

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

SENATE
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

10 AUG -2 P1:38

SENATE
S. No. 2221

RECEIVED BY: 

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Good nutrition and a balanced diet are important to help children grow up healthy. Nutrition plays a major role in children's health and also affects their performance in school. Children's peak performance at school can be attributed much to good nutrition and eating habits. Eating a nutritious meal has an effect *on* cognition, strength, attitudes and endurance at school. Hungry, weak children are not alert and are less active in class.

It is important to improve the standard of health of children through proper nutrition education and good health practices, particularly a good diet. This Act aims to provide supplementary food to public elementary school students to improve their general health and help them reach better scholastic achievements.¹


MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

¹ This bill was originally filed in the Thirteenth Congress, Third Regular Session.

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1 AN ACT
2 PROVIDING FOR FREE MEALS FOR STUDENTS OF PUBLIC ELEMENTARY
3 SCHOOLS

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

4 SECTION 1. *Short title.* - This Act shall be known as the "Healthy Students Act."

5 SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - It is hereby declared the policy of the State to
6 promote good health among the youth. The State shall promote programs that will improve the
7 nutrition value of meals given to children by providing free meals for students of public
8 elementary schools.

9 SECTION 3. *Definition of Terms.* -

10 1. School meal program - shall refer to the free meal (breakfast or lunch) to be served by
11 the public elementary schools to their students at least once every school day;

12 2. Commission - commission to be constituted by the DepEd for the implementation of
13 the provisions of this Act.

14 3. Public elementary schools - shall refer to all public elementary schools accredited with
15 the DepEd.

16 SECTION 4. *School meals program.* - Every public elementary school throughout the
17 country shall be entitled to apply for funds to be used for school meals program as provided for
18 under this Act.

19 SECTION 5. *Guidelines.* -

20 A. Commission

1 1. In General - The Department of Education (DepEd) shall constitute a
2 “Commission to Formulate and Improve School Meals for Students of Public Elementary
3 Schools”, hereinafter referred to as the “Commission”;

4 2. Membership - The DepEd shall appoint members of the Commission from
5 among individuals who are nutritionists, pediatricians, or experts in nutrition and
6 children’s health.

7 3. Duties - The Commission shall--

8 a. review available dietary guidelines that are relevant for children;

9 b. evaluate the nutritional and dietary needs of school-age children and
10 recommend nutritional standards for establishing a healthy school nutrition
11 program;

12 c. new nutritional standards for the school meal programs under this Act;

13 d. evaluate compliance with and enforcement of the minimum nutritional
14 requirements established under subparagraph (c);

15 e. not later than 90 days after nutritional standards are developed under
16 subparagraph (c), the Commission shall promulgate and implement rules, based
17 on the standards, that establish minimum nutritional requirements for food served
18 under the meals programs for students of public elementary schools as provided
19 for under this Act not later than 90 days after the date of enactment this Act,
20 develop

21 B. School Nutrition Programs

22 1, In General - The Commission shall carry out a program under which the
23 Commission shall provide funds to public elementary schools for school meal programs
24 under this Act ;

25 2. Uses - Funds provided under this subsection may be used

26 a. to provide an healthy foods in the meals served under programs;

27 b. to promote healthy food education in the school curriculum;

28 c. to carry out garden to kitchen or seed to table programs; or
29

1 d. to provide professional development for teachers to carry out programs that
2 promote healthy alternatives for students.

3 C. Study Report

4 1. Study - During the first year of the implementation of this Act, in which funds
5 are used by schools, the Commission shall conduct a study of the results of the school
6 meals program;

7 2. Report - Not later than 90 days after the date on which the study is completed
8 under subparagraph (1) above, the Commission shall submit to the DepEd a report that
9 describes the results of the study.

10 SECTION 6. *Eligibility of Schools.* - Only public elementary schools shall be entitled to
11 the school meals program as provided for under this Act.

12 SECTION 7. *Application-* An eligible school desiring the grant of funds for the
13 implementation of the school meals program under this Act shall submit the application for the
14 same at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Commission may
15 require.

16 SECTION 8. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision or part hereof, is held invalid or
17 unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall
18 remain valid and subsisting.

19 SECTION 9. *Repealing Clause.* - Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive
20 order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to or is inconsistent
21 with the provision of this Act is hereby repealed, modified, or amended accordingly.

22 SECTION 10. *Effectivity Clause.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
23 publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,