Current Education

The Malaysian government reviewed the legislative provision and education policies which came into effect after our country achieved Independence. This resulted in the Education Act 1996 and the New Education Policy 1999 which is the basis of our present education system.

In a concerted effort to consolidate our education system further, the Ministry of Education has come up with the Education Development Master Plan for the period of 2006-2010.

Education Act 1996 is an extension of the Education Act 1961; and thus some of the provisions from the Education Act 1961 had been abolished or deemed not appropriate and retained and some still revolved with the Razak Report which has remained the basic national education policy ever since.

Education Act 1996

The aim of the Education Act 1996 are to further consolidate the national education system for the generation in accordance with the country’s aspiration of making Malaysia the center of excellence for education and to outline the legislation related to education.

Legislative provisions
Due to the aspiration of different ethnic groups in Malaysia and to cope with the educational challenges of the 21st century and to fulfill the goals of Vision 2020, it is pertinent that you remember that the Act has three general legislative provisions namely:

a) the National Philosophy of Education 1988
b) consolidation of the national education system to include;
   - all levels of schooling from pre-school to tertiary education
   - all categories of school example government, government-aided and private schools
c) the National Language as main medium of instruction and as compulsory subject in all schools and institutions

**Legislative Provisions of the Education Act 1966 According to the Levels of Schooling**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels Schooling</th>
<th>Legislatative Provisions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-school</td>
<td>- Minister of education given the power to establish and maintain pre-schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Children from poor families in urban area given opportunity to received pre-schooling</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Compulsory use of Pre-school curriculum, guidelines produced by MOE for all types and categories of pre-schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary and Secondary</td>
<td>- compulsory for pupils from all types and categories of schools to sit for public examinations</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Islamic Education made a core subject and taught to all Muslim pupils in all primary schools</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Allocation to special education</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Continuation of status quo of national type primary schools and 60 private Chinese schools</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Continuation of the Unified Examination for national-type primary school pupils</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Continuation of the School Board of Governors and mission schools</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Teaching of indigenous languages (if appropriate and practical)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- No necessity to register religious classes e.g. Bible classes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
No necessity to register religious classes e.g. Bible classes

Technical and Vocational:
- Improvement of technical education in technical schools and polytechnics in line with the country efforts to enculturate science and technology education
- Change of status of vocational schools to technical schools
- Collaboration of polytechnics with industrial institution or organizing to conduct technical or vocational course or training programs, or exchange programs
- Twinning program in polytechnic with local or foreign institutions of higher learning at diploma or degree level

Teacher Training:
- Teacher education programs at certificate, diploma and degree level through twinning program

Tertiary Education:
- Establishment of universities and private colleges
- Corporatisation of existing public universities
- Development of private institutions of higher learning
- Teaching of subjects like National Language, Malaysian Studies and Islamic or Moral Education in private institutions

