

Republic of the Philippines  
Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao  
**BANGSAMORO TRANSITION AUTHORITY**  
Cotabato City

*Third Regular Session*

BTA Bill No. 162



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Introduced by **MP AMILBAHAR S. MAWALLIL**  
Co-authored by **MP ATTY. LAISA MASUHUD ALAMIA, ENGR. BAIN TAN A. AMPATUAN,**  
**ENGR. DON MUSTAPHA A. LOONG, ATTY. RASOL Y. MITMUG, JR., ATTY. SUHARTO**  
**M. AMBOLOD TO, RASUL E. ISMAEL, ABRAHAM T. BURAHAN**

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AN ACT  
ESTABLISHING A SCHOLARSHIP AND RETURN SERVICE PROGRAM FOR  
DESERVING STUDENTS IN THE BANGSAMORO AUTONOMOUS REGION IN  
MUSLIM MINDANAO, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

The 1987 Philippine Constitution established the following fundamental guarantees:

- “The State shall protect and promote the right of the citizens to quality education at all levels and shall take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all.” (Sec. 1, Art. XIV)
- “The State shall establish and maintain a system of scholarship grants, student loan programs, subsidies, and other incentives which shall be available to deserving students in both public and private schools, especially to the underprivileged.” (Sec. 2, Art. XIV)

Higher education contributes largely in the development of competent and high-level human resources and generates knowledge and technologies needed for development and for advancing competitiveness. Higher education serves as the link between basic education and the professional world, thus its contribution towards the development of human capital in BARMM cannot be overlooked.

Increasing the access of the Bangsamoro constituents on higher education is one of the major challenges of the Ministry of Basic, Higher, and Technical Education (MBHTE)-CHED. This challenge is compounded by the armed conflict and other peace and order related problems in the region.

One way of promoting access is giving scholarships or financial assistance to deserving students. However, scholarship programs in the region, specifically the Student Financial

Assistance Programs (StuFAPs) is being managed by the CHED Central Office. Slots provided to the BARMM depends on how CHED allocates slots among the regions.

This measure aims to address this problem. This bill mandates the establishment of a Bangsamoro Scholarship and Return Service Program for deserving students who wish to pursue education and training in any State University and College in the country.

It also includes a provision for return service where after graduating from the SUC, the scholar shall be integrated into the Bangsamoro Government and shall receive the appropriate civil service rank, salary and related benefits. This will not only be beneficial to the scholar but has a reciprocal benefit to the government through the gainful employment of competent professionals and public servants for the region.

In view of the foregoing, the passage of this bill is earnestly sought.

**AMILBAHAR S. MAWALLIL**  
*Member of the Parliament*

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**Section 1. *Short Title.*** – This Act shall be known as the “*Bangsamoro Scholarship Grant Act of 2021*”

**Section 2. *Declaration of Policy and Principles.*** – It is the declared policy of the Bangsamoro Government to recognize the vital role of the youth in nation-building, promote their intellectual well-being, and guarantee their right to quality and accessible education at all levels.

Towards this end, the Bangsamoro Government shall adopt a tertiary level scholarship program for all qualified students residing within its jurisdiction, designed to allow them to pursue degree courses on applied sciences which are relevant to the human resource requirements of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region necessary for its development.

For this purpose, successful graduates of the scholarship program shall, through their enhanced skills and expertise, contribute to the development of the region. This shall ensure the availability of capable professionals who can provide competent services in every component city and municipality, especially the underserved, economically underdeveloped, and geographically disadvantaged areas.

**Section 3. *Establishment of the Bangsamoro Scholarship and Return Service Program.*** – There shall be established a Bangsamoro Scholarship and Return Service Program (Program) for the top 3 graduating students in all public high schools in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region, based on the guidelines and criteria set by the Ministry of Basic, Higher, and Technical Education (MBHTE): *Provided*, That they must enroll in any recognized State

University and College (SUC) in the country, subject to the academic standards, application and admission policies, and such other reasonable rules and regulations of the preferred SUC.

**Section 4. Eligibility.** – Any public high school student who belongs to the top three (3) bracket of the graduating class shall be entitled to the Program provided under this Act in any SUC of choice upon compliance with the following conditions:

- a. The student must be a Filipino citizen and a bona fide resident of any component city or municipality within the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao for the last four (4) years prior to the availing of the scholarship program;
- b. The student must be of good moral character and without any derogatory record;
- c. The student has graduated from any public high school situated within the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao within two (2) years prior to the academic year being applied for in the SUC;
- d. The student has complied with the application and admission requirements of the preferred SUC;
- e. The student's rank is reported by the public high school principal or administrator in a certificate bearing the name of the school and its location, the number of students, the rank of the student applicant in the graduating class, and other relevant information.

