

Solon urges govt to help struggling private schools

Manila Standard · 8 Mar 2022 · A3 · By Maricel V. Cruz

IN A Resolution, House deputy majority leader and **Rep. Alfred Vargas** of Quezon City called for “urgent and decisive” government support for the struggling private school sector.

Vargas lamented the lack of action to address retrenched teachers and staff, affected students, and the closure of schools during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Every private school closure is a tragic loss to learning and should be treated with concern by the State with the same gravity and seriousness,” Vargas said in the resolution.

“It means wasted infrastructure and human capital, uncertainty in the future of our teachers and educators, and anxiety for students and their families who are separated from communities of learning that they had been long part of,” he added.

Vargas cited UNICEF reports that the economic shock of the pandemic has placed private schools, especially lowcost private schools, under significant financial stress.

According to UNICEF, only two million out of a former 4.3 million students in private schools had re-enrolled at the beginning of the pandemic in the Philippines.

Vargas called the private school sector’s plight an “educational crisis” in the making because of missing educational opportunities for millions of Filipino students.

According to the three-term congressman, his consultations with private school administrators and managers from his district signal that there is an education crisis at the horizon as many private schools in Quezon City had already closed because of serious financial losses.

“I personally met with members of the Association of Private School Administrators (APSA) – Quezon City and many of them voice their fear that with the opening of face-to-face classes in public schools, there will even be less concern for private schools from the Department of Education (DepEd),” Vargas stated.