

Opinion

Feeding our school-going children is not negotiable – Muyingo

When I was growing up, I used to see our parents packing food for us as we set off to school. We would take lunch at school, something which is unheard of in some schools nowadays. This is a trend which must quickly be overturned. Children must have school lunch provided by parents.

I can confidently tell you that some of us managed to make it in life, partly because our parents paid enough attention to our education. This is what I expect from all parents in this country.

Our senior education minister and First Lady Janet Kataaha Museveni has been traversing the country, explaining to parents the value of feeding their children during lunch at school. I do hope that this message has been taken seriously.

All headteachers, Parents and Teachers Associations (PTA) and school management committees of all primary schools in the country should take this call seriously. It is wrong for any headteacher to be kept in his position, superintending over a school where children do not eat lunch.

Always remember that the headteacher is the first inspector of any school in this country. So, what are you doing in such an office, if you are failing on your basic responsibilities? All primary school headteachers, must impress it upon their parents that packing school lunch for their children is not negotiable.

Depending on where the school is located, you can determine the available food options to give your children; considering what is stipulated in the school feeding policy guidelines.



Dr. John C Muyingo

As a parent, you should know that getting involved with activities at your child's school, or paying attention to how the school is run is beneficial to your child's learning.

PTA meetings are held regularly for parents to voice their concerns with issues.

This would be a good venue for bringing up the subject of healthier school lunches.

More than likely, you are not the only one who would want to see good food served to your children in that school.

Parents ought to know that nutrition is one of the single most important factors to a child's development.

If you want your child to be bright and grow well, you must remember that proper nutrition is essential.

By feeding your children a proper diet, you are helping them to be able to function properly in school in addition to fostering their growing mind and bodies.

Studies show that this lunch at school, several hours after the morning breakfast, re-energises your child's body and can raise blood sugar levels when focus and concentration is very important in the afternoon.

It does not have to be so much food. A cup of porridge or any small amount of food, can renew your child's energy and help him or her feel ready to concentrate during the afternoon lessons

It is not easy for most people to concentrate during the afternoon, including adults. This is more reason you should help your child remain focused during the afternoon, if you so much care about his or her education.

It does not have to be so much food. A cup of porridge or any small amount of food, can renew your child's energy and help him or her feel ready to take on the afternoon lessons.

Children need lots of minerals and vitamins in order to develop the tools necessary to facilitate healthy growth in both body and mind.

The other important thing is that as a parent, packing lunch for your children is a great way to monitor what they eat while at school.

As Government, we have constructed a number of schools around the country, renovated several others and are now also furnishing them with desks.

We have also bought a number of scholastic materials like textbooks for various schools, on top of providing teachers.

A launch of the new classrooms blocks

constructed in 54 schools around the country with the support of the Global Partnership for Education has been ongoing this month in various regions of the country.

We expect that more 84 schools will receive new classrooms and furniture in the next few months.

But all this work may go to waste if parents, local leaders and headteachers do not play their role in ensuring that children are learning.

All we are asking from you parents, is to support the country's education system with a simple school meal for your children.

This, on top of quality teaching, is one sure way of improving the country's quality of education.

What your child will turn into several years from now, will directly have an effect on you as a parent and the community.

What you have to do is to ensure that you make the best out of those children. That journey starts today.

The writer is the Member of Parliament for Bamunanika County and State Minister for Higher Education