Comparison between Education Act 1996 and the Education Act 1961

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Education Act 1996</th>
<th>Education Act 1961</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basis</td>
<td>Founded on the National Philosophy of Education and aspirations of Vision 2020</td>
<td>No clear documentation but explicit aim is unite different ethnic groups as stated in National Education Policy according to Razak Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National System of Education</td>
<td>Include all levels of schooling from pre-school until tertiary education and all types of schools except expatriate schools (Section 16 and 17)</td>
<td>Include all schools or government or government aided institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Medium of Instruction</td>
<td>Status of National Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The national language as main medium of instruction in all schools with exception of national type schools or others which have been given exemption (Section 17)</td>
<td>The national language as medium of instruction in national schools and national secondary schools only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese and Tamil Language</td>
<td>Can be taught in national schools and national secondary schools upon request and if more than 15 pupils</td>
<td>Can be taught on two conditions: - upon request of more than 15 parents - if deemed appropriate and practical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous language</td>
<td>Can be taught on two conditions: - upon request of more than 15 parents - if deemed appropriate and practical</td>
<td>No provision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Examination</td>
<td>Responsibilities of all schools to prepare pupils to sit for public examinations; all examining bodies to obtain permission from the Director of Examinations (Section 69)</td>
<td>No provision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Categories of schools</td>
<td>Three categories of schools: -government -government-aided -private</td>
<td>Two categories of schools: -fully-aided -private</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Provisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-school centers</td>
<td>Minister of Education given power to set-up and maintain all pre-school center</td>
<td>No provision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-school curriculum</td>
<td>Provision for pre-school curriculum guidelines to coordinate pre-school education; compulsory to be used in all pre-schools</td>
<td>No compulsory guidelines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary education</td>
<td>Duration between 5 until 7 years (Section 29) taking considerations of three groups i.e. intelligent, average and weak</td>
<td>Duration of six years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-secondary education</td>
<td>Provision for students in national secondary schools, colleges or other educational institutions; provisions for Form 6, Matriculation and so on (Section 33)</td>
<td>No clear provision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching of Islamic Education</td>
<td>Compulsory to be taught in all schools including private schools with 15 or more Muslim pupils</td>
<td>Compulsory in government and government-aided schools with 15 or more pupils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special education</td>
<td>Minister of education given power to open special education classes in special schools or in any primary or secondary schools (Section 40)</td>
<td>No clear provision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board of Governors</td>
<td>To be abolished if no longer functional except for Chinese national-type, government aided and private schools (Section 62)</td>
<td>Compulsory for all categories of school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polytechnics</td>
<td>Can collaborate with any industrial institutions, body or organizations</td>
<td>No provision</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Teacher Training | Offer degree, diploma and certificate program; collaborative twinning program especially math, science and IT | Too general provision

Twinning Programs and Linkage | Written permission sought from Minister of Education | No provision

Role of Head Registrar/Registrar | Power of/to: -investigate (Section 137) -enter without any warrant (Section 138) -initiate and conduct proceedings -compound any wrongdoing | No provision

National Education Policy

The mission of Ministry of Education is to produce world class education and ensure the development of individual potentials and to fulfill nation’s aspiration.

The goals of National Education are to produce a united Bangsa Malaysia; to produce Malaysian citizens who are knowledgeable, God-fearing, well-behaved; competent and harmonious; to provide a competent work-force to meet the needs of a growing nation and to offer equal educational opportunities for all Malaysian citizens

Policy and Implementation Strategies of National Education Policy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy</th>
<th>Implementation Strategies</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Institutionalize pre-school education based on the pre-school curriculum guidelines and reinforced through</td>
<td>Consolidate pre-school education giving due consideration to curriculum, infrastructure and teacher training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Continuous monitoring</strong></td>
<td>Initiate quality teaching and learning approaches</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ensure at least 65% involvement of children between ages of 4-6 years</td>
<td>Produce pre-school curriculum guidelines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinate various type of pre-school education; government, private and non-government bodies</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**PRIMARY EDUCATION**

Provide primary education for children aged 6 years for a duration of 6 years, can be terminated after 5 to 7 years

Introduce the national curriculum for all pupils; emphasize given to mastery of three basic skills (3R) – reading, writing and arithmetic as well as social skills

Establish a strong foundation for subjects like Mathematics, Science and English language

Improve educational facilities both quantity and quality wise; increase number of graduates and trained teachers

Introduce Vision Schools and Model Schools

Equip Resource Center with adequate books, resource materials and etc.

