partner institutions. The research team consists of the authors and research personnel of the PIDS, namely, Maropsil Potestad, Kris Ann Melad, Nina Victoria Araos, Danica Ortiz, Ma. Kristina Ortiz, Viveka Miguel, Emma Cinco, and Susan Pizarro. The full list of the members of the study team and the ad hoc discussion group is found in Appendix B. This project would not have been possible without the support of the numerous respondents consisting of former and current DepEd officials at the national, regional, and division offices, teachers, and parents of the 24 schools visited.

¹ ADB. 2015. K-12 Transitions: Approaches and Lessons Learned. Metro Manila.

² ADB. 2015. Technical Assistance Report to the Republic of the Philippines for Implementing the Senior High School Support Program. Manila.

³ See Table 2 (page 7) of SEAMEO INNOTECH, (2011). K to 12 Education in Southeast Asia, Regional Comparison of the Structure, Content, Organization, and Adequacy of Basic Education.

⁴ The figure excludes the Philippines.

⁵ See Monroe Survey 1925, Prosser Survey 1930, UNESCO Survey 1949, Swanson Survey 1959, PCSPE Survey 1969, PESS Report 1998, PCER Report 2000.

Filipino students, will increase wage income by 56 percent, considering the probability of employment⁶.

To reform the education system in the Philippines, the Enhanced Basic Education Act (RA 10533) was signed into law in 2013. RA 10533 was crafted to improve the country's education system through a strengthened curriculum. A key feature of this law is the Senior High School (SHS) program that added G11 and G12 making compulsory pre-college education 13 years⁷. The SHS program was rolled out in 2016, which seeks to produce students that are holistically developed, equipped with 21st century skills and prepared for the future, regardless of their chosen paths, may it be higher education, attainment of middle-level skills, employment or entrepreneurship.

In congruence with the idea laid out by Hanushek and Wößmann (2007), stating that the returns to increase in years of schooling highly depends on the quality of school system, this study aims to provide a factual assessment on the implementation of the Senior High School program to uncover ground-level issues and recommend necessary interventions to improve the execution of the program and help attain its ultimate goals. A Process Evaluation is utilized to examine specific program components, namely: (a) program theory, (b) service delivery and utilization, and (c) program organization (Rossi, Lipsey and Freeman, 2004). Findings of this study will lend itself useful to the Department of Education and ultimately, to the Filipino students.

The paper is organized as follows. Section 2 gives a brief review of the relevant literature. Section 3 provides a background of the policies that led to the implementation of the SHS Program. It also presents a discussion on the different components of the SHS program including SHS curriculum, its goal, the SHS voucher program and the Joint Delivery Voucher Program for the TVL track (JDVP-TVL). Section 4 offers information about the research design and methodology. It provides details on the study's conceptual framework, data sources and description, sampling strategy as well as summary of activities done for the study. Section 5 contains the discussions on the results and discussion of findings on the specific components of the SHS program. Lastly, Section 6 presents the summary and recommendations of the study.

2. Literature Review

2.1. History of Education Reform in the Philippines⁸

The educational reform in the Philippines that includes expanding the basic education from 10 to 13 years is backed up by a long history of studies, pointing out the issues in the country's education system and inadequacy of the 10-year education structure. In as early as 1925, a survey was carried out to examine the status of education in the country. One of the main findings of the Monroe Survey relates to the inability of the secondary education curriculum to prepare students for real life; thus, the recommendation for training in agriculture, commerce and industry. It likewise revealed that almost 95 percent of the teachers during the time were not professionally trained for teaching.

⁶ ADB. 2014. Report and Recommendation of the President to the Board of Directors: Proposed Loan to the Republic of the Philippines for the Senior High School Support Program, Linked Document 3: Summary Sector Assessment. Manila.

⁷ Kindergarten is now also a pre-requisite for grade 1.

⁸ Discussion based on <https://chedk12.files.wordpress.com/2015/10/history-infographic-02.jpg>

In 1930, the Prosser Survey, a follow-up survey that was conducted to look into the vocational education in the Philippines, recommended for the review of the country's cycle. It also prescribed a shop work for the 7th grade. It is worth noting that both the Monroe and Prosser surveys advocated for the 11-year education system for the country.

Another survey was undertaken in 1949 by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). It assessed the educational situation in the Philippines to serve as guide for the organization's succeeding educational missions. The UNESCO survey highlighted the following issues:

- i. Language problem
- ii. Elementary education was considered ineffective
- iii. Need to strengthen teacher education program
- iv. Inadequate teacher income
- v. Inadequate national support on education

Given the constraints hampering the Philippine education system, the UNESCO prescribed the restoration of the Grade 7 as well as revisiting the idea of the 11-year basic education that was practiced prior to World War II.

The Swanson Survey done in 1959 similarly recommended for the restitution of Grade 7 as comparable tests executed, revealed a decline in reading, arithmetic computation and language among Filipino students. A study (Hunt, C. and McHale, T., 1965) notes that the abolition of the Grade 7 in the Philippines' basic education system was a drastic move that forced Filipino students to learn the same academic content in a shorter period of time, in comparison with the American system, which was, to some extent, regarded as a benchmark.

In 1969, the Presidential Commission to Survey Philippine Education (PCSPE) was created through Executive Order No. 202, based on the need to evaluate and improve the educational system in the country, and make it responsive to modernization and national development goals. The PCSPE suggested for an overhaul of the education system, which pertains to reverting to the 11-year basic education but at the same time, acknowledging the need to assess the government's financial capacity to undertake the reform.

In 1991, the Congressional Commission on Education (EDCOM) released a report that assessed the state of Philippine education and manpower training. Some of the key findings include high dropout rates especially in rural areas, and high repetition rates in Grade 1, reflecting the lack of preparation among young children to transition to primary education. Additionally, it was observed that the government was not investing enough on education as compared to other ASEAN countries (only 1.3 percent of GDP was allotted to education sector during that time). The EDCOM report thus, recommended for the restructuring of the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (now Department of Education), and creation of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) for more efficient management of programs and resources. However, it also suggested maintaining the 10-year primary education structure, citing the government's financial capacity as a constraint. Two routes were proposed if the education structure is to be changed: (1) add another year (Grade 7) to primary education since it is the most accessible to Filipinos, or (2) add an additional year in secondary education (senior high school) that would offer academic (preparatory for tertiary education), and technical and vocational tracks.

In 1998, the Philippine government, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank jointly conducted the Philippine Education Sector Study (PESS). The PESS recognized the need to extend the duration of basic education. Though, in the wake of the Asian financial crisis, the report instead recommended for an optional bridging program for students preparing to enter the university.

The PESS proposal was reaffirmed by the Philippine Commission on Education Reform (PCER) report in 2000. This report recommended improving the readiness of Filipino students for tertiary education and address issues related to school repetitions and dropouts. It likewise advocated for the establishment of a one-year pre-baccalaureate program that would serve as a link between high school and college, improving the readiness of students for tertiary education.

In response to the recommendations outlined in both the PESS and PCER, the Department of Education launched a compulsory bridging program in 2004. This program focuses on English, Science and Mathematics, prescribed for students who failed the High School Readiness Test (HSRT). Results of the HSRT shows that 1.5 million out of 1.6 million students (98 percent) were unprepared for high school. However, due to political pressure, the bridging program was instead made optional, resulting to a low take-up (only 245,000 out of the 1.5 million students expected). The bridging program was eventually discontinued.

Another report by the Presidential Task Force on Education in 2008 puts forward the need to align the Philippines' education system with global standards. Finally, the long-overdue educational reform was identified as part of the priority programs of the newly-elected administration in 2010. The education reform was facilitated through the Enhanced Basic Education Program, also known as the K to 12.

2.2. The K to 12 Program in Other Countries

Until the program implementation in 2013, the Philippines has been the only country in Southeast Asia and one of the three countries in the world (along with Angola and Djibouti) that maintained a 10-year pre-university education cycle. This shows that compressing the 12 years of education learned worldwide into 10 years of education in the Philippines has been a challenge to students and teachers to be at par with global standards. Moreover, K to 12 in the Philippines has a recurring aim of having students gain 21st century skills. Evidently, some countries in Southeast Asia (Brunei, Malaysia, Singapore, and Hong Kong) shifted and reformed their respective curricula to keep their education system in line with 21st century requirements. Sarvi, Munger and Pillay (2015) identified six groups of macrolevel reasons for implementing the program to include: (1) meeting international standards, (2) providing equity especially for the disadvantaged, (3) preparing for long-term and decent careers, (4) competing globally, (5) fostering national cohesion, and (6) decongesting the curriculum⁹.

Worldwide, shifts to the K to 12 program had various reasons aside from improving overall education quality. Sarvi, Munger and Pillay (2015) grouped countries according to the type of K to 12 transition adopted. For Mongolia and the Philippines, transitioning to K to 12 expanded their systems from 10 to 11 years to 12 years of schooling. The challenge in this type of transition is to avoid both the lack and the surplus of schools, teachers, and materials. In Mongolia, an excess of teachers and classrooms under the Ministry of Education, Culture, and

⁹ Sarvi, J. Munger, and H. Pillay (2015) "K-12 Transitions: Approach and Lessons Learned," ADB Briefs.

Sports are brought about by programs offered by the Ministry of Labor which includes monthly stipends for students. The country also experienced an enrollment rate lower than expected in upper secondary schools due to a decline in the school age population. On the other hand, the case of Ontario, Canada illustrates a reduction from 13 to 12 years of education system to align with other Canadian provinces. This reduction entailed a reconfiguration of secondary education curriculum and a universal full-day kindergarten.

Another transition type is implementing the compulsory 12 years of schooling. Although countries such as Mongolia, Indonesia, Poland, and Turkey have already been implementing K to 12, the levels required to be completed varied. Prior to the compulsory adjustment, in Mongolia, students may only finish until Grade 9, while in Indonesia, Poland, and Turkey, it may be until Grades 8, 9, or 12. The required completion of Grade 12 was then followed by reinforcements in teacher preparations and restructuring of curricula in certain levels. Ensuring that all 12 levels are mandatory for students guarantees recognition of the value and relevance of the entire program for all stakeholders.

Like any other reform, transition to K to 12 in other countries also met obstacles before reaching a relatively smooth-sailing implementation. Transitions generally experienced lengthy discussions prior to official implementation. Expansion of years of schooling was not received well and was criticized by the national press in Turkey, Ontario, and Poland. Other countries had setbacks during adjustments before reaching visible success. Some of the adjustment efforts and challenges experienced by other countries include the following:

- i. In Turkey, large-scale adjustments were made for the curriculum of Grade 5 to 8 due to the reduction of primary school years (from 8 to 4 years). This also included additions of electives and specialized subjects and changes in assessment standards, teaching materials, and learning materials.
- ii. In Malaysia, Hong Kong, Brunei, and Indonesia, preschool curricula contain more of activities than content. While elementary and secondary curricula for the four countries are structured the other way around.
- iii. Brunei, Malaysia, and Singapore follow a spiral curriculum for elementary and secondary education levels. Their basic education curriculum is also seamless and therefore, facilitates continuous learning.
- iv. In Mongolia, the extension of schooling entailed hiring more teachers to ensure that schools are prepared to enforce the program. Teacher training extensively followed this adjustment, and the same is true for Ontario and Poland.
- v. Poland, particularly, invested much in improving teacher training to upgrade professional competency and expand the capacity of teachers to carry out the new curricula. The country also initially experienced poor performance in the first Program for International Student Assessment but improved eventually.

Meanwhile, other countries that implemented the K to 12 system agreed that the target contributions and anticipated benefits to overall individual and societal development are worth the government commitment and financial investment. For instance, a cohort taught under the old system in Poland, which includes eight years of primary and four years of secondary education performed poorly in an initial assessment. The new cohort taught under six years of primary and six years of secondary education drastically improved in overall performance and

was pulled mainly by impressive gains of disadvantaged students. In Qatar, independent schools implementing the reform produced students who outperformed students from traditional Ministry schools in mathematics, science, Arabic, and English assessments. In Mongolia, several waves of reform and curriculum revisions have increased participation in all educational levels. In Ontario, there is approximately 30 percent secondary education dropout rate, and seven years later, this has been reduced to 17 percent.

3. Policy Background

3.1. Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013 (K to 12)

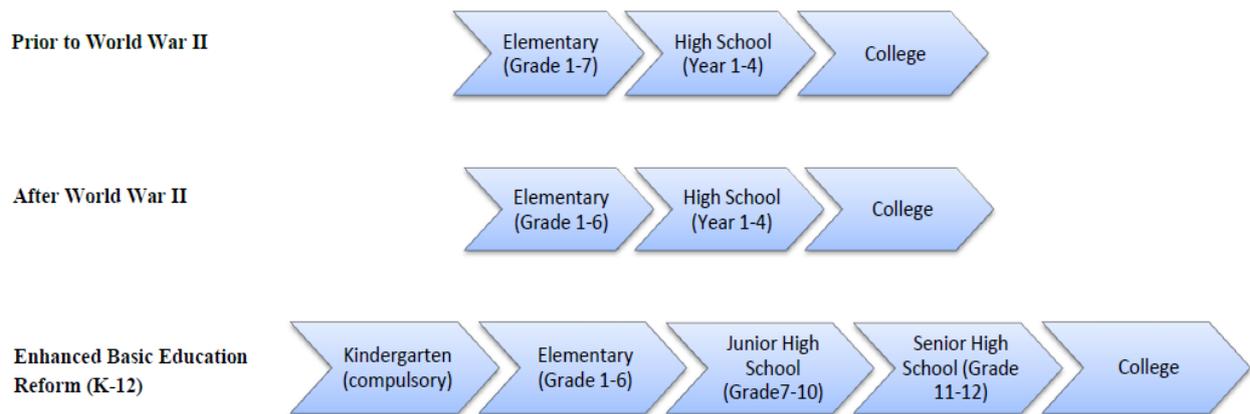
The Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013, also known as K to 12, was implemented through the Republic Act 10533. The primary goal of this Act is to improve the education system in the Philippines by strengthening the curriculum and expanding the duration of basic education from 10 to 12 years, in order to produce locally and globally competitive Filipinos.

Based on the Implementing Rules and Regulations of RA 10533, the enhanced basic education program consists of at least one (1) year of kindergarten education, six (6) years of elementary education, and six (6) years of secondary education.

The first stage of compulsory and mandatory formal education is the kindergarten education, which is a prerequisite for Grade 1. The age of entry for kindergarten education is at least five (5) years old. The second stage is the elementary education, which consists of six (6) years. Students typically start elementary education at six (6) years old. The third stage is the secondary education, which is composed of four (4) years of junior high school education and two (2) years of senior high school education. The age of entry in junior high school is typically twelve (12) years old while for senior high school is typically sixteen (16) years old.

Figure 1 shows the comparison of basic education structure of the Philippines prior to World War II, after World War II and the enhanced basic education (K to 12) reform. As shown in the figure, the Philippines used to have 7 years of elementary education during pre-World War II period.

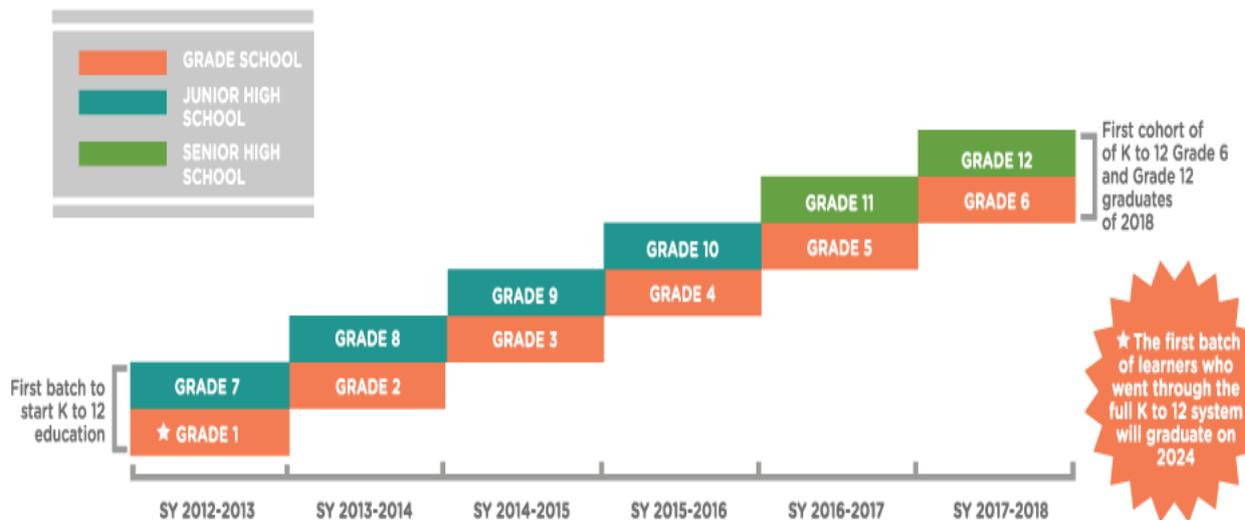
Figure 1. Comparisons of the basic education structure of the Philippines



Source: Adapted from <https://chedk12.wordpress.com/about-kto12/>.

In preparation for the K to 12, kindergarten education was required for all 5-year old children beginning School Year (SY) 2011-2012. This was done through the Universal Kindergarten Education Program (R.A. 10157). On the other hand, the senior high school program was first rolled-out in SY 2016-2017. The first batch of students under the K to 12 program will graduate in 2024. Figure 2 shows the implementation schedule and transition management the enhanced basic education (K to 12) reform.

Figure 2. Implementation and transition management of the Enhanced Basic Education reform



Source: www.gov.ph/k-12/

3.2. Senior High School Program

The SHS program is one of the six salient features of the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013 (RA 10533):

- i. Strengthening Early Childhood Education (Universal Kindergarten)
- ii. Making Curriculum Relevant to Learners (Contextualization and Enhancement)
- iii. Ensuring Integrated and Seamless Learning (Spiral Progression)
- iv. Building Proficiency through (Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education)
- v. ***Gearing Up for the Future (Senior High School)***
- vi. Nurturing the Holistically Developed Filipino (College and Livelihood Readiness, 21st Century Skills)

Being the last two levels in the Enhanced Basic Education Program, the SHS curriculum aims to produce students that are holistically developed, equipped with 21st century skills and prepared for the future, regardless if the student decides towards the direction of higher education, attainment of middle-level skills, employment or entrepreneurship¹⁰.

3.3. Senior High School Curriculum

The SHS curriculum is mainly divided into three: (1) the core subjects and (2) the applied track subjects, and additionally, the (3) specialized track subjects that vary depending on the student's chosen field of specialization (strand). This is outlined in Table 1.

Table 1. The Senior High School curriculum

Senior High School		
CORE SUBJECTS (Communication, Languages, Literature, Math, Philosophy, Science, Social Sciences)	TRACK SUBJECTS	
	Contextualized Tracks	Strands
	(1) Academic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Academic Strand (GAS) • Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS) Strand • Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Strand • Accountancy, Business and Management (ABM) Strand • Pre-Baccalaureate Maritime Strand
	(2) Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agri-Fishery Arts Strand • Home Economics Strand • Industrial Arts Strand • Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Strand • TVL Maritime Strand <p><i>*96+ specializations</i></p>
	(3) Sports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaching • Basketball • Volleyball • Boxing <p><i>*plus other sports</i></p>
(4) Arts and Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual arts • Theater arts • Media 	

¹⁰ Adapted from the Senior High School Manual of Operations, Vol. 1.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Music • Dance
	+ Work Immersion / Culminating Activity / Research Output

Source: Department of Education.

All SHS students are required to take a total of 15 core subjects. These are in the areas of Communication, Languages, Literature, Math, Philosophy, Science and Social Sciences. The time allocation for each of these 15 core subjects are provided in Table 2.

