

'17 MAY -3 P2:05

SENATE

Senate Bill No. 1432

RECEIVED BY: 

Introduced by Senator FRANCIS G. ESCUDERO

AN ACT
SYNCHRONIZING THE OPENING OF ALL CLASSES IN ALL
SCHOOLS IN THE PHILIPPINES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Globally, there is a growing recognition of the fundamental importance of human capital as the primary force that drives national development. Studies show that the quality of a country's human capital is directly proportional to the quality of its education.

Consequently, far-reaching reforms in our education system must be undertaken in order to ensure the development of our human capital.

In the rankings of the educational institutions of the world, our top universities always lag behind our ASEAN counterparts. We, therefore, need to engage with the top educational institutions of the world in order to benefit from their experience and expertise and hopefully raise the standards of our education.

Majority of the world's top institutions start their academic calendar in August or September. And among the members of the ASEAN, only the Philippines follows the June-to-March academic calendar. Our engagement with the world's top universities will be greatly facilitated with the alignment of our academic calendar with the rest of the world.

Hence, this bill proposes the start of the school year on the second Monday of August to the second Monday of September, a mere one month difference as opposed to the current allowable period of almost three months, from the first Monday of June but not later than the last day of August, as provided for under Republic Act No. 7977.

The synchronization of the academic calendar will assist in the conduct of research between local and international universities as well as student participation in exchange programs designed eventually to benefit local education.

A synchronized local academic calendar aligned with the rest of the world also has the following benefits: *first*, it avoids confusion among the various stakeholders (the schools, the students, parents, partner communities, and other institutions and entities engaged in education related services; *second*, it avoids the dire economic consequences among sectors or industries which benefit from common break schedule of students as well among families engaged in agriculture who need as many helping hands as possible; and *finally*, it eases the burden of parents in having to deal with

multiple school calendars, which are likely to disrupt precious work and family time and activities.

We are on the right course when we recognize the fundamental role education plays in our national development. However, bold initiatives must be undertaken in our education system if we are to compete and thrive with the rest of the world.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED.

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SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)

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Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

Section 1. *Synchronizing the Start of the School Year.* – Any provisions of law to the contrary notwithstanding, the start of the school year beginning school year 2018-2019 shall be synchronized.

The school year shall start on the second Monday of August but not later than the second Monday of September.

In the implementation of this Act, the Secretary of the Department of Education (DepEd) and the Chairperson of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) shall be guided by the provisions of Republic Act No. 7977 insofar as they are not inconsistent with this Act.

Section 2. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The DepEd and the CHED in coordination with the associations of private schools shall promulgate the corresponding implementing rules and regulations of this Act within sixty (60) days from the date of its effectivity.

Section 3. *Repealing and Amendatory Clause.* – Republic Act No. 7977 and all other laws, decrees, orders, regulations and policies inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed and/or amended accordingly.

Section 4. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions not affected hereby shall remain valid and subsisting.

Section 5. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in two (2) newspapers of general circulation or in the *Official Gazette*, whichever comes first.

Approved,