



China

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Principles and general objectives of education

In general terms, education in the People's Republic of China must serve the construction of socialist modernization, be combined with production and labour, and foster builders and successors with all round development of morality, intelligence and physique for the socialist cause. Education shall be carried out in the spirit of inheriting and expanding the fine historical and cultural traditions of the Chinese nation and assimilating all the fine achievements of the civilization progress of human beings.

The Chinese government holds persistently the idea that education is the essential pre-condition for the all round development of mankind. Article 46 of the Constitution of People's Republic of China stipulates that all citizens have the right and obligation to pursue education. Article 9 of the Education Law (1995) stipulates that the citizens have equal opportunities of education regardless of nationality, race, sex, occupation, social conditions and religious belief. The Law on Compulsory Education (1986) stipulates that the State, society, schools and families guarantee the right to education of school-age children and adolescents.

Current educational priorities and concerns

Generally speaking, the existing education system—especially the systems of school operation, management and investment, and enrolment and employment regimes of universities—still lag behind the demands of the economic reform and fail to meet the needs of the modernization drive. The education system and operational mechanism can hardly accommodate the needs arising from the establishment of the socialist market economy.

The principal objectives of educational development in China up to the year 2010 are: (i) education attainment for all people should be markedly better, and a basic socialist education framework shaped according Chinese characteristics and oriented to serve the needs of the twenty-first century, should be put into place; (ii) nine-year compulsory education should become universal and there should be no more illiterates among youth and adults; (iii) senior secondary education should be expanded; (iv) vocational education and adult education should be developed more energetically; (v) the percentage of people with higher education should be close to that of developed countries; and (vi) education at various levels should enjoy better conditions under which operate schools, and both its quality and efficiency should be improved.



The specific goals for educational development are as follows:

- The remaining illiterates should become literate and a functional literacy programme should be launched to reduce the illiteracy rate among youths and adults to about 1%, so as to increase adult literacy rate to over 90%.
- A nine-year compulsory education should be achieved in regions where 90-95% of the population lives; kindergarten enrolment rate should reach 50%. Primary schools should have an enrolment of 130 million, while junior secondary schools should have an enrolment at 63 million, with an enrolment rate of about 95%.
- Regions following the eight-year primary programme and junior secondary schools shall gradually introduce the nine-year compulsory programme; regions where the school admission age is 7 years or above shall strive to lower the admission age to 6 years.
- Enrolment at various types of senior secondary schools shall be increased to about 34 million, with an enrolment rate of over 50%.
- The number of students enrolled in higher education institutions should be increased to around 9.5 million, with an average of 700 university students per 100,000 people, and with a gross enrolment rate of about 11%. Post-graduate programmes should accommodate 300,000 students and over 100,000 people should be awarded master's and doctoral degrees of every year.
- Pre-service and in-service training, job-transfer training and continuing education should be further developed, so as to establish a comprehensive, modern system of social education and lifelong education, adapted to the requirements arising from the socialist market economy, employment pressure and increasingly greater sophistication of the people.

The former education system, organized according a planned economy, played a positive role in the past. But it can no longer adapt itself to the new environment, as a result of the establishing of a socialist market economy. It is, therefore, essential that the reform of the education system should be accelerated, in order to make it compatible with the requirements of the new environment. Over the past years, the ongoing reforms of the economic, political, scientific and technological systems in China have had enormous impact on the education system.

The requirements, as well as the impact on education, from the adoption of a socialist market economy in China, are primarily reflected in the following aspects:

- Reform of the educational management system, by replacing highly centralized with decentralized management under the macro-guidance of the central government.
- Reform of the school system, by replacing the previous system under which the government was solely responsible for schools with a system under which



the various sectors of society participate in school administration to complement government's efforts.

- Reform of the education financing system, by transforming the single funding source (the government) into diversified sources for education financing with a view to gradually establishing a system under which the principal source, namely state appropriations, is supplemented by other channels of education financing.
- Reform of educational philosophy, contents and methods.
- Reform of the school management system, by ushering into the schools a system of independent school administration, self-development, self-motivation and self-restraining.
- Reform of the former school administration system operated by state-owned enterprises. In their efforts to establish modern enterprises regime, the large and medium-sized state-owned enterprises shall gradually spin off the primary and secondary schools they are operating. All enterprises must conduct vocational education and training.

In June 1994, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council convened the National Conference on Education. The Conference put forward that: eradicating illiteracy and universalizing nine-year compulsory education by the end of the century will be listed as the first priority; energetically developing vocational and adult education is the only approach for enhancing labour quality and a prosperous economy; at the higher education level, enhancement of quality and efficiency of education provision is a key issue. The Conference also defined policies, guidelines and measures relating to several important issues, such as improvement of moral education, enhancement of education quality, strengthening teacher training and educational legislation.

In order to adapt to the socialist modernization drive, education in China is being reformed and developed in accordance with the overall plan established at the 1994 National Conference on Education and the Outlines for Educational Reform and Development. The overall plan contains several key points: "realization of Two Primaries; establishment of Two Keys; forcefully developing vocational and adult education; strengthening and improving the moral education and guaranteeing the basic conditions." These are the core of the overall plan for educational reform and development.

Two Primaries refers to universalization of nine-year compulsory education and eradicating illiteracy by the end of the century. *Two Keys* is the abbreviated form for development of higher education, also called *211 Project*, oriented towards the twenty-first century and establishing a batch of key universities and key disciplines. The most essential factor is to guarantee basic conditions, especially the expansion of financial inputs and enhancing teachers' welfare.

The general objectives of the educational reform are: to stimulate the enthusiasm of all social sectors in education provision; explore effective approaches



for education development adapted to the actual conditions of the country; enhance education quality and efficiency of school operations; gradually formulate a socialist education system adapted to the socialist market economy and to the characteristics of modern education.

The system where schools are operated by the government is being transformed into a system where education provision is mainly rendered by the government but also supplemented by all social sectors. The functions of the government are shifting from direct management to macro-level control by laws, plans, budget allocation, information service, policy guidance and necessary administrative means.

Compulsory education is provided free of charge and at the stage of non-compulsory education (higher education, general senior secondary and secondary vocational education) the system of tuition fees is to be adopted. Standard tuition fees are to be established in accordance with the different conditions of all types of education and the economic capacity of citizens. A system of scholarships, loans, free-of-charge, and work-study programmes will be adopted in higher education institutions, specialized secondary schools and skilled workers schools, so as to provide financial assistance to needy students.

More efforts should be made to transform and reform teaching content and methods. Use should be made of the new developments of culture, science and technology to update teaching content, adjust curricula, and improve quality of education and learning achievement. Based on the transmission of basic knowledge and basic theories, as well as on the training in basic skills, great attention should be paid to the building of students' capacity to analyze and solve problems and to adapt to the social developments, so that the basic quality of students can be enhanced in an all-round way.

In order to ensure the sustained development of compulsory education in the rural areas, in 2001 the government convened a working meeting on basic education, and as a follow-up the Decision on the Reform and Development of Basic Education was made. The Decision pointed out clearly that a management system under the leadership of the State Council, implemented by the local governments, managed at different levels and with emphasis on counties shall be conducted for compulsory education in the rural areas. Governments at the county level shall be responsible for planning the development of education as a whole at the local level, including the allocation and use of funds and the management over principals and teachers.

In March 2004 the Chinese State Council approved and transmitted the Action Plan for Rejuvenating Education prepared by the Ministry of Education. The Plan is an overall, guiding and operational plan for national educational development in China during the period 2003-2007. According to the Plan, the first priority is to promote the educational reform and development in rural areas. Efforts should be made to improve the standard and quality of the universalization of nine-year compulsory education, especially in poor areas of the Western region. Furthermore, a system relevant to the public financial system should be established for education to ensure the sustained and stable increase in educational funds.

Laws and other basic regulations concerning education

On 18 March 1995, the Third Session of the Eighth People's Congress examined and adopted the **Education Law of the People's Republic of China**, which came into force on 1 September 1995. This Law guarantees the strategic position of education in the social and economic development, implements the significant decision of the State of establishing education development as a priority, and guarantees the reform and development of education.

On 15 May 1996, the 19th session of the Standing Committee of the Eighth People's Congress adopted the **Law on Vocational Education**, which came into force on 1 September, 1996. This Law will accelerate the reform and development of vocational education.