**SECONDARY EDUCATION**

Provide appropriate secondary education for students who have completed primary schooling

Establish an integrated curriculum with emphasis on subjects like English, Mathematics, Science and Technology, and infusion of physical, emotional, spiritual and intellectual elements

Provide post-secondary education (Form 6) and matriculation program as entry points for basic degree learning

Improve the quality of teaching and learning on subjects like English, Mathematics, Science and Technology

Establish fully-equipped computer and science laboratories

**SPECIAL EDUCATION**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provide educational opportunities to special needs children in order to realize the democratization of the education policy and to guarantee involvement in nation-building</th>
<th>Provide suitable curriculum for special education Provide special education in special schools for special need children Provide trained teachers in special education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consolidate technical and vocational education to produce students who are technically-oriented in order to meet the country’s needs for a skilled work force</td>
<td>Provide diversified technical courses tailored to the country needs Coordinate various elements e.g. curriculum, academic qualifications, infrastructure Consolidate career guidance in technical and vocational field Establish smart partnership with industries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>POLYTECHNICS</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase the number of middle level workers in the field of engineering and professional management to meet the country’s needs for a skilled work force</td>
<td>Set-up new polytechnics Increase private sector involvement Establish collaboration between local universities and polytechnics Set-up branch campuses throughout the country</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TERTIARY EDUCATION</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhance higher education opportunities for those in 19 until 24 years age group by increasing the number of public and private-institution of higher learning</td>
<td>Improve physical facilities Increase student intake in institution of higher learning Provide distance education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Make our country a center of excellence for education in this region

Provide adequate manpower for all field of studies

Establish the National Accreditation Board (know known as Malaysian Qualification Agency) to regulate quality of courses offered

Offer twinning program with other developing countries

Conduct 3 + 0 programs

Encourage foreign students to pursue further studies in this country

**Teaching of Mathematics and Science in English (EteMS)**

In the year 2002, the government announced that beginning 2003 Mathematic and Science would be taught in English, whilst the other subject still in Malay language. This is to ensure Malaysian would not be left out in the globalization era. This is due to that, the internet uses English as medium of transmission of information, if young Malaysians are not proficient in English it would be a great disadvantage to them in obtaining valuable knowledge and references on the World Wide Web.

The implications here are:

Firstly, teachers of Mathematic and Science need to master the English language both oral and written, otherwise they will need to learn or improve themselves;
Secondly, relevant authorities specifically the Ministry of Education need to ensure there is adequate supply of Mathematics and Science text books from Year 1, Form One and Lower Six.

Thirdly, it is also important that reference materials be available for both teachers and students either in the form of printed texts or computer software

Fourthly, books and reference materials of Bahasa Melayu must also be written and published by teachers

**Compulsory Education**
It is compulsory for all Malaysian citizen parents and residing in Malaysia to register their children who have reached the age of 6 years for schooling. Duration of primary schooling is six years and failure or violation to do so will cause parents RM5000 or not more than six months prison or both.

The implication for this are:

All children, irrespective race or creed have the right to an education

Children from poor family rights are uphold i.e. they cannot be forced to work to supplement their parent’s income

**Status of Chinese and Tamil Language**

Chinese and Tamil language are made elective subject in all national schools in April 2005. The rationales for this policy are because there’s an inadequate number of pupils in Government schools and the increase in the number of non-Chinese pupils in Chinese vernacular schools

The implications for this issue are:

There has to be an increase in the number of trained teachers whose option is Chinese or Tamil language, this is to ensure that there are enough option teachers to teach these two subjects and teacher training colleges have to do the needful to meet the needs of parties concerned.

**Smart Schools**

Rationale to inline with country’s aspiration to achieve Vision 2020 as well as to keep pace with rapid development in this era of science and technology and transforming the education system.

The catalyst for this transformation will be the establishment of Smart Schools which is technology-supported initiative. It also hopes to promote the development of a work force prepared to meet the challenges of the next century.
The present culture and classroom practice will have to be changed. Teachers have to move away from rote-learning and drill strategies to a form that stimulate thinking, creativity, catering for student needs, individual abilities and learning style as well as targeted towards more equitable access.

Students will have to be more concerned and take responsibility of their own learning and at the same time getting the full support and assistance of their parents and the community where they belong.

Smart school upholds the concept of change in the learning culture based on memory and examination-orientation to that of creative thinking and problem solving. Smart school also call for holistic and integrated development of individual’s potential in order to produce individuals who are physically, emotionally, spiritually and intellectually well-balanced whilst being technology savvy and globally and internationally-inclined.