Table 2. Senior High School core subjects

Learning Areas	Core Subjects	Hours per sem
Language	Oral Communication	80
	Reading and Writing	80
	Komunikasyon at Pananaliksik sa Wika at Kulturang Pilipino	80
	Pagbasa at Pagsusuri sa Iba't Ibang Teksto Tungo sa Pananaliksik	80
Humanities	21 st Century Literature from the Philippines and the World	80
	Contemporary Philippine Arts from the Regions	80
Communication	Media and Information Literacy	80
Mathematics	General Mathematics	80
	Statistics and Probability	80
Science	Earth and Life Science (Lecture and Laboratory)	80
	Physical Science (Lecture and Laboratory)	80
Social Science	Personal Development / Pansariling Kaunlaran	80
	Understanding Culture, Society, and Politics	80
Philosophy	Introduction to the Philosophy of the Human Person	80
PE and Health	Physical Education and Health	80
Total number of hours for Core Subjects		1,200
Total number of hours for Track		1,280
Total number of hours		2,480
Total number of hours divided by no. of SHS school days (400): average hours/day		6.2

Source: DepEd presentation, K to 12 Updates, September 2014.

On the other hand, there are four main options for the applied track subjects: (1) the academic track, (2) technical-vocational-livelihood (TVL) track, (3) sports track and (4) arts and design track. The subjects for the four tracks each with 80 hours per semesters are as follows¹¹:

- i. English for Academic and Professional Purposes
- ii. Practical Research 1
- iii. Practical Research 2
- iv. Filipino sa Piling Larangan (Akademik, Isports, Sining, at Tech-Voc)
- v. Empowerment Technologies
- vi. Entrepreneurship
- vii. Inquiries, Investigations, and Immersion

Tracks pertain to the general categories of the subjects while strands refer to more specific areas of expertise. The academic and TVL tracks are further divided into five strands each. The strands for the academic track are: General Academic Strand (GAS), Humanities and Social

¹¹Official Gazette of the Philippines, <http://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/k-12/>

Sciences (HUMSS) Strand, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Strand, Accountancy, Business and Management (ABM) Strand, and Pre-Baccalaureate Maritime Strand. The strands for the TVL track, on the other hand, are: Agri-Fishery Arts Strand, Home Economics Strand, Industrial Arts Strand, Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Strand, and TVL Maritime Strand (see Table 1).

The academic track is designed for students who are planning to proceed to college.¹² This category offers a preview of certain courses that students can take up in the next level. There are basically five strands to choose from¹³:

- i. *General Academic Strand (GAS)* is advised for students who are still undecided on which track to take. Students under GAS can take electives from other academic strands.
- ii. *Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS) Strand* is designed for students who are planning to take up humanities and social science-related courses in college, such as journalism, communication arts, liberal arts, education, etc. The focus of this strand is on improving students' communication skills.
- iii. *Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Strand* focuses on advanced concepts and topics. This strand will fit students who are considering either sciences or engineering courses in college.
- iv. *Accountancy, Business and Management (ABM) Strand* centers on the basic concept of business management, financial management, corporate operations and other topics related to accounting.
- v. *Pre-Baccalaureate Maritime Strand* is a modified version of the STEM, consisting of 6 specialized subjects of the STEM along with 3 maritime-related subjects. This strand aims to encourage students to pursue maritime higher education, with the end goal of producing officer-level seafarers.¹⁴

The technical-vocational-livelihood (TVL) track on the other hand, is intended for students who would choose to work immediately after completing their basic education. It seeks to equip students with job-ready skills. The TVL track has five strands:

- i. *Agri-Fishery Arts Strand* offers hands-on learning and application of skills in the areas of agriculture and aquaculture. Subjects in this strand can also be utilized for other related jobs such as food processing, rubber production, animal production, or landscape installation.
- ii. *Home Economics Strand* provides various specialization in home economics that can help students develop livelihood projects at home.
- iii. *Industrial Arts Strand* is fit for students interested in gaining knowledge and developing skills in the following areas: carpentry, automotive servicing, driving, electronics repair, electrical installation, welding, plumbing, and tile setting.
- iv. *Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Strand* train students to utilize information and communication technological tools.

¹² It should be mentioned, however, that from an earlier study when SHS graduating students were asked what they would do after graduation, a similar high proportion (75%) says they are going to college (Orbeta, et al., 2018).

¹³ The discussion on academic and TVL tracks, along with each of the strands, are based on <https://www.edukasyon.ph/courses/senior-high-tracks>.

¹⁴ Discussion based on http://www.marianamaritime.ph/?page_id=286.

- v. *TVL Maritime Strand* train students to prepare them for taking the assessment for Certification of Ratings Forming Part of a Watch (Deck and Engine) after the program.¹⁵

The specific offerings under each of the TVL strands uses TESDA's Training Regulations (TR) that qualifies TVL strand students for assessments in corresponding COCs (Certificates of Competency) and NCs (National Certifications). These NCs are enhances securing career opportunities in agriculture, electronics, and trade. Such certifications are also needed when applying employment abroad.

Meanwhile, the sports track is intended for students planning to pursue work such as fitness trainers, game officials, tournament manager, recreation attendant, masseur, or gym instructor. It aims to provide knowledge and appreciation of the basic principles and techniques in physical education and recreation. Moreover, it covers discussions on various factors affecting social, psychological, and cognitive development in sports leadership and management.

Finally, the arts and design track is for students wanting to explore the creative field after completing basic education. It aims to expose the students to several forms of media such as architecture, interior design, industrial design, graphic design, animation, painting, fashion design, photography, and film.

Aside from these applied tracks and specialized strands, a key component of the SHS curriculum is work immersion. This is like an internship program or on-the-job training (OJT) usually taken by college students as a requirement for graduation. SHS students are required to complete an 80-hour work simulation in a company or institution that is aligned to their track, strand, or intended career¹⁶. This program is executed under the supervision of the School Head and the designated personnel of the partner institution. The goal of the work immersion is to expose students to an actual and practical learning experience while enriching their competencies for the career path they are most likely to pursue after SHS or college. This presents an opportunity for preparing students and equipping them with employable skills should they opt apply for a job. The work immersion likewise includes simulations and seminars on job application processes, such as preparing a resume and securing government documents.

As an alternative to work immersion, which is required for those in the TVL track, the other tracks can adopt alternative culminating activity including a research output.

Accompanying the introduction of the additional two years of basic education are two programs that are designed to improve access to the SHS program and address the procurement issues related to the implementation of the TVL track. These are the SHS voucher program and the Joint Delivery Voucher Program for the TVL track (JDPV-TVL). We describe the features of these programs next.

3.4. Senior High School Voucher Program

The senior high school is similar with the college level in the sense that it entails tuition fees, which varies depending on the school offering the program. To ensure that students can enroll in this level, the Department of Education (DepEd) introduced the Senior High School Voucher Program, in response to the mandate of RA 10533 to expand Government Assistance to

¹⁵ Based on <http://marianaacademy.ph/senior-high/tvl/>

¹⁶ Jeanella Mangaluz, "K-12 and the Work Immersion Program", *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, April 2018.

Students and Teachers in Private Education (E-GASTPE). The SHS voucher program is a mechanism to provide financial assistance to qualified students, and at the same time, decongest public schools and promote partnership with private schools. This program specifically aims to¹⁷:

- i. Increase access to SHS;
- ii. Promote diversity of SHS providers;
- iii. Expand the options of students and their families in terms of choosing the SHS program that are matched with their capacity and career goals.

Recipients of the voucher program will get a voucher certificate, in lieu of money. DepEd will then remit the payment to their chosen school. The amount ranges from PHP 17,500 to PHP 22,500, depending on the location of school¹⁸. On average, DepEd spends around PHP 18,300 per voucher recipient.

Students are required to submit proofs and other documents for enrollment. They can claim discount percentages based on scope. The criteria for discount percentages are as follows¹⁹:

- iv. 100% of voucher total for students from DepEd/public JHS who will enroll at non-DepEd/private SHS or Tech-Voc institution;
- v. 80% of voucher total for ESC grantees from non-DepEd/private JHS who will enroll at non-DepEd/private SHS or Tech-Voc institution;
- vi. 50% of voucher total for recipients who will enroll at LUCs and SUCs, regardless if from public or private JHS.

The Private Education Assistance Committee²⁰ (PEAC) manages the implementation of the SHS voucher program. The organization is represented by its National Secretariat (PEAC NS) and Regional Secretariats (PEAC RS), in NCR and other regions, respectively.

3.5. Joint Delivery Voucher Program for the TVL Track (JDVP-TVL)

To address the lack of facilities in DepEd SHS offering the TVL track hampered by procurement issues, the JDVP-TVL was launched in SY 2018-19. The JDVP-TVL has the following objectives: “(a) allow learners to complete their TVL specialization through JDVP-TVL partners who had the facilities; (b) provide an appropriate learning environment required for the specialization; and (c) address the delays in the provision of necessary resources for TVL specialization” (DepEd Department Order s2018 033). The program allows G12 students in public SHSs with inadequate facilities, equipment, tools and teachers to take their TVL specialization in chosen private TVIs who agree to partner with DepEd SHSs. The student tuition in the private TVIs is subsidized by the amount of the voucher.

¹⁷ From <https://peac.org.ph/senior-high-school-voucher-program/>

¹⁸ Computation accounts for the cost of living and public provision for the place. Source: <https://www.ciit.edu.ph/voucher-program/>

¹⁹ As stated in <https://www.ciit.edu.ph/voucher-program/>

²⁰ PEAC is the trustee of the Fund for Assistance to Private Education (FAPE), a perpetual fund created to provide assistance to private education in the country.

4. Research Design and Methodology

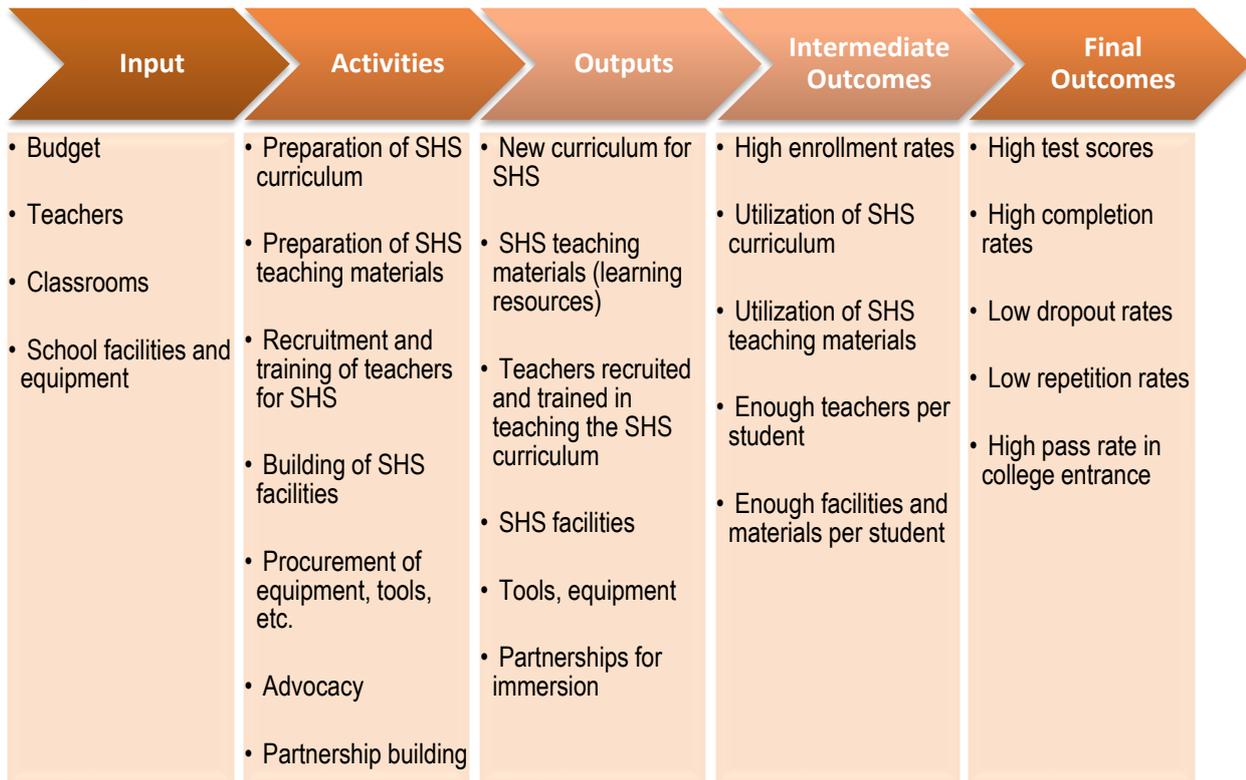
4.1. Conceptual Framework

This study aims to assess the status of implementation of the Senior High School Program, which is a feature of the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013. A Process Evaluation (PE) is employed to specifically investigate the following components: (1) program theory, (2) service delivery and utilization, and (3) program organization.²¹ *Program theory* is assessed by determining the need that the program is addressing, the critical assumptions in formulating the objectives, the logic and plausibility of attaining the program goals, and the sufficiency of preparations and resources for the achievement of the program goals. *Service delivery and utilization* is assessed in terms of the program's reach, stakeholder satisfaction, and the challenges related to implementation. Lastly, *program organization* investigates the adequacy and use of resources (human, financial, physical), the quality of operational procedures, the external support received, and other organizational concerns that support program implementation. The goal of the PE is to unveil implementation issues, show best practices and recommend appropriate interventions that can improve the execution of the SHS program.

The Theory of Change narrative that guides this study is illustrated in Figure 3. As exhibited in the figure, the desired final outcomes of the SHS program can be attained by investing in necessary inputs like budget, teachers, classrooms, school facilities and equipment, which are then translated into outputs such as new curriculum for SHS, teaching materials, trained teachers, school facilities and equipment and partnership for immersion. The efficient utilization of these outputs is subsequently expected to result to intermediate outcomes like high enrollment rates, utilization of the SHS curriculum and teaching materials, enough teachers per student and enough facilities and materials per student. Finally, the success of the SHS program is achieved if the desired final outcomes such as high test scores, high completion rates, low dropout rates, low repetition rates, high passing rates in college entrance exams, high TVL certification rates and high employment or entrepreneurship rates are accomplished. The progress and accomplishment of the SHS program can be gauged by utilizing the corresponding indicators shown in Figure 4.

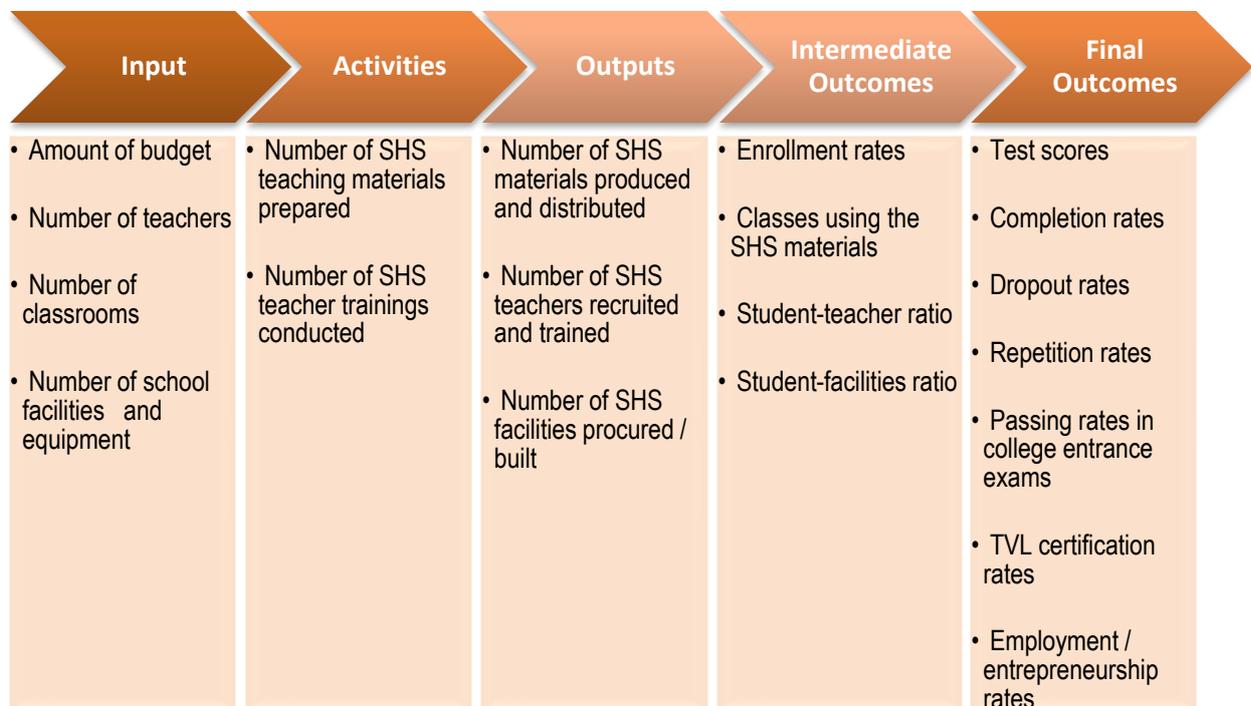
²¹ Rossi, et. al. 2004. Evaluation: A Systematic Approach.

Figure 3. Theory of Change narrative



Source: Adapted from Orbeta and Paqueo presentation (2018).

Figure 4. Theory of Change indicators



Source: Adapted from Orbeta and Paqueo presentation (2018).

4.2. Research Design

The study was conducted, from inception to data collection, within a period of seven months (May to November 2018). The primary methods used for data collection are key informant

interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs) with different stakeholders. These are supplemented by a review of official program documents and processing of available administrative data.

4.2.1. Key Informant Interviews and Focus Group Discussions

The identified respondents for the KIIs and FGDs for this study are the program designers, policy makers, and implementers from the different levels of DepEd, including (a) the Department officials (former and present secretaries and undersecretaries), (b) Bureau representatives, (c) Field office representatives (SHS focal persons from Regional and Schools Division offices), and school implementers (school heads, SHS focal persons, and teachers). On the program beneficiaries' side, respondents included grades 11 and 12 students, and their parents.

4.2.1.1. *Key Informant Interviews.* The KIIs were conducted with department officials, representatives from the bureaus, regional offices, schools' division offices, school heads, and focal persons. The following are the descriptions of the respondents and the nature of the interviews:

- i. **Officials.** Five (5) past and present officials of the Department of Education were interviewed to understand the plausibility of the program logic and to capture the perspective of the leadership in terms of the preparations, challenges, and gains of the program from the conceptualization stage to the implementation on the ground.
- ii. **Bureaus.** The interviews with five (5) representatives from four (4) different DepEd bureaus sought to understand the role of the bureaus in the development of the program and to know the details of their planning and conceptualization depending on their respective functions.
- iii. **Regions and Divisions.** The team was able to interview nine (9) regional offices and eight (8) division offices with the objective of understanding the role of regional and division offices in the implementing the program. More importantly, the interviews were aimed at finding out how different program activities and processes carried out at the regional level and division level differ by region and division, and the factors that lead to these differences.
- iv. **School Heads and SHS Focal Persons.** The team interviewed 24 school heads and 24 focal persons (of which, six functions as school heads, 10 are part of the school's teaching faculty, and eight are focal persons without other responsibilities). Their inputs were gathered to document the implementation of the program in the school level, to understand how school leadership affects the implementation, and to understand the different roles of those involved in the implementation in schools.

The KII guide questions used in this study are provided in Appendix A.

4.2.1.2. *Focus Group Discussions.* The FGDs were conducted with four types of respondents— teachers, students (grades 11 and 12), and parents— with each group having a maximum of 10-12 participants per session to cover a good range of views and inputs. The descriptions and nature of the FGDs are as follows:

- i. **SHS Teachers and Non-teaching Staff.** As the primary implementers of the curriculum in schools, the discussions with teachers intend to understand program implementation from their perspective and to assess the capacity of the program based on the quality of teachers and their teaching.
- ii. **Grades 11 and 12 Students.** As the beneficiaries of the program's intended benefits, the discussion with students from both levels will be valuable in documenting their actual experience and utilization of the program and its delivery.
- iii. **Parents of SHS Students.** The parents were interviewed to simply get their views and perceptions of the program implementation based on their experience and observations of their children in SHS.

