

**HONORABLE ROMAN T. ROMULO**  
Chairperson  
Committee on Basic Education and Culture  
House of Representatives  
Quezon City

Attention: **NEMESIO O. MALATAMBAN III**  
**Committee Secretary**

Dear **REPRESENTATIVE ROMULO**,

This refers to House Bill No. 8393 or An Act Ensuring The Alignment Of Basic Education And Early Childhood Education, Appropriating Funds Therefor, And For Other Purposes, introduced by Representative Francisco "Kiko" B. Benitez.

As the lead agency in social protection, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) expresses its support for the proposed legislation that values the developmental stage of children through the enhancement of early childhood education. In fact, some crucial interventions during a child's formative years are incorporated into the following DSWD programs:

- a. In the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps), children aged 3-5 must enroll in Child Development Centers, supervised neighborhood play or preschool and maintain a monthly class attendance rate of at least 85%;
- b. Under the Parent Effectiveness Service (PES) program, parents and parent-substitutes are assisted in developing and strengthening their knowledge and skills to assume a significant educational role in their child's growth and development. The DSWD and the Local Social Welfare Development Offices (LSWDOs) in the local government units (LGUs) conduct PES as part of our efforts to support and empower parents as primary caregivers and nurturers of their children. The seminars aim to provide parents with knowledge, skills, and techniques to improve their parenting practices, strengthen family relationships, and promote the overall being of their children; and
- c. Through the Kapit-Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan – Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services (KALAHI-CIDSS), around eight thousand (8,000) CDC sub-projects were completed to testify that early childcare is also valued in communities.

Providing children with access to education is part of the social security guarantees under the social protection floor aimed at alleviating poverty, vulnerability, and social exclusion. This is also aligned with the Philippine Development Plan towards the attainment of Ambisyon Natin 2040, particularly under “Maginghawang Buhay,” or a comfortable life where children receive a quality education so that they realize their full potential and become productive members of society.

To contribute to the enhancement of the legislative measure, the following are submitted for consideration by the Committee:

### **1. On Section (4) 5**

It must be noted that Child Development Centers are either community-based or center-based and modalities of learning may be different. As such, it must be ensured that the learning modalities are responsive to the children's needs and should enable their psychosocial development through various enrichment activities.

### **2. On Section (6) 7-A.**

It is suggested that the salary grade for Child Development Teachers (CDTs) should be aligned with the minimum salary of a Public Teacher under the salary standardization law. At the same time, the suggested salary grade for Child Development Workers (CDWs) is aligned with the Department's position in the Magna Carta for Child Development Workers, where the salary for CDWs should also be standardized. As such, remuneration for CDTs should stay within salary grade (SG) 11 and at most SG 15 in cities. Similarly, in municipalities, the remuneration levels for CDTs should be no lower than SG 8 and no higher than SG 11.

We agree that a CDW should possess a formal education at the degree level and should meet the minimum qualifications and competencies required for the position.

CDTs and CDWs shall likewise complete training or seminars related to Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) or Early Childhood Education Division to be designed and required by the ECCD Council and provided by the ECCD Council, its member agencies, or accredited organizations.

As we advocate the prioritization of CDWs currently employed, it is suggested to consider those who will be unable to comply within the five-year period by providing alternative equivalency programs such as (a) mandatory reskilling and upskilling-training programs; and (b) assessment based on experience, skills, and competencies.

### **3. On Section (7) 7-B.**

It is suggested that Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) Divisions shall be created in the province under the supervision of the Office of the

Governor instead of cities and municipalities. It would be more convenient for the ECCD Council to have one communication and direction line from Provinces to the LGUs and efficient delegation of ECCD services.

The DSWD recommends incorporating specific provisions in the bill that clearly outline the functions of both daycare centers and preparatory schools under the Department of Education, particularly focusing on their roles in preparing children for formal basic education.

The Department believes that the enactment of this measure will mobilize all sectors in the pursuit of creating a child-centric and healthy educational environment conducive to the holistic development and total well-being of early learners.

Respectfully submitted for the Committee's consideration.

Thank you.

Very truly yours,

  
**REX GATCHALIAN**  
Secretary  
Date: DEC 22 2023