In order to guarantee the right of the disabled to basic education, on 23 August 1994 the State Council issued the **Regulation on Education of the Disabled**. The Regulation stipulates that education of the disabled is an obligation of the State; it also establishes that people's governments at all levels should strengthen leadership, planning and development of education of the disabled. Furthermore, it foresees a gradual increase of financial inputs and an improvement of educational provision for the disabled. The educational authorities of the State Council are responsible for education of the disabled in the whole country, and local people's governments and educational authorities are responsible for the education of the disabled in their regions.

In order to improve quality of teachers and accelerate teacher training, on 12 December 1995 the State Council promulgated the **Regulation on Qualifications of Teachers**. The Regulation stipulates that Chinese citizens who are teaching in educational institutions, at all levels and of all types, should acquire teacher's qualifications according to law. The Regulation stipulates the categories, application, recognition and pre-conditions of teachers' qualifications.

On 31 October 1993, the fourth session of the Standing Committee of the People's Congress approved the **Teacher Law of the People's Republic of China**. This Law introduced important measures for the improvement of teachers' qualifications and the protection of teachers' lawful rights. The Law recognizes that teachers are the professional personnel who shoulder the responsibility of education and instruction, undertake the tasks of imparting knowledge, educating people and improve the quality of their lives. It also calls for the whole society to respect teachers and to this end the 10th September is designated as Teachers' Day.

The **Higher Education Law of People's Republic of China** was approved on 29 August 1998 by the fourth Conference of the ninth Standing Committee of National Congress. This Law, which came into force on 1 January 1999, is the first comprehensive legal document regulating higher education in the country.

The **Law on Compulsory Education**, promulgated in 1986, stipulates that the States shall institute a system of nine-year compulsory education divided into two stages, primary and lower secondary education. According to this Law "All children



who have reached the age of 6 years shall attend school for the prescribed number of years, regardless of sex, nationality or race. In areas where this is not possible, the beginning of schooling may be postponed to the age of 7 years". "The State, the community, schools and families shall, in accordance with the law, protect the right to education of school-age children and adolescents." Hence, the age limits for primary school pupils are 6/7 to 12/13 years; for lower secondary school students, 12/13 to 15/16 years. The length of compulsory schooling is eight or nine years, including five or six years of primary education, and four or three years of lower secondary education.

During the period 2000–2004, the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of China examined and adopted the **National Language Law** and the **Private School Promoting Act of the People's Republic of China**. The Act and its related Regulation aim at creating a more favorable legal and institutional environment for the development of private education.

Administration and management of the education system

Governments at the central, provincial, prefecture, municipal and county levels have departments of education responsible for the administration of education. According to the Education Law, the **State Council** and **local people's governments** at all levels shall guide and administer education according to the principles of management at different levels and with a suitable division of responsibilities.

Education up to the secondary level is administered by local people's governments under the leadership of the State Council. Higher education is administered by the State Council and the people's governments of the provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the Central Government.

The administrative departments of education under the State Council are in charge of educational work throughout the country, and undertake overall planning, co-ordination and management of educational activities. The administrative departments of education under the people's governments, at or above the county level, are in charge of educational activities in their respective administrative regions. Other administrative departments of the people's governments, at or above the county level, are responsible for the relevant educational activities within their jurisdiction.

The **State Education Commission** (SEDC) was the agency in charge of education throughout the country. Other ministries and commissions under the State Council also have departments in charge of educational administration within their sphere of competence.

Educational inspection in China is a system whereby governments (at or above the county level) monitor, examine, assess and direct the educational activities as well as the work of schools (mainly primary and secondary education) being administered by the government at the lower level. The **State Education Inspectorate** is the agency for national educational inspection. It is composed of a Chief Inspector, a Deputy Chief Inspector and some 60 inspectors that the State Education Commission has engaged from the provinces and ministries. The Inspectorate has an office to take



charge of day-to-day operation. Local governments have also established similar agencies. Departments of inspection have been created in 30 provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the Central Government.

The main responsibilities of the departments of inspection at all levels are to: monitor and examine the implementation of state laws, regulations, principles and policies on the part of the governments at the lower level, their departments of education and schools; assess and give guidance to educational work as administered by the governments at the lower level; give advice and report to governments and their education departments with regard to educational activities.

Structure and organization of the education system

Pre-school education

Kindergartens enrol children at age 3+, and the length of schooling is three years, which could be full- or part-time. Pre-school education (one-year course before the primary education stage) is not compulsory.

Primary and lower secondary education

Three systems co-exist for primary and lower secondary education: the 6 + 3 system, the 5 + 4 system and the nine-year system, with the 6 + 3 system predominating in most areas. Thus, the length of schooling for primary education is six or five years, and for lower secondary education, four or three years. Children start school at the age of 6 or 7, and enter lower secondary schools at the age of 12 or 13.

Secondary education

The starting age for upper secondary schools is 15 or 16, and the length of schooling is three years. For secondary specialized schools, there are two different possibilities. For schools that enrol lower secondary school graduates, the starting age is 15 or 16; the length of schooling is four years for most schools, and three years for the rest. For schools that enrol upper secondary school graduates, the starting age is below 22; the length of schooling is usually three years and, for upper secondary vocational schools, two or three years (exceptionally four years).

Full-time undergraduate courses at higher education institutions last four or five years (seven or eight years for medical universities), and the length of short-cycle courses is two or three years.

The starting age for graduate education is below 40 for master's degree programmes, and below 45 for doctoral degree programmes. The length of courses is two or three years for master's programmes, and three years for most doctoral programmes. Schools for adults follow the same schooling system as the corresponding ordinary schools. Secondary school courses for adults have the same length as the ordinary secondary schools for full-time students, and are one year longer for part-time students. The length of undergraduate courses at higher education



institutions for adults is usually four or five years. Short-cycle courses take many forms and the length of courses is usually between two and four years.

The school year at the primary and secondary levels is divided into two terms, with the first term beginning in autumn (September), and the second term beginning in spring (usually in March). At the primary and lower secondary levels, each school year normally includes thirty-four weeks of classes, one week for school activities, one week for community-based activities, two weeks for general review and examinations (three weeks at the lower secondary level), and one week in reserve.

As far as higher education is concerned, the academic year consists of thirty-six weeks of classes (eighteen weeks for each of the two terms), two or three weeks for general review and tests, and eleven weeks for winter and summer vacations. A number of higher education institutions which have adopted the credit system follow a different approach, with the school year divided into three terms, in order to strengthen practical teaching.

The financing of education

State budgetary allocation is the main source of funds for education in the country, consisting of allocations from the central treasury and those from local treasuries. In general, educational services run and administered by local governments are financed by local budgets, while the central treasury provides funding for schools under the jurisdiction of the former SEDC, central ministries and agencies, and special allocations for particular aspects of educational development.

In spite of the many financial difficulties, in 1995/96 the level of educational input has risen considerably, giving more evidence to the importance attached by government at all levels to education. However, 90 percent of the increase in the recurrent expenditure on education in the fiscal budget is spent on personnel costs.

Public expenditure on education as percentage of GNP (in million yuan)

	1993	1994	Growth rate (%)
GNP	3,447,700	4,491,800	30.28
Public expenditure:			
- on education		117,474	35.38
- as % of GNP	2.52	117,474	35.38



Allocation of public expenditure on education by level (in billion yuan)

	1993	% of the total	1994	% of the total
Total	105.994		148.878	
Ordinary H.E.	15.595	14.71	22.485	15.10
Basic Ed.	69.014	65.11	96.671	64.93
(of which Comp. Ed.)	58.943	55.61	83.315	55.96
Voc. Ed.	12.838	12.11	17.819	11.97
(of which Sec. Norm.)	1.951	1.84	2.501	1.68
Adult Ed.	3.635	3.43	5.396	3.62
Of which Adult H.E.	1.959	1.85	3.153	2.12
Miscellaneous	4.912	4.63	6.507	4.37

While increasing the input of financial resources directed to education, the government has attempted to raise funds for education through a variety of channels. These channels mainly include: (i) urban and rural educational surcharges collected by local governments; (ii) expenditure on education by factories and enterprises; (iii) funds raised among various social groups, public organizations and individual citizens, as well as donations; (iv) fees paid by students; and (v) income from school-run enterprises and work-study programmes.

