



## Introduction

The establishment of the Teacher Education Council (TEC) (RA 7784, 1994) was part of a package of reforms passed in 1994 to meet the recommendations issued by the Congressional Commission on Education (EDCOM, 1991). Also known as “An Act to Strengthen Teacher Education in the Philippines by Establishing Centers of Excellence, Creating a Teacher Education Council for the Purpose, Appropriating Funds Therefor, and for Other Purposes” RA 7784 was one of five laws<sup>1</sup> passed to address the country’s declining quality of education.

National assessments show that the Philippines’ quality of education is declining, and the country’s poor performance in the most recent Programme for International Student Assessment shows that it is falling behind international performance (OECD, 2018).

Twenty-six years after the creation of the TEC, it is timely to propose for the amendment of RA 7784 to make the TEC focus genuinely, systematically and deeply on the quality of our teachers and school leaders to strengthen the country’s education system.

## Power of the Council on Pre-Service Teacher Education based on RA 7784

The Teacher Education Council (TEC), as mandated by RA 7784 has, among others, the power “to identify and designate among existing private and public schools, teacher education institutions as Centers of Excellence for Teacher Education at the national, regional, and provincial levels,” and “to initiate a periodic review of curricula and programs for teacher education and training through participatory methods, such as self-assessment by institutions.”

## CHED’s Role in the Strengthened TEC

The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) will play a pivotal role in the proposed strengthened TEC. The CHED Chairperson will: (i) remain as an ex-officio member of the Council and (ii) serve as the chair of the strengthened TEC’s Pre-Service Teacher Education



Committee. In this role, the CHED Chairperson or his/her representative will oversee the following functions of the Committee:

- Identify and designate Centers of Excellence (COEs) for Teacher Education at the national, regional, and provincial levels.
- Encourage consortia or cooperative arrangements among Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs).
- Recommend approval to the Council and monitor the pre-service curriculum offered by TEIs.
- Oversee accreditation panels to review applications for the accreditation of pre-service teacher education programs.
- Ensure that teacher education curricula are based on evidence, professional standards, and best practice.

The Commission’s functions as regards teacher education will be part of a more efficient and streamlined overarching organization capable of undertaking a strategic, integrated approach. CHED as part of the TEC, together with DepEd and other members, will enable a strong link between pre-service and in-service teacher education. CHED will continue to have sole power over all other technical panels. However, the TEC, where CHED is a member, has the power over pre-service teacher education, as mandated in RA 7784 and retained in the proposed amendatory bill. Aside from the TEC Law, there are no other existing measures that provide other disciplines with a dedicated Council.

The proposal to strengthen the TEC will provide the Council with the necessary support that it should have received when it was established 26 years ago. At the same time, CHED can devote more time, effort, and funding to other disciplines once it shares the responsibility for pre-service teacher education with the TEC. For instance, with the work of ensuring the quality of hundreds of TEIs no longer its sole responsibility,

<sup>1</sup> i) RA 7722 or the Higher Education Act; RA 7796 or the TESDA Act; RA 7797 or an act on lengthening the school calendar; and RA 7836 or the Philippine Professionalization Act.

CHED can better support, monitor and evaluate the performance of programs and institutions specializing in disciplines such as Business, Social Science, Engineering, Nursing, Physical Therapy, Medicine, and more.

## A strengthened TEC

Strengthening the TEC empowers the Council to exercise its core mandates which are already vested in it by RA 7784. Below are the existing and proposed additional powers and functions of the TEC:

1. Identify and designate among existing private and public schools, teacher education institutions as centers of excellence for teacher education, at the national, regional, and provincial levels;
2. Formulate evidence-based policies and standards that strengthen and improve the quality of teachers and school leaders;
3. Uphold and maintain the integrity of professional standards for teachers and school leaders;
4. Set out basic requirements for pre-service teacher education programs and provide accreditation thereto in accordance with the professional standards to ensure a stronger and more transparent link between the outcomes of teacher education programs and the expectations of teachers and the community;
5. Support teachers entering the profession through the setting and monitoring of systematic requirements and linking professional standards across their professional lives;
6. Establish policies to implement a system of recognition affirming the career stages achieved by teachers and school leaders;
7. Establish and maintain a pool of national assessors for career stage recognition based on professional standards;
8. Adopt an adequate and effective system of incentives such as scholarship grants in order to attract and encourage outstanding high school graduates whether from public or private schools, to pursue teacher education;
9. Encourage the establishment of consortia and other cooperative arrangements among teacher education schools, public or private, for greater efficiency and economy in the use of resources;
10. Advocate for teachers and school leaders by advancing the profession and monitoring the progress of other functions in contributing to the standing of the profession in the community;
11. Co-design with the Professional Regulation Commission Board for Professional Teachers the licensure examination for teachers ensuring its relevance to the professional standards and the current needs of teachers, and put in place with the

Board feedback mechanisms to stakeholders to enhance examinations and pre-service provision in teacher education institutions;

12. Design collaborative programs or projects that enhance pre-service teacher training, in-service training, re training, orientation, and teacher development;
13. Undertake, apply, and share research related to teaching and school leadership, and conduct relevant studies as may be needed in the formulation of policies and in the planning and successful implementation of plans, programs, and projects required in attaining the purposes of this Act;
14. Recommend appropriate measures to the President of the Philippines, Congress, and heads of other government offices and agencies to improve, enhance, and strengthen teacher education, and promote the welfare of teachers and school leaders; and
15. Promulgate rules and regulations and exercise such other powers and functions as may be necessary to carry out effectively the purpose and objectives of this Act.

## Conclusion

A council exclusively focused on advancing the teaching profession can support teachers and school leaders to improve student learning outcomes. Thus, the effort to strengthen the TEC must be pursued and must serve as an avenue for cooperation and collaboration to improve teacher and school leader quality, and henceforth, the country's education system.

*Note: This proposal is under discussion by the Technical Working Group for Teacher Quality (TWG-TQ) chaired by Cabinet Secretary Karlo Alexei Nograles where CHED is represented.*

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## References

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