The FGD guide questions used in this study are provided in Appendix A.

4.2.1.3. *Sampling Strategy and Summary of Activities.* The team randomly selected 25 schools listed in DepEd Enrollment Data SY 2017-2018 based on the following criteria: school size, tracks offered, area classification, SHS type and SHS sector (Table 3). The categories for selection are consistent with the original proportions based on the descriptive statistics of 11,087 high schools in the enrollment data. The criteria of selection were designed to capture breadth of experience of SHS implementation.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics from DepEd enrollment data, SY 2017-2018

Classification	Criteria	Proportion
School size <i>Based on enrollment size and DepEd School Typology</i>	Small	86%
	Medium	9%
	Large/Very Large	6%
Tracks offered <i>Academic, TVL, Sports, Arts</i>	Single track	51%
	Multi-track	48%
Area classification	Rural	65%
	Urban	35%
SHS type	Regular	61%
	Integrated	27%
	Stand-alone	12%
SHS sector	Public	58%
	Private	40%

Other important considerations in school selection include: (1) the division of schools according to the proportions from the enrollment data processing and (2) the representation of each island cluster. To represent all track offerings, schools that offer sports and arts were separately selected from each island group since there are only few schools offering these. Schools for sports and tracks are likewise selected randomly, but with priority given to schools that offer both, in regions with the highest number of sports and arts schools, and with at least eight (8) enrollees in each track. Table 4 shows the stratification of selecting schools with consideration to all other categories.

Table 4. Distribution of schools according to categories

Area	Tracks	Sector	Size	Type	Luzon	Visayas	Mindanao		
Urban (40%)	ST (50%) MT (50%)	Public (60%) Private (40%)	Small	Regular		1	1		
				Integrated	1				
				Stand-Alone		1			
			Medium	Regular					
				Integrated		1			
				Stand-Alone	1		1		
			Large	Regular		1			
				Integrated					1
				Stand-Alone					
Rural (60%)	ST (50%) MT (50%)	Public (60%) Private (40%)	Small	Regular	1		1		
				Integrated	1				
				Stand-Alone		1	1		
			Medium	Regular	1	1			
				Integrated		1			
				Stand-Alone	1				
			Large	Regular		1	1		
				Integrated					1
				Stand-Alone					
SHS with Arts and Design Track							1		
SHS with Sports Track					1	1	1		
Total number of schools to visit					8	8	9		

Since there are several categories to be met, including the percentages for track offerings, SHS type, and SHS sector, the team formulated this distribution and followed the proportions to the extent possible. A total of 21 schools offering the academic and TVL tracks are selected according to the distribution above, while four (4) schools are separately selected from each island cluster to represent senior high schools that offer sports and arts tracks. Table 5 summarizes the number of schools for each category in the island clusters, together with the percentage distributions.

Table 5. Number of schools per category in each island cluster

Category	Type	Luzon	Visayas	Mindanao	Total	Actual %	% from data
Area	Urban	3	3	3	9	43	35
	Rural	4	4	4	12	57	65
Tracks	Single-track	4	4	3	11	52	51
	Multi-track	3	3	4	10	48	48
Size	Small	3	3	3	9	43	86
	Medium	3	3	1	7	33	9
	Large	1	1	3	5	24	6
SHS Type	Integrated	2	2	2	6	29	27
	Regular	3	3	3	9	43	61
	Stand-alone	2	2	2	6	29	12
School Type	Public	5	4	5	14	56	58
	Private	3	4	4	11	44	40

Notes:

- (1) *Actual %* is the total number of schools per category divided by 21 (selected schools with academic and TVL). For the SHS type, actual % is the total divided by 25 schools (21 + 4 sports and arts schools).
- (2) *% from data* is the proportion from table n. It is included in this table to show how the percentages were approximately followed.

4.2.1.4. *Research Activities and Respondents per Island Cluster.* Among the 25 selected schools, one school was not able to participate in the study and was not pursued by the research team due to consistent schedule conflicts. Nonetheless, the team was able to conduct 93 KIIs, 50 KIIs in schools and 43 KIIs with department representatives, regional offices, and division offices across the three island clusters. A total of 106 FGDs with 248 SHS teachers and non-teaching staff, 261 Grade 11 students, 253 Grade 12 students, and 255 parents were also conducted. The schools and the offices visited for the conduct of research activities are in the following sites:

- i. Luzon: Benguet, Bulacan, Caloocan, Cavite, Pangasinan, Pasay, Quezon City, Rizal
- ii. Visayas: Cebu, Leyte, Negros Occidental, Negros Oriental, Samar
- iii. Mindanao: Bukidnon, Davao, Davao del Norte, Misamis Oriental, Surigao del Norte

Table 6 summarizes the number of respondents per island cluster; Tables 7 and 8 present the profiles of teacher/staff and student respondents, respectively.

Table 6. Number of participants per island cluster

Respondents	Luzon	Visayas	Mindanao	Total
Central Office (KII)	5	-	-	5
Officials (KII)	5	-	-	5
Regional Offices (KII)	3	5	5	13
Division Offices (KII)	8	3	9	20
CHED K to 12 PMU (KII)	1	-	-	1
School Heads (KII)	7	8	9	24
Teachers (FGD)	65	79	92	236
Parents (FGD)	70	88	97	255
Grade 11 (FGD)	81	87	93	261
Grade 12 (FGD)	74	90	89	253
SHS Focal Person (KII)	7	8	9	24
Total per island cluster	326	368	403	1,097

Source: Key informant interviews and focus group discussions.

Table 7. Descriptive statistics of SHS teacher and non-teaching staff respondents

	No. of Teachers	%
Age		
19-44	195	78.63
45-68	39	15.73
Did not answer	14	5.65
Sex		
Male	83	33.47
Female	164	66.13
Did not answer	1	0.40
Highest educational attainment		

	No. of Teachers	%
College graduate	138	55.65
Master's degree graduate	72	29.03
PhD graduate	7	2.82
Did not answer	31	12.50
Years of teaching		
< 3 years	68	27.42
3 - 10 years	101	40.73
> 10 years	51	20.56
Did not answer	28	11.29
No. of SHS trainings received		
0	2	0.81
1	117	47.18
2	22	8.87
3	7	2.82
> 3	2	0.81
Did not answer	98	39.52

Source: Profiles from focus group discussions.

Table 8. Descriptive statistics of grades 11 and 12 respondents

	Grade 11		Grade 12	
	No. of students	%	No. of students	%
Age				
16-19 years old	245	93.87	244	96.44
20 years old and up	15	5.75	90	3.56
Did not answer	1	0.38	0	0
Sex				
Male	121	46.36	106	41.90
Female	140	53.64	147	58.10
Did not answer	0	0	0	0
Track				
Academic	141	54.02	137	54.15
ABM	22	8.43	20	7.91
STEM	32	12.26	34	13.44
HUMSS	26	9.96	30	11.86
GAS	61	23.27	53	20.95
TVL*	52	14.56	47	18.58
Sports	28	10.73	24	9.49
Arts and Design*	40	15.33	40	15.81
Did not answer	0	0	0	0
Voucher Program				
Recipients	108	41.38	101	39.92
Non-recipients	4	1.53	3	1.19
From public school	139	53.26	135	53.36
Did not answer	10	3.83	14	5.53
Plans after SHS				
Going to college	210	80.46	221	87.35
Planning to work	20	7.66	4	1.58
Undecided	21	8.05	16	6.32
College and work	0	0	1	0.40
Training	0	0	1	0.40
Did not answer	10	3.83	10	3.95

*Aggregated, includes those who put their specializations. The disaggregated data for each specialization is in the respondents' profile submitted.

Most of the student respondents are below 20 years old, which is the usual age for these grade levels, while a small number are 20 years old and above. One of the respondents from the latter age group confirmed that he/she enrolled in SHS to fulfill the additional two-year requirement for job applications abroad.

Most students are in the academic track, and among the four strands under this, most are GAS students. This is also brought about by the selected single-track schools who only offer GAS. On the other hand, all recipients of the voucher program are from private schools. Less than 2% are non-recipients from private schools, while the rest are from public schools.

The plans after graduating from SHS are probably more pressing for Grade 12 students. Around 87.35% are pursuing college (this includes TVL students), only 1.58% plan to work, while 6.32% are undecided. Although it is not among the choices in the profile sheet, one student indicated that he/she plans to undergo training and another one seems to plan on being a working student. For the Grade 11 students, a great number are planning to pursue college, and only a few are planning to work or are undecided.

4.2.2. Secondary Data Analysis

To provide a comprehensive background for the KII and FGD results, secondary data from the DepEd administrative reporting system are processed. This analysis provides a comprehensive information of the supply side including the number and distribution of schools and their track offerings across space. This has enabled a quantitative assessment of the extent of track offerings across space. It also provides information on the demand side such as the enrollment profile of the SHS students by grade, track and sex.

4.2.3. Scope and Limitations

This process evaluation was conducted with primary objective of documenting the implementation of SHS and to identify issues and challenges in the three domains in program assessment (see evaluation framework above). The study does this by documenting the implementation experience as perceived by the respondents consisting of decision makers, program implementers from the different levels of the DepEd bureaucracy, teachers and intended targets beneficiaries selected as discussed above. Because the primary methodology used in this study is qualitative in nature, its main intent is to capture and document the range of experiences in program implementation. The selection of schools was designed to capture the broad spectrum of experiences (poor to excellent) within the constraints faced by the study (i.e., budgetary and time constraints). There is always the possibility that even with the intension to capture the breadth of experience with a well selected set of officials and schools, other perspectives may not have been captured. In order to provide a more comprehensive view of the SHS program implementation, the study complemented the KIIs and FGDs results with secondary data from the administrative reporting system of the DepEd. The results must be viewed with these limitations in mind.

5. Results and Discussions

5.1. Senior High School Profile

5.1.1. Schools and Enrollment

The following discussions provide the general profile of senior high school in the country for the school year 2017-2018, which has produced the first batch of graduates since its implementation in 2016. The sections are subdivided into (a) the national distribution of schools, (b) enrollment and offerings, (c) the track and strand offerings by region, and (d) the profiles of the schools across regions.

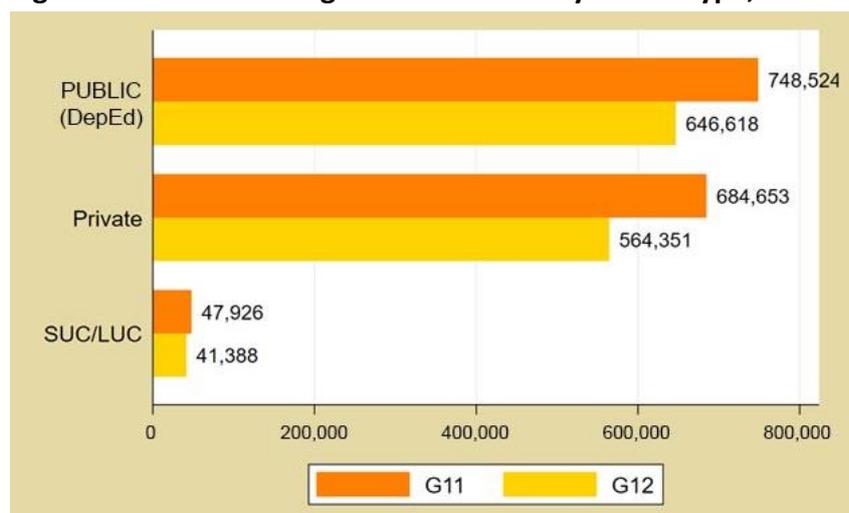
Of the 11,087 schools in the country that offer the SHS curriculum in SY 2017-2018, 58 percent are public schools²², 40 percent are private, and 2 percent are in SUC/LUCs (Table 9). A total of 2.7 million students are enrolled in senior high school of which 1.48 million are Grade 11 students, and 1.25 million are Grade 12 students. Of the total population, 51 percent are enrolled in public schools, 46 percent in private schools, and 3 percent are in SUCs/LUCs. Figure 5 shows the distribution of enrollment in Grade 11 and Grade 12 by school type.

Table 9. Number of schools and enrollment in grades 11 and 12, SY 2017-2018

School Type	Schools		Enrollment					
			Grade 11		Grade 12		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Total Public	6,636	59.9	796,450	53.8	688,006	54.9	1,484,456	54.3
PUBLIC	6,404	57.8	748,524	50.5	646,618	51.6	1,395,142	51.0
SUC/LUC	232	2.1	47,926	3.2	41,388	3.3	89,314	3.3
Private	4,451	40.1	684,653	46.2	564,351	45.1	1,249,004	45.7
Total	11,087	100.0	1,481,103	100.0	1,252,357	100.0	2,733,460	100.0

Source of basic data: EMISD-DepEd, as of November 30, 2017.

Figure 5. Enrollment in grades 11 and 12 by school type, SY 2017-2018



Source of basic data: EMISD-DepEd, as of November 30, 2017.

²² Includes schools that are managed by DepEd, DOST, and the local government. SUC/LUCs are separately categorized.

In terms of the number of strands offered, majority of these schools (38%) have only one strand offered; while a minimal proportion (0.3%) offer 7 out of 8 strands²³ (Table 10). It should also be noted that no school offers all 8 strands. Similar patterns are observed for both public and private schools.

Table 10. Distribution of the number of strands offered by school type, SY 2017-2018

Number of strands	Public		Private		SUC/LUC		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
1	2,813	43.9	1,400	31.5	48	20.7	4,261	38.4
2	2,198	34.3	948	21.3	60	25.9	3,206	28.9
3	639	10.0	932	20.9	53	22.8	1,624	14.6
4	468	7.3	710	16.0	42	18.1	1,220	11.0
5	227	3.5	395	8.9	23	9.9	645	5.8
6	43	0.7	48	1.1	6	2.6	97	0.9
7	16	0.2	18	0.4	0	0.0	34	0.3
Total	6,404	100.0	4,451	100.0	232	100.0	11,087	100.0

Source of basic data: EMISD-DepEd, as of November 30, 2017.

Meanwhile, Table 11 shows that among all these eight strands, GAS (28.5%) and TVL (28.2%) are the mostly offered followed by ABM (16.3%), HUMSS (13.5%), STEM (12%), and only less than one percent each for ARTS, SPORTS, and MARITIME is offered.

Table 11. Frequencies of strands offered by school type, SY 2017-2018

Strand	Public		Private		SUC/LUC		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
GAS	4,305	34.4	2,600	23.0	66	10.2	6,971	28.5
TVL	4,503	36.0	2,246	19.8	162	25.1	6,911	28.2
ABM	1,241	9.9	2,627	23.2	121	18.7	3,989	16.3
HUMSS	1,317	10.5	1,857	16.4	132	20.4	3,306	13.5
STEM	974	7.8	1,812	16.0	150	23.2	2,936	12.0
ARTS	93	0.7	106	0.9	5	0.8	204	0.8
SPORTS	67	0.5	38	0.3	8	1.2	113	0.5
MARITIME	3	0.0	35	0.3	2	0.3	40	0.2

Source of basic data: EMISD-DepEd, as of November 30, 2017.

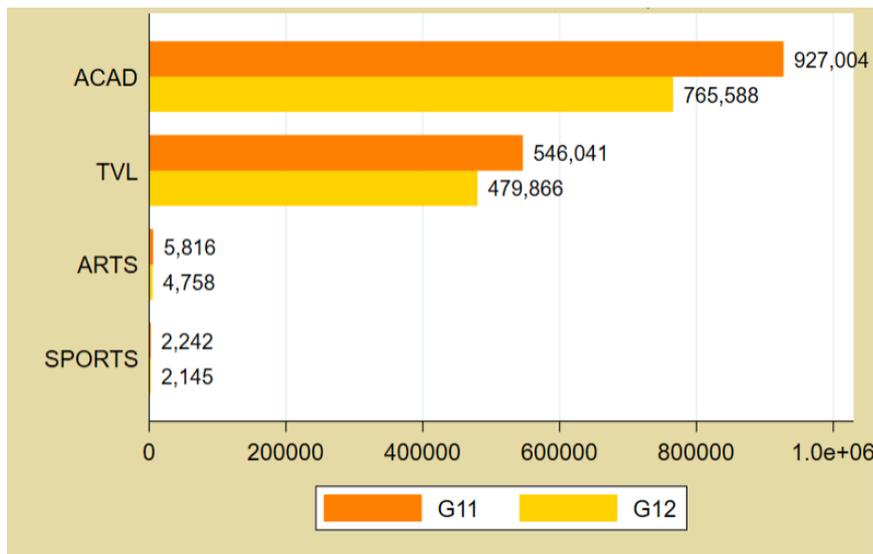
Slightly different patterns, however, are observed per school category. Public schools offer mostly TVL and GAS strands which together comprise nearly 60 percent of its total offerings; private schools offer mostly ABM and GAS with relatively smaller disparity in the distribution with other strands. SUC/LUC offerings, on the other hand, are more focused in the TVL, STEM, HUMSS, and ABM strands. Arts, Sports, and Pre-Baccalaureate Maritime have noticeably minimal share of offerings at one percent or less across all school categories.

²³ For the purpose of the discussions and unless otherwise specified, “strand” is used interchangeably with *track* to pertain to all 5 strands under the Academic track, as well as the TVL, Arts and Design, and Sports tracks. Due to data limitations, for the purpose of providing the profile of SHS enrollment, all five strands under the TVL track are grouped as one—i.e., TVL.

Highest number of offerings for Arts and Maritime are in the private schools, while for Sports are in the public schools.

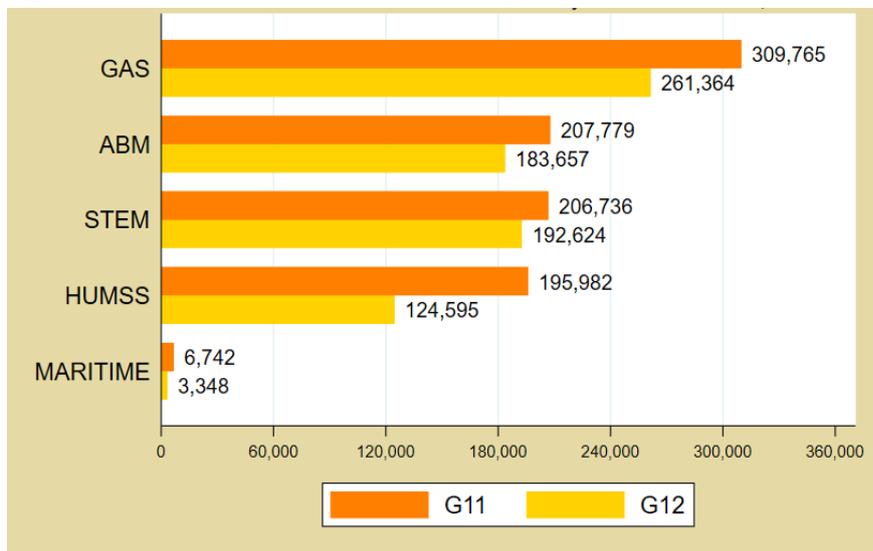
In terms of the distribution of enrollment by track and strand as illustrated in Figures 6 and 7, largest concentrations are in the Academic (61.9%) and the TVL (37.5%) tracks. Among the five strands under the Academic track, GAS is the most popular (20.9%), followed by STEM (14.6%), ABM (14.3%) and HUMSS (11.7%). This is similarly shown in Table 10.

Figure 6. Distribution of enrollment by track, SY 2017-2018



Source of basic data: EMISD-DepEd, as of November 30, 2017.

Figure 7. Distribution of enrollment by strand under the Academic track, SY 2017-2018



Source of basic data: EMISD-DepEd, as of November 30, 2017.