Article 53 of the Education Law stipulates that the State will establish a system with government budget allocation as the main funding source, supplemented by multi-approaches for raising funds for education. At present, in addition to the financial input from enterprises, individuals and social bodies, the main approaches for raising education funds are as follows: finance, extra fees tuition, industry, fund-raising, donations and monetary approach.

In 2002, the social investment in education was estimated at 198.863 RMB billion yuan or 1.94% of GDP, and the state's investment in education was estimated at 349.140 RMB billion yuan or 3.41% of GDP. (Chinese National Commission, 2004).

The educational process

The Law on Compulsory Education stipulates that the teaching approach, teaching contents and curriculum development for compulsory education should be determined in accordance with the needs of the socialist modernization drive as well as the physical and mental development of children and young persons. The revision of the teaching plans and syllabi for the nine-year compulsory programme has been organized by the State Education Commission.



Formally promulgated in 1992, the syllabi and twenty-four curricula began to be used in all primary and middle schools across the country as from the autumn 1993. The new curricula have embodied many breakthroughs in curriculum policies, training objectives and curriculum structures. There have been: a shift from the individual disciplinary courses to a combination of disciplinary and activity courses; increased elective courses; adjustments in the ratio between the arts and science; strengthening of a number of courses (sociology, labour skills, music, sports and arts); the introduction of vocational guidance courses; and more emphasis on integrated courses.

In 1998, the contents of primary and middle (lower secondary) school education have been further adjusted with the aim of reducing the difficulty of some teaching subjects and curriculum overloading. To cope with the reform, it has been decided that while the basic uniform teaching requirements should be maintained, teaching materials should be diversified. For this purpose, the State set up a national body to analyze teaching materials and established a system for examining and approving new teaching materials. Several sets of materials have been compiled, published and made available to the different regions for their selection. In addition, the provinces (including autonomous regions and centrally controlled municipalities) also compiled sets for electives and local teaching materials. The diversification of teaching materials has enabled the different regions and schools to select the materials in light of the local and school conditions. This has changed the decades-old rigid control over teaching materials and created conditions for deepening the educational reform. (Ministry of Education, 2001).

According to legislation, Chinese is the basic instructional language for schools and other educational institutions. In schools and educational institutions mainly attended by ethnic minority students, the ethnic minority language or the local language can be used in teaching activities.

Pre-primary education

Pre-school education is a one-year course before the primary stage and is aimed at preparing children for school education. In recent years, the State Education Commission has adopted the Rules for the administration of kindergartens, the Directive Rules for the work at kindergartens, as well as a series of other laws and regulations aimed at promoting the development of pre-school education. The local governments, which are the main providers of pre-school education, also established and promulgated supporting policies and local regulations and systems. Regional educational authorities also adopted quality standards and evaluation systems for kindergarten education so as to strengthen evaluation and supervision.

Diverse forms of pre-school provision have been developed integrating formal and non-formal approaches and combining collective education with family education. In rural areas, pre-school education mainly consists of nursery classes and seasonal kindergartens. In remote and poor regions, seasonal classes, week-end classes, tutorial stations, child visit days, home tutorial classes, and other non-formal approaches have been developed to gradually expand the coverage.



In recent years, pre-school education in the rural areas—particularly in remote, poor and minority areas—has developed rapidly. Kindergartens combine childcare with teaching so that the children will develop physically, morally, intellectually and aesthetically in a harmonious way to get ready for formal school education. The educational activities in kindergartens constitute a systematic, purposeful and multi-faceted process of education conducive to lively, invigorating and sound development of children. With playing games as the main part of educational activities, a good environment should be created conducive to the education with conditions and opportunities offered to children to live and display their expressiveness.

For pre-school classes, instructional time is no more than twelve periods per week and each period is no longer than thirty minutes. No tests or examinations are administered at the pre-school level.

According to the Ministry of Education, by the end of 2002 there were some 111,800 kindergartens nationwide with a combined enrolment of 20.36 million children. According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, in 2004 the gross enrolment ratio at the kindergarten (three-year programme) level was 36%.

Primary education

The curriculum of primary education comprises academic subjects and practical activities, determined at State and province levels. The curriculum set forth by the State is compulsory. Some schools with the necessary capacities also offer foreign languages teaching. The local curriculum mainly aims at facilitating the local economic and cultural development and is arranged by the educational authorities of provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities under the control of the central government. Schools are authorized to arrange the local curriculum, both in academic and activity aspects, as compulsory or alternative courses.

According to the two systems of 6+3 and 5+4 nine-year compulsory education, the State determines the number of teaching periods by subject for the full-time primary education programme as follows:

Primary education (six-year programme): weekly lesson timetable

Subject/activity	Number of weekly periods in each grade					
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
Subjects:						
Ideology and moral character	1	1	1	1	1	1
Chinese language	10	10	9	8	7	7
Mathematics	4	5	5	5	5	5
Society	–	–	–	2	2	2
Nature	1	1	1	1	2	2
Physical education	2	2	3	3	3	3
Music	3	3	2	2	2	2
Painting	2	2	2	2	2	2
Work	–	–	1	1	1	1
Sub-total	23	24	24	25	25	25
Activities:						
Collective activities	1	1	1	1	1	1
Physical exercise, science, technology and cultural activities	4	4	4	4	4	4
Sub-total	5	5	5	5	5	5
Locally-arranged curriculum	2	2	3	3	3	3
Total weekly periods	30	31	32	33	33	33
Morning/afternoon meeting (ten minutes per day)						

Source: Zhou Wei & Gao Min, 1999. Each teaching period lasts 45 minutes.


Primary education (five-year programme): weekly lesson timetable

Subject/activity	Number of weekly periods in each grade				
	I	II	III	IV	V
Subjects:					
Ideology and moral character	1	1	1	1	1
Chinese language	11	11	9	9	9
Mathematics	5	6	6	6	6
Society	–	–	2	2	2
Nature	1	1	2	2	2
Physical education	2	2	3	3	3
Music	3	3	2	2	2
Painting	2	2	2	2	2
Work	–	–	1	1	1
Sub-total	25	26	28	28	28
Activities:					
Collective activities	1	1	1	1	1
Physical exercise, science, technology and cultural activities	3	3	3	3	3
Sub-total	4	4	4	4	4
Locally-arranged curriculum	2	2	2	2	2
Total weekly periods	31	32	34	34	34
Morning/afternoon meeting (ten minutes per day)					

Source: Zhou Wei & Gao Min, 1999. Each teaching period lasts 45 minutes.

Concerning Hong Kong and Macao (Special Administrative Regions of China), the tables below show the teaching subjects and the average time allocation at the primary level:



Hong Kong. Primary education (P1–P6): suggested percentage of lesson time allocation

Key learning area	Subjects	Suggested lesson time allocation (%)
Chinese language education	Chinese language, <i>putonghua</i> (standard Chinese)	25–30%
English language education	English language	17–22%
Mathematics education	Mathematics	12–15%
Science education; Technology education; Personal, social and humanities education	General studies	12–15%
Arts education	Art and craft; music	10–15%
Physical education	Physical education	5–8%

Source: Education Department of Hong Kong, 2001.

Note: The school year consists of thirty teaching weeks. The total lesson time over six years amounts to approximately 4,200 hours (about 23.5 weekly hours) for whole-day schools and 4,000 hours (about 22.5 weekly hours) for bi-sessional schools. The additional time in whole-day schools is not meant for lengthening lesson time. Other than total lesson time, whole-day schools should spare more time within the school hours to plan a variety of activities and programmes conducive to whole-person development and life-wide learning. Lesson time for flexible use is approximately 10–19% (or about 420 to 800 hours over six years) for whole-day schools and 10–15% (or about 400 to 600 hours) for bi-sessional schools. Schools can use this time for activities that meet their individual needs and contexts, e.g. activities/learning programmes for remedial or enrichment/enhancement purposes, cross-curricular activities, fieldwork, promoting reading, etc.

Macao. Primary education: weekly lesson timetable

Area/Subject	Average number of weekly periods	
	Grades I-IV	Grades V and VI
<i>Desenvolvimento pessoal e social:</i> [Personal and social development] Moral education, civic education, religious education (at least one of these subjects)	1-2	1-2
<i>Aquisições básicas:</i> [Basic skills] Language (first and second language), mathematics	18-20	19-22
<i>Atividades de descoberta:</i> [Discovering the world] Social studies, natural sciences, hygiene and health, history, geography	4-6	5-7
<i>Expressões:</i> [Expressive skills] Aesthetic education, practical activities, music education, physical education	4-8	4-8
<i>Complemento curricular</i> [Additional lessons to be decided by the school]		
Total weekly periods (min.)	28	30
Total weekly periods (max.)	38	40

Source: Government of Macao, 1994. The school year consists of 180 working days. Each teaching period lasts 35 to 45 minutes.

