



NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE ]  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES ]  
Second Regular Session ]

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SENATE  
P.S. Res. No. 672

RECEIVED BY 

Introduced by SENATOR WIN GATCHALIAN

**RESOLUTION**  
**DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, FOR A RE-EVALUATION OF THE CRITICAL FACTORS TO DETERMINE THE SCHOOL OPENING, FOR THE PURPOSE OF RECOMMENDING POLICY INTERVENTIONS FOR THE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11480 OR "AN ACT AMENDING SECTION 3 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7797, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS 'AN ACT TO LENGTHEN THE SCHOOL CALENDAR FROM TWO HUNDRED (200) DAYS TO NOT MORE THAN TWO HUNDRED TWENTY (220) CLASS DAYS' "**

1       **WHEREAS**, Republic Act (R.A.) No. 11480 was enacted on July 17,  
2 2020, amending Section 3 of R.A. No. 7797, otherwise known as "An Act to  
3 Lengthen the School Calendar from Two Hundred (200) Days to Not More  
4 Than Two Hundred Twenty (220) Class Days". It prescribes that "[t]he school  
5 year shall start on the first Monday of June but not later than the last day of  
6 August: *Provided*, that in the event of a declaration of a state of emergency or  
7 state of calamity, the President, upon the recommendation of the Secretary of  
8 Education, may set a different date for the start of the school year in the  
9 country or parts thereof";

10  
11       **WHEREAS**, Section 1 of R.A. No. 11480 also provides that the deferred  
12 school opening shall apply to all basic education schools, including foreign or  
13 international schools. The Secretary of the Department of Education (DepEd)  
14 shall determine the end of the regular school year, taking into consideration  
15 the Christmas and summer vacations, and the peculiar circumstances of each

1 region. Lastly, the DepEd Secretary may authorize the holding of Saturday  
2 classes for elementary and secondary levels for public and private schools;

3  
4 **WHEREAS**, Section 1 of R.A. No. 7797 lengthened the school calendar  
5 beginning school year 1995-1996 from two hundred (200) days to not more  
6 than two hundred twenty (220) class days;

7  
8 **WHEREAS**, basic education classes in the Philippines have been held  
9 during the months of June to March;

10  
11 **WHEREAS**, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the DepEd issued DepEd  
12 Order (DO) No. 007, s. 2020 dated May 11, 2020, setting the opening of  
13 classes for School Year (SY) 2020-2021 of public schools<sup>1</sup> on August 24, 2020  
14 until April 30, 2021. The DO stated that “[t]he push back in the formal  
15 school opening by nearly three months from the traditional opening on  
16 the first Monday of June, is intended to afford DepEd enough time to  
17 undertake the necessary preparations in what will be an extraordinarily  
18 challenging school year.” Also, this school year conducted alternative modes  
19 of delivery other than face-to-face learning;

20  
21 **WHEREAS**, SY 2021-2022 under DO No. 029, s. 2021 dated August 5,  
22 2021, further pushed the start of the school year to September 13, 2021 until  
23 June 24, 2022. Face-to-face classes were then still prohibited unless  
24 permitted by the Office of the President;

25  
26 **WHEREAS**, SY 2023-2024 opened on August 22, 2022 and ended on  
27 July 7, 2023, as provided under DO No. 034, s. 2022 dated July 11, 2022.  
28 The guidelines were issued in accordance with DepEd’s commitment to the  
29 resumption of 5 days in-person classes despite the health crisis brought on  
30 by the COVID-19 pandemic;

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<sup>1</sup> Private schools and state and local universities and colleges (SUCs and LUCs) offering basic education were allowed to open classes within the period authorized by R.A. No. 7797, which is on the first Monday of June but not later than the last day of August, subject to certain conditions set in the DO.

