

STATEMENT

An EdCom to Seriously Address the Learning Crisis

We call for the immediate convening of a multi-sectoral Educational Commission (EdCom) to immediately and seriously address the country's learning crisis.

We believe that an EdCom should be convened at the soonest possible time to set systemic and strategic long-term policy reforms that will address the crisis our country is facing. Our education system has been on the decline over the last two decades, with our students underperforming in local and international assessments. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the situation. The number of enrollees has declined as families cannot meet the demands of online learning or people have lost their jobs. School closures and mobility restrictions have also caused delays in graduations and licensure examinations, slowing the flow of new entrants in the labor force. We see increasing risk of our children's learning outcomes and futures being stunted if we do not do something about this immediately. As a result, our country's own development will be equally stunted if it cannot build upon our strong, competitive human capital. We call on the government to stand with us in our goal to establish and create a more inclusive and quality education.

This EdCom should be multi-sectoral, with representatives not only from the legislature and executive but also from the academe, business sector, civil society organizations, teacher organizations, parents, and learners. In addition, it must tackle concerns such as learning outcomes, learning inequities, and resiliency of the education system while remaining open to reforms such as a more decentralized system and new governance structure that is learner-centered. Finally, it must be immediate and urgent and aim to have recommendations within the next six months. Any delay will only further endanger the future of the Philippine youth and the country as a whole.

The EdCom resolution passed the Committee level on 27 May 2021 in the House of Representatives (HOR). We thank the sponsors of the EdCom resolution in the HOR: Reps. Kiko Benitez, Stella Quimbo, Fidel Nograles, Rommel Angara; Chairperson Mark Go and members of Committee on Higher, Technical Education; and Chairperson Roman Romulo and members of the Committee on Basic Education and Culture.

**The ball is rolling. A non-contentious effort such as the EdCom should immediately pass the legislative mill.
Set up the Philippine Education Commission now.**