In primary and junior secondary schools qualification examinations are conducted at the end of each term, at the end of the school year and for graduation.

Primary graduation includes an examination in language and mathematics and only check-ups for the other courses. When students pass exams in language and mathematics and are up to the standard in physical education, they graduate. The primary graduation exams are under the guidance of the county educational departments. Normally, schools will design the examination papers; in rural townships the education department will be responsible for designing of examination papers. In the areas where the nine-year compulsory education is achieved, there is no entrance examination for junior secondary education.

Promotion rate (percentage)

	1993	1994	1995
Primary to junior secondary	81.8	86.6	90.8
Junior secondary to upper secondary	44.1	86.6	90.8
Upper secondary to higher education	43.3	46.7	49.9

Drop-out rate at the primary and junior secondary levels (percentage)

Year	Primary	Junior secondary
1993	2.27	7.08
1994	1.85	5.11
1995	1.49	3.98

Repetition rate (percentage)

	1993	1994	1995
Primary schools	3.8	2.9	2.2
Junior secondary	1.0	0.7	0.5

Average number of pupils in each class at the primary level

Year	Number of classes	Pupils per class
1993	3,976,406	31.2
1994	3,976,406	31.9
1995	4,038,547	32.7

According to the Ministry of Education, by 2002 there were altogether 456,900 primary schools in the country with a total enrolment of 121,567,100 pupils and the net enrolment ratio was 98.6%. The total number of full-time primary school teachers was 5,778,900. The transition rate to junior secondary school was estimated at 97%.

Secondary education

According to the two systems of 6+3 and 5+4 nine-year compulsory education, at the junior secondary level the State determines the number of teaching periods by subject for the full-time junior secondary education programme as follows:

Lower secondary education (three-year programme): weekly lesson timetable

Subject/activity	Number of weekly periods in each form		
	I	II	III
<u>Subjects:</u>			
Ideology and politics	2	2	2
Chinese language	6	6	5
Mathematics	5	5	5
Foreign language (Level II)	4	4	4(*)
History	2	3	2
Geography	3	2	–
Physics	–	2	3
Chemistry	–	–	3
Biology	3	2	–
Physical education	3	3	3
Music	1	1	1
Painting	1	1	1
Work skills	2	2	2
Sub-total	32	33	31
<u>Activities:</u>			
Collective activities	1	1	1
Physical exercise, science, technology and cultural activities	3	3	3
Sub-total	4	4	4
<u>Locally-arranged curriculum</u>	–	–	1(*)
Total weekly periods	36	37	36
Morning/afternoon meeting (ten minutes per day)			

Source: Zhou Wei & Gao Min, 1999. (*) The course foreign language at level I is offered in Forms I and II only (four weekly periods); in Form III, four additional weekly periods are allocated to the locally-arranged curriculum. Each teaching period lasts 45 minutes.


Lower secondary education (four-year programme): weekly lesson timetable

Subject/activity	Number of weekly periods in each grade				
	I	II	III	IV	V
Subjects:					
Ideology and moral character	1	1	1	1	1
Chinese language	11	11	9	9	9
Mathematics	5	6	6	6	6
Society	–	–	2	2	2
Nature	1	1	2	2	2
Physical education	2	2	3	3	3
Music	3	3	2	2	2
Painting	2	2	2	2	2
Work	–	–	1	1	1
Sub-total	25	26	28	28	28
Activities:					
Collective activities	1	1	1	1	1
Physical exercise, science, technology and cultural activities	3	3	3	3	3
Sub-total	4	4	4	4	4
Locally-arranged curriculum	2	2	2	2	2
Total weekly periods	31	32	34	34	34
Morning/afternoon meeting (ten minutes per day)					

Source: Zhou Wei & Gao Min, 1999. Each teaching period lasts 45 minutes.

Concerning Hong Kong, the table below shows the suggested percentage of lesson time allocation:

Hong Kong. Junior secondary education (S1–S3): suggested percentage of lesson time allocation

Key learning area	Suggested lesson time allocation (%)
Chinese language education	17–21%
English language education	17–21%
Mathematics education	12–15%
Science education	10–15% (8–10% for schools whose curriculum has a technology education orientation)
Technology education	8–15% (25–35% for schools having a curriculum with a strong orientation in technology education)
Personal, social and humanities education	15–20% (10–15% for schools whose curriculum has a technology education orientation)
Arts education	8–10%
Physical education	5–8%

Source: Education Department of Hong Kong 2001.

Note: 'The school year consists of thirty teaching weeks. The total lesson time over three years amounts to approximately 2,700 hours (about 30 weekly hours). Lesson time for flexible use is approximately 5–15% (or about 135 to 405 hours over three years). Schools can use this time for activities that meet their individual needs and contexts, e.g. learning activities and programmes for remedial or enhancement purposes in the form of additional study within the key learning areas, or for school programmes or activities such as activity weeks, China visits, outward bound experiences, leadership training camps, etc.'

According to the Ministry of Education, by 2002 there were 65,600 junior secondary schools in the country with a total enrolment of 66,874,300 students and 3,467,700 full-time teachers. The net enrolment rate was estimated at 90% and the transition rate to senior secondary was estimated at 58%.

At the general senior secondary level (three-year programme), the following subjects are taught: politics, Chinese, mathematics, foreign language, physics, chemistry, biology, history, geography, sports, arts and labour skills. All subjects are determined by the State and politics, mathematics, language, sports, arts and labour skills are compulsory. Other subjects could be either compulsory or alternative.

The subjects included in the junior secondary graduation examinations are selected among those of the graduating grade; other subjects are checked only. The design of examination papers is determined by education departments and education commissions of provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the central government.



The qualification examination system is adopted at the general secondary stage. Exams and checks are combined. The subjects for the examination are: language, mathematics, foreign language, politics, physics, chemistry, biology, history and geography. The subjects for check-ups are: labour skills, experiment and operation of physics, chemistry, and biology. Examination in physical education is conducted in accordance with a uniform syllabus. The examination papers are prepared by provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities. Their responsibilities also cover exam organizing, paper correcting, collecting and analyzing of statistics, and results reporting. The check-up papers are prepared by the county and city education departments according to the examinations norms.

Average number of students in each class at the junior secondary level

Year	Number of classes	Students per class
1993	826,332	49.4
1994	857,898	50.3
1995	899,355	51.8

Vocational education in China is provided at three levels: junior secondary, senior secondary and tertiary. Junior vocational education refers to vocational programmes after primary education and is a part of the 9-year compulsory education. Junior vocational schools mainly provide workers, peasants and employees with basic professional knowledge and certain professional skills. Vocational programmes at this level usually last three to four years. Junior vocational schools are generally located in rural areas where the economy is less developed.

Secondary vocational education plays a guiding role in training manpower with practical skills. The network consists of specialized secondary schools, schools for skilled workers and vocational high schools. Consisting of secondary technical schools and normal schools, specialized secondary schools enrol junior high school graduates; the duration of studies is usually four years—in some cases, three years. A few specialties are open only to graduates from senior high school, and courses last two years. Schools for skilled workers enrol graduates from junior high school and courses normally last three years. Vocational high schools enrol junior high school graduates and the duration of programmes is usually three years. Their main task is to train secondary-level practice-oriented talents with comprehensive professional abilities and all round qualities directly engaged in the forefront of production, service, technology and management. Accordingly, the specialties offered in vocational high schools are mainly related to the third industry.

In 2001, there were altogether 17,770 secondary vocational schools (including vocational high schools, specialized secondary schools and schools for skilled workers), with a total enrolment of 11,642,300 students (around 4 million in 1995). The number of specialties offered in skilled workers schools and secondary vocational schools is over 3,000.

Tertiary vocational education is offered to graduates from regular high schools and secondary vocational schools; the duration of programmes is two to three years.