Table 12. Share of enrollment by track, strand and school type, SY 2017-2018

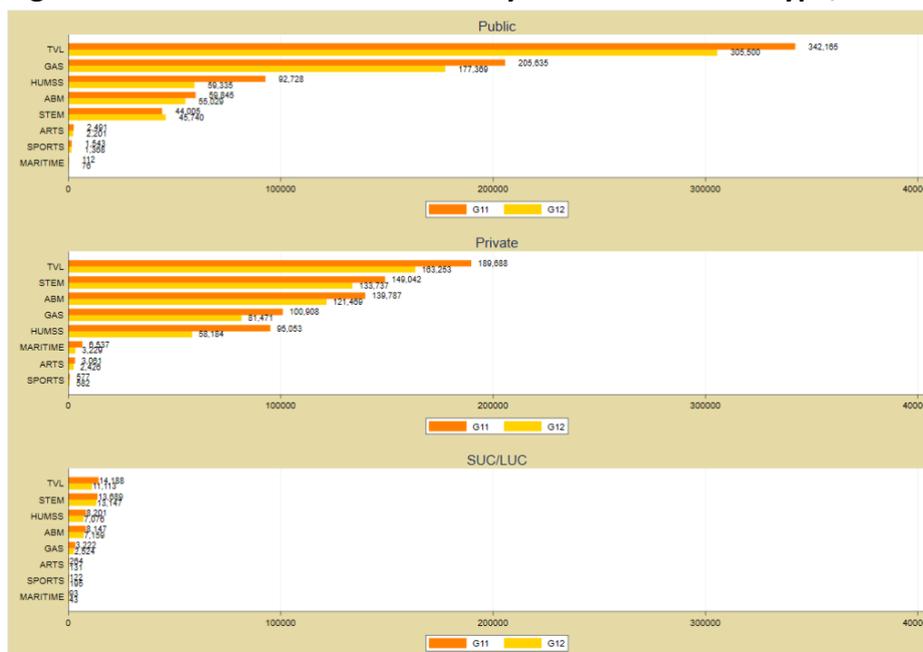
School Type	Tracks (%)				Academic Strands (%)					Total (Tracks)	
	TVL	Sports	Arts	Academic	ABM	HUMSS	STEM	GAS	Maritime	Number	%
Total Public	65.6	73.6	48.1	47.5	33.3	52.2	29.2	68.1	3.2	1,484,456	54.3
DepEd	63.1	66.4	44.4	43.7	29.3	47.4	22.5	67.1	1.9	1,395,142	51
SUC/LUC	2.5	7.2	3.7	3.7	3.9	4.8	6.7	1.0	1.3	89,314	3.3
Private	34.4	26.4	51.9	52.5	66.7	47.8	70.8	31.9	96.8	1,249,004	45.7
% share to Total Track	37.5	0.2	0.4	61.9	14.3	11.7	14.6	20.9	0.4		

Source of basic data: EMISD-DepEd, as of November 30, 2017.

A closer look at the distribution per school type and again disaggregating the Academic track into strands in comparison with TVL, Arts, and Sports tracks in Figure 8, shows that TVL²⁴ consistently has the highest enrollment, and while Arts, Sports, and Pre-Baccalaureate Maritime consistently have the lowest enrollments. Enrollment distribution patterns for the public and SUC/LUC clusters are consistent with the distribution of offerings for the same. TVL and STEM are noticeably more popular than ABM and GAS in the private. Maritime, which is mostly offered among the private schools, also consistently has the highest enrollments (96.8%).

There is a pattern of concentration of enrollment by sex in the different tracks. Figure 9 shows that the academic track is dominated by females while the TVL track is dominated by males. There are also more females in arts and design tracks while there are more males in the sports track.

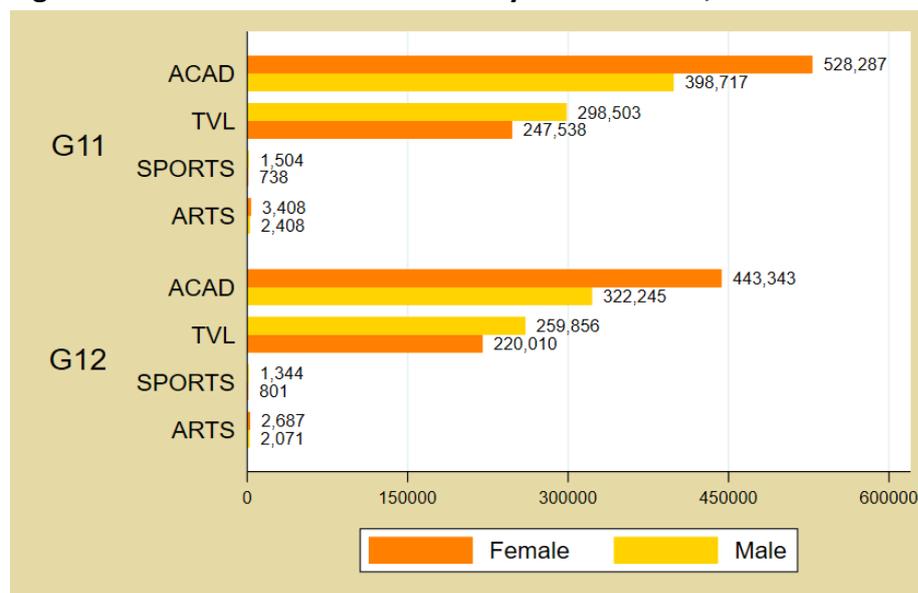
Figure 8. Distribution of enrollment by strand and school type, SY 2017-2018



Source of basic data: EMISD-DepEd, as of November 30, 2017.

²⁴ Includes all five strands under TVL track – i.e., HE, ICT, Industrial Arts, Agri-Fishery Arts, and TVL Maritime.

Figure 9. Distribution of enrollment by track and sex, SY 2017-2018



Source of basic data: EMISD-DepEd, as of November 30, 2017.

As of June 15, 2018, the national graduation rate²⁵ is at 96 percent or 1.20 million. Highest graduation rate (Grade 12) is with the Sports track while the highest completion rate for Grade 11 is with the TVL track (Table 13).

Table 13. Completion rates by track, SY 2017-2018

Track	Grade 11		Grade 12	
	Number	Rates	Number	Rates
Academic	842,789	90.9	734,627	96
TVL	499,917	91.6	462,210	96.3
Arts and Designs	5,211	89.6	4,499	94.6
Sports	2,031	90.6	2,089	97.4
NATIONAL	1,349,948	91.1	1,203,425	96.1

Source of basic data: EMISD-DepEd.

Note: Data on SHS graduates, as of June 15, 2018; data on SHS enrollment, as of November 30, 2017.

5.1.2. Track and Strand Availability at the Division, Municipality and School Levels

Illustrating the availability of strands and tracks at the division, municipality and school level is instructive. This is shown by computing the proportion of units not offering strands and tracks at different levels of disaggregation. Table 14 lists the number of divisions out of the 219 that have no schools offering a track or academic strand per region. At this level it appears that there seems to be no strand / track offering constraint except for pre-baccalaureate maritime academic strand, sports and arts tracks which showed 84%, 62% and 50%, respectively, of divisions without schools offering the track / strand.

²⁵ Note that enrollment data do not capture enrollments beyond Nov. 30, 2017; while completion rates are as of June 15, 2018 data.

When one goes down to the 1,599 municipal / city levels, the track and strand offering constraints starts to appear. For instance, Table 15 shows that 37%, 36%, 43%, 6% and 98% of municipalities/cities have no schools offering ABM, HUMSS, STEM, GAS and pre-baccalaureate maritime academic strands, respectively. In terms of the tracks, 6%, 94%, 91% and 1% of municipalities / cities have no schools offering TVL, sports, arts and design and academic tracks, respectively.

The track and strands offering constraints becomes even more evident at the school level. Table 16 shows that there is a substantial proportion of the 11,087 senior high schools not offering even the main line academic strands and tracks. For instance, 64% of schools are not offering ABM, 70% not offering HUMSS, 74% not offering STEM, 37% not offering GAS and almost all (99.6%) are not offering pre-baccalaureate maritime, 38% are not offering TVL track, 99% are not offering sports, and 98% are not offering arts and design.

While it is perhaps too much to expect for all schools to offer all tracks and strands, there is merit to having common tracks and strands available in the municipality. A separate strategy, e.g. having dormitories, is needed for more specialized tracks such as sports and arts and design and pre-baccalaureate maritime academic strand. If this is not addressed students who want to enroll in tracks / strand not offered in schools in their municipalities will have to travel to other municipalities or just enroll in the tracks / strands available in their area. Both are obviously less than efficient results.

Table 14. Number of Divisions with no schools offering track, strand by Region, SY 2017-2018

	Academic Strands					Tracks				Total no. of Divisions
	ABM	HUMSS	STEM	GAS	MARITIME	TVL	SPORTS	ARTS	ACAD	
ARMM	1	1	1	0	9	0	7	7	0	9
CAR	0	0	0	0	8	0	6	6	0	8
CARAGA	0	0	0	0	11	0	10	10	0	12
NCR	0	0	0	0	12	0	6	2	0	16
Region I	0	1	0	0	11	0	13	7	0	14
Region II	1	1	0	0	7	0	4	4	0	9
Region III	0	0	0	1	15	0	14	8	0	20
Region IV-A	0	0	0	0	16	0	7	3	0	19
Region IV-B	0	0	0	0	5	0	1	1	0	7
Region IX	0	0	0	0	6	0	3	3	0	8
Region V	0	0	0	0	10	0	5	3	0	13
Region VI	0	0	0	0	15	0	12	12	0	18
Region VII	0	0	0	0	15	0	13	10	0	19
Region VIII	0	0	0	0	13	0	12	12	0	13
Region X	0	0	1	0	12	0	9	9	0	14
Region XI	0	0	0	0	10	0	10	7	0	11
Region XII	0	0	0	0	9	0	4	3	0	9
Total	2	3	2	1	184	0	136	107	0	219
%	0.9	1.4	0.9	0.5	84.0	0.0	62.1	48.9	0.0	100.0

Source of basic data: EMISD-DepEd, as of November 30, 2017.

Table 15. Number of municipalities / cities with no schools offering track, strand by Region, SY 2017-2018

Region	Academic Strand					Tracks				Total Munis / Cities
	ABM	HUMSS	STEM	GAS	MARITIME	TVL	SPORTS	ARTS	ACAD	
ARMM	72	73	75	17	98	25	96	96	1	98
CAR	48	39	44	21	77	11	75	75	5	77
CARAGA	28	27	27	6	70	1	70	69	2	71
NCR	1	2	2	3	25	1	17	12	1	29
Region I	43	36	33	7	116	10	118	111	2	119
Region II	30	36	26	3	90	12	88	84	2	92
Region III	17	19	16	5	121	1	118	115	0	128
Region IV-A	24	29	39	16	138	3	129	120	0	141
Region IV-B	27	28	19	1	65	4	61	59	0	67
Region IX	28	24	31	3	70	0	67	66	0	72
Region V	48	62	58	1	109	8	103	98	1	112
Region VI	39	35	58	2	128	1	125	121	0	131
Region VII	54	64	65	0	126	2	125	122	0	130
Region VIII	66	55	100	8	142	4	141	141	2	142
Region X	29	31	51	8	90	7	87	86	1	92
Region XI	20	13	21	0	47	1	47	44	0	48
Region XII	13	3	17	1	50	0	44	43	0	50
Total	587	576	682	102	1562	91	1511	1462	17	1599
%	36.7	36.0	42.7	6.4	97.7	5.7	94.5	91.4	1.1	100.0

Source of basic data: EMISD-DepEd, as of November 30, 2017.

Table 16. Number of schools not offering track, strand by Region, SY 2017-2018

Division	Academic strand					Tracks				Total Schools
	ABM	HUMSS	STEM	GAS	MARITIME	TVL	SPORTS	ARTS	ACAD	
ARMM	162	158	173	70	216	87	214	214	19	216
CAR	211	195	217	147	286	143	281	283	49	286
CARAGA	388	386	399	227	472	140	471	470	160	473
NCR	295	493	496	439	886	441	868	843	97	890
Region I	532	559	534	257	747	286	750	741	122	751
Region II	305	321	303	120	435	203	430	427	42	437
Region III	556	751	751	480	1,163	393	1,156	1,151	128	1,170
Region IV-A	582	799	793	597	1,307	554	1,297	1,281	171	1,310
Region IV-B	244	269	251	82	343	120	339	337	37	345
Region IX	259	244	277	119	379	107	376	374	56	381
Region V	655	736	713	192	843	272	836	830	125	846
Region VI	632	602	698	281	849	325	847	842	115	854
Region VII	767	815	818	338	1,014	384	1,012	1,004	179	1,018
Region VIII	369	352	431	173	515	212	514	514	60	515
Region X	379	390	460	180	555	196	552	550	84	557
Region XI	373	379	414	164	507	145	507	499	110	508
Region XII	389	332	423	250	530	168	524	523	105	530
Total	7,098	7,781	8,151	4,116	11,047	4,176	10,974	10,883	1,659	11,087
%	64.0	70.2	73.5	37.1	99.6	37.7	99.0	98.2	15.0	100.0

Source of basic data: EMISD-DepEd, as of November 30, 2017.

5.2. Key Findings from KIIs and FGDs

5.2.1. Program Theory

The introduction of the SHS program in the Philippine basic education system is part of the ambitious Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013 (RA 10533) which put in law several education reform efforts. The SHS component is labelled as the strategy for gearing up the youth for the future. It added two years in the secondary level and envisioned four exits for the graduates, namely, (a) higher education, (b) middle-level skills, (b) employment, and (c) entrepreneurship. It clearly addresses the long-recognized lack of years in Philippine pre-baccalaureate education that have been adopted in other countries. This has been highlighted in the review of the history of education reform in the Philippines presented above.

As revealed in a key informant interview, the critical assumptions of implementing the SHS program are that (1) the government has the political will to implement the entire K to 12 programs, which includes SHS, in one go, (2) the government has the financial capacity to implement the program, and that (3) the SHS program will be inclusive for all Filipino learners. The assumption on the political will was clearly challenged because even the constitutionality of the law was challenged in the Supreme Court which was resolved only in 2018²⁶. The assumption on financial capacity was tested with the requirement that gaps in resources, e.g. (teachers), (b) classrooms, (c) textbooks, (d) seats, (e) toilets, in the lower levels of basic education be substantially addressed on the eve of the SHS roll-out (Section 14 R.A. 10533).

²⁶ The Supreme Court ruled the law as constitutional on October 1, 2018.
<http://sc.judiciary.gov.ph/pdf/web/viewer.html?file=/jurisprudence/2018/october2018/216930.pdf>

Aside from the funding needed to finance the program inputs (as shown previously in the Theory of Change narrative in Figure 3), implicit in the logical framework also are the assumptions that, (a) all the other necessary organizational support are provided, (b) there are enough qualified teachers to be recruited, (c) students will enroll in SHS, (d) the new curriculum for SHS is effective in providing the learners with the required competencies for college, employment, or entrepreneurship, and that (e) SHS graduates will be employed or will pursue entrepreneurial activities.

Finally, FGDs with other stakeholders have likewise unveiled some other assumptions on how the program will work from their perspective including: different stakeholders will cooperate, and the labor market will be ready to accept SHS graduates.

To assess the implementation of the program, we follow the elements in the theory of change. First we look at what government has expended on the program, the activities that have been carried out, and the outputs that have been produced thus far.

Table 17 shows the government budget allocation to SHS program from 2016 to 2018. Figures exhibit that the budget for operating expenses has not been increasing consistently. The sudden increase in budget is evident in FY 2017; however, the budget in succeeding years FY 2018 and FY 2019, were relatively lower. In terms of human resources, data shows that additional teacher items were created as DepEd conducted mass hiring of teachers in 2016. Newly hired teachers have also undergone SHS trainings. DepEd also conducted massive advocacy campaigns on SHS, which served as partnership-building activities.

With respect to teaching materials and school facilities, the delivery of learning materials was not completed in time for the opening of classes in SY 2016-2017. Additional classrooms and facilities (TVL and Science and Math laboratories) were also built but were still being constructed during the class openings. A total of 1,309 TVL laboratories were built and about 82,725 sets of school seats were provided.

Table 17. Summary of program inputs

Budget	
<i>FY 2016 (GAA)</i>	PHP 1,077,508 (MOOE only)
<i>FY 2017 (GAA)</i>	PHP 3,562,090 (MOOE only)
<i>FY 2018 (GAA)</i>	PHP 2,536,600 PHP 11,605,491 (MOOE and Personnel Services)
<i>FY 2019 (NEP)</i>	PHP 2,720,391 PHP 13,123,720 (MOOE and Personnel Services)* <i>*still under deliberation of the Senate</i>
Teachers	
<i>2016*</i>	36,461 items created
<i>2018**</i>	356 items created
Teachers Trained	
<i>2016*</i>	36,150 (all newly-hired G11 teachers were required to undergo training)
Learning Materials	
<i>2016*</i>	Gr. 11 1 st sem: LRs for 16/20 subjects ongoing printing and delivery Gr. 11 2 nd sem: LRs for 21/25 subjects for printing Gr. 12 1 st and 2 nd sem: LRs 38/40 ongoing procurement/development

Classrooms (2016*)	30,000 (completed and ongoing construction)
Facilities* <i>From July 2016 to June 2018</i>	1,309 TVL laboratories 82,725 sets of school seats
School heads trained <i>2016*</i>	5,700 SHS principals

Sources:

*Presentation of Dir. J. Andaya, "The K to 12 Curriculum and Its Support System," SMX Convention Center, Nov. 4, 2016

**Department of Budget Management 2018

The outputs and many of the intermediate outcomes of the program will be discussed in the service delivery and utilization section.

For the enrollment component of the intermediate outcomes, it was shown earlier that the total SHS enrollees reached 1.4 million for S.Y. 2016-2017 and 2.7 million for S.Y. 2017-2018. Of these learners in 2017-2018, 1.29 million are enrolled in private schools through the SHS Voucher Program²⁷. These enrollments represent a transition rate (from Grade 10 to Grade 11) of 93.3%²⁸. Around 1.2 million learners graduated from SHS²⁹ in early 2018. It has been mentioned that the enrollment exceeded expectations of the implementers.

On final outcomes, it is still too early having definitive measures. Initial data shown earlier (Table 13) show high completion rate of 96%. There are no readily available data on employment rates yet. An earlier study (Orbeta et al., 2018) show at the perception level that, on the one hand, graduating grade 12 students are not very confident about getting jobs as employers are still expected to prefer college graduates, and on the other hand, many employers are not very clear on what skills SHS graduates have and will need to test them to determine their employability.

The SHS program, in combination of the other reform efforts, is expected to result in improved overall education outcomes, but is shown to be beset by numerous implementation challenges perhaps typical of newly launched programs. For a start, some assumptions and expectations implicit in the logical framework may have been too optimistic. One example is the implicit assumption of providing adequate, quality, and timely inputs such as classrooms, schools facilities, and equipment, which may be constrained by logistics, administrative constraints (ex. restrictions affecting the procurement of learning materials and building of facilities). Additionally, the implicit assumption that necessary organizational and external support is present, such as the availability of qualified teachers or the openness of industries and businesses in employing SHS graduates. Furthermore, there are issues in implementing necessary program activities that eventually leads to gaps between desired and actual program outputs.

Whether program implementation is in the intended direction as laid out by the program's theory of change is assessed and detailed in the succeeding section on service delivery and utilization.

²⁷ DepEd Enrollment Data SY 2017-2018

²⁸ DepEd Enrollment Data SY 2017-2018

²⁹ DepEd Accomplishment Highlights, August 2018

5.2.2. Service Delivery and Utilization

This section discusses the actual SHS implementation at the different levels of DepEd from the perspective of the implementers, teachers and beneficiaries namely students and parents. The information presented is based on the KIIs with former DepEd officials, field office representatives, and school heads and FGDs with teachers and FGDs with students and parents.

