

# Special Education



## Laws and Regulations

Properly administering to the needs of special education is an important part of promoting equal educational opportunities. As early as 1984, to advance the progress of special education in Taiwan, local government passed legislation on the Special Education Act, pledging to provide suitable education for both the disabled and the gifted.

The act, which marked a milestone in the history of special education in Taiwan, contained regulations defining the goals and purposes of special education and suggested materials and methods for instruction. It was later revised in 2009 to provide more comprehensive support to needy students at all levels.

To ensure better enforcement of the act, the Ministry of Education set up the Special Education Task Force to coordinate the various efforts of those engaged in providing special education.

Since the promulgation of this law, special education has made substantial progress in Taiwan. In 1950, only two schools had been established specifically for the education of blind and deaf children, with a total of 384 students.

By the year 2009, the number of schools for special education had increased to 24.

## Education for Students with Disabilities

Currently, placement of special education students encompasses special education schools, special education classes at regular schools, resource classes, regular classes and circuit guidance, as well as assistance, home education and bedside education.

Placement of these physically- or mentally-challenged students aims at satisfying their learning needs with minimum environmental constraints.

These special education schools include: comprehensive schools for the disabled; schools for the hearing impaired; schools for the vision impaired, schools for the mentally challenged; and experimental schools.

Today, a total of 24 schools nationwide offer special education, with a total of 7,145 students.

## Education for Gifted Students and Those with Special Talents

The Special Education Act allows gifted students to enter school before the required age, to skip grades or subjects, to be accelerated by a whole year, or to take courses beyond their year level. All schools are required to evaluate whether certain students could be accelerated in terms of year level or subject. Before receiving their diplomas, the teachers of the students who have been accelerated should confirm that they have reached the standards of the graduating class.

Students with outstanding talent in sports, the arts, sciences or other academic areas can also be recommended for admission to schools at advanced levels if they have claimed prizes during the school term in an international contest, if they have produced an outstanding performance at a science event organised by academic research institutions, or if they have undertaken independent research, published outstanding articles or research, or displayed great talent in leadership and been recommended by related academic institutions.