



Chapter 3

Part Three: Important Actions for the Reform and Development of Basic Education by the Chinese Government

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(1) Three-Year Action Plan for Preschool Education (2010)

The Three-Year Action Plan for Preschool Education was a major policy decision by the State Council to accelerate the development of preschool education and effectively address the issue of "difficulty in securing kindergarten enrollment". In 2010, the State Council mandated that all provinces (autonomous regions, and municipalities) formulate and implement county-level three-year action plans for preschool education. The Action Plan outlined three key measures: 1. Establishing development targets for preschool education over the next three years, with annual implementation of construction tasks. 2. Launching projects to expand preschool education resources and enhance kindergarten teacher training, incorporating them into key public welfare initiatives with guaranteed support. 3. Introducing a series of policies in accordance with teaching staff standards and the need of strengthening preschool teacher training, regulating community kindergarten operations and improving childcare-education quality. Additionally, the central government initiated major programs to support rural preschool education in central and western regions. By 2013, the first phase of the Action Plan concluded with remarkable outcomes: kindergarten enrollment surged by 9.18 million children—equivalent to the total

growth of the previous decade—and the gross enrollment rate for three-year preschool education reached 67.5%, surpassing the National Medium-and Long-Term Education Reform and Development Plan (2010-2020) target¹⁶ of 60% by 2015, four years ahead of schedule.

Considering the diachronic and synchronic nature of education, China has also paid close attention to challenges of implementing these policies. China launched the second (2014-2016) and third (2017-2020) Action Plan, dynamically adjusting priorities. The second action plan optimized resource allocation, emphasized sustainability, strengthened government accountability, and leveraged central fiscal incentives. The third action plan expanded affordable kindergartens, improved institutional mechanisms, and elevated education quality to achieve nationwide access to “quality” preschool education, ensuring affordability and availability.

Through the implementation of three consecutive Three-Year Action Plans for Preschool Education, China has essentially established an inclusive, adequately-resourced, and quality-driven public service system for early childhood education. Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, the nationwide execution of

16. www.gov.cn | Three-Year Action Plan for Preschool Education

these three-phase action plans has catalyzed rapid development in preschool education. By 2020, China's kindergarten infrastructure had expanded to 292,000 institutions, comprising 124,000 public kindergartens and 168,000 private kindergartens, representing 1.9-fold, 2.6-fold, and 1.6-fold increases respectively from 2010 levels. Notably, 80% of enrolled children attended subsidized kindergartens. This systematic expansion has

substantially alleviated the previously prevalent issues of “enrollment scarcity” and “prohibitive costs” across regions, achieving near-universal access to subsidized preschool education. The tangible “educational dividend” has become perceptible to the general populace, marking the successful realization of baseline accessibility and equitable distribution in early childhood education.

(2) Sports and Aesthetic Education Immersion Action Plan (2019)

The Sports and Aesthetic Education Immersion Action Plan aims to leverage resources from university sports and aesthetic education faculty and students to provide sustained, targeted assistance and volunteer services to local areas—particularly old revolutionary base areas, ethnic minority regions, border areas, impoverished areas, and rural communities—ensuring balanced development of sports and aesthetic education in primary and secondary schools. By delivering high-quality educational resources, the plan seeks to enhance teaching standards and education quality, promote the regularization, diversification, and specialization of sports and aesthetic education in schools, and ensure that every student has access to equitable and quality sports and aesthetic education.

In order to thoroughly implement General Secretary Xi Jinping's important expositions on education and the spirit of the National Education Conference, promote the reform and development of school sports and aesthetic education in the new era, promote educational equity, and optimize resource allocation, the Office of the Ministry of Education (MOE) issued the "Notice on Implementing the Sports and Aesthetic Education Immersion Action Plan" (hereinafter referred to as the Notice) in June 2019, launching a pilot program in

select universities.