In recent years, the proportion of graduates from secondary vocational schools has increased, gradually establishing a link between secondary and tertiary vocational education. Aiming at training secondary and high-level specialized technical and management talents needed in the economic construction, tertiary vocational education emphasizes the training of practice-oriented and craft-oriented talents. Educational establishments providing tertiary vocational education are divided into four categories: higher vocational technology institutions; five-year higher vocational classes provided in the regular specialized secondary schools; tertiary vocational education provided in some regular higher education institutions and adult higher education institutions; reformed regular institutions offering two- to three-year higher education courses with the emphasis on training practice-oriented talents, namely high-level professional technical talents.

Measures are being taken to establish a system of double certificates oriented to vocational education. When students receive their diplomas, the authorities concerned will check their skills in accordance with their specialties and then the qualified students will receive the vocational qualification certificate or the technical-grade certificate. These measures have been implemented in schools for skilled workers and senior secondary vocational schools.

Finally, a wide range of vocational training courses have been playing a more important role in vocational education. Vocational training is mainly conducted and managed by the departments of education and labor, but enterprises are encouraged to provide vocational training for their own employees. In 2001, short-term training courses involved the equivalent of 100 million person-time.

Assessing learning achievement nationwide

Information is not available.

Higher education

The Provisional Regulation on Admission to General Institutions of Higher Education, promulgated by the former State Education Commission, stipulated that a system of unitary entrance examinations for general higher education was to be adopted, namely, unitary design of examination papers, tests, qualification for registers and subjects, as well as the checking methods for morals and standards for physical constitution. In accordance with the unitary regulations, provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities are responsible for registration, tests, political checks, health examination, and undertake separately the recruitment in general higher education. The Higher Education Law has been approved in 1998 and is implemented from January 1999.

Higher education institutions may decide to adjust disciplines and specialties; undertake scientific research, technical development and social services; establish their internal structure; and assign staff members in teaching, research and administrative organs on their own, in accordance with the concerned stipulations, social needs and their actual conditions. The institutions examine and approve the professional titles of technical personnel, and have the decisive right in: employment



matters; adjusting the internal structure of salary; management of funds; facilities; governmental finance and donations; and conduct international exchanges and co-operation programmes. The decision-making organs in the higher education institutions determine the internal organizational structure, personnel assignments, medium- and long-term development plans, and the basic management system. The president of the institution is responsible for the daily administrative work such as: teaching, scientific research, political and values education, and general affairs. The academic committee is in charge of the assessment and adjustment of disciplines and specialties, as well as examining teaching and research plans.

The assessment of higher education institutions is composed of three forms: self-assessment, assessment by the administrative organs and social assessment. The assessment by the administrative organs includes: qualified assessment, comprehensive assessment of levels of education provided, and assessment for selection of the best.

The purpose is mainly to comprehensively assess levels of education provided with a focus on the qualifications and assessment for selection of the best. The main contents of the comprehensive assessment are: the orientation and management levels of higher education institutions; overall qualities of students in terms of moral, intellectual and physical characteristics; scientific and technological endeavours and social service; basic conditions under which education is provided.

In order to guarantee the assessment work of higher education institutions, the former State Education Commission formulated and disseminated the Primary Standards and Contents for Assessment of Higher Education Institutions. It stipulates that all the institutions must satisfy the requirement of the Provisional Regulation on Establishment of Higher Education Institutions for Adults and Complementary Regulation on Establishment of Higher Education Institutions. At the same time, it establishes the basic conditions for education provision, institution management, teaching quality and efficiency of operation, as well as the concrete contents and requirement for correspondence programmes and evening programmes operated by higher education institutions. It also stipulates assessment methods and standards.

In 1980, the People's Congress approved and promulgated the Regulations on Degrees of the People's Republic of China. The Regulation stipulated the requirements for awarding bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees. According to the Higher Education Law of 1998, higher education consists of specialty, undergraduate and postgraduate courses. In accordance with Article 17 of the Law, specialty education courses shall last two to three years and undergraduate courses shall last four to five years. At the postgraduate level, master's degree courses shall take two to three years to complete and doctoral degree courses shall last three to four years.

In order to strengthen the management of higher education academic diplomas and keep up the authenticity of the diploma system, as well as the quality and structure of higher education, the former State Education Commission promulgated the Provisional Regulation on Management of Diplomas of General Higher Education in 1993. According to this Regulation, when students with a formal record of schooling accomplish all the courses, pass the examinations and are up to the standard



in moral and physical education, they can graduate with an academic diploma. The Regulation stipulates clearly the conditions and management of the awarding of academic diplomas. Students with a formal record of schooling having completed all the courses and not passing examinations in one or more courses and failing either of the complementary examinations, but who are up to the standard in moral and physical education will receive a certificate of accomplishment. Students with formal record of schooling having studied in a school for more than a year and leaving school without finishing all the courses of programme, will also receive a certificate. The Regulation also stipulates the awarding of certificates for other types of students.

In order to improve the higher education system and encourage self-improvement through self-study, the State Council promulgated the Provisional Regulation on Self-study Examinations in Higher Education, which stipulates that learners could receive academic diplomas when they:

- have completed all the courses set by the teaching programme and pass the examinations;
- accomplish the graduation thesis or other required tasks;
- are up to standard in morality.

In the past fifteen years, more than 20 million students participated in self-study examination programmes. In 1995, 7.45 million students sat the examinations and 1.2 million graduated.

Higher education institutions, 1991–93

	1991	1992	1993
No. of institutions	1,075	1,053	1,065
Enrolment	2,043,700	2,184,400	2,535,500
Full-time teachers	390,800	387,600	387,800

According to the Ministry of Education, in 2002 the total number of higher education institutions (HEIs) was 2,003—including 607 HEIs for adults. In the same year, the total number of new entrants admitted by regular HEIs was 3,205,000 and the total enrolment was 9,033,600 students. In the case of HEIs for adults, the total enrolment was 2,223,200.

Special education

The objective of special education is to render education for the disabled children compulsory. At present, of all the disabled children most of the mildly disabled can attend general schools. In recent years, China mainly developed special education for children with eyesight, hearing and mental problems.



In addition to special education schools, classes for the blind, the deaf, and for the mentally retarded children are attached to regular primary schools. General primary schools enrol children with mild problems in sight, hearing and speaking and mental growth in study programmes together with the ordinary children. Due to the flexible forms of educational provision, compulsory education for the disabled children is developing rapidly.

Number of special education schools and number of entrants

Year	Number of schools	No. of entrants (in ten thousand)
1993	1,241	3.35
1994	1,241	3.98
1995	1,379	5.63

The curriculum in special education schools is as follows:

- Schools for blind children. The subjects taught at primary schools are: morality, language, mathematics, society, nature, sports, oriented walk, music, arts, recognition, life guidance, labour skills. Courses offered at junior secondary schools include: politics, language, mathematics, foreign language, history, geography, physics, chemistry, biology, sports, music, arts and labour skills.
- Schools for deaf children (Grades I-IX). The subjects taught are: morality, language (language practice in Grades I-III), mathematics, nature and common knowledge, social science, science, sports, arts and labour skills.
- Schools for mentally retarded children (Grades I-IX). Courses offered include: common knowledge, language (language practice in Grades I-VI), mathematics, music (singing, dances and games in lower grades), arts, sports and labour skills.

According to recent data, there are over 1,500 special education schools in the country with about 370,000 disabled students enrolled. The total number of staff was 40,378 and there were 28,494 full-time teachers. By the end of 2003, there were 3,156 regular vocational education institutions enrolling disabled students, 987 vocational education training institutions run by the disabled persons' federations devoted to the training of disabled persons in vocational skills, 190 secondary vocational educational institutions for the disabled, and the total number of disabled students was about 11,000. (Chinese National Commission, 2004).

Private education

In order to facilitate the development of community-run education, the Guidelines for Encouragement, Support, Guidance and Management have been adopted. Article 19 of the Constitution stipulates that the State encourages community economic



organizations, State enterprises and institutions, and other social organizations to provide education according to the laws concerned. As mentioned, the Private School Promoting Act and its related Regulation approved during the period 2000–2004 aim at creating a more favorable legal and institutional environment for the development of private education.

According to Article 25 of the Education Law: “The State shall formulate educational development plans and run schools and other types of educational institutions. The State shall encourage enterprises, institutions, public organizations, other social groups as well as individual citizens to operate schools or other types of educational institutions in accordance with the law. No organization or individual may operate a school or any other type of educational institution for profit.” All educational institutions, whether government-sponsored or non-government-sponsored, should keep to the socialist orientation; implement the State’s educational policies; comply with the State’s educational standards; guarantee educational quality; and safeguard the lawful rights and interests of those receiving education, as well as teachers and other staff and workers.