**Section 5. Conditions for the Grant of Scholarship.** Deserving students accepted to the Program shall be subject to the following conditions:

- a. Must sign an agreement stating the terms and conditions of the scholarship on a form prescribed by the Ministry of Basic, Higher, and Technical Education (MBHTE);
- b. Must carry the full load of subjects prescribed per semester by the SUC, and shall not, under any circumstance, drop a course which will result in underloading;
- c. Must finish the entire course within the prescribed time frame of the SUC where the scholar is enrolled in, subject to the retention policies of the SUC: *Provided*, That the deserving student accepted to the Program, before actual enrollment in the first semester as a scholar, may be allowed for valid and justifiable reasons, to defer enrollment or to file a leave of absence: *Provided, further*, That a scholar who is already enrolled may be allowed for valid and justifiable reasons, to file a leave of absence;
- d. Must take the board examination of the chosen course within a maximum period of one (1) year after graduation, if applicable; and
- e. Must render return of service, as provided under Section 7 of this Act.

The scholar who fails to pass the licensure examination within one (1) year after graduation and completion of academic requirements shall shoulder all the necessary expenses for the succeeding professional licensure examination.

**Section 6. Disqualifications.** – The scholarship grant shall terminate in case of the following circumstances:

- a. If the scholar fails to meet the academic requirements or to complete the course within the prescribed period without valid cause, as may be determined by the SUC, such as

but not limited to, absence without notice, willful neglect or other causes within the control of the scholar;

- b. While being a scholar, the scholar commits misconduct in a manner that would bring significant damage to the SUC concerned, or to the Bangsamoro community as a whole.

**Section 7. *Mandatory Return Service Program.*** – Upon graduation and/or passing the licensure examination of the chosen course, if applicable, the scholar shall be integrated into the Bangsamoro Government and shall receive the appropriate civil service rank, salary and related benefits. The scholar shall serve in the Bangsamoro Government, preferable in the scholar’s hometown, or, in the absence of a need thereat, in any city or municipality closest to the scholar’s hometown, for at least one (1) year: *Provided*, That in all cases, the scholar shall only be required to serve in such municipality if no threat to the scholar’s life is present.

A scholar who has graduated from the Program and/or passed the licensure examination of the chosen course but fails or refuses to comply with the mandatory return service program under this Act shall be required to pay two (2) times the full cost of scholarship, including other benefits and expenses incurred by reason of participation in the Program.

**Section 8. *Lead Implementing Agency.*** – The Ministry of Basic, Higher, and Technical Education (MBHTE) shall be responsible for the planning, policy formulation, and direction of the Program, including its management, administration, monitoring and evaluation. It shall have the following functions:

- a. Conduct a review of the number of graduating public high school students in each BARMM component province and identify the top three (3) graduates in each public high school;
- b. Continuously develop various forms of scholarship grants or *tiers* that may be awarded to the scholars of the Program, which may be measured against economic indicators such as economic status upon enrollment, income, and employment, if applicable;
- c. Develop a system which shall provide assistance and guidance to the scholars in the determination of the appropriate course and the SUC which will best suit their aspirations and strengths;
- d. Disseminate information to all public high schools on the implementation of the Program and provide timely reminders about the Program to all public high schools in the region in order to give the prospective top graduates ample preparation to apply for the Program; and
- e. Ensure compliance by all BARMM public high schools.

**Section 9. *Appropriations.*** – The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be included in the budget of the MBHTE in the annual Bangsamoro General Appropriations Act. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the continued implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual GAA for BARMM.

**Section 10. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – Within ninety (90) days from the approval of this Act, the MBHTE shall formulate and promulgate the necessary rules and

regulations to implement the provisions of this Act. The implementing rules and regulations issued pursuant to this section shall take effect thirty (30) days after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

**Section 11. *Separability Clause.*** – If any provision of this Act shall be held unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions not otherwise affected shall remain in full force and effect.

**Section 12. *Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, executive orders or issuances, or any parts thereof which are inconsistent herewith, are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

**Section 13. *Effectivity Clause.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after publication.

Approved,

AUTHOR:



**AMILBAHAR S. MAWALLIL**  
*Member of the Parliament*

Certified correct:

**PROF. RABY B. ANGKAL**  
*Secretary-General*

Attested by:

**HON. PANGALIAN M. BALINDONG**  
*Speaker*