

2. New Culture of Learning

As learning reform can be implemented without required regulations, and the improvement of learning process is considered to be extremely important, various efforts have been initiated and carried out in parallel with the drafting of the *National Education Act* in order to move towards the new culture of learning.

2.1 Learners as the Centre of Learning

According to Section 22 of the *National Education Act 1999*, all learners are capable of learning and self - development and are regarded as being most important. To ensure desirable characteristics of future learners, child - centred learning has been promoted by all agencies concerned. Both teachers and learners are currently encouraged to change their roles. Teachers must change themselves from “tellers” to “facilitators”, while learners are encouraged to learn by themselves with the help of teachers.

- **Change Agents for the Learning Reform**

The most significant agents of teaching and learning reform are teachers. Therefore, *ONEC* initiated the National Teacher and Master Teacher Awards in 1998 in order to recognize and reward outstanding teachers and set them as models for other teachers in terms of teaching- learning reform.

The *MOE* has currently accepted the idea of learning reform through national teachers and master teachers. Any teacher who is likely to change his teaching



Master teachers and their networks of teachers

behaviour according to the child - centred concept will be selected as Spearhead Teacher. This type of teacher will attend workshops on child-centred learning, under the supervision of national teachers and master teachers. These teachers will create increasing agents of change for learning reform through their networks of teachers.

● **Research and Development on Learning Process**

Research and development projects on teaching - learning processes are essential for the success of learning reform. Teaching staff in all faculties of education and educational institutions as well as personnel in other public and private organizations will be encouraged to conduct R&D projects with financial support from the *Thailand Research Fund*.

The objectives of the R&D projects are to develop basic education institutions through participation of all parties concerned, focusing on the learning process reform of the whole school. The expected outcomes of the R&D projects are as follows:

- Changes in paradigm and learning process,
- Development of learners in line with standards set,
- Body of knowledge on research and development,
- Development of research skills and utilization of research as an instrument in work development and building the body of knowledge,
- Community participation in learning process,
- Networking of cooperation for development.





● **Leading Schools for Learning Reform**

In order to promote and support schools or basic education institutions that are in the process of teaching and learning reform or want to initiate the reform of learning, *ONEC* has launched a project to select 1,000 schools to be leading schools for learning reform. These schools will be

provided with documents on educational reform and learning reform, support for personnel development, and a part of financial support for reform of learning. They are required to improve the quality of education to conduct research and development on teaching and learning in their schools, and finally, create networks by providing knowledge and experience to other schools. This project is expected to effectively encourage more schools to participate in the reform of learning in line with the *1999 National Education Act*.

2.2 The Reformed Curriculum for Basic Education

To achieve the objectives of learning reform, the curricula at all levels of education will be diversified and commensurate with each level. Both academic and professional substance will aim at human development with a desirable balance regarding knowledge, critical thinking, capability, virtue and social responsibility. As a result, the existing curricula for basic education have been developed and redesigned by *MOE* to ensure effective reform of learning.

A. Curriculum Framework for Basic Education

The new Curriculum Framework for Basic Education has been developed based on the comments of all educational personnel,

both public and private. The framework consists of concepts and principles, curriculum structure, objectives, basic education standards, standards of groups of learning contents, assessment of learning contents, organization of learning, as well as monitoring, inspection, evaluation and report.

Standards of subject groups and their indicators have been drafted in line with four key stages of basic education : 1) primary education Grades 1-3, 2) primary education Grades 4-6, 3) secondary education Grades 7-9, and 4) secondary education Grades 10-12. The subjects are classified into 8 groups : 1) Health Education and Physical Education; 2) Art, Music and Dramatic Arts; 3) Mathematics; 4) Thai Language; 5) Social Studies 6) Science and Technology; 7) Foreign Languages; and 8) Career and Work Education.

The prescribed standards and indicators have been used for development of the national core curriculum which will provide the guidelines for all schools to prepare their learning contents in detail relevant to local conditions and wisdom.

The Curriculum Framework for Basic Education has been prescribed in line with Section 27 of the *National Education Act 1999*, with 3 components :

1) The curricular framework specifying its objectives, standards, as well as assessment and evaluation methods of teaching and learning.

2) The framework for the national core curriculum to be organized consistently through 4 key stages.

3) The framework for local curriculum providing schools with guidelines for adaptation of learning contents appropriate to their localities.





B. Preparation of National Core Curriculum

Concepts and guidelines for curriculum management including strategies for the introduction of the new curriculum have been developed as follows:

1) Key structures of the core curriculum have been developed comprising 8 subject groups.

2) Four strategies have been set out for effective implementation of the new curriculum:

- A strategy for curriculum development includes a trial of curriculum management; research studies on the curriculum implementation process; improvement and development of curriculum implementation; curricular personnel development; and introduction of the new curriculum.

- A strategy for curriculum management includes public relations; guidance; academic networking system; supervision; monitoring, inspection and evaluation.

- A strategy for organization of learning experiences includes learning resources; professional associations, classroom research, development of learning media, and promotion of Master Teachers.

- A strategy for assessment of educational quality which sets out that all educational institutions are required to establish their own quality assurance system, with inspection and review as well as

the intervention of agencies concerned in their educational areas. Each educational institution must request evaluation of its quality, both internal and external.

C. Implementation Plan for the Reformed Curriculum

The new curriculum for basic education will be introduced in the academic year 2002. It will start with the first year of each key stage and the second and the third for the following years as follows:

Academic Year 2002 : Grades 1, 4, 7 and 10.

Academic Year 2003 : Grades 2, 5, 8 and 11.

Academic Year 2004 : Grades 3, 6, 9 and 12.

2.3 A System of Educational Quality Assurance

To ensure improvement of educational quality and standards at all levels, a system of educational quality assurance has been initiated, with both internal and external evaluation.

1) Internal Evaluation

As internal quality assurance must be regarded as part of educational administration, educational institutions and agencies have been encouraged to conduct internal evaluation to improve the quality of education. So far, research and development on internal evaluation has been undertaken in 30 schools by *ONEC* for the preparation of guidebooks and internal evaluation models. *ONEC* has also conducted research on the status of internal evaluation in educational institutions so as to promote internal evaluation and prepare all schools for external evaluation.





Sumalee Suntravirat, 1999 Master Teacher

2) External Evaluation

The *National Education Act 1999* requires that each educational institution will receive external quality evaluation at least once every five years and the evaluation results will be submitted to the relevant agencies and made available to the general public. The first round of external evaluation of all educational institutions will be completed by 20 August 2005.

The *Office of the National Education Standards* has been established as an independent public organization since 4 November 2000. The major role of the Office is to promote and set educational standards as well as to organize a system for quality assurance, evaluation and monitoring the educational standards of both public and private institutions. It will design a system of external and internal evaluation and prepare and implement a major reform of educational testing and measurement.

In order to achieve these reform objectives, understanding and support of all parties concerned and the general public are most essential. Consequently, measures and strategies to mobilize public participation should be urgently introduced to move forward the reform of education for the new century.