Part of an effective and meaningful transfer of learning is a healthy body and mind. Students learn best when a physiological needs like hunger is satisfied or fulfilled. According to Abraham Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, the lower level of needs must be satisfied before individuals can attend to needs higher up. In the base of the hierarchy is the physiological needs which include the need for food and water. He also asserted that the deprivation of such needs may lead to what he referred “deficiency needs or D-Needs”. Deficiency needs arise when a specific need is being deprived or not given and are said to motivate people more when unmet.

How is it related to students or in classrooms? When students are hungry they cannot focus on the teaching-learning process or their engagement towards classroom activities tend to be lower because their attention is being diverted to their need for food/hunger. This is the main reason why the Department of Education (DepEd) initiated the so-called School-Based Feeding Program.

The legal provision of the SBFP is enlisted in the DepEd Order No.39 s.2017 also known as “Operational Guidelines on the Implementation of School-Based Feeding Program for School Years 2017-2020”. The main target of this program is to address the undernutrition among learners and provide solution to the degrading health of Filipino children. The priority target beneficiaries of the SBFP shall be all severely wasted and wasted Kinder to Grade 6 students based on the baseline nutritional assessment for the current school year. The implementation of the SBFP shall commence every June/July and will last after the targeted 120 days of actual feeding.
Aside from providing meals to students, SBFP also focuses on some aims such as the improvement of classroom attendance of target beneficiaries to more than 85%, improve the nutritional status of the severely wasted and wasted learners, ensure 100% deworming of target beneficiaries prior to the feeding activity and conduct group daily handwashing and tooth brushing as stipulated in DO 10 s. 2016. As for the intended budget allocated for feeding, it is Php 16.00 per beneficiary multiplied by total number of feeding days and Php 2.00 for operational expenses multiplied by the total number of feeding days.

The SBFP can be conducted thru some suggested procurement/food preparation modalities including: 1.) School-led (a. Regular SBFP scheme, b. Food preparation done by hired labor, c. Central kitchen model through clustering of schools, d. Catering services/contracting), 2.) SDO-led procurement, and 3.) LGU-led procurement.

Through the SBFP, children are given equal opportunities to learn with the right nutrition they receive. Indeed, a healthy mind dwells in a healthy body.

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