Smart school aims to produce a knowledge-based work force who will navigate our country towards an information-based economy. Students of Smart schools who will be absorbed into the workforce for the Multimedia Super Corridor will assist in transformation of technology leading to a highly technology based local industry.

To implement this, Smart school has outlined to meet the needs of individual, society and stakeholders in:

Producing a computer-savvy workforce equipped with thinking skills
Democratization of education
Increment of stakeholders’ involvement
Holistic development with due consideration to individual capability
Emphasis on physical, emotional, spiritual and intellectual domain

The strategies identified for used are:

A multi-perspective curriculum which encompasses elective subjects
Vertical, horizontal and multi-disciplinary integration
Reasoning, values, creativity and language across the curriculum
Use of technology in teaching and learning
Care and concern delivery for diversity in learning abilities and styles

Operationally, the Smart schools involved 90 schools categorized into three levels;

Level A  Nine new schools equipped with modern technology
Level B+  Two Smart schools equipped with computers in 15 science laboratories, classroom and offices
Level C  79 Smart schools equipped with a laboratory and computers in the Resource Center in addition to computers for teachers

Vision Schools

Another government initiative to produce a Malaysian race (Bangsa Malaysia) built on a love for the country and for the abolition of ethnic differences amongst its citizen. Approved by the Cabinet in 1997 as a result of our leader awareness to foster racial unity early in individual life.

Consist of three schools clustered to one common area that is the National Primary school (Sekolah Kebangsaan), Chinese National-type primary school (Sekolah Rendah Jenis Kebangsaan Cina) and Tamil National-type primary school (Sekolah Rendah Jenis Kebangsaan Tamil), connected to one another by a link-way. Meaning pupils of different races and creed study together in a common area.

The cluster of this type has no effect on each school’s organizational structure, administration or allocation from the Ministry of Education. Each school head is given the autonomy to implement their respective educational program. The three schools will share common physical amenities, canteen, playing field, assembly area and corridors.
In comparison, schools set up in the past were separated from one another but currently are united under one standardized education system. Pupils from diversified races interact with one another from an early age thus ensuring our country moving towards national unity.

*Lurah Bilut Vision School* is one of the pioneer set-up. Requested by local resident comprising Malays, Chinese and Indians. Built in an open area of 10 acres with neither boundary nor fencing. Pupils from three schools have ample opportunity to interact with each other.

The core issues commonly related to the Vision Schools was to what extent the existing school system adhered to the principles of a diversified school system as listed below:

- inculcation of ethnic and cultural diversity through printed and non-printed material such as books, magazine, audio-video, internet and etc. celebration of festivals
- equality in implementation of school rules in accordance to the culture and belief of each ethnic group such as food selling
- academic and non-academic staff of all races to enhance social interaction
- fostering of positive ethnic identity awareness and the absence of superiority or inferiority complex founded on ethnicity
- open communication across ethnic groups through interaction during recess and co-curricular activities
Some classroom practices and issues need to be given consideration by authorities to ensure continuity of such system:

- inadequate practice of collaborative teaching; important that pupils exposed and comprehend different cultural and social viewpoints
- inadequate specialized training for Vision Schools teachers in areas of cross-cultural communication skills, cultural sensitivity
- balance between teachers’ and pupils’ backgrounds so as to bridge the social gap as well as enhance mutual understanding

One flop story was from Tasik Permai Vision School Complex

**Basic Reading and Writing Classroom Intervention Program (KIA2M)**

At a meeting to strengthen national schools (Sekolah Kebangsaan) held on 22 November 2005, pupils’ failure to master basic reading and writing skills was brought up. The Curriculum Development Center was given the mandate to implement KIA2M program. The special program was conducted by the Malay language teachers for a duration of three to six months.

