

Compulsory Education Act (CHAPTER 51)

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COMPULSORY EDUCATION ACT

(CHAPTER 51)

(Original Enactment: Act 27 of 2000)

REVISED EDITION 2001

(31st December 2001)

An Act to provide for compulsory primary education in Singapore and for matters connected therewith.

[1st January 2003]

Short title and commencement

1. This Act may be cited as the Compulsory Education Act and shall come into operation on such date as the Minister may, by notification in the *Gazette*, appoint* .

* This Act came into operation on 1st January 2003 (S 329/2002).

Interpretation

2. In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires —

“Board” means the Compulsory Education Board established under section 5;

“child of compulsory school age” means a child above the age of 6 years who has not yet attained the age of 15 years and who satisfies such conditions for receiving primary education as the Director-General may determine;

“Director-General” means the Director-General of Education, and includes such officers of the Ministry of Education as may from time to time be authorised to exercise the functions of the Director-General of Education under section 5 of the Education Act (Cap. 87);

“national primary school” means any institution for the provision of full-time primary education, being —

- (a) a school organised and conducted directly by the Government;
- (b) a school in receipt of grant-in-aid under the Education Act;
- (c) a school specified in any order made under section 3(1) of the School Boards (Incorporation) Act (Cap. 284A); or

(d) such other school as may be prescribed;

“parent”, in relation to a child to whom section 3(1) applies, includes a guardian and any person having the actual custody of the child;

“primary education” means a 6-year course of education normally commencing when a child has attained the age of 6 years.

Compulsory primary education

3.—(1) A child of compulsory school age who is —

- (a) born after 1st January 1996;
- (b) a citizen of Singapore; and
- (c) residing in Singapore,

shall attend regularly as a pupil at a national primary school.

(2) Where a child of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly as a pupil at a national primary school as required under subsection (1), each parent of the child shall be guilty of an offence.

(3) This section shall not apply —

- (a) to a child of compulsory school age for whom a parent presents within a reasonable time a prescribed reason to the satisfaction of the Director-General for the absence of the child at a national primary school; or
- (b) to a child of compulsory school age who is exempted under section 4.

Exemption

4.—(1) The Minister may, by order published in the *Gazette* and subject to such terms or conditions as he may impose, exempt any child of compulsory school age or class of children of compulsory school age from section 3.

(2) An exemption granted under this section may be revoked at any time.

Establishment and constitution of Compulsory Education Board

5.—(1) There shall be established a body to be known as the Compulsory Education Board.

(2) The Board shall consist of such number of members as the Minister may, in his discretion, appoint.

(3) The Minister shall appoint one of the members of the Board as chairman.

(4) Subject to subsections (5) and (6), a member of the Board shall hold and vacate his office in accordance with the terms of his appointment and shall, on ceasing to be a member, be eligible for reappointment.

(5) A member of the Board may resign his office at any time by giving notice in writing to the Minister.

(6) If the Minister is satisfied that a member of the Board —

- (a) is guilty of neglect of duty or misconduct;
- (b) has become a bankrupt or made an arrangement with his creditors;
- (c) is incapacitated by physical or mental illness; or
- (d) is otherwise unable or unfit to discharge the functions of a member,

the Minister may remove him from such office.

(7) The validity of any proceedings of the Board shall not be affected by any vacancy among its members or by any defect in the appointment of any member.

(8) At any meeting of the Board, one-half of the number of members shall constitute a quorum.

(9) The chairman shall preside at all meetings of the Board at which he is present and, in his absence, the members present shall elect one of their number to act as chairman of that meeting.

(10) The Board may delegate to any person all or any of its duties or powers under this Act.

(11) All questions arising at any meeting of the Board shall be decided by a majority of votes of the members present and, in the case of an equality of votes, the chairman or, in his absence, the member presiding shall have a casting vote.

(12) Subject to the provisions of this Act, the Board may regulate its own procedure in such manner as it thinks fit.

Duties and powers of Board

6.—(1) The duties of the Board shall be —

- (a) to investigate whether the provisions of this Act have been or are being contravened;
- (b) to make recommendations to the Director-General on the enforcement of the provisions of this Act; and

(c) generally to do all such acts and things as are necessary to be carried out under the provisions of this Act.

(2) For the purpose of performing its duties under this Act, the Board may —

- (a) hear and examine witnesses on oath;
- (b) summon any person to attend any hearing of the Board to give evidence or produce any document or other article in his possession;
- (c) generally require any person to furnish any information or produce any document or other article in his possession;
- (d) require any person to attend any counselling or mediation session as the Board may specify; and
- (e) do anything incidental to any of its powers.

(3) The Minister may give such directions, not inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, as to the performance of the duties and the exercise of the powers of the Board and the Board shall give effect to any such directions.

Penalties

7.—(1) Any person who is guilty of an offence under section 3(2) shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$5,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 12 months or to both.

(2) Any person who —

- (a) refuses to attend any hearing of the Board;
- (b) refuses to furnish any information or produce any document to the Board;
- (c) furnishes any information or produces any document which is false in a material particular and which he knows to be false or does not believe to be true; or
- (d) obstructs or impedes the Director-General, the Board or any person acting under the direction of the Board,

shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$5,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 12 months or to both.

No person to be charged for offence except on complaint of Director-General

8. No person shall be charged with any offence under this Act except on the complaint of the Director-General.

Composition of offences

9. The Director-General may, in his discretion, compound any offence under this Act which is prescribed as a compoundable offence by collecting from a person reasonably suspected of having committed the offence a sum of money not exceeding \$2,000.

Protection from personal liability

10. No suit or other legal proceedings shall lie personally against —

- (a) any member of the Board; or
- (b) any other person acting under the direction of the Board,

for anything which is in good faith done or intended to be done in the execution or purported execution of this Act.

Operation of this Act not to affect Education Act

11. Except as otherwise expressly provided in this Act, nothing in this Act shall affect the operation of the Education Act (Cap. 87).

Regulations

12. The Minister may make such regulations as are necessary or expedient for the purpose of carrying out any of the provisions of this Act.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

COMPULSORY EDUCATION ACT (CHAPTER 51)

This Legislative History is provided for the convenience of users of the Compulsory Education Act. It is not part of the Act.

1. Act 27 of 2000—Compulsory Education Act 2000

Date of First Reading	:	25 August 2000 (Bill No. 23/2000 published on 26 August 2000)
Date of Second and Third Readings	:	9 October 2000
Date of commencement	:	25 October 2000 (Publication date of Act Supplement)

2. 2001 Revised Edition—Compulsory Education Act

Date of operation : 31 December 2001

3. Act 27 of 2000—Compulsory Education Act

Date of First Reading : 25 August 2000
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26 August 2000)

Date of Second and Third Readings : 9 October 2000

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