5.2.2.1. Implementers' Perspective

National-level Preparations. Prior to the enactment of the K to 12 law in 2013, DepEd already implemented the SHS Modeling Program³⁰ in 2012 to prepare for the program rollout. The SHS Modeling Program was a research and development activity conducted in selected schools, wherein participating schools tested their innovations and implementation designs. The results of the evaluations done in this program served as inputs in crafting the guidelines for the full implementation of SHS in 2016.

Interviews with former DepEd officials on the other hand, revealed that the actual preparations for the nationwide implementation began in 2014, with the formation of the SHS Technical Assistance Team at the Central Office. The team was mandated to plan and implement SHS and provide inputs to policies. The earliest preparations involved the following activities:

Planning. DepEd conducted data gathering on both the supply- and demand-side of the program, participated in by the field offices and schools. This involved demand and preference surveys of JHS students and their parents, mapping of schools that could offer SHS, and internal and external assessments at the division and school levels. The planning process was piloted in a division in Rizal and the planning workshops were conducted nationwide by clusters.

Budgeting. DepEd sought the assistance of an expert, who provided a business-as-usual and an “Education-for-all” (EFA) costing, in the preparation of the program budget.

Crafting of the curriculum and learning materials. From 2013 to early 2014, DepEd created the curriculum with stakeholders and experts from various organizations (e.g., CHED, TESDA, NCCA, industry experts). This activity was followed by the development of instructional materials with the private sector (i.e., publishing companies). However, production of these materials was met with difficulties because of issues like insufficient time for textbook calls and procurement problems. Consequently, the first SHS cohort started with some instructional materials yet to be produced.

Issuance of policies and guidelines. During the pre-implementation period, DepEd created policies and implementing guidelines, including guidelines on opening SHSs for non-DepEd schools (DM No. 4 s. 2014)³¹, which effectively announced

³⁰ Governed by DO No. 36 s. 2012 (Guidelines on the 2012 Implementation of the Senior High School (SHS) Modelling in Selected Technical and Vocational Education and General Secondary Schools Under the K to 12 Basic Education Program) and and DO No. 71 s. 2012 (Additional Information to and Changes in DepEd Order No. 36 s. 2012).

³¹ Guidelines on the Preparation for the National Implementation of the Senior High School (SHS) Program in Non-DepEd Schools for the School Year 2016-2017 Onwards

the nationwide implementation of SHS), provided the guidelines for offering SHS for DepEd schools, as well as the guidelines for teacher hiring, among others. DepEd Central Office released an SHS Manual of Operations (DM 76 s. 2016) detailing the timeline and the steps schools need to take from the planning to setting up stages to help school heads prepare for the opening of classes in 2016.

Teacher hiring and training. DepEd also retrained and retooled existing teachers for the new curriculum, and recruited and trained new ones. DepEd conducted a mass hiring of and mass trainings for SHS teachers.

Program advocacy. DepEd carried out program advocacy, a major preparatory activity given that SHS was a new program at the time that was met with skepticism from many sides. A massive advocacy and marketing campaign for the program was carried out at different levels. Plans for such activities were crafted at the Central Office and cascaded down to the school level. Regional offices organized summits attended by various partners from the higher education sector, other government agencies, local government units, and industries. Division offices on the other hand, raised awareness about the program by utilizing media outlets (local TV and radio show) and conducting information drive around municipalities and barangays. At the school level, senior high school representatives went to junior high schools to promote their schools. Junior high schools also began explaining SHS to students through their career guidance activities.

SHS offering. DepEd opened SHS programs in existing schools and constructed completely new SHSs. In 2014, it called for non-DepEd schools' (i.e., TVIs, HEIs, individuals and corporations) intent to offer SHS through DM No. 4 s. 2014, and in 2015 it released DO 51 s. 2015³² providing the guidelines for implementing SHS in DepEd schools. Applications for opening SHSs were evaluated by the SHS National Task Force, which deputized ROs and SDOs for school inspections when necessary.

SHS Offering and Reach. The SHS program has been able to reach more than its expected number of students, with SDOs and schools initiating the opening of SHSs where needed. This is in fulfillment of the guidelines for SHS implementation in public schools (DO 51 s. 2015), which stipulates that, to ensure all students' access to an SHS, "every municipality shall have an SHS. As much as possible, lone public JHS or IS in a municipality shall implement SHS program or if not possible, a stand-alone SHS shall be established." As of August 2018, there are 11,087 SHSs nationwide, including private schools and SUCs/LUCs offering SHS³³.

Among the respondent schools, some have been initiated by ROs, SDOs, and schools themselves to address the lack of an SHS in the locality (e.g., stand-alone schools built where there were no nearby JHS, provincial JHS requested to offer SHS, only Arts and Design school in the region initiated by DepEd RO). Most of these and the other respondent schools conducted SHS advocacy drives and school marketing, and reached

³² Guidelines on the Implementation of the SHS Program in Existing Public JHSs and ISs, Establishment of Stand-Alone SHSs, and Conversion of Public Elementary Schools and JHSs into Stand-Alone SHSs

³³ 11,327 according to the Key Education Statistics as of August 24, 2018 from the Education Management Information System Division – Planning Service of the Department of Education. However, 240 schools showed no enrollment data reducing the effective number of schools to 11,087.

more than their expected number of enrollees, with some even reaching their maximum capacity.

School heads or SHS focal persons from these respondent schools also shared some enrollment trends they have observed within their schools. Several of the bigger integrated schools reported a high JHS to SHS enrollment in their schools. On the other hand, some of the smaller integrated schools' JHS graduates transferred to SHSs with more track offerings or to SHSs in cities. School heads of public school respondents also said that there has been a trend of their JHS finishers enrolling in private SHSs. Both public and private school respondents also mentioned having enrollees from the Alternative Learning System.

But despite DepEd's efforts to ensure access to SHSs and the wide program reach, some respondents from ROs and SDOs said that there were still learners in some areas (i.e., islands, hinterlands) who could not attend SHS because of geographical constraints. DepEd on the other hand, is constrained in putting up SHS in distant areas especially if the demand (i.e. number of enrollees) is low.

Track and Strand Offering. While SHS enrollment is high, there exists an issue with whether students can enroll in their desired track or strand because of limited options due to track/strand availability or accessibility within a province or region. DO 51 s. 2015 states that a school's track or strand offering "must be aligned with Local Development Plans, industries, and learners' interests and preferences." Demand was considered when student and parent surveys were administered prior to SHS implementation, but track offerings have been more supply-driven as capacity and available resources have been schools' main considerations in deciding their offerings. The SDOs' considerations for approving SHS offerings are likewise the same. It is worth noting, though, that some of the school respondents have been approved to offer particular tracks despite inadequate required facilities and materials (e.g., approved STEM track, but laboratory is not functional; approved Arts and Design track, but the student respondents do not have adequate and appropriate facilities for the track).

As described earlier, schools are not able offer all the tracks and strands that may be demanded by students with 38% of schools offering only one strand. It was also shown that while at the division level it was not obvious that there are lack of track strand offerings except for pre-baccalaureate maritime, sports and arts and design, the lack of offering for tracks and strands starts to show at the municipal level and even more so at the school level.

It is important to note that due to limited strand offerings, there were students who had to compete for limited slots. Such was the case of student respondents from Arts and Design, and Sports tracks. For these tracks, current officials said that the ROs have been tasked to ensure their availability at least at the regional level, and some ROs have done so. In other areas, Arts and Design, and Sports track offerings are made available by SDOs requesting JHSs with Special Programs for the Arts and Sports to offer them, as was the experience of one school respondent.

Curriculum Delivery. FGDs with teacher and student respondents revealed disparities in how some aspects of the curriculum are being delivered in schools, particularly in terms of subject programming, subject delivery, track delivery, and work immersion.

- i. School respondents in some areas have encountered problems with transferees because of the unstandardized subject programming within their division. Key informants from the CO explained that the culprit for this lack of standardization is that schools have different level of preparedness in subject offerings. Schools are given the prerogative to offer subjects when they have all the necessary resources for them. This produced the unintended consequence of lack of standardization of implementation. Recognizing the difficulties arising from this, there are SDOs and even ROs that have already released their own policy that standardizes subject offerings across schools in their division or region.
- ii. Based on accounts by student respondents, there is confusion about how the subject Practical Research should be delivered. For instance, an Arts and Design school is unsure whether Arts students should study qualitative or quantitative research. There are also other student respondents who expressed confusion about the scope of Practical Research 1 and 2.
- iii. Differences in implementing the Arts and Design and Sports tracks were also revealed in the interviews. In an Arts and Design school, students specialize in a strand (e.g., Visual Arts only) while in another, they do not. These schools' specialization of focus also differs depending on the teacher's specialization. For instance, if the teacher hired specializes in Fine Arts, the track will be inclined towards visual arts. In a school respondent with the Sports track, students take up a sport they focus on, while in another, they do not even have to play a sport. This also highlights the resource dependence of the offering.
- iv. For work immersion, although there are guidelines on its implementation (DO 30 s. 2017), school respondents still have different interpretations of how it should be implemented in terms of (a) whether it is a must or just an option for some strands, and (b) whether students will just observe or will do actual tasks.

Assessment. Assessment of student learning and system assessment for the K to 12 program is governed by DO No. 55 s. 2016 and DO No. 29 s. 2017³⁴. These DOs stipulate that one of the SHS assessments at the national level is the National Achievement Test, which is to be administered every three years beginning 2018. Before this, DO No. 55 s. 2016 intended it to be administered only to a sample, but an amendment to this provision in DO No. 29 s. 2017, required it to be administered to “the universal population” or the entire first batch of Grade 12 students. However, due to procurement issues, in which failures of bidding affected the production of test booklets, DepEd was only able to administer the test to a sample.

5.2.2.2. *Teachers' Perspective on the Curriculum and its Delivery*

³⁴ Policy Guidelines on the National Assessment of Student Learning for the K to 12 Basic Education Program and Policy Guidelines on System Assessment in the K to 12 Basic Education Program, respectively.

In the FGDs, teachers were asked about their assessment of the SHS curriculum. Most of them believe that adopting the curriculum was a step in the right direction and that its features are good. However, they have the impression that the government was ill-prepared for its implementation, which resulted to the challenges they are currently facing. Nevertheless, most of them maintain that the SHS goals will eventually be achieved, but its success depends on the availability of resources.

Many of the teachers handling different subjects, but most commonly Math teachers, remarked that based on their experience, the curricular content is “too ambitious” vis-a-vis the allotted time and the level where the students are. There were those who said that the curriculum seemed to be designed for advanced learners (e.g., those in science high schools) as well as for an urban setting. Some teachers said that because of this, they were having a hard time contextualizing the activities in the curriculum. This is made worse by the lack of resources.

Teacher respondents were also asked about their observations of their students’ experience in SHS. Many observed positive behavioral changes in their students such as: being more collaborative, confident, mature, and responsible. The teachers suggested that performance tasks could have contributed to these changes. However, another notable observation was that SHS students were also unsure whether they should act more like high school students, given the new label, or like college students, given the expectations of students their age prior to SHS implementation. As one respondent has said, “the (high school) label affected the learners’ behavior.”

Many teacher respondents also mentioned various difficulties their students were experiencing in the classroom. The following are the most prominent issues:

Students’ unpreparedness for SHS material. Many of the teachers shared they had students who still lacked the literacy and numeracy skills and English competencies required for SHS (especially in public schools). They added that the ideal SHS teacher is a facilitator, who encourages learning through discovery and gives more activities than lectures, but they had to return to the traditional approach because of their students’ lack of readiness for SHS material.

Students’ different competency levels upon SHS entry. Several teachers also said they had classes with students of diverse competency levels because of differences in their JHS education. This is evident, for example, in computer literacy. This issue is more pronounced in private schools, where there is a mix of SHS students coming from both public and private JHSs. For this reason, teachers had to begin teaching the basics or teach lower level competencies first.

Students’ difficulties with research and performance tasks. Many teachers noted that SHS students generally find their Practical Research subjects difficult, with some saying that for non-Academic track students, research subjects are being submitted only for compliance. As for performance tasks, many teachers also observed that their students were having difficulties coping with their many performance tasks. To help the students, some teachers said that they find ways to collaborate with teachers of related subjects to merge their performance tasks.

Partnerships. The SHS manual of operations identifies partnership-building for mobilizing resources and immersion placement, among others, as one of the responsibilities of the school head. Some school heads have proactively sought partnerships to support SHS implementation in their schools. This includes partnerships with LGUs (e.g., for funds, buildings or facilities, equipment, immersion), other schools (e.g., for TVL assessment, chairs), industries or commercial establishments (for immersion), and other stakeholders, such as NGOs, alumni, parents, industries, community (for other school needs).

FGDs with teachers and KIIs with school heads and SDOs revealed that LGU support to SHS in different areas, varied. For most of the respondent schools, their LGU has been crucial to the provision of their school resources like school site and buildings. At the same time, there were school respondents, mostly private schools, who have not developed a strong linkage with their LGUs.

Partnerships with private sector are also revealed. There is, for example, the dual training modelling in Laiya, Batangas where students and learning the theories and skills in the workplace. The private sector has also been engaged in the review of the curriculum guides of very specific specializations such as call centers, heavy equipment operations, aviation and theme parks and recreation.

In terms of partnerships for work immersion, some school respondents in certain regions (e.g., CAR, NCR) are experiencing difficulties in looking for immersion partners because of potential partners' lack of awareness of the SHS program, lack of readiness to accept SHS students, or hesitation with the MOA provisions.

Schools are also encouraged to develop working relationships with DepEd offices, especially the SDOs, but just as with the LGUs, SDO support to schools varies. Many respondent schools have said that they have open communication lines with their SDO SHS focal person, facilitating the resolution of SHS concerns. Others, however, have not been able to resolve concerns with their SDOs (as in the case of a school in NCR having problems arising from non-standard subject offering in the division).

Human Resources. The SHS Manual of Operations outlines the following responsibilities of the school head: (1) determine teacher needs, organize the school staff and (2) designate roles and constitute the required committees for SHS implementation (Partnership Focal Person, School Inspectorate Team, and School Screening Committee).

Issues raised about teacher needs include the following:

Inadequacy of teachers to hire and difficulty in recruiting qualified teachers. This especially true for TVL and the specialized subjects. In many of the public schools, respondents pointed out that JHS teachers were assigned SHS teaching load to address teacher needs. Schools also hired non-LET passers provided that those teachers will pass the LET within five years from the date of hiring. Non-Let passers will teach their area of specialization. Another issue raised is the difficulty of the CSC's qualification standards (QS), making it more challenging to recruit TVL teachers (i.e., NC for some specializations are only up to NC II). Recognizing

this issue, DepEd asked the CSC to lower training requirements, resulting in a resolution amending the QS for TVL teaching positions in SHS³⁵.

Mismatch between teacher qualifications and subject taught. The shortage of teachers in some public-school respondents has resulted in teachers being assigned subjects that are not related to their areas of specialization. While such teachers try to study their new subjects, some have expressed that they are “not doing the subject justice.” One example of this mismatch is an accountant hired to originally teach business-related subjects but is now assigned to teach Filipino subject.

SHS-specific training inadequate or lacking for some teachers. Not all the teacher respondents, especially the new ones, have attended extensive trainings on the SHS curriculum. For those who were able to participate, they mentioned that they attended DepEd’s mass trainings (for public schools) or the PEAC or school-provided trainings (for private schools). There were, however, some training-related issues such as the incorrect assignment of teachers who participated in these trainings. It should be noted, though, that the teachers from JHS went through some preparations for the SHS.

Teacher respondents also raised some concerns regarding the performance of their duties as teachers. Many of them expressed that the amount of their administrative work is already affecting their teaching, and there were some who suggested hiring non-teaching staff to support them in these tasks.

In addition, there were several teacher respondents who pointed out that JHS and SHS teachers have the same salary levels despite differences in the difficulty level of the content they are teaching. However, according to Central Office informants, salaries of JHS and SHS teachers cannot be the same because the movement from JHS (Teacher 1) to SHS (Teacher II) is considered a promotion, and the minimum entry point in SHS is Teacher II. This is of course for public schools. For private schools, many of JHS teachers also teach in SHS.

With regard to school organization, not all schools have designated a clear SHS focal person and immersion coordinator to the principal despite the tasks being assigned to some teachers.

School Resources. Guidelines are in place for the procurement of (DO 8 s. 2016)³⁶, monitoring, and following up for school resources (SHS Manual of Operations). Public school heads are specifically tasked to monitor the delivery of school resources, assemble a School Inspectorate Team that will ensure the completeness of materials and equipment, identify options for procuring materials and equipment and for using classrooms, and to forge partnerships to augment DepEd resources.

Given these guidelines, some school respondents sought assistance from LGUs, NGOs, other schools, and private individuals for the provision of some of the school requirements they have requested from DepEd that remain undelivered, which include:

³⁵ CSC Resolution 1701192, Qualification Standards, Re: Amended QS of Senior High School Teaching Positions, Technical-Vocational Livelihood Track, Department of Education

³⁶ Guidelines for Procurement of TVL Tools, Equipment, and Materials 2016-2017

Buildings, classrooms, other facilities. School buildings in some schools visited are still under construction. To cope, some schools resort to alternate use of classrooms or facilities for JHS, SHS, and/or college and multiple shifts. In some schools, school facilities (e.g., restrooms, clinic, canteen, and laboratory) are not available or not functional, if present.

Instructional materials. Public school teachers had to develop teaching guides for some subjects because these were not available on DepEd's online portal. Some also look for their own books and references, which they have their students photocopy.

Tools and equipment. In many of the school respondents, delivery of tools and equipment is not yet complete. Also, there have been cases of delivery of tools or equipment with incorrect specifications or incorrect delivery of equipment and materials (e.g., incorrect textbooks, laboratory chairs and tables delivered for regular classrooms).

5.2.2.3. *Students' and Parents' Perspective*

This section discusses program beneficiaries' (students and their parents) experience of and satisfaction with SHS delivery, as revealed in the FGDs conducted with them.

Senior High School Awareness. Most student and parent respondents generally have a good understanding of the SHS goals and believe that these are achievable, conditional on government's provision of all the program needs. Parent respondents expect that with the new curriculum, their children will be able to work after SHS and be better prepared for college. Student respondents share these expectations, and view the curriculum as relevant and useful because it equips them with soft and technical skills that could make them employable immediately. In addition, they find that the curriculum prepares them for challenges and responsibilities given its level of difficulty. For many respondents, their initial skepticism about the program, due mainly to perceived unpreparedness of the government to implement it, has been dispelled by the first batch of graduates' immediate outcomes, such as being gainfully employed. Still, many respondents are largely concerned with the cost of the additional two years in high school and some respondents do not fully understand the program.

Choice of SHS and Track or Strand. Finding an SHS to attend was easy for most of the student respondents and their parents because their junior high schools also offered SHS. Those who had to look for an SHS because their schools had no SHS offering based their choice on the following factors: (a) peer recommendation, (b) availability of preferred track or strand, (c) perceived quality of education the school provides, (d) affordability, and (e) school's proximity to their homes. Some student respondents had difficulty looking for an SHS because of the unavailability of their preferred track or strand, or the limited slots in schools that offered it, especially for the Arts and Design and Sports tracks. These student respondents had to look even outside their localities, and eventually temporarily relocate to live near the SHS. There were also student

respondents, such as those residing in far-flung areas and with meager finances, who had limited or no other track options besides the school they enrolled in.

Aside from deciding on an SHS, students also had to decide on their track or strand. As early as Grade 10, students and their parents were already being provided with career guidance and SHS orientations to help them with their choice of track or strand³⁷. In Grade 9, the students also took the mandatory National Career Assessment Examination (NCAE), an aptitude test that aims to provide them with information on their skills and abilities and to help them with their decision on the career path to take. There were student respondents whose NCAE results and chosen track or strand did not match. Some of these students were given guidance counseling during enrollment to ascertain their fit for their chosen track or strand.

