

ASSEMBLY, No. 2903

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 20, 2020

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman PARKER SPACE

District 24 (Morris, Sussex and Warren)

Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblymen Wirths and Dancer

SYNOPSIS

“The Smarter Lunchroom Act;” promotes healthy food choices in school cafeterias.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 10/19/2020)

1 **AN ACT** concerning healthy food choices in school cafeterias and
2 supplementing Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.

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4 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
5 *of New Jersey:*

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7 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the “The
8 Smarter Lunchroom Act.”

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10 2. The Legislature finds and declares that:

11 a. The overall health of children depends, in part, upon a
12 balanced diet that provides sufficient energy and nutrients to
13 support optimal growth and development;

14 b. In New Jersey over 1.37 million children are enrolled in
15 public schools, and many of these children rely upon school
16 cafeterias for their breakfast and lunch meals;

17 c. Despite school, State, and federal efforts to provide healthy
18 and nutritious food options, nearly 24.7 percent of New Jersey
19 children aged 10 through 17 are classified overweight or obese;

20 d. Researchers at the Cornell Center for Behavioral Economics
21 in Child Nutrition Programs founded The Smarter Lunchroom
22 Movement to combat the challenges that schools face in regard to
23 student health and diet by designing simple, low to no-cost
24 evidence-based tools that improve child eating behaviors in school
25 cafeterias; and

26 e. Implementing the strategies of The Smarter Lunchroom
27 Movement in New Jersey schools can have a positive and lasting
28 impact on the overall health of students in the State.

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30 3. The Commissioner of Education shall make every effort to
31 assist, guide, and support school districts and nonpublic schools in
32 planning, establishing, and implementing the strategies of The
33 Smarter Lunchroom Movement. These strategies include but are not
34 limited to:

35 a. Highlighting fruit and other nutritional foods by placing
36 them near the cash register;

37 b. Identifying vegetables and other nutritional foods with
38 creative names on labels and menu boards;

39 c. Arranging white milk in the front of the drink cooler; and

40 d. Placing the most nutrient-filled entre first in the serving line
41 and first on the menu board.

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43 4. Information on The Smarter Lunchroom Movement shall be
44 provided in a “user-friendly” format using plain language on the
45 Department of Education’s Internet site in an easily accessible
46 location. At a minimum, the provided information shall:

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20 The bill requires the Commissioner of Education to make every
21 effort to assist, guide, and support school districts, public schools,
22 and nonpublic schools in planning, establishing, and implementing
23 the strategies of The Smarter Lunchroom Movement. Strategies
24 include highlighting fruit and other nutritional foods by placing
25 them near the cash register and placing the most nutrient-filled entre
26 first in the serving line and first on the menu board. The bill also
27 requires that information on The Smarter Lunchroom Movement be
28 available for public inspection on the Department of Education's
29 Internet site in a user-friendly, plain language format.

In New Jersey, nearly 24.7 percent of children aged 10 through 17 are classified overweight or obese. Because many of the over 1.37 million children enrolled in New Jersey public schools rely upon school cafeterias for their breakfast and lunch meals, schools are in an influential position to combat this growing trend. By implementing the strategies of The Smarter Lunchroom Movement, schools can have a positive and lasting impact on the overall health of students in the State.