Non-government sponsored educational institutions are an important component of China’s educational undertakings. The State policy towards these institutions is that of “positive encouragement, active support, proper guidance and better administration”, protecting their lawful rights and treating them equal to government-sponsored educational institutions.

The main differences between government-sponsored and non-government sponsored educational institutions lie in:

- Administration. The principal or the chief administrator of a government-sponsored school is appointed by the relevant department of education, whereas non-government-sponsored schools usually adopt a principal responsibility system under the leadership of the board of trustees.
- Source of funding. Government-sponsored schools are mainly financed by government allocations, and no tuition is charged for children and students receiving compulsory education. The rates of miscellaneous fees are determined by departments of education in conjunction with departments in charge of pricing. Non-government sponsored schools, on the other hand, are funded mainly by the sponsors. They can charge tuition, but they must submit them for approval by departments of education and departments in charge of chargeable items and rates.

The general trend in China is towards basic and higher education financed by the State, and vocational and adult education financed by other social sectors.

Along with the legislative framework, the State establishes managing agencies and designates personnel to strengthen and improve the management of community-run education. The responsibilities of education authorities in community-run education are: (i) examine and approve the establishment of schools and issue licenses; (ii) examine and determine the admission advertisement and the qualification



of headmasters and deputy headmasters; and, (iii) conduct annual check-ups, financial audition, evaluation of education quality and award prizes for community-run schools.

Community-run primary schools and secondary schools offer courses in accordance with the teaching programme set by the State. Other schools with a formal record of schooling must offer courses in accordance with the instruction system and teaching programme set by the State. Other educational institutions will determine courses on their own.

By the end of 1994, the number of community-run educational institutions recognized by the educational authorities was 60,000, including: 18,284 kindergartens; 1,078 primary schools; 888 general secondary schools; 392 vocational schools; 100 specialized secondary schools; 18 institutions of higher education with diploma programmes; 800 institutions of higher education without diploma programmes; and 35,000 educational institutions for short-term training and social life.

In 2003, there were over 70,000 private educational establishments of various types at different levels throughout the country, with a total enrolment of 14.16 million students. The breakdown was as follows: 55,500 kindergartens with 4,802,300 children enrolled; 5,676 regular primary schools with 2,749,300 pupils; 3,651 junior secondary schools with 2,565,700 students; 53 vocational junior secondary schools with 22,800 students; 2,679 regular senior secondary schools with 1,413,700 students; and 1,382 secondary vocational schools with 793,800 students. (Chinese National Commission, 2004).

Means of instruction, equipment and infrastructure

With the increasing inputs from governments, textbooks, laboratories and other teaching instruments in higher education institutions, general secondary and primary schools are developing each year. All the textbooks reach students on schedule and all students have their own books.

Textbooks for general secondary and primary schools, vocational schools, adult schools and higher education institutions are mainly compiled and produced by the educational departments themselves. Part of specialized textbooks in vocational schools are compiled by the corresponding departments; a small amount of textbooks used in higher education institutions need to be imported. As mentioned, it has been decided that while the basic uniform teaching requirements should be maintained, teaching materials should be diversified. For this purpose, the State set up a national body to analyse teaching materials and established a system for examining and approving new teaching materials. Several sets of materials have been compiled, published and made available to the different regions for their selection. In addition, the provinces (including autonomous regions and centrally controlled municipalities) also compiled sets for electives and local teaching materials. The diversification of teaching materials has enabled the different regions and schools to select the materials in light of the local and school conditions.



Furthermore, 29 languages of 21 minority ethnic groups are being used in China to compile and publish textbooks for infant, primary and secondary schools, specialized secondary schools, adult, vocational technical education, and also part of the specialties of institutions of higher education for nationalities. Each year, over 3,500 types of textbooks in the languages of minority ethnic groups are published after translation and editing.

Classrooms, teachers' offices and other buildings and transportation vehicles generally meet the needs, with the exception of some poverty-stricken areas where they are still in shortage and of poor quality.

During the past ten years, the Chinese government has raised 10 billion RMB yuan through various channels and six billion square metres of school buildings have been repaired. The numbers of dangerous buildings in primary and secondary schools decreased from 15% to 1.77% in 1995. The quality of buildings has improved greatly.

Facilities in laboratories of general primary schools

	Schools	Schools popularizing experiments	Instruments in billion RMB yuan
1993	712,973	280,813	26.3
1994	694,694	311,974	37.2

Facilities in laboratories of general secondary schools

	Schools	Schools popularizing experiments	Instruments in billion RMB yuan
1993	97,784	95,418	46.1
1994	95,418	47,553	62.4

Facilities in laboratories of higher education institutions

	Laboratories	Laboratory staff (ten thousand)	Instruments (ten thousand)	In RMB yuan (billion)
1994	38,861	13.37	359	141.44
1995	30,621	10.37	275	149.21

By the end of 2000, some 70,000 primary and middle schools had begun offering information technology (IT) education and each year about 50 million students take IT courses. Overall, these schools were equipped with 2.1 million computers and had about 70,000 full-time and part-time teachers specializing in computer science.



In 2003, there were 6.63 million computers in primary and secondary schools, or an average of one computer per 32 students, and a total of 34,749 school nets have been established.

Adult and non-formal education

Adults are the main target groups of non-formal education in China. According to the academic levels and requirements of learners, non-formal education includes: literacy; primary, secondary and technical education; in-service training; social and cultural life; subject qualification certificate education; and specialized certificate education.

Non-formal education is offered by: ministries and commissions of the State Council, education authorities of local governments, factories and enterprises, social bodies and organizations, academic associations, collective economic organizations, and individual citizens.

The number of people attending literacy classes in 1992 and 1993 was 5,520,000 and 5,070,000, respectively, among whom 5,230,000 and 5,482,000 persons achieved literacy in each of these two years. This exceeded the standard set by the State Education Commission in the early 1992 for an annual literacy rate of 4,000,000 persons. In 2000, the overall illiteracy rate was estimated at 8.7% and the number of illiterates at 87 million.

As a new mode for bridging the traditional school-based education and lifelong education, adult education plays an important role in improving the overall national quality and promoting economic and social development. During the 1990s, China formulated the policy of actively developing adult education, focusing on on-the-job training and continuing education. Considerable attention has been paid to the improvement of on-the-job training, certificate system, qualification exams, test system, and continuing education system.

Adult education is divided into degree-education and non-degree education. The former is composed of undergraduate education, two-year college education, specialized secondary education and secondary education. Their corresponding schools include institutions of higher learning for adults, self-learning exams and specialized secondary schools. The latter refers to literacy education, rural training for practical skills, on-the-job training, single course qualification certificate education, specialization certificate and continuing education.

Specialized secondary schools are the main components of adult education. In 1994, the total number of specialized secondary schools of all types was 4,811, including: 152 specialized broadcasting and TV secondary schools; 1,827 workers specialized secondary schools; 915 specialized secondary schools for administrators; 499 specialized secondary schools for farmers; 60 correspondence specialized secondary schools; and 2,065 refresher schools for teachers. In 1995, the total number of specialized secondary schools was 4,905, with 2.43 million students enrolled in more than 600 specialties.



In addition to literacy programmes, active development of rural and technical schools and extensive post-literacy education, with emphasis on practical skills training, are the top priorities of rural adult education. As a result, the technical and general quality of the rural population has significantly improved. There are 288,500 farmers' technical schools nationwide, covering 75% of the townships and 38% of the villages all over the country. The number of farmers having completed courses in these schools reached 53,814,600, an increase of 8,213,600 compared with 1992. The development of rural adult education has not only trained a large number of primary- and secondary-level personnel necessary for rural development, but also promoted the expansion and popularization of agricultural science and technology.

Following several years of rapid development in adult higher education, the focus is now on the various types of non-degree education with emphasis on on-the-job training. With the ever-increasing number of job descriptions formulated by sectors, on-the-job training has become more and more systematic and standardized. The adult education pattern with on-the-job training as priority has taken shape. According to available statistics, in 1992 a total of 35,420,000 persons participated in on-the-job training courses across the country, representing 31.8% of 111,400,000 persons covered by the survey.