Most of the student respondents eventually made their choice based on their interests or passion, skills, strengths, talents, the employment opportunities they perceived as connected to the strand, and their desired college course. Those who could not decide on their college course yet chose GAS, believing that this strand was for the undecided. For a few student respondents, their chosen track or strand was their parents' decision. And then there were also student respondents who chose a track or strand other than their real preference because they had no options due to their school's limited track offerings, especially those in far-flung areas. This issue with limited track offerings also surfaced in FGDs with student and parent respondents in urban centers, who hoped that there were more tracks offered, providing students more options. This has been highlighted earlier using secondary data on enrollment.

SHS Experience. When it comes to student experience of SHS, the FGDs with Grade 11 and Grade 12 respondents revealed that SHS was what they expected for the most part. In general, they expected SHS to be more difficult than JHS in terms of content (college level material) and requirements (more challenging). Grade 11 respondents, in particular, expected that there were going to be more research, hands-on activities, and practical lessons and less spoon feeding by teachers, hence greater independence. Grade 12 respondents, on the other hand, expected to be more specialized and to gain applicable knowledge from specialized subjects. They also expected the work immersion component to enhance their skills and prepare them for the real world.

Many student respondents described their initial SHS experience as "culture shocked" because they felt like they were already in college in terms of the number of requirements and the difficulty of subject content. At the same time, being college-like also allowed some Grade 12 respondents to know themselves better and discover their potential.

The student respondents also revealed that SHS has mostly been self-study and reporting, although there were more lectures in Grade 11. There were some respondents who raised the issue that there were no clear standards of assessment for class reporting,

³⁷ DO 41, s. 2015, From Manual of Operations: "Incoming Grade 11 students should be properly guided in envisioning what they want to be or the exit they may pursue after SHS. This should be among the more important bases for choosing their track and strand. It is for this purpose that DepEd provides for the mandatory conduct of the Career Guidance Program (CGP) for all Grade 10 students."

and that teachers resorted to reporting as an activity too often that students felt like they were teaching each other more than their teachers did.

In terms of subjects, most student respondents found the core subjects still useful regardless of their tracks or strands³⁸. However, there were some, mostly TVL students, who did not expect to take them anymore thinking that SHS was supposed to be more specialized. Asked which subjects they found difficult, the student respondents commonly answered subjects that were not their majors or specializations, Practical Research, Philosophy, and Pre-Calculus.

The respondents expected heavy workload at school, but they still raised having too many requirements, topics, and performance tasks as a concern. They also expressed being exhausted given the school load and pointed out that with too many things being required of them, the quality of their learning was being sacrificed. But for many student respondents and even their parents, their main sources of dissatisfaction with the program are the inadequacies in their school's resources and the competency of their teachers.

While responses from students taking different tracks indicate many similarities in SHS experience, some students still have a completely different sense of the curriculum. For instance, students in Arts and Design and Sports tracks feel that exposure is important for them (e.g., performances, exhibits, competitions), that their track is more difficult because they have a need to balance their academics and their art or sport, and that they are being looked down on by their teachers and students from other tracks.

5.2.3. Program Organization and Support

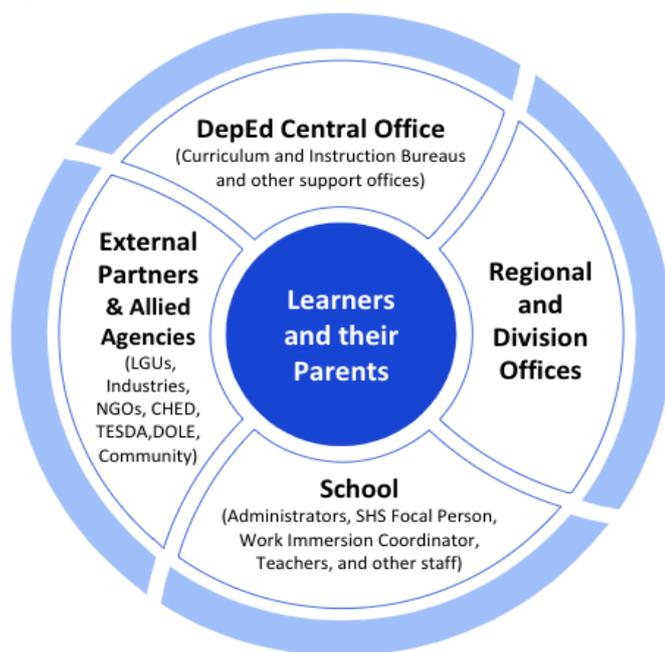
5.2.3.1. Program Organization

This section discusses how DepEd is organized for SHS delivery, identifying which of its aspects support or hinder the program's successful implementation.

Figure 10 shows the different actors involved in the implementation of SHS program. Central to the program are the learners and their parents. On the outer circle are the different levels of DepEd bureaucracy delivering the program – the Central Office, Field Offices (Regional and Schools Division), and the schools –and DepEd's external partners and allied agencies.

³⁸ This is a welcome view as earlier interviews with first batch and graduating G12 students indicated that core courses have not been given due emphasis (Orbeta, et al., 2018).

Figure 10. SHS stakeholder map



At the Central Office, Curriculum and Instruction has been the organizational strand most immersed in and even central to SHS planning and implementation. It “ensures that the organization focuses on the delivery of a relevant, responsive, and effective basic education curriculum around which all other strands and offices provide support.” It comprises four bureaus, each of which has a designated SHS focal person. In general, these bureaus craft policies pertinent to their area of responsibility and provide technical assistance to the regions. More specifically, these bureaus have the following roles in SHS implementation:

- i. Bureau of Curriculum Development (BCD) – serves as the secretariat of the SHS task force formed in 2014. The BCD was involved in curriculum writing and content checking, together with experts from other institutions (e.g., NCCA for the Arts and Design track, HEIs for the Academic track).
- ii. Bureau of Learning Development (BLD) – designs programs, projects, and activities that involve pedagogy (e.g., pedagogical retooling); implements teacher training.
- iii. Bureau of Learning Resources (BLR) – conceptualizes and translates the curriculum coming from BCD and pedagogy from BLD into learning resources.
- iv. Bureau of Evaluation and Assessment (BEA) – manages the assessment of systems and student learning (e.g., National Achievement Test), and provides inputs for teacher trainings with their research.

Policies crafted by these bureaus and directives issued by the Central Office are cascaded to and implemented by the field offices, with the Regional Offices leading the activities. Prior to the SHS rollout in 2016, ROs and SDOs jointly undertook pre-implementation activities that included data gathering, mapping of schools and track and strand offerings, conduct of internal and external assessments, SHS advocacy

campaigns, internal and external stakeholder orientations, teacher recruitment, and the rollout of teacher trainings.

At present, ROs' and SDOs' different divisions take on program functions related to their regular office functions, just as for the other basic education levels (i.e., elementary, JHS).

ROs' Quality Assurance Division processes applications to offer SHS, assessing schools' available resources and issuing permits to operate SHS, a function that Central Office bureaus used to perform. The Curriculum Learning Management Division, which primarily handles SHS implementation in some regions, ensures the proper implementation of the SHS curriculum (i.e., subject programming is correct, meaning prerequisites are followed; the number of hours per subject are met). This division also takes charge of learning materials provision and TVL tools and equipment procurement, ensuring their on-time delivery and payment. In addition, this division provides guidance on DepEd issuances related to SHS as technical assistance to SDOs. ROs also conduct monitoring, submit quarterly reports, and conduct training for school heads and teachers, and are currently doing a tracer study of the first batch of SHS graduates.

At the school's division level, either the Curriculum Implementation Division or the Schools Governance and Operation Division handles the SHS implementation. Many of these offices' SHS functions are similar to that of the ROs', except that they transact directly with schools. These functions include SHS mapping and identification of areas with a need to establish SHS, teacher recruitment, conduct of orientations for schools and immersion partners, monitoring of curriculum delivery (validation of compliance with the number of hours of teaching, alignment of class programs with unified subject offering if it exists) and compliance with policies and guidelines, private school supervision, facilitation of partnerships between schools and other stakeholders (e.g., industry partners, LGUs), assessment, and technical assistance to schools.

At the school level, where actual curriculum delivery takes place, school heads have the main responsibility of ensuring that all systems, school's physical resources, and teaching and non-teaching staff are prepared for a successful SHS implementation. Some school heads serve as the Partnership Focal Person (PFP), a role that DepEd's SHS Manual of Operations (DM No. 76 s. 2016) requires to be designated in every school. The PFP is responsible for networking with partners for resource mobilization and SHS immersion placement, among others. In some schools, other teachers are designated as the PFP.

The program is well-organized, and there are clear reporting relationships between the different levels. This structure helps DepEd in managing SHS implementation down to the more than 11,000 schools. However, FGDs and KIIs with these different levels of implementers reveal some organizational issues and challenges affecting implementation.

5.2.3.2. *Issues and Challenges*

Program functions. The SHS Manual of Operations and other DepEd issuances identify, either implicitly or explicitly, the functions necessary for the delivery of SHS.

These include program advocacy, capacity building, monitoring and evaluation, technical assistance to schools, and at the school level, guidance or career counseling and partnership-building. While field offices and schools perform these functions in compliance with the directives from the Central Office, the extent to which these are carried out in different places varies, such as in the following.

- i. Not all school respondents actively advocated for SHS and promoted their schools to junior high school students and their parents.
- ii. SDOs and school respondents vary in their efforts to conduct their own needs-based trainings. Some schools can provide capacity-building support to their teachers. For instance, one school head of an Arts and Design school would send teachers to trainings related to their specialization when the school's budget can allow for it. In another school respondent (a private HEI), teachers who have not yet taken the LET are provided free classes so they could complete their Education units and eventually take the licensure exam as required. These initiatives are not being done in other schools.
- iii. Monitoring and evaluation is not consistent and standard across regions. DepEd has a monitoring program referred to in regional issuances as the Monitoring, Evaluation, and Adjustment system, which is periodically conducted from the school to the RO levels (School / District / Division / Regional Monitoring, Evaluation, and Adjustment). However, there are SDOs and a RO that are only starting to incorporate monitoring and evaluation into their regular standard functions. At the school level, only some schools have come up with formal means, such as surveys, to obtain client feedback or evaluation of SHS delivery. Most of the other schools get feedback from parents during Parent-Teacher Conferences.
- iv. SDO's efforts in facilitating partnerships between schools and other stakeholders vary in that some take a more active role in leveraging relationships with stakeholders. For instance, there is one SDO that forged a MOA with private schools so that they would not add extra charges. At the school level, some school heads seek partnerships for their school needs more proactively than others.
- v. At the school level, FGDs with students revealed that guidance or career counseling is not being actively performed in all the respondent schools.

Operational procedures. Guidelines for SHS implementation are established with DepEd CO's step-by-step guidelines and detailed orders and memos both for field offices and schools, but interpretations differ among the implementers, resulting in variations in implementation, such as in the instances mentioned in the service delivery section. Some SDO respondents shared that there have also been deviations from the policies, usually by private schools and higher education institutions offering SHS, but these have been addressed with the available corrective measures.

Staff adequacy. Most of the SHS focal persons interviewed expressed a need for additional manpower. For instance, the respondent from BLR pointed out that additional staff could ease the burden of procurement and its monitoring. For the respondents from field offices, on the other hand, items dedicated to SHS especially for

monitoring purposes and in very large divisions might be needed, noting that the role is performed on top of the designated staff's regular functions (and without additional compensation). Looking at division coverage, a focal person could be overseeing 40 municipalities with 126 senior high schools, as in the case of the biggest division in Eastern Visayas, whereas another could only be covering 17 municipalities with 37 senior high schools, as in the case of one of the biggest divisions in Calabarzon³⁹.

At the school level, SHS teacher to student ratio is 1:30⁴⁰ and items for teaching staff have recently been added (356 Teacher II positions opened as of April 4, 2018 for SHS for SY 2018-2019)⁴¹, but an assessment of the teacher respondents' qualifications vis-a-vis their subjects taught indicates that there might not be enough qualified teachers especially for specialized subjects, and that this shortage has led to mismatches between teachers' specialization and subjects taught. This issue is more pronounced in smaller schools than in bigger ones, which could hire more teachers because of a bigger student population.

Staff competencies. Competency issues are mostly at the teacher level identified both by teacher and student respondents. These include the following:

- i. Lack of content mastery, especially for those handling subjects that are not at the very least related to their field of specialization;
- ii. Lack of training on pedagogy, especially for those who came from higher education institutions and industry;
- iii. Inadequate understanding of learners (i.e., multiple intelligences as it relates to learners in the Arts and Design and Sports tracks); and
- iv. Inadequate training, especially for the new teachers.

Role assignments. There are ROs, SDOs, and schools that have not designated an SHS focal person (and work immersion coordinator in some schools). In some ROs and SDOs, it is not clear which division has the responsibility for SHS concerns.

Coordination with other agencies. Different sets of respondents pointed out the lack of effective coordination between DepEd and TESDA and CHED on two areas.

- i. **DepEd and CHED.** A major issue among different sets of stakeholders is the policy on SHS graduates having to take remedial or bridging subjects in college when they apply to courses that are not vertically aligned with their SHS tracks or strands. Many respondents feel that the need to take bridging subjects defeats the purpose of tracking in SHS, and so they feel that it is a policy that has to be ironed out between the two agencies.

³⁹ SDO websites

⁴⁰ Department of Education, Education Management Information System Division-Planning Service, *Key Education Statistics as of August 24, 2018*.

⁴¹ Department of Budget and Management, Secretary Press Releases, accessed through <https://www.dbm.gov.ph/index.php/secretary-s-corner/press-releases/list-of-press-releases/787-dbm-approves-creation-of-75-242-new-teaching-positions>

- ii. **DepEd and TESDA.** CO key informants and TVL teacher respondents noted that there are some inconsistencies between the TESDA and DepEd TVL competencies in the TVL curriculum, although there have initially been efforts during the creation of the curriculum to align DepEd and TESDA TVL competencies.

Adequacy and use of resources. At the Central Office, a respondent shared that there are sufficient funds for learning resources; however, procurement issues hamper the timely and effective use of these funds. For instance, one of the reasons for delays in the provision of textbooks is that DepEd has to wait for two failures of bidding before it can produce learning materials on its own, when private sector companies cannot deliver, in compliance with the procurement laws (RA 8047 and RA 9184). This affects not only the procurement of learning materials, tools, and equipment (particularly for TVL), but also the construction of school buildings.

At the school level, schools also experience problems with the system for delivering school resources. There are cases of schools receiving equipment, tools, or materials with incorrect specifications (e.g., tables and chairs), or receiving the incorrect textbooks.

For the field offices, respondents from the SDOs noted that operating funds are not enough for monitoring activities, especially that some divisions cover many municipalities.

5.2.4. Good Practices, Success Factors, and Program Gains

Despite the many challenges the SHS implementation is still facing, three years since its rollout, the program likewise had some notable gains, mostly from the perspective of program designers and implementers.

- i. Considered by the program designers as a major gain, SHS enrollment far exceeded expectations. Enrollment surpassed not only DepEd's target of one million SHS enrollees, but also the number of high school graduates transitioning to college under the old curriculum. The Grade 10 to Grade 11 transition rate in 2016 was 93%, while previous high school to college transition rate was only about 50%. The 2016 enrollees included not only Grade 10 completers, but also those who finished high school under the ALS program and those who previously discontinued schooling. To program implementers, high enrollment rates likewise indicate acceptance of and satisfaction with the program.
- ii. Another gain for DepEd officials and other stakeholders, including parents, is that graduates particularly of the TVL track have been able to gain employment after graduation. While DepEd has yet to complete a tracer study on the first batch of graduates, many of the different sets of respondents shared anecdotal evidences of graduates being employed by the firms they went to for immersion.
- iii. A current DepEd official also considers it a gain that the program was able to mobilize different sectors nationwide, both public and private, for its implementation.

- iv. DepEd officials likewise consider the high graduation rate of the first batch as a success of the program.

In terms of good practices and success factors, the following factors have been critical to the success of SHS implementation in some places based on the experiences of the different sets of respondents.

Teacher effort. Teachers have been DepEd's biggest asset in the implementation of SHS. They make up for inadequacies in program inputs with their resourcefulness, sometimes on their own account, so that the curriculum could be delivered.

Quality of school leadership and management. School heads' management skills have been crucial in ensuring that the school's requirements for delivering the curriculum are met and are appropriate (e.g., correct teacher qualifications for subjects). Likewise, school heads' effective advocacy and partnership-building skills are important, as observed in schools enjoying strong external stakeholder support.

Quality of service rendered by field offices, particularly the SDOs. Also crucial to a smooth SHS implementation on the ground, is the accessibility of SDO assistance (technical support) and the degree to which they monitor schools and initiate activities in support of SHS implementation (e.g., standardizing subject offerings in the division, providing trainings or orientations based on need, facilitating partnerships for immersion).

For some of the ROs and SDOs, the use of social media and technology, such as FB groups and Google sheets, has helped them keep an open communication line with schools (and even between ROs and SDOs) and gather data faster. Another practice that has helped an SDO with monitoring, is having area coordinators (school heads) for every 20 to 30 schools and having monthly conferences with them.

Strong partnerships and linkages with various stakeholders. While considered a program gain, different stakeholders' involvement with the program, from pre-implementation to actual implementation, has also been crucial to moving the program forward. For instance, LGU support has been instrumental to the provision of school requirements that DepEd cannot provide and to the implementation of work immersion in many of the schools visited.

Box 1. Stakeholder support and school leadership at work in SHS implementation

One of the observations of this study is that amidst implementation challenges, there are senior high schools that thrive due mainly to a combination of good school leadership and a strong support from stakeholders. This is manifested in an SHS in the Visayas offering the Arts and Design track. This school is the only public SHS in the region offering the said track, and is envisioned to be a regional Arts school. It was established through the joint efforts of the respective Deped Regional Office and the local government, which provided the school site and helped fund the construction of the school. Through the school head's constant coordination with the local officials, the LGU has also been able to provide the school's various needs, such as the students' everyday transportation to and from the school and the different equipment and instruments needed for the specializations (e.g., video cameras, musical instruments). To date, the school has yet to have its own water source, complete the buildings, and build a dormitory (having students from different places), but the school head is in conversation with the mayor for the provision of these needs.

In terms of the other aspects of SHS implementation, there was an effort to ensure that the teachers hired are trained in the specialization (i.e., art form) they are teaching, and the school head supports these teachers' training when the school budget can afford it. But the school also augments its human resources through an institutionalized school program, where artists, for instance, are invited as resource persons. In implementing the work immersion component, the school head, with the help of a teacher, also works on finding immersion partners that are relevant to the students' specializations.

6. Summary and Recommendations

6.1. Summary

RA 10533 or the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013 was enacted to put into law the major reforms proposed to improve the country's educational system. A key feature of this law is the Senior High School Program. The primary goal of the reform is to produce holistically developed and well-prepared students equipped with 21st century skills. This study was designed to assess the extent of implementation of the SHS program two years into implementation in order to identify issues and challenges it is facing and find areas for improvement. As in any process evaluation of programs it looks at three domains, namely, program theory, service delivery and utilization, and program organization.

The assessment revealed that the program had notable gains. One, enrollment exceeded expectations. The Department of Education expected only one (1) million enrollees but got 200 thousand more with transition from G10 to G11 – a higher transition rate than from fourth year to college before the program. Two other explanations besides high continuation rate among G10 graduates were given, namely, many of the out-of-school youth went back to school, and graduates of ALS also may have continued their studies. It has also been noted that preliminary data has shown high graduation rate among the first batch of SHS students. Two, stakeholders also mentioned of anecdotal evidence that graduates, particularly of the TVL track, found employment after graduation. Employment is one the desired exits for SHS graduates. Three,

the program has succeeded in forging partnerships with different sectors in implementing the program, e.g., with an LGU in putting up the only Arts and Design school in the region and with private sector in developing curriculum for specific specialized strands. Four, the program has also become a venue for public and private partnership in the implementation. The SHS voucher program and the JDVP-TVL are two such programs that foster public-private partnerships. The SHS voucher enables students who cannot be accommodated in the public school to study in private schools using the voucher as subsidy for their tuition. The JDVP-TVL allows students of DepEd SHS offering TVL strands that have inadequate facilities to take their TVL specializations in selected TVIs.