The goal is to enable 100% Year 1 to master 2R that is basic reading and writing skills. The aims are outlined:

- to assist Year 1 pupils to master the basic 2R in Malay language
- to provide opportunity for pupils to learn according to their individual ability level
- to enhance pupil self-confidence
- to nurture an interest for learning
The target group is Year 1 pupil who need remediation fall into three groups: i) those who need remediation in class ii) those who need to be in special remedial class iii) the slow learners who have yet to master the basic reading and writing skills

The program is compulsory for Sekolah Kebangsaan only.

KIA2M teachers are from Year 1 Malay language teachers, special remedial teachers and assistant and teachers who teach Physical and Health Education, Music education and Visual Arts education

Teaching and Learning strategies consist of six steps: nomination, screening test, planning, teaching, evaluation and follow-up.

i) nominations and screening test are done together and they will be classified based on the test as follows:
-0-9 referred to medical practitioner
-10-44 undergo KIA2M program
-45-60 continue teaching and learning in normal class

ii) planning are done using the teaching module provided as guide and reference. They are given autonomy to modify the activities and exercises in the module according to the pupil ability. Some strategies suggested are teacher-centered (follow the teacher), pupil-centered and resource-centered. Some approach suggested are individual approach, group approach and class approach.

Teachers are required to and encouraged to vary their techniques which among are story telling, drills, demonstrations, songs, plays ad quizzes.

Pupils will undergo evaluation and follow-up, they are needed to pass two tests namely Ujian Pelepasan 1 and Ujian Pelepasan 2. Observation and monitoring are carried out by Curriculum Development Center, School Inspectorate, State Education Department, District Education Offices, School heads.

**Education Development Master Plan (EDMP) 2006-2010**

EDMP was the brainchild of MOE to consolidate the education sector in the country; it has become the guideline for holistic development for a period of 5-year as contained in the 9th Malaysia Plan; as a comprehensive and integrated document plan for education development covering infrastructure, input and manpower.

The goal is to produce quality education for all through two main approaches mainly:

- ensure equity and equality in education whereby all citizens are given fair and just educational opportunities regardless of location or ethnicity, inclusive of the physically impaired; all given opportunities to master the 3R’s irrespective of they are from poor families, rural or urban or interior; improvement of ICT access
- fully develop the potential of all schools so as to fall within excellence cluster and thus achieve measurable success as to chart our country and education system on the world map by identifying cluster schools and introducing various programs to enhance strengths and competitiveness of schools in the education cluster
### Implementation Strategies of EDMP Thrusts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thrusts</th>
<th>Implementation Strategies</th>
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</table>
| Thrust 1 - Nation building               | -strengthened the National language  
- enhance national unity and integrity  
- nurture a love for arts, heritage and culture  
- nurture an understanding of Islam Hadhari |
| Thrust 2 – Developing Human Capital      | -provide more educational choices for parents and students  
- enhance mastery knowledge  
- nurture student skills and deportment  
- enhance a holistic assessment and evaluation system  
- reinforce discipline  
- upgrade services dealing with complaints about discipline problems  
- improve collaboration between the Ministry of Education and other agencies |
| Thrust 3 – Strengthening national schools | -expand pre-school program  
- enhance head-teachers leadership and qualities of teachers  
- reinforce school culture |
| Thrust 4 – Bridging the education group | - improve rural infrastructure and educational facilities  
- increase schooling attendance and reduce drop-out risk  
- increase the number of option teachers in the interior  
- continuous improvement of subsidy allocation for pupils, special needs pupils and minority groups |
| Thrust 5 – Enhancing teaching profession | - improve selection of teacher candidate  
- improve teacher training  
- improve teacher’s work environment and welfare  
- improve planning and management of human resources |
| Thrust 6 – Accelerating excellence of educational institutions | - ensure strong and effective leadership  
- select competent and highly-skilled teachers and trainers  
- give more autonomy to schools in the choice of school heads, administrators, teachers, support staff and students  
- establish accountability system  
- establish standardization and benchmarking as a symbol of a developed and progressive nation  
- make Malaysia a center of excellence for education  
- initiate change and innovation |