Over the past years, significant strides have been made in long-distance education in the country. In 1993, China Education Television broadcast 10,834 hours of programmes on air with a total audience of 30,000,000. In 1992, there were more than 1,000 education stations, over 6,000 education satellite earth stations and 53,000 video play sites nationwide, representing an increase of 300, 3,000 and 23,000, respectively, over 1990 figures. The set-up and broadcasting of education television has provided a strong boost to the development of television universities and specialized secondary schools. In 1993, China had forty-five television universities and 124 television specialized secondary schools. From 1992 to 1993, television universities trained 223,800 college-level students, an equivalent of 27% of all the college students trained during the same period of time. Television specialized secondary schools trained 193,400 personnel of various types. The Liao Yuan School was set up in 1990 in line with the Liao Yuan Programme, to bring into full play the role of radio and television. To date, about 1,000 programmes have been broadcast for rural areas. The sample survey conducted by China Education Television in 1992 indicated that the programmes broadcast by Liao Yuan School had a 38% relay rate among rural and county-level television stations, and a total of more than 20,000,000 watched these programmes. Over the past thirteen years since its creation, China Agricultural Broadcasting and Television School has had 2,300,000 registered students. The School offers about 130 courses, has trained 720,000 specialized secondary school students and about 1,000,000 students have obtained the single-course completion certificate. The Broadcast and Television Education in China is playing an increasingly important role.

The number of illiterates in the country decreased dramatically in recent years. According to the Fifth National Population Census of 2000, the number of illiterates above 15 years of age has reduced to 85 million, the illiteracy rate has reduced to 8.7%, and the illiteracy rate among the middle-aged and young people decreased to below 5%. (Chinese National Commission, 2004).

Teaching staff

A system of teacher's professional titles has been implemented. At higher education institutions, teacher positions include: professor, assistant professor, lecturer and assistant lecturer. Teacher positions at specialized secondary schools include: senior lecturer, lecturer, assistant lecturer and teacher. Teacher positions for cultural and technical theory at skilled workers schools include: senior lecturer, lecturer, assistant lecturer and teacher. Titles of practice-guiding teachers in skilled worker schools are senior practice-guiding teacher, first-rank practice-guiding teacher, second-rank and third-rank practice-guiding teacher. Teacher positions at general secondary schools include: senior secondary school teacher, first-rank secondary school teacher, second-rank, and third-rank secondary teacher. Teacher positions at vocational secondary schools are the same as in skilled worker schools. Teacher positions at primary schools are: senior primary school teachers, first-rank primary school teacher, second-rank, and third-rank primary teacher. Teacher positions at kindergartens are the same as those in primary schools.

In accordance with the regulations of the central government, schools are authorized to manage their teachers independently. Within the State-formulated establishment ceilings, schools independently decide upon the employment of teaching and supporting staff, the terms of employment and methods of selection (although the method generally adopted is choosing the best candidates, following comprehensive examinations).

The state sets annual quotas for schools of various kinds and at various levels. Those that fit the post qualifications and gain the approval of the selection and examination organs are recruited as teachers.

The qualification system for teachers is the legal system which gives permits for the teachers to practice. It stipulates the titles, types, the scope of application of teachers' qualifications, the requirements for different kinds of teachers, the examinations for teacher qualification, the confirmation of the teachers' qualification, and their legal liabilities. The requirements for teacher status are a vital part of the teacher qualification system. To acquire a teacher's certificate, the following requirements must be met:

- **Citizenship.** To be qualified as a Chinese teacher, one must first be a Chinese citizen; on the other hand, any Chinese citizen, regardless of ethnic origin, sex, or occupation, can acquire a teacher status so long as he or she meets all the teacher qualifications.
- **Ethical requirements.** To apply for a teacher's certificate, one has to be sound ideologically and politically. This is a basic requirement for teachers determined by the socialist nature of education in the country.
- **Academic requirements.** The academic requirements for different levels of teachers qualifications are as follows: (i) graduates from normal schools for pre-school education or above for teachers in nurseries and kindergartens; (ii) graduates from secondary normal schools or above for teachers in primary



schools; (iii) graduates from two-year normal colleges or other colleges or above for teachers of junior-middle schools or teachers who teach general academic and specialized courses in junior vocational middle schools; (iv) undergraduates from normal or other universities and four-year colleges or above for teachers of senior middle school or teachers who teach general academic and specialized courses in senior secondary specialized schools, skilled workers schools, and vocational schools; (v) post-graduates or undergraduates from universities for teachers of schools of higher learning; (vi) graduates from schools of higher learning or secondary schools or above for teachers of adult education in accordance with the different levels and types of adult education involved.

- Educational and teaching abilities. In order to select correctly the educational or teaching content and method, design the teaching programme scientifically, and conduct educational and teaching activities effectively, a teacher must have: a good command of pedagogic and psychological laws; a reasonably good articulation and ability to handle the students; an ability to conduct scientific research, so as to improve the teaching content and method and raise the teaching standard; and a good physique needed for conducting teaching activities.

Due to the huge number of secondary and primary school teachers, teacher training is a shared responsibility of various education administrative organs at different levels: regular normal schools, teacher training institutions of various kinds and at various levels, training agencies, as well as the schools where the teachers work. The education administrative organs formulate policies, provide financial support, define training programmes and methods for management and examination, and sum up and spread good practices in a timely manner. Training institutions collaborate with the organs responsible for education research in organizing training activities systematically, providing professional guidance and management for training activities and conducting training research. Schools where teachers work are the prime places for teacher training. They should provide time for training and necessary material conditions for a systematic, permanent and effective training.

The State Education Commission is responsible for the macro-guidance of teacher training for the higher education institutions, overseeing the integrated training of teachers in the six key normal universities and the fifty-nine non-key normal universities. The education administrative organs of the provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities are responsible for the pre-service and in-service teacher training for the local higher education institutions and for coordinating teacher training with higher education institutions located within their regions, but attached to the ministries of the central government. Higher education institutions are responsible for their own teacher training (e.g. formulation of plans, concrete arrangement for teachers' advanced studies on teaching theories and practices, and sending teachers abroad for further studies).

Prior to their employment, nursery and kindergarten teachers must: follow specialized courses at secondary normal schools for pre-school education; acquire general and scientific knowledge and skills needed for undertaking nursery and kindergarten work; learn about laws and characteristics of pre-school children's



physiological and psychological development; master basic knowledge and skills in childcare and education; develop some knowledge about how to conduct research on pre-school education; develop the ability to increase social contacts and bring the initiative of the family and society of the pre-school children into full play; learn how to observe and understand pre-school children's behaviour; and learn how to set objectives for child care and education, to organize games and other educational activities for children, and to manage the class and nursery or kindergarten.

Before they start working, primary school teachers must: acquire a specialized education in politics, general literacy and scientific knowledge, educational theories, art, physical culture, and labour skills in secondary normal or other schools or above. They must also obtain job training which includes: an effort to inspire their dedication to primary school education; instructions on related laws; regulations and policies; developing familiarity with the teaching and general educational theories; and mastering teaching methods for different courses (if the students are non-normal school graduates).

Prior to employment, teachers of secondary schools must receive an education in: politics, physical culture, basic theories of specialized courses, basic knowledge and skills, pedagogy, psychology, and develop basic knowledge and skills about methodologies of specific courses in normal universities or other and in schools of higher learning.

Prior to employment, university and college teachers must receive training, especially those undergraduates and post-graduates who immediately start working as assistants and lectures respectively after finishing their studies.

The main forms of in-service training for primary and secondary school teachers are as follows:

- Systematically send teachers to teacher training schools for advanced studies or normal schools at different levels with the purpose of making them qualify for a certain academic status.
- Apply a training model which combines correspondence and satellite TV education with a national examination system for self-taught students.
- Offer the chance for junior middle school teachers to take the courses in two-year programmes of normal universities though self-study and acquire qualifications through a series of examinations.
- Encourage teachers to study while working. Encourage them to improve their competence in teaching in close connection with their teaching practice and in all possible forms: to be trained by the school itself, to learn through research work, to require the veteran teachers help the young (or to encourage them in self-directed teaching).
- Require the government educational authorities sponsor all kinds of training programmes and get teachers together for intense training.



- Require schools at various levels which are authorized to undertake teachers' training, to offer training in accordance with specific plans for teachers of primary and middle schools who are: new on their jobs, need training for their specific posts, are the backbones of the school, or need more education to meet the qualifications for a higher academic title.