The success of the program despite the challenges it is facing can be traced to several factors. One, teachers made up for the inadequacies in program inputs with resourcefulness, sometimes on their own account, so that the curriculum could be delivered. Two, the management skill of the school head is crucial in delivering the program. This is particularly evident in drawing external stakeholder support. Three, the timely technical assistance to schools provided by the SDOs proved to be very essential. Four, program implementation is also facilitated and enhanced by strong partnerships and linkages with various stakeholders. This has been amply demonstrated, for instance, in an Arts and Design school in Region 8.

The highlights from the perspectives of students are also very instructive. One, the students find the SHS program a “culture shock” as they experience some college-level subjects and workload. Two, many have expressed that they are mostly teaching themselves with grade 11 as mostly lecture, and grade 12 mostly reporting. Third, they found the topics and requirements too much and that quality of learning is being sacrificed. Fourth, being treated like college students allowed them to know themselves better and to discover their potentials. Fifth, they find subjects that are not their major as difficult; particularly practical research, philosophy and pre-calculus were found to be difficult subjects. Sixth, arts and design and sports students find it difficult to balance their academic requirements and sport or art practice, moreover they also need exposure in the form of performances, exhibits, and competitions.

It is to the credit of the DepEd bureaucracy to have launched the SHS program to a very good start considering the enormity of the needs and challenges of implementing a new and nationwide program. The bureaucracy was found to have prepared well to implement the program and program support was conceptually well-organized. It has undertaken modelling efforts as early as 2012 or four years before the rollout in 2016. Planning of track and strand offerings considering demand and supply at the division and school level have been done. Preparation of the curriculum and learning materials started as early as 2013. Costing and budgeting were also done. Massive advocacy has been launched to meet skepticism from many sides. The DepEd Bureaus is organized to serve the different dimensions of the program needs. The BCD is responsible for curriculum writing and content checking, the BLD is responsible for pedagogy and teacher training, BLR responsible for translating curriculum and pedagogy into learning resources and BEA responsible for assessment of student learning. This organization with clearly delineated roles is replicated in regional and division offices in some form. Policies crafted by these bureaus are issued by the central office and cascaded to field offices.

Nonetheless, the program is facing many challenges which hopefully are mostly mere birthing pains which can be addressed soon as implementation procedures continue to stabilize and take root. These issues and challenges need to be put in perspectives relative to the enormous needs of implementing a new and nationwide program. Recognizing these challenges and addressing

them squarely would hopefully prevent it from hampering the initial gains the program has already achieved from taking root. We summarize these challenges in three domains, namely, (a) program theory, (b) service delivery and utilization, and (c) program organization.

6.1.1. Program Theory

- i. ***Too optimistic assumption on adequacy of resources at the school level.*** The KIIs and FGDs found that building of school facilities, hiring of qualified teachers, delivery of teaching materials was not complete at the start of the program for many reasons foremost of which are procurement issues. These problems were compounded by an enrollment turnout that exceeded expectations.
- ii. ***Teachers and students have issues with the curriculum.*** While teachers find the curriculum a step in the right direction, some find it too ambitious for the time allotted and for the level of preparation of students. Students also complained of the heavy workload at school.
- iii. ***Lack of awareness and understanding about the needs program for some stakeholders.*** The program was designed expecting active participation of relevant stakeholders beyond the school system such as LGUs and employers. Yet there are not too many such collaboration happening in the implementation of the program despite explicit encouragements in the Manual of Operations. Collaboration that occurred has depended on the individual initiatives of school heads and division and regional school officials and their counterparts in the LGUs and industries.

6.1.2. Service Delivery and Utilization

- i. ***Many teachers find it difficult to deliver the curriculum due to insufficient guidelines and inadequate materials and preparation.*** Many teachers express difficulties in delivering the curriculum. This is the result of a combination of factors ranging from lack of learning materials, teachers that are not adequately trained for specific subjects, and students that are not appropriately prepared having differing levels of competency upon entry.
- ii. ***Students often lack choice in terms of track and strand due to supply-side issues in program offering.*** While it has been claimed that program offerings considered demand and supply, it appears that ultimately the decision to offers a strand has been supply determined, i.e. whether the school has the needed resources, particularly, teachers for the offering. This came out in the FGDs with students claiming they were enrolled in track / strand other than their preferred ones because the school have limited track / strand offerings. This has also been validated by the secondary data which shows that even though at the division level there appears to be no issue, except of pre-baccalaureate maritime, sports and arts and design, the of shortage of program offering for many of the track / strand appears at the municipal / city and school level.
- iii. ***Diverse program experiences among students from different schools in different areas.*** Despite the elaborate preparation activities made prior to the implementation of the program, diversity in experience still happened. Difficulty on delivering the curriculum because of inadequate learning materials and differing interpretation of guidelines made the learning experience teacher dependent. It has been pointed out

that the main source of dissatisfaction of students and their parents with the program are the inadequacies in their school's resources and competency of their teachers. It has been pointed out by some students that they teach one another more than the teachers do.

- iv. ***Clamor for support for taking NC exams.*** Often students were able to take the NC exams only because school arranged for it. There is also a clamor for subsidizing the fees for taking the NC exams for TVL graduates.

6.1.3. Program Organization and Support

- i. ***Varying extent of performance of program functions.*** It is observed that there is no consistency in performing well-defined program functions stipulated in the SHS Manual of operations such as program advocacy, capacity building, monitoring and evaluation, technical assistance to schools, guidance and counseling and partnership building at the school level. Some schools can do some of these functions well but not the others.
- ii. ***Variation in interpreting program guidelines.*** It has been observed that implementers often vary in the interpretation of program guidelines resulting in variation in implementations. This is particularly true in private schools and SUCs/LUCs.
- iii. ***Inadequate human resources.*** Most SHS focal persons expressed the need for additional manpower. One dimension of manpower shortage is that while the number may appear adequate, specializations are not appropriate resulting in a shortage for specific subjects. Another case in point is adding tasks to regular functions, i.e., the monitoring function that becomes too heavy particularly for big divisions.
- iv. ***Coordination with external partners (i.e., other agencies).*** A considerable confusion was generated when higher education institutions required bridging or remedial classes for students whose SHS tracks or strand is not vertically aligned with the college courses they want to take. CHED had to issue a policy to clarify this issue. There is also the issue of coordination of the SHS TVL offerings and the TESDA training offerings.
- v. ***Unclear long-term role for private-public partnerships such as the SHS Voucher and JDVP-TVL.*** The SHS voucher program has provided opportunities for students that cannot be accommodated in public schools to study in private schools. Similarly, the JDVP-TVL has enable students enrolled in TVL strands in public schools that don't have appropriate facilities to get training in better-equipped private partner TVIs. However, there is no clear guidance on the longer-term roles of these program in SHS implementation.

6.2. Recommendations

What follows are specific recommendations for improving implementation of the SHS implementation. These are arranged by assessment area.

6.2.1. Program Theory

- i. ***Make more realistic assessment of delivery of program inputs (teachers, learning resources, school buildings, facilities, tools and equipment) considering procurement and capacity issues.*** It has been revealed in the FGDs and KIIs that the assumptions and expectations on the delivery of resources were too optimistic that did not consider well the well-known procurement issues. Classes had to start without all the needed resources. It needs to be recognized that it does not help the program to be overly optimistic on the delivery of program inputs and outputs. Allowance for well-known procurement issues should have been factored in. The unrealistic expectations lead to unfulfilled promises and frustrations because of non-delivery of needed learning materials. Teachers are emphatic that success depends on the availability of resources. Teachers often spend scarce preparation time to look for relevant learning materials themselves and be creative in delivering the needed content. They often had to make do with haphazardly assembled materials rather than concentrate their efforts on delivering the promised well-thought out learning materials in the classroom. These resulted in varying learning experiences because it became too teacher dependent.
- ii. ***Continue DepEd's current review of curriculum content, with consideration to teachers' and students' perspectives.*** As mentioned, teachers find the curriculum too ambitious vis-à-vis the allotted time and the level where the students are. They felt that these are designed for advanced students. They also felt that the schools are ill-prepared for its implementation and success in implementation critically depends on availability of resources. Students have also complained about heavy workload at school. There maybe two perspectives to this issue. One dimension is that conceptually there are just too many topics to cover in the new curriculum given the time allotment resulting into teachers complaining about the curriculum being too ambitious. In addition, there is also the corollary issue of being too ambitious for the average student. Another dimension is the implementation perspective where the content maybe just right but because of the problems in delivery of learning materials, teachers find it too burdensome to deliver without the needed support in available learning materials. The students also complained that teachers have been using student reporting too often rather than lectures leading to the complain that they were teaching each other more than their teachers.
- iii. ***Continue program advocacy and dialogue with different stakeholders to improve their understanding of the needs of the program and to rally support for it.*** The SHS program was designed with the participation of relevant stakeholders beyond the school system, such as the LGUs and employers. Partnerships can happen in various areas of SHS implementation. Pockets of good collaboration of schools and LGUs resulted in good results such as the School of Arts in Region VIII. This came from a very good collaboration of the school regional and division officials and a well-informed LGU. Efforts of explaining what the SHS program requires and what it imparts to students also need to continue. Meaningful work immersion experience results from good partnership and good match between schools' strand offerings and the work environment of immersion partners. The private sector must be engaged in curriculum review, particularly, of very specialized strands. Firms need to understand better what skills SHS graduates possess to encourage them to hire SHS graduates. Government appears to be not prepared for SHS graduates

because they have yet to adjust entry requirements to the Civil Service which does not yet recognize SHS graduates.

6.2.2. Service Delivery and Utilization

- i. ***Continue to address the inadequacies in program inputs (teachers, learning resources, school buildings, facilities, tools and equipment).*** The KIIs and FGDs highlights the failures in delivery of needed learning resources. Teachers are very clear that success of the program critically depends on the availability of resources. Students and parents' initial skepticism with the program was mainly due to the perceived unpreparedness to implement the program. This requires identifying and addressing issues in procurement systems and processes that cause delays and, on some occasions, erroneous delivery. Besides basic classrooms, tables and chairs, there is a continuing need to ensure that schools have functional and enough basic allied facilities, such as restrooms. There is also a need to ensure that Teacher Education Institutions produce graduates with degrees aligned with the SHS subjects.
- ii. ***Improve the availability of all tracks and major strands by developing the principles behind strand offerings and by building on existing models.*** DepEd must recognize the need to rationalize the specializations offered by both public and private schools to ensure that (a) they are equipped to offer them, and (b) these specializations are responsive to the needs of the community. The coordination of strand offerings lies in DepEd which is tasked with approving school openings and strand offerings. The principles that govern which sector should offer which strand and under which circumstances should be developed, be transparent, well disseminated and adhered to. This is needed to guide future investments in expanding capacities in both public and private schools.

It has been mentioned that secondary data show that while at the division level there appears to be no lack of supply of strands except of pre-baccalaureate maritime, sports and arts and design, as one goes down to the municipality and school level, the lack of specific strands surfaces. On the one hand, lack of strands is inefficient because it forces students to either travel to school far from their homes or force the student to enroll in tracks/strands that are not of their first choice. On the other hand, it is very costly and not economical to offer all strands in all places. A balance of these conflicting concerns needs to be found and strategically acted on.

For school types that are viable only in few places, such sports and arts and design school, it must be recognized that complementary support services need to accompany them. One such complementary support mechanisms are student dormitories and even targeted subsidies for living and transportation allowances. The regulation for allowing offering of such types of schools should include these support services. The model for these specialized schools is science high schools system. LGUs have proven to be a good partner in establishing these specialized schools. There are already existing models of partnership in Valenzuela, Bataan and Region VIII. These partnerships should be pursued and developed.

Another evolving model of partnership is the initiative to respond to the needs of businesses and industries. DepEd has just developed curriculum guides for very

specific specializations, such as call centers and heavy equipment operation. At present, curriculum guide development is ongoing for aviation and theme parks and recreation.

- iii. ***Clarify the curriculum implementation design and performance testing (e.g., work immersion, standardized subject sequencing).*** There is still confusion on some elements of the curriculum. For one, implementing meaningful work immersion continues to be a challenge. Work immersion was included in the curriculum because two of the desired exits for SHS graduates are employment and entrepreneurship. An important revelation in the earlier study (Orbeta et al., 2018) show that as much as three quarters of the SHS graduating students are going to pursue college education and if ever they will work it will be for a short time while waiting for the opportunity to go to college. Even more revealing is that this very high proportion planning to pursue college education is true for both academic and TVL tracks. If most of the SHS are going to college, should work immersion be mandatory? If it is mandatory which type of work immersion should be implemented – a work environment exposure or the specific competency developing type. Clarification also needs to be done on whether it should be limited to the TVL track and other strands doing alternative activities.

A decision needs to be made on whether to standardize subject offerings across school so that transferees will have no problems moving from one school to the next. In fact, some division have decided to implement this policy. The initial decision was to leave to the schools the decision on the sequencing of subject offering according to availability of resources, e.g. teachers. As the implementation matures and resource constraints ease up, should standardized subject offering be considered?

- iv. ***Clarify the conduct and disseminate results of performance assessments.*** Clarifications need to be made on what the desired mode of assessment is. Should it cover the total population or a sample? The latest DO No. 29 s. 2017 says assessment should be universal. However, due to procurement issues, it was administered in a sample. Procurement issues should not be the determinant on what should be the mode of assessment. Notwithstanding the procurement issues, the results of the assessments must be disseminated well to enable stakeholders to understand and keep abreast with the performance of the school system so they can make informed decisions. The overall performance of the school system is a society's common concern and not just limited to its direct implementers.
- v. ***Strengthen career guidance in schools.*** Even though NCAE is administered, it appears that the advice from the results of the exam is not, for the most part, utilized by students. This point to the need to re-examine the effectiveness of career guidance in schools.
- vi. ***Improving arrangements for certifications of skills.*** There is a need to clarify who should be responsible for arranging that students are able to take NC assessments. There is also a clamor to subsidizing the fees for taking the NC exams for TVL graduates. There may be a case for this particularly for students from poorer households. The NCs are expected to boost SHS graduates' probability of hiring. If they are not able to take certification assessments for one reason or the other, then this deprives them of the chance of getting certified.

There may be a misconception that certification should only be limited to TVL strand students. ABM students should also be eligible for allied certificates such as bookkeeping. All SHS graduates should be eligible for Civil Service sub-professional exam if only CSC will change its minimum qualification requirements to include SHS graduates.

Explore the possibility of supporting students required to take the exam by their employers but cannot afford the exam fees in taking NC exams. Maybe an amount can be set aside from existing fund and a mechanism be put in place.

- vii. ***The role of the voucher program needs to be clarified.*** The voucher program has effectively addressed the immediate need of students that cannot be accommodated in public schools due to capacity constraints in public schools, on the one hand, and the available spaces in private schools, on the other hand. Certainly, there were short-term issues such as untimely release of reimbursements that were experienced which will hopefully be addressed soon as implementation procedures stabilizes. But there is a need to spell out the long-term role of the program in the delivery of the SHS program. This will help guide future investments in SHS capacity build-up.
- viii. ***The role of the JDVP-TVL program needs to be clarified.*** Like the voucher program, the JDVP-TVL appeared to have served well the short-term objective of providing better learning environment for TVL students in public schools that did not have the appropriate facilities which were hampered by procurement issues. There is a need to clarify the long-term objectives of the program. Again, this is needed to guide future investments in capacity for offering the TVL strands.
- ix. ***Provide better guidance on the TVL offerings of schools.*** The introduction of the TVL track in SHS created the issue of coordination between TVL offerings in the SHS and the offerings of TESDA. Efficiency was served when SHS utilized TESDA training regulations (TRs) to determine the content of the TVL strands. In addition, SHS also utilizes the certification system of TESDA to award COCs and NCs. With the two systems co-existing, there is a need to develop the principles of coordination so that the two systems do not unnecessarily duplicate offerings which can result in inefficiencies in the training systems. It may still be justified to duplicate offerings if the two systems target differing clientele. For instance, TESDA can target out-of-school youth and those who wants to re-train is specific competencies while DepEd focuses on in-school youth.

6.2.3. Program Organization

- i. ***Continue to improve the bureaucracy's responsiveness to the needs of SHS implementation.*** The DepEd bureaus under the Curriculum and Instruction has clearly delineated roles addressing specific needs of not just SHS implementation but the delivery of the entire basic education systems. That these clear delineations of roles are replicated in some form at the regional and division offices also speaks of well of organization support. However, FGD and KII results still highlighted variation in performance of specified program functions namely advocacy, capacity building, monitoring and evaluation, technical assistance to schools, guidance and counseling and partnership building. Some schools do these functions better than others. Even if guidelines have been issued, interpretation vary resulting

in variation in implementation. This is particularly true for private schools and SUCs/LUCs. The sources of these variations in implementation need to be understood to minimize unnecessary variation in learning experiences.

- ii. ***Better equip and support teachers in delivering the curriculum.*** The assessment of service delivery has highlighted the results of failures in supporting teachers with appropriate learning materials. It has also highlighted the results of shortage of qualified teachers to deliver the curriculum. This points to the need for continuous and effective capacity building of school heads and teachers. It also points to the need to address mismatch of teacher qualifications and subjects taught.
- iii. ***Strengthen mechanisms that ensure standards compliance in schools.*** It has been mentioned that initial notable success of the program came from individual teacher efforts and pockets of good leadership in the bureaucracy. This must be translated into much more broad-based standard procedures rather than from individual efforts. The mechanisms and incentives accompanying compliance to standards must be fully understood and reinforced so pockets of good practices will become standard practice for everyone in the system.
- iv. ***Institutionalize and strengthen SHS monitoring and evaluation at all levels of DepEd.*** Implementing new programs require strong monitoring and evaluation systems as one cannot hope to fully anticipate the responses of clients. It has been said “good intentions are never enough.” We need to measure and evaluate if the program is achieving its stated objectives.

At present the central office is starting the Quality Management System, where every office is getting feedback from customers, as part of institutionalizing a monitoring and evaluation system. The end goal of any organization’s M&E system is to provide feedback and improve the empirical basis of operational decisions. Openness to learning from implementation experience is key in utilizing and improving existing M&E systems and the resulting enhanced capacity to implement effective programs. For this to happen, basic is to provide needed funds and manpower for SHS monitoring and evaluation to eventually become an integral part of the overall basic education M&E system.

- v. ***Strictly enforce the designation of SHS focal persons in ROs, DOs, and schools and immersion coordinators in schools.*** SHS focal persons and immersion coordinators are important in coordinating implementation at different levels. The current practice of designating a teacher as SHS focal person and immersion coordination as add-on responsibility must be re-examined. Coordination and monitoring tasks need full-time attention just like other functions such as teaching. These should never be treated as add-on to existing tasks.
- vi. ***Coordinate with CHED and TESDA to iron out policies related to SHS and to address stakeholders’ confusion with these policies.*** There are confusions emanating from the lack of closer coordination with CHED and TESDA. With CHED there was the confusion of whether students can take, without remediation, courses that are not vertically aligned with their SHS tracks. With TESDA, it has already been mentioned that there needs to be a coordination between SHS TVL offering and the TESDA offerings. It has already been mentioned that one way of coordinating efforts between SHS TVL and TESDA offering is to target different clientele.

