

preface

One of the significant indicators to evaluate the modernity of a country lies in the popularization and development of education. Therefore, educational authorities of all the governments shall adopt measures contributive to educational popularization and development as their focuses of administration. In conformity with that principle, the ROC government is devoted itself to the educational missions as follows: (1) to offer equal opportunity of education for all citizens; (2) to implement diversified educational programs and curriculum to create the most desirable environment for learning; (3) to search for excellence in the overall academic development to enhance our nation's competitiveness; (4) to enhance educational functions of the family to build a society engaged in lifelong learning; (5) to provide resources and assistance necessary for underprivileged students.

In response to the dramatic changes occurring both domestically and internationally, all the visionary countries actively initiate educational reform, and Taiwan is no exception. For the past few years, the MOE has been making great efforts to promote educational reform and has already obtained visible achievements. Looking into the future, efforts made for educational reforms are sure to continue in quest for a better perspective of our nation's education.

Considering that the 21st century is an era in which knowledge-based economy prevails, the future of a nation chiefly depends on whether there will be sufficient human resource of high quality. Since one of the main purposes of higher education is to build up the pool of talents for the nation, to improve the quality as well as to expand the capacity of higher education shall be the task of top priority. The net enrollment rates at the higher education level of some developed countries have reached the level between 60% and 70% while that of Taiwan is 45.7%. Although there are different national conditions, such figures indicate that it is reasonable to expand the capacity of higher education in Taiwan.

Furthermore, due to the capacity expansion, more and more university or college students choose to attend domestic graduate institutes instead of going abroad for their postgraduate studies, while the number of students studying abroad gradually decreases in recent years. Such trend may curtail the introduction and exchange of advanced technology and knowledge from abroad.

In view of this, we shall seek for ways to promote the quality along with expanding the capacity of higher education. Therefore, the MOE adopts the applicable methods including (1) increasing the investment in higher education continuously and utilizing such resources in a rational and efficient way, and (2) establishing the supervision mechanism for higher education by means of implementing accountability assessments to colleges and universities and making the information concerning the academic affairs of all schools accessible for the public.

As far as secondary education is concerned, we had adopted the policies to encourage the establishment of new senior high schools and the transformation of senior



vocational schools to comprehensive senior high schools. For the past decade the ratio of students of them has changed from 32:68 to 53:47. However, senior vocational schools are responsible for training technical human resources, which always plays a fundamental role as facilitator for the economic development. Students in this system have done excellently and won great recognition in many international contests of skills and techniques.

In terms of senior high schools, there have been many prestigious schools at this level and many elite students from senior high schools have won awards in international Olympiad in math, physics, chemistry, etc.. However, we can not be complacent with the accomplishments; instead, we shall do some thorough thinking of the resolutions to bridge the divide between the urban and rural areas and formulate the most applicable measures to construct a prevalently excellent senior high school system.

In terms of the nine-year compulsory education, which is fundamental to the formation of one's personality, intellectual and physical capacities, character, etc. The enrollment rate at this level in Taiwan has come very close to 100%. Such facts symbolize the popularity of national education in Taiwan. In recent years, the MOE has been promoting measures for the purpose of relieving the load of study, by such as reducing the size of schools and classes, lowering the ratio of students to teachers, and implementing curriculum reform, which have obtain excellent performance.

Now the administration focus of the MOE is to implement Grade 1-9 curriculum integration consisting of seven learning areas as well as to foster the teaching innovation. Both of which aim to realize the ideal of offering diversified education which can satisfy the needs of various students and can



develop the capabilities applied to every aspect of their daily life.

In response to the demands of globalization, liberalization, and modernization of education, the MOE will attentively take advices and opinions from the public of all sectors as the guidelines of the administration. In conformity with such principle, the MOE convened the National Conference on Educational Development in September 2003, and the agreements reached in this conference will be taken as the major principles in formulating the Second Action Plan for Initiation of Educational Innovation. We are going to seek for efficient ways to put these principles into practice in hopes of creating the most desirable environment of education.

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