The main forms of in-service training for university and college teachers are:

- Offer the chance to take a specified course to those who are preparing themselves to teach that course.
- Offer the chance for young teachers (who still have not been conferred an M.A. or M.S. degree) to apply for an M.A., M.S., or Ph.D. thereby becoming candidates equivalent to post-graduates.
- Allow teachers to receive advanced training as visiting scholars in domestic institutions of higher learning. This is an important way to train academic leaders as well as an effective channel to promote intercollegiate academic exchanges.
- Offer advanced studies programmes for backbone teachers, mainly intended for young teachers with two years or above teaching experience.
- Offer short academic conferences or lectures. This is the way teachers get together in order to learn from, and exchange views with, each other and discuss the new developments, achievements, as well as problems that need to be solved in a certain academic field.
- Send some teachers, mainly young and middle-aged *backbones*, overseas for further studies.
- Offer advance academic conferences for the purpose of training new academic leaders and *backbones* in specific fields so as to fulfil the strategic task of completing the "change of guards", where the young take over the tasks from the old.

The workload of teachers at the compulsory education level is primarily the responsibility of the local authorities, under the macro-guidance of the central government. Generally speaking, the number of teaching hours for senior secondary school teachers is ten to fourteen hours per week; for junior secondary school teachers, twelve to sixteen weekly hours; and for primary school teachers, sixteen to twenty-two weekly hours. The localities determine the number of teaching hours for extra-curricular classes, according to local conditions. The workload for teachers at higher education institutions is determined by the institutions themselves.

The leveled-salary is practiced both for teaching and support staff. Salaries are composed of two parts: post salary and allowances. The allowances account for 30% of the total salary and the grade of post salary is determined on the basis of: performance, duration of employment, record of schooling, etc.

In accordance with the Teacher Law, the main material benefits include: (i) teachers' average salary shall not be lower or higher than that of the State public servants and shall be raised gradually; (ii) teachers of primary and middle schools and vocational schools enjoy subsidies, primarily in accordance with the length of their teaching; (iii) local people's governments at all levels, and the departments concerned under the State Council, shall give priority and preferential treatment to teachers in the construction, renting and sales of the houses in urban areas; (iv) teachers enjoy equal medical care treatment as the State public servants of the localities; they shall be given regular health check-ups and enjoy recuperation holidays, organized in line with actual local conditions; (v) after retiring or resigning from posts, teachers enjoy the retirement or resignation treatment as stipulated by the State; local people's governments above the county level can appropriately raise the pensions for the retired primary and middle school teachers who have long been engaged in education and teaching; (vi) measures shall be adopted to improve the treatment of the teachers who receive state subsidies and are paid by the collectives, so that they can enjoy equal pay for equal work just as the teachers who are paid by the State.

The Constitution provides that female teachers enjoy the same equal rights and treatment as their male counterparts.

Following the salary reform in 1993, the overall salary level of teachers has registered a substantial gain. The retirement benefits have risen for teachers in over twenty provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities to the extent that secondary and primary school teachers who have had a teaching career of thirty years (twenty-five years for female teachers) shall have a pension of the same amount as their salary.

In recent years, thanks to the numerous preferential policies adopted by the State Council and the various local governments to solve the housing difficulties for teachers, housing projects for teachers have made huge progress. In 1994, over 8.9 billion RMB was invested in housing projects for teachers of secondary and primary schools and regular institutions of higher education all over the country, with a completed floor area of 14.68 million square meters and 205,000 apartments. In 1995, investment reached 11.9 billion, 33.7% over the same figure of 1994. Completed floor area was 20.08 million square meters, representing an increase of 36.85% over 1994. As a result of these substantial inputs, the housing difficulties for teachers have been alleviated to a certain extent and the per capita living space for the families of teachers has been markedly increased.

In 1994 and 1995, China continued to give training to headmasters (principals) at various places in accordance with the State Education Commission guidelines. The training took either the form of spare-time self study (with special coaching and with no less than 300 class hours devoted to it) or a three-month concentrated study focused on educational laws regulations and policies, lectures in pedagogic courses, and the theory and practice of school management. In the course of these two years, nearly 350,000 headmasters received this training nationally, and at the same time conferences on specific problems were also held by local authorities in various places to look into particular issues.



The training of university presidents is mainly entrusted by the State Education Commission to the National Academy of Educational Administration (NAEA), which, from 1994 to 1995, trained 20% presidents and vice-presidents. The main content includes: the development strategies and policies in the field of society, economy, science and technology, and education; the reform and development policies of higher education, educational laws and regulations; theories and practice of school management; world trends in promoting and organizing scientific research and higher education reforms. Each training programme lasted two to three months. The prior-to-work training of educational inspectors is handled at two levels. First, under direct leadership of the Central Government, the State Education Commission (in collaboration with the municipality) is responsible for the training of inspectors at the precinct and city levels. Second, under the direct leadership of the Central Government, the educational authorities of autonomous regions, provinces, and municipalities are responsible for the training of county and district inspectors. The main content of the inspectors training includes: selected lectures on Marxist philosophy; basic educational theories; general theory on educational management; educational inspection and evaluation; educational laws, regulations and policies; and various kinds of inspections. By the end of 1994, about 43.5% of the nation's inspectors had received prior-to-work training.

In 2000, there were 9.86 million teachers working in regular primary and middle schools, of whom some 4 million were in middle schools and 5.86 million in primary schools. (Ministry of Education, 2001).

Educational research and information

China has established key educational research bases across the nation, provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities under the direct leadership of the Central Government. The thirty provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities under the direct leadership of the Central Government, as well as six other cities listed separately in state plans, have educational research institutes and over 700 higher education institutions have established the school's research institute/office on higher education. A few ministries and agencies of the State government also have set up specialized educational research organizations. Non-governmental research activities have also been developing rapidly. Four national non-governmental learned societies were founded one after another. They are: the Chinese Education Society, the Chinese Society of Higher Education, the Chinese Adult Education Society, and the Chinese Society of Vocational and Technical Education, which have, respectively, ninety-four, seventy-nine, eighty-three and seventy-eight members. Almost all government departments and all industries have established their specific educational research societies or associations.

There are about 10,000 professional educational researchers in the country. The number could be approximately one million, if we include researchers on a part-time basis, teachers, educational administrators, principals and presidents. This forms a preliminary three-level research network (provincial, municipal and schools at grassroots level), combining the efforts of professionals, part-time researchers and the broad masses of ordinary educators. Progress has not only been made in quantity, but also in quality. Particular attention has been paid to the training of young and middle-aged researchers with some favourable policies, including the establishment of twenty



special youth funds in the Eighth Five Year Plan of National Educational Scientific Research and the eighty-three special research topics for young people along with the necessary government research grants for them (thus providing conditions for accelerating the growth of young and middle-aged educational researchers).

The range of educational research has been increasingly expanded, covering not only all aspects of education, but also politics, economy, science and technology, and society. The number of research subjects has also increased, including such topics or subjects as: basic educational theories; moral education; educational psychology; history of education; comparative education; educational development strategy and educational management; elementary education; vocational and technical education; higher education; adult education; educational legislation; educational policies and national defence.

The total number of research projects reached 592, with special focus on important theoretical and practical issues of educational development and growth (both at home and abroad), such as the study of: the relationship between educational and economic development; the proper percentage of the education budget in the GNP; the guarantee mechanism and the efficiency of the use of the education budget; the improvement of government macro-management of education; the demands on people's cultural qualities in the 21st century and the goals of elementary education; basic experiences in vocational education; the requirements and specifications of graduates from institutions of higher education; the adult education system; the theory and practice in China's rural education reform; the functions of modern education; the integration of education and productive labour in theory and practice. By the end of 1995, about 90% of the various kinds of key subjects had been completed. A great number of research subjects of local interest have also been undertaken and successfully concluded by a considerable number of provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities (directly under the central government's leadership).

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Web resources

Ministry of Education: <http://www.moe.edu.cn/> [In Chinese, some information in English. Last checked: October 2007.]

Hong Kong Education and Manpower Bureau: <http://www.emb.gov.hk/> [In Chinese and English. Last checked: October 2007.]

Macao Education and Youth Affairs Department: <http://www.dsej.gov.mo/> [In Chinese, Portuguese and English. Last checked: October 2007.]

For updated links, consult the Web page of the International Bureau of Education of UNESCO: <http://www.ibe.unesco.org/links.htm>