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8. Appendices

Appendix A. List of Guide Questions for the KIIs and FGDs

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

(a) DepEd Leadership – Former and Present Secretaries

<p>Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) To get the perspective of DepEd leadership (past and present) on SHS (challenges, gains, etc.) b) To understand the beginnings of and vision they have for the program c) To understand the preparation and work that went into conceptualizing and planning for the program d) To understand plausibility of program theory 	
PE Component	Questions
<p>Program Logic and Plausibility</p>	<p>Former DepEd Secretary</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What was the impetus for the Senior High School program? 2. What need is the SHS program trying to address? 3. How does it intend to address the need? 4. What were the primary considerations in designing the SHS program? 5. What were the critical assumptions made when designing the SHS program? 6. In conceptualizing the program, what were the core elements that DepEd focused on (i.e., core subjects, tracks, immersion, etc.)? 7. What were the preparations done for the program in terms of the following? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Policy b. Budget c. Curriculum and Teaching Materials d. Human resources e. Physical resources/infrastructure f. Systems and processes <p>Current Secretary</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. What do you know about the design parameters of the Senior High School program? 9. Do you have any doubts about the design elements and the program's assumptions? If yes, what are these doubts? 10. What changes would you introduce to the program, if any, and for what purposes? 11. What are ongoing initiatives related to the SHS program introduced by the current DepEd administration?
<p>Service Delivery and Utilization</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is the program reaching its target beneficiaries? 2. Are the primary stakeholders (students, parents, community) satisfied with the program? 3. What are the challenges DepEd is facing in implementing SHS with respect to its core elements? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Challenges former officials were facing then

	<p>b. Challenges current officials are facing now</p> <p>4. How is DepEd addressing these challenges?</p> <p>5. What are the program gains thus far?</p> <p>6. What is DepEd doing to improve the delivery of the SHS program?</p>
Program Organization	<p>1. Are you satisfied with the staffing support of the program then/now (previous/current)? If not, what changes would you want to introduce?</p> <p>2. What are the critical functions needed to implement the program effectively? Are all the needed functions being performed adequately? Why or why not?</p> <p>3. Do you think the operational procedures are clear to all concerned?</p>

(b) DepEd Leadership – Undersecretary/ies or Assistant Secretary/ies with SHS oversight

Objectives:	
<p>a) To get the perspective of DepEd leadership on SHS (challenges, gains, implementation, etc.)</p> <p>b) To assess how the program is being managed at the top management level</p>	
PE Component	Questions
General	What are your/your office's specific responsibilities for the program?
Program Logic and Plausibility	<p>1. What need is the SHS program trying to address?</p> <p>2. How does it intend to address the need?</p> <p>3. Do you think this need will be adequately addressed by the program?</p> <p>4. What were the primary considerations in designing the core aspects of SHS?</p> <p>5. What were the preparations done for the program?</p> <p>a. Policy</p> <p>b. Budget</p> <p>c. Curriculum and Teaching Materials</p> <p>d. Human resources (staffing and training)</p> <p>e. Physical resources/infrastructure</p> <p>f. Systems and processes</p> <p>6. What are ongoing initiatives related to the SHS program introduced by the current DepEd administration?</p>
Service Delivery and utilization	<p>1. Is the program reaching its target beneficiaries?</p> <p>2. Are the primary stakeholders (students, parents, community) satisfied with the program?</p> <p>3. Are there mechanisms in place for assessing stakeholder satisfaction or obtaining their feedback on the program?</p> <p>4. How does DepEd plan and budget for SHS?</p> <p>5. What are the challenges DepEd is facing in implementing SHS (with respect to its core elements)?</p> <p>6. How is DepEd addressing these challenges?</p> <p>7. What are the program gains thus far?</p> <p>8. What is DepEd doing to improve the delivery of the SHS program?</p>

Program Organization	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are you satisfied with the staffing support of the program then/how (previous/current)? If not, what changes would you want to introduce? 2. Are all the needed functions being performed adequately? Why or why not? 3. Are operational procedures clear to all concerned?
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(c) DepEd Central Office Implementers – Different bureaus involved

(to be made more specific through probing questions, depending on the Bureau being interviewed)

Objectives:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) To understand the role of the bureaus in the development of the program b) To get the specifics of program planning and the details of program conceptualization 	
PE Component	Questions
General	How is your office involved in the implementation of SHS?
Program Logic and Plausibility	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What need is the SHS program trying to address? 2. How does it intend to address the need? 3. Do you think this need will be adequately addressed by the program? 4. At your level, what preparations for SHS were done? Do you believe these are sufficient to achieve the objectives?
Service Delivery and Utilization	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is the program reaching its target beneficiaries? 2. Are the primary stakeholders (students, parents, community) satisfied with the program? 3. Are there mechanisms in place for assessing stakeholder satisfaction or obtaining their feedback on the program? 4. What are the processes and guidelines involved in the aspect of the program you are handling (e.g., curriculum design, teacher training, track offerings per school, etc.)? Are they well documented? Were program guidelines issued on time? 5. What is the extent to which your processes and guidelines are being followed, internally and by involved stakeholders? (Compare ideal vs. actual processes/guidelines.) 6. What are the challenges relative to program implementation your bureau is facing? 7. What are the challenges relative to the core elements of SHS your bureau is facing? 8. What can be improved in your processes? 9. What can be improved in your bureau's outputs related to SHS? 10. What has helped your bureau achieve your desired outcome?
Program Organization	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Does your bureau have adequate resources (financial, human) to implement the aspect of the program being handled? 2. Are there organizational concerns that challenge your bureau's work for the program?

(d) Regional DepEd Offices

Objectives: a) To find out how the different program activities and processes carried out at the regional level differ by region and the factors that lead to these differences, if any b) To understand the role of regional offices in the implementation of SHS	
PE Component	Questions
General	How is your office involved in program implementation?
Program Logic and Plausibility	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What need is the SHS program trying to address? 2. How does it intend to address the need? 3. Do you think this need will be adequately addressed by the program? 4. At your level, what preparations for SHS were done? Do you believe these are sufficient to achieve the objectives?
Service Delivery and Utilization	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is the program reaching its target beneficiaries? 2. Are the primary stakeholders (students, parents, community) satisfied with the program? 3. Are there mechanisms in place for assessing stakeholder satisfaction or obtaining their feedback on the program? 4. What are the processes and guidelines involved in the aspect of the program you are handling? Are they well documented? Were these guidelines issued on time? 5. What is the extent to which your processes and guidelines are being followed, internally and by involved stakeholders? (Compare ideal vs. actual processes/guidelines.) 6. How do you ensure that all systems are in place for an orderly implementation of SHS in your region? 7. What are the challenges relative to program implementation your office is facing? 8. What are the challenges relative to the core elements of SHS your office is facing? 9. What can be improved in your processes? 10. What can be improved in your office's outputs related to SHS? 11. What has helped your office achieve your desired outcome?
Program Organization	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Does your office have adequate resources (financial, human) to implement the aspect of the program being handled? 2. Does your office have sufficient support from the leadership in implementing the aspect of the program being handled? 3. Does SHS implementation get LGU and community (e.g., parent groups) support? 4. Are there organizational concerns that challenge your office's work for the program?

(e) DepEd Division Offices

Objectives: a) To find out how the different program activities and processes carried out at the division level differ by division and the factors that lead to these differences, if any b) To understand the role of division offices in the implementation of SHS	
PE Component	Questions
General	How is your office involved in program implementation?

Program Logic and Plausibility	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What need is the SHS program trying to address? 2. How does it intend to address the need? 3. Do you think this need will be adequately addressed by the program? 4. At your level, what preparations for SHS were done? Do you believe these are sufficient to achieve the objectives?
Service Delivery and Utilization	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is the program reaching its target beneficiaries? 2. Are the primary stakeholders (students, parents, community) satisfied with the program? 3. Are there mechanisms in place for assessing stakeholder satisfaction or obtaining their feedback on the program? 4. What are the processes and guidelines involved in the aspect of the program you are handling (the determination of tracks offered in schools, in particular)? Are they well documented? Were these guidelines issued on time? 5. What is the extent to which your processes and guidelines are being followed, internally and by involved stakeholders? (Compare ideal vs. actual processes/guidelines.) 6. How does your office ensure the availability and access to all the tracks in your division? 7. What are the challenges relative to program implementation your office is facing? 8. What are the challenges relative to the core elements of SHS your office is facing? 9. What can be improved in your processes? 10. What can be improved in your office's outputs related to SHS? 11. What has helped your office achieve your desired outcome?
Program Organization	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Does your office have adequate resources (financial, human) to implement the aspect of the program being handled? 2. Does your office have sufficient support from the leadership in implementing the aspect of the program being handled? 3. Does SHS implementation get LGU and community (e.g., parent groups) support? 4. Are there organizational concerns that challenge your office's work for the program?

(f) CHED K to 12 PMU team assigned to SHS Materials Development and SHS Training

<p>Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) To understand how the SHS curriculum and materials were developed from CHED's side b) To understand the role of another agency in the preparation for SHS implementation 	
PE Component	Questions
Program Logic and Plausibility	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How do you understand the goals of SHS? Do you think the goals will be achieved? 2. Why was CHED tapped for the development of some SHS materials and the training of SHS teachers? 3. What specifically was CHED's involvement in the development of SHS materials and SHS teacher training? 4. Were there activities jointly conducted by CHED and DepEd prior to the actual work for the development of SHS materials and teacher training? 5. What was the process that CHED went through in developing the SHS materials? 6. What have been the bases for designing the new materials and training the SHS teachers?

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Were there any challenges in the development of the SHS materials and training SHS teachers? 8. How were these challenges addressed?
Program Organization	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How did DepEd coordinate with CHED the development of SHS materials and teacher training? 2. Were the materials and trainings completed in a timely manner?

(g) Developers of SHS Materials

Objective: To understand how the SHS curriculum and materials were developed	
PE Component	Questions
Program Logic and Plausibility	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How do you understand the goals of SHS? Do you think the goals will be achieved? 2. What is your field of specialization that has led DepEd to tap you for the development of SHS materials? 3. What was your specific involvement in the development of SHS materials? 4. What activities were conducted in preparation for the development of SHS materials? 5. What was the process that you went through in developing the SHS materials? 6. What have been your bases for designing the new materials? 7. Were there any challenges in the development of the SHS materials? 8. How were these challenges addressed?
Program Organization	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How did DepEd coordinate the development of SHS materials? 2. Were the materials completed in a timely manner?

(h) National Screening Committee Members

Objective: To find out how DepEd planned and designed some core elements of the SHS program with partners, such as in industry.	
PE Component	Questions
Program Logic and Plausibility	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How do you understand the goals of SHS? Do you think the goals will be achieved? 2. How were you involved in the conceptualization of/preparation for SHS? 3. For what need were you tapped by DepEd particularly? 4. What were the utmost concerns when you were conceptualizing the program/program component? 5. What have been the primary considerations in designing the program component (e.g., work immersion)?

SCHOOL-BASED KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

(i) School Administrators/Principals

Objectives:	
a) To document SHS implementation at the school level b) To understand how school leadership affects the implementation of SHS	
PE Component	Questions
Program Logic and Plausibility	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How do you understand the goals of SHS? Do you think the goals will be achieved? 2. How did your school prepare for the implementation of SHS in terms of the following? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Teaching Materials b. Work Immersion c. Human resources (staffing and training) d. Physical resources/infrastructure e. Systems and processes 3. Are your school's resources for implementing SHS adequate (teaching and non-teaching staff, facilities, equipment, teaching materials, books, classrooms, desks and chairs)?
Service Delivery and Utilization	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is the program reaching its target beneficiaries? 2. Were there activities you conducted to promote the program (i.e., information drive and orientations)? 3. Are the primary stakeholders (students, parents, community) satisfied with the program? 4. Are there mechanisms in place for assessing stakeholder satisfaction or obtaining their feedback on the program? 5. How did your school decide on the SHS tracks and strands to be offered? 6. How did your school prepare for the offering of your tracks and strands? 7. How does your school plan for the work immersion? 8. Does your school have admission policies specifically for SHS? 9. Does your school have target students? 10. If resources are inadequate, how does your school address it? 11. What are the challenges or difficulties in implementing SHS in your school? 12. What practices help your school deliver SHS smoothly? 13. What is your general impression of your SHS students and their experience in SHS? <p>Additional Question for private school heads:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 14. How is your school implementing the SHS voucher program? Please describe your processes in terms of information dissemination/marketing, application processing, etc. 15. Is the voucher program able to reach its target beneficiaries? 16. What are the challenges in implementing the program in your school? 17. What could improve the implementation of the voucher program?
Program Organization	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Did you have a hand in the hiring of your school's teachers? What were the considerations in selecting teachers? 2. Are your teachers sufficient in number and competencies? 3. Is there adequate support from higher levels of DepEd in the implementation of SHS? 4. Does SHS implementation get LGU and community (e.g., parent groups) support?

(j) SHS Focal Persons

Objectives: a) To understand the different roles of those involved in SHS implementation in schools b) To understand how SHS is implemented at the school level	
PE Component	Questions
Program Logic and Plausibility	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How do you understand the goals of SHS? Do you think the goals will be achieved? 2. What are your responsibilities as your school's SHS focal person? 3. What were your preparations as the SHS focal person? 4. How did your school prepare for SHS implementation in terms of the following? Are these adequate? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> f. Teaching Materials g. Work Immersion h. Human resources (staffing and training) i. Physical resources/infrastructure j. Systems and processes
Service Delivery and Utilization	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is the program reaching its target beneficiaries? 2. Are the primary stakeholders (students, parents, community) satisfied with the program? 3. Are there mechanisms in place for assessing stakeholder satisfaction or obtaining their feedback on the program? 4. How did your school decide on the SHS tracks and strands to be offered? 5. How did your school prepare for the offering of your tracks and strands? 6. How does your school plan for the work immersion? 7. If resources are inadequate, how does your school address it? 8. What are the challenges or difficulties in implementing SHS in your school? 9. What practices help your school deliver SHS smoothly? 10. What is your general impression of your SHS students and their experience in SHS?
Program Organization	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the process in troubleshooting problems in SHS implementation? 2. Is there adequate support for when there are concerns in SHS implementation? Are these concerns addressed in a timely manner? 3. Does SHS implementation get LGU and community (e.g., parent groups) support?

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

(a) SHS Teachers and Other Staff (e.g., Guidance Counselor, Immersion Coordinator)

Objectives: a) To understand SHS implementation in schools from the perspective of teachers and non-teaching staff b) To assess SHS strengths and weaknesses based on the quality of teachers and their teaching	
PE Component	Questions
Program Logic and Plausibility	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How do you understand the goals of SHS and the new curriculum? Do you think the goals will be achieved?

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. What is the subject you are currently teaching or the role that you have in the school and your training/background? 3. Did you undergo any training or orientation on the new curriculum? 4. Were there other preparations you made specifically for SHS before classes started?
Service Delivery and Utilization	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is the program reaching its target beneficiaries? 2. Are the primary stakeholders (students, parents, community) satisfied with the program? 3. Are there mechanisms in place for assessing stakeholder satisfaction or obtaining their feedback on the program? 4. Are there teaching or curriculum guides available for your use? 5. How would you assess these materials? Are these adequate? 6. Are there prescribed methods for teaching your SHS subject? 7. How would you describe your own teaching style vis-à-vis the characteristics of SHS students (e.g., hands on, encourages independent study)? 8. What are the difficulties/challenges you are facing in teaching SHS/performing your role (as guidance counselor or immersion coordinator)? 9. What is your own assessment of the SHS curriculum? 10. What is your own assessment of your SHS students in terms of learning?
Program Organization	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the process in troubleshooting problems in the delivery of your subject/performance of your role? 2. Is there adequate support for when there are concerns in SHS implementation? Are these concerns addressed in a timely manner? 3. Does SHS implementation get LGU and community (e.g., parent groups) support?

(b) Grade 11 Students

Objective: To assess and document SHS students' actual experience of the program	
PE Component	Questions
Program Logic and Plausibility	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describe your understanding of the purpose of adding two years in high school. 2. Do you think it will achieve its objectives? Why or why not?
Service Delivery and Utilization	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Experience in looking for a SHS <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. How did you look for a SHS? b. How did you choose your track and strand? c. Did you have any problems/difficulties in looking for a school? 2. Experience during enrollment <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. What were the requirements for enrollment? Were these difficult to comply with? b. Did you have any difficulties or challenges in enrolling? 3. Experience in school <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. What do you think about the curriculum/subjects you are taking or have taken? b. Do you have adequate school materials and facilities? c. How would you assess your teachers' quality of teaching? d. Is there support, academic or non-academic, available to you in school when you need it? e. If there is something that needs to be done to improve your schooling experience or the quality of the SHS education you are getting, what is it? 4. Questions if availed of the SHS voucher program and their experience with it <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Are you a recipient of the voucher program? b. What is your experience in applying to the program?

	c. What is your experience with its benefits?
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(c) Grade 12 Students

Objective: To assess and document SHS students' actual experience of the program	
PE Component	Questions
Program logic and Plausibility	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describe your understanding of the purpose of adding two years in high school. 2. Do you think it will achieve its objectives? Why or why not?
Service Delivery and Utilization	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Experience in looking for a SHS (for when there are transferees from other schools) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. How did you look for a SHS? b. How did you choose your track and strand? c. Did you have any problems/difficulties in looking for a school? 2. Experience during enrollment <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. What were the requirements for enrollment? b. Did you have any difficulties or challenges in enrolling? 3. Experience in school <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. What do you think about the curriculum/subjects you are taking or have taken? (<i>With emphasis on experience with work immersion and taking NCs</i>) b. How is the transition from Grade 11 to Grade 12? c. Do you have adequate school materials and facilities? d. How would you assess your teachers' quality of teaching? e. Is there support, academic or non-academic, available to you in school when you need it? f. If there is something that needs to be done to improve your schooling experience or the quality of the SHS education you are getting, what is it? 4. Questions if availed of the SHS voucher program and their experience with it <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Are you a recipient of the voucher program? b. What is your experience in applying to the program? c. What is your experience with its benefits?

(d) Parents

Objective: To get parents' views and perceptions of SHS implementation	
PE Component	Questions
Program Logic and Plausibility	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describe your understanding of the purpose of adding two years in high school. 2. Do you think it will achieve its objectives? Why or why not? 3. Did you attend any consultation or orientation on senior high school?

<p>Service Delivery and Utilization</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Experience in looking for a SHS <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. How did you look for your child's SHS? b. How did your child choose his/her track and strand? c. Did you have any problems/difficulties in looking for a school? 2. Experience during enrollment <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. What were the requirements for enrollment? b. Did you have any difficulties or challenges in enrolling your child? 3. Experience in school <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. What do you think are your child's concerns about senior high school? b. Is there support, academic or non-academic, available to your child in school? c. If there is something that needs to be done to improve your child's schooling experience or the quality of the SHS education he/she is getting, what is it? 4. Questions if student availed of the SHS voucher program and their experience with it (for students in private schools) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Are you a recipient of the voucher program? b. What is your experience in applying to the program? c. What is your experience with its benefits? d. What could be done to improve the implementation of the SHS voucher program (i.e. requirements, application process, info dissemination, among others)
<p>Program Organization</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Do you provide any support to the implementation of SHS in your child's school? If yes, what kind of support?

Appendix B. The SHS Process Evaluation Research Team and the Ad hoc Discussion Groups

PIDS Research Team

1. Aniceto C. Orbeta, Jr.
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3. Kris A. Francisco-Abrigo
4. Karen Dominique B. Brillantes
5. Justine Beatrice B. Jovellanos
6. Maropsil V. Potestad
7. Ma. Kristina P. Ortiz
8. Danica P. Ortiz
9. Kris Ann M. Melad
10. Nina Victoria V. Araos
11. Viveka A. Miguel
12. Emma P. Cinco
13. Susan Pizarro

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19. Rose Margaret Redelicia, *Planning Service*
20. Marion Gapultos, *Planning Service*
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NEDA Ad hoc Discussion Group

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6. Xarina David
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