



Senator sees growing dissatisfaction with K-12

By Cecille Suerte Felipe – July 19, 2022

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MANILA, Philippines — The growing dissatisfaction of the people over the K-12 education system indicates the urgency of conducting a review and formulating reforms, according to Sen. Sherwin Gatchalian.

Gatchalian filed Proposed Senate Resolution 5 seeking a Senate inquiry on the status of the implementation of Republic Act 10533 – the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013 or K-12 Law – exactly 10 years from the time the enhanced curriculum for K-12 was initially implemented in school year 2012-2013.

“It is clear in the voices of our countrymen that they are not satisfied with the K-12 programs. This is because its promises are not being fulfilled, and it has only become an additional burden on our parents and students,” Gatchalian, who chairs the Senate committee on basic education, arts and culture, said.

Commissioned by Gatchalian, a Pulse Asia survey conducted on June 24-27 with 1,200 respondents revealed that 44 percent of adult respondents are dissatisfied with the program.

The survey result is 16 percentage points higher than the results of the September 2019 survey, which showed that only 28 percent of respondents were dissatisfied with the K-12 system.

The June survey also saw a drop of 11 percentage points in satisfaction rate with K-12 programs, compared with the results of the September 2019 survey.

While 50 percent of the respondents in the September 2019 survey were satisfied with the program, only 39 percent of respondents in this year’s survey said they are satisfied.

Gatchalian also commissioned a Pulse Asia survey in December 2019, which pointed out that among those who were dissatisfied with K-12 programs, the additional financial burden is the top reason for dissatisfaction with 78 percent.

A 2020 discussion paper by the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) showed that while K-12 programs promised to boost employability among senior high school (SHS) graduates, only a little over 20 percent of them have entered the labor force while 70 percent continue with their education.

The same discussion paper added that historically, the Filipino youth or those aged 15-24 have the lowest rates in terms of labor force participation in the Southeast Asian region.

For example, 70 percent of Vietnamese youth are in the labor force, but it is only less than 60 percent of their counterparts in the Philippines.

“We must carefully review the implementation of K-12 to ensure that it fulfills the goal of delivering quality education and promoting the competitiveness of our youth,” Gatchalian said.

He added that the proposed review is one of his priority measures for the 19th Congress and was at the centerpiece of his commitments to Filipino voters during the senatorial campaign.

Technology

Meanwhile, the Department of Education (DepEd) should ensure that the use of technology is incorporated into the education system, similar to the practice in other Asian countries, according to Sen. Nancy Binay.

Binay underscored that authorities should also address the apparent weaknesses of students in mathematics, science and reading and comprehension.

She added that during the COVID-19 pandemic, the use of gadgets became part of students' education so it should be incorporated, citing examinations, which used to be conducted with paper and pencil, but are now administered with the use of gadgets.

"Let's go back to basics because that is also one of the weaknesses today, in English, in math and especially in science," she said.

With face-to-face classes soon to be implemented, the senator said she is supportive of the hybrid or the concept of blended learning.

"I'm for hybrid, maybe I should study the concept of blended learning or hybrid mode of learning. I understand the concerns of the private school that there are still parents who are hesitant, but maybe it can be done on combinations of three days face-to-face and there is also an option online," she added.