

Section 4: Professional Development

Target

Frontline education workers are the key players in implementing the education reform. To support the reform, the Government is putting in lots of efforts to enhance the quality and professionalism of the teaching force, through providing training and support as well as formulating appropriate professional standards for teachers. In realizing the vision of the reform, school principals play a very vital role. The Government places much emphasis on promoting the continuing professional development among school principals, and assisting them in enhancing their professional leadership so that they can lead teachers and students in facing the changes and challenges of the new millennium. We would also encourage sharing among school principals.

(1) The Professional Development of Teachers

Last Year's Progress

Kindergarten Teachers

- (i) To meet the target that all new kindergarten teachers should obtain the qualified kindergarten teacher qualifications by the 2003/04 school year, the Education Department has commissioned a number of one-year full-time pre-service early childhood education courses to provide 200 and 440 training places in the 2000/01 and 2001/02 school years respectively. The ED is reviewing the supply and demand of teachers in order to decide on the number of training places to be provided in the 2002/03 school year.
- (ii) To enable qualified kindergarten teachers to further their studies, different early childhood teacher education providers are now providing Certificate in Education (Kindergarten) training places. As at the end of 2001, some 600 serving kindergarten teachers had completed the Certificate in Education (Kindergarten) training. A number of post-secondary institutions have also started to provide Certificate in Education (Kindergarten) training or Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood Education) programmes. It is estimated that around 330 teachers will complete the two types of courses described above in 2002.

School Teachers

- (i) The Education Department has provided a subsidy to the District Teacher Network scheme for supporting 20 projects a year to disseminate good teaching practices.
- (ii) To support the curriculum reform, a series of professional development programmes and activities were organized to help teachers enhance their knowledge and skills in curriculum development, teaching and learning, assessment and school-based curriculum development.

Tasks Ahead for the Coming Year

The Government will continue to work closely with the Advisory Committee on Teacher Education and Qualifications and teacher education providers to proceed with the following tasks:

- (i) Developing a professional development ladder for teachers.
- (ii) Enhancing support for new teachers and actively exploring the feasibility of establishing a mentorship scheme.
- (iii) Reviewing the qualification requirements for teacher registration to bring it in line with the upgrading of teachers' professional status.
- (iv) Actively considering the mechanism for giving recognition to distinguished teachers with a view to further enhancing teachers' professional status.
- (v) Strengthening the pre-service and in-service teacher education in support of the implementation of the education reform.
- (vi) Improving the Education Department's Training Calendar System and setting up a teacher databank to facilitate teachers, schools, the Education Department and education providers in planning for the provision of training and teachers' professional development.

(2) The Professional Development of Principals

Last Year's Progress

Early Childhood Education

- (i) Starting from the 2001/02 school year, serving kindergarten principals and child care centre supervisors will be provided with 150 additional Certificate in Education (Kindergarten) training places every year. The target is to enable all serving

principals and supervisors to receive the training before the end of the 2005/06 school year.

- (ii) Starting from the 2001/02 school year, a principalship training course specifically designed for kindergarten principals and child care centre supervisors was introduced. A total of 120 places will be provided each year.
- (iii) An Expert Group on Certificate in Early Childhood Education was formed in January 2001. The Group comprises representatives from related education institutes, kindergartens, child care centres, the Education and Manpower Bureau, the Education Department and the Social Welfare Department. A course framework for the Certificate in Early Childhood Education Course has been drawn up. Those who have completed courses designed according to this framework are recognised by the Education Department and the Social Welfare Department as having fulfilled the training requirement for kindergarten principals/child care centre supervisors.

School Education

- (i) A series of specialised training programmes have been provided to new school principals, including needs assessments, induction programmes, leadership development programmes and continuing professional education programmes. A total of 173 newly appointed principals have received or will receive such training in the 2000/01 and 2001/02 school years.
- (ii) A variety of programmes covering curriculum development and leadership, as well as the continuing professional development of teachers were organized for serving principals. In addition, these principals were encouraged to establish and expand their own networks to facilitate professional sharing.
- (iii) Offshore programmes were organized to broaden the exposure of serving principals to overseas developments on the basis of which they could reflect on their current practices and try out new ideas.
- (iv) A framework has been mapped out to outline different professional development channels for potential, newly appointed and serving principals to meet their development needs and those of the schools and the community. The proposed framework was endorsed by the Board of Education in late 2001.

Tasks Ahead for the Coming Year

- (i) Providing professional development programmes to meet the needs of serving and newly appointed principals.
- (ii) Consulting the education sector on the proposed framework for the continuing professional development of principals and how it should be implemented.