1           **WHEREAS**, with the reopening of classes from a two-year school  
2 closure, SY 2022-2023 was the first instance for public schools to hold full  
3 face-to-face classes during the summer months of March to May. Meanwhile,  
4 the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services  
5 Administration (PAGASA) weather bureau announced the start of the dry  
6 season on March 21, 2023<sup>2</sup>;

7  
8           **WHEREAS**, the beginning of the dry season brought about an  
9 unfortunate incident on March 23, 2023, when it was reported that over 100  
10 students were sent to the hospital after participating in a fire drill conducted  
11 in Gulod National High School Mamatid Extension, a public school in  
12 Cabuyao City, Laguna. The drill, involving 3,000 students, started at around  
13 12 noon and lasted for over 3 hours, with a temperature at the time reportedly  
14 ranging from 36 to 43 degrees Celsius. The students were sent to an open  
15 field, where they stayed for 30 minutes under the heat, which resulted in  
16 fainting, dizziness, and seizures<sup>3</sup>;

17  
18           **WHEREAS**, on May 13, 2023, PAGASA reported the highest heat index  
19 recorded so far in the country this year to be at 50°C in Legazpi City in Albay,  
20 Bicol. Temperatures from 42°C to 51°C fall in the “danger” level which may  
21 cause heat cramps and heat exhaustion in some people, and heat stroke if  
22 heat exposure continues;<sup>4</sup>

23  
24           **WHEREAS**, the DepEd reminded school authorities that they could call  
25 off in-person classes to safeguard the health of their learners and personnel  
26 as they have the “authority and responsibility to suspend in-person classes  
27 and switch to alternative delivery modes (ADMs) if it is really hot and already  
28 affecting [their] health xxx”<sup>5</sup>;

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<sup>2</sup> [PAGASA logs highest heat index yet since start of summer \(cnnphilippines.com\)](#), April 10, 2023

<sup>3</sup> [Over 100 students sent to hospital after fire drill participation | ABS-CBN News](#), March 24, 2023

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.cnnphilippines.com/news/2023/5/13/legazpi-50-degrees-celsius-heat-index.html>, May 13, 2023

<sup>5</sup> [Schools can call off classes due to heat – DepEd | Inquirer News](#), April 23, 2023

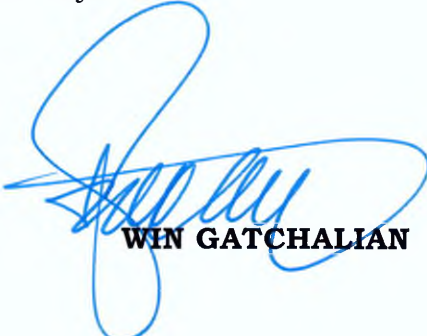
1           **WHEREAS**, DO No. 034, s. 2022 also pre-determined the school period  
2 for the next two (2) years which is from August 28, 2023 to June 28, 2024 for  
3 SY 2023-2024, and from August 26, 2024 up to June 27, 2025 for SY 2024-  
4 2025. A separate DO shall still be issued for these school calendars;

5  
6           **WHEREAS**, there have been several calls to revert to the original school  
7 calendar.<sup>6</sup> However, pre-pandemic data showed numerous suspensions in the  
8 original school calendar. For SY 2017-2018, there were forty (40) days when  
9 classes were suspended due to typhoons, transport strikes, and earthquakes.  
10 For SY 2018-2019, there were forty-five (45) days when classes were  
11 suspended mostly due to weather disturbances;

12  
13           **WHEREAS**, there is a need to re-evaluate whether the school year  
14 should continue to be conducted during the summer when continuous heat  
15 exposure may be dangerous to one's health, or to revert to the original school  
16 calendar where classes were suspended largely due to floods because of  
17 typhoons;

18  
19           **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE**  
20 **PHILIPPINES**, to direct the Senate Committee on Basic Education to conduct  
21 an inquiry, in aid of legislation, for a re-evaluation of the critical factors to  
22 determine the school opening, for the purpose of recommending policy  
23 interventions for the effective implementation of Republic Act No. 11480 or  
24 "An Act Amending Section 3 of Republic Act No. 7797, otherwise known as  
25 'An Act To Lengthen The School Calendar from Two Hundred (200) Days to  
26 Not More Than Two Hundred Twenty (220) Class Days' ”.

*Adopted,*



**WIN GATCHALIAN**

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<sup>6</sup> <https://mb.com.ph/2023/3/29/amid-the-harsh-heat-dep-ed-urged-to-revert-school-calendar-to-pre-pandemic-schedule>, March 29, 2023;  
<https://www.manilatimes.net/2023/04/25/news/national/govt-weighs-return-to-march-school-break/1888583>, April 25, 2023