

# Educational Reform

## Innovation in Education for a Vibrant Taiwan



Taiwan's educational system has grown and expanded; now steps need to be taken to upgrade the quality of education and to meet the demands arising in times of globalisation. The Ministry of Education has developed a four-year, school year (SY) 2009 - 2012 road map, aimed at strengthening the quality of education, creating a pleasant learning atmosphere and cultivating high-quality professionals with a global outlook.

The blueprint comprises hundreds of plans and projects aimed at achieving high-quality learning, personalised education, equal opportunity, global vision and sustainable development.

The following fifteen administrative and governing directions were decided in 2008.

**1. Preschool Education:** Create a high-quality and happy learning environment that brings out the potential of preschool children. Free tuition for five-year-olds would start as early as 2010 as part of a two-stage project.

**2. Education for the Citizenry:** Strengthen the quality of education by downsizing the number of

students in each class. The Ministry provides equal education opportunities for all students, particularly those from disadvantaged families. Courses taught at elementary and junior high schools should not only enable students to view Taiwan from an in-depth perspective, but should also help to build their characters and allow their aesthetic sensitivities to grow.

**3. Compulsory Education:** Taiwan now offers compulsory education for nine years, from primary school to junior high school. The Ministry aims to extend compulsory education to cover both senior secondary school and early childhood schooling to create a more complete educational structure.

**4. Senior Secondary Education:** Bridge the learning gap between rural and urban high schools. The current system of entrance examinations will undergo a major revision in a bid to make current school admissions fairer and more flexible. The measure aims to help outstanding students from remote areas to be admitted into their university of choice and junior high school students to gain admission into senior high and vocational schools close to home, as well as helping all students to find the most suitable higher education institution.

**5. Higher Education:** Improve the international competitiveness of colleges and universities; continue to push for collaboration among academic circles and different teaching fields; bring higher education and economic development together to upgrade national competitiveness; and cultivate professionals who are willing to make a contribution to society.

**6. Social Education:** Promote lifelong learning; bolster the functions of public social education systems; promote cultural activities; provide adult education classes for female immigrants, including those from China, and the Taiwan Character Project to promote character-building, arts, lifelong reading



and environmental sustainability education.

**7. Teacher Training:** Encourage teachers to polish their teaching techniques by subsidising plans that enhance professional teaching capabilities, while establishing a mechanism for comprehensive curriculum development in order to create appropriate, diverse and innovative educational activities.

**8. Arts Education:** the public sector should work with civil organisations and private firms to push for artistic educational activities at schools or museums that increase the capacity of citizens to appreciate the arts. The Ministry also offers grants for colleges or universities, educational institutes and performing groups who are engaged in arts education and cultural activities. National-level competitions for music, dance, fine arts, puppet shows and folk songs are to be increased.

**9. Physical Education and Health Education:** Foster physical education classes in schools; hold sports competitions; and strengthen the health plan. The MOE has also put tremendous effort into providing school students with an on-campus lunch service, food and drinking water, in addition to improving oral hygiene and gender education.

**10. International Cultural Education:** Increase international academic and cultural exchanges with initiatives such as a nationwide training and certification project for host families of international

students in Taiwan; publicise overseas study programmes and counselling; encourage overseas study trips for students in senior high schools or vocational schools.

**11. Training and Counselling:** Promote human rights on campus; offer counselling for school drop-outs; ensure gender equality in education; organise college/university volunteer teams; hold fairs for senior secondary school organisations.

**12. Internet and High Technology Education:** Improve digital auxiliary education; encourage working for digital education certificates; establish community education networks.

**13. Multi-Culture Education:** Ensure and increase indigenous groups' rights and access to better education; cultivate diverse talents among indigenous and minority groups; promote indigenous people's cultural assets.

**14. Special Education:** Formalise accreditations for physically- and mentally-challenged students; subsidise special education in 25 counties and cities.

**15. Environmental Protection Education:** Promote nationwide safety and hygiene training; safeguard school safety initiatives; establish sustainable campuses.