The Notice outlines the following core principles of the Action Plan: 1. Education-Oriented Principle: emphasizing the characteristics of sports and aesthetic education and the developmental needs of students, the plan promotes fine traditional Chinese culture, revolutionary culture, and socialist core values, guiding students to establish sound concepts of life, health, and aesthetics. 2. Specialized Development: building on regional cultural characteristics and leveraging the strengths of universities and schools, the plan encourages the creation of specialized sports and aesthetic curricula and practice models tailored to local conditions. 3. Collaborative Advancement: by coordinating urban-rural development and establishing a long-term collaboration mechanism between governments, universities, and schools, the plan aims to stimulate internal motivation for reform and foster a dynamic, multi-stakeholder model for sports and aesthetic education.

Under the Notice, every university participating in the pilot program is required to support 1-2 rural primary or secondary schools that lack sufficient sports and aesthetic education courses, providing assistance in four key areas: curriculum and instruction, practical activities, campus culture development, teacher training and

capacity building.

In 2019, the MOE supported approximately 20 universities in piloting the program, selected through university applications, provincial recommendations, and MOE approval. Local governments are expected to treat this initiative as a critical measure for achieving balanced sports and aesthetic education

development, and they should strengthen coordination, maximize the program's demonstration and leading role, and establish mechanisms to extend its impact to more schools. Additionally, efforts should be made to promote successful models and foster public support on sports and aesthetic education reform.¹⁷

17. www.gov.cn | Notice of the Ministry of Education on the Full Implementation of the School Aesthetic Education Immersion Action

(3) "14th Five-Year" Action Plan for Enhancing Preschool Education (2021)

To fully implement the decisions of the Fifth Plenary Session of the 19th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on "enhancing the support system for public-interest preschool education" and "building a high-quality education system," actively support the national population development strategy, and further advance the development of accessible, inclusive, safe, and high-quality preschool education, nine government departments—including the Ministry of Education, the National Development and Reform Commission, the Ministry of Public Security, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security, the Ministry of Natural Resources, the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development, the State Taxation Administration, and the Medical Security Bureau—jointly issued and implemented the *Action Plan for Promoting the Development of Preschool Education during the 14th Five-Year Plan* in December 2021.¹⁸

The action plan outlines the overall goals for the reform and development of preschool education during the "14th Five-Year Plan" period. By 2025, a public service system for preschool education that covers both urban and rural areas, with rational resource allocation, and prioritizes public

benefit and universal accessibility will be further improved. It also sets forth three specific objectives: (1) Development Goals. The national gross enrollment rate for three-year preschool education will exceed 90%, the coverage rate of public-interest kindergartens will surpass 85%, and more than 50% of children will be enrolled in public kindergartens. (2) Support Mechanism Goals. The support system for public-interest preschool education will be further refined. (3) Quality Goals. The quality of kindergarten education and care will be comprehensively improved, and a scientific transition mechanism between kindergartens and primary schools will be essentially established.

In 2021, preschool education achieved the goal of basic universal access and entered a new phase focused on comprehensively improving quality. During the "14th Five-Year Plan" period, the primary tasks for the reform and development of preschool education are to address gaps in inclusive resources while shifting the focus to improving institutional mechanisms and enhancing the quality of education. The key tasks include: (1) Addressing Shortcomings in Inclusive Resources. Strengthen the construction of village-level kindergartens, and build or expand a number of kindergartens in urban areas with growing populations or

18. Source: Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China | Notification of the Ministry of Education and Eight Other Departments on Issuing the Action Plan for Promoting the Development of Preschool Education during the 14th Five-Year Plan Period and the Action Plan for Promoting the Development of County-Level General Senior High Schools during the 14th Five-Year Plan Period.

concentrated migrant populations. Optimize the layout of preschool education and the public service network in both urban and rural areas to effectively ensure that school-age children have access to kindergartens. (2) Improving Inclusive Support Mechanisms. Earnestly implement the primary responsibility of governments at all levels for the development of preschool education. Strengthen the investment support

mechanism and establish a robust system for the recruitment, staffing, and salary guarantees of kindergarten teachers. (3) Comprehensively Enhancing the Quality of Education and Care. Deepen reforms in kindergarten education, fully promote teaching and research reforms, improve the quality evaluation system, and enhance teachers' professional skills and practical capabilities.¹⁹

19. Source: Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China | Q&A with the person in charge of the Department of Basic Education of the Ministry of Education on the Action Plan for Promoting the Development of Preschool Education during the 14th Five-Year Plan Period

(4) "14th Five-Year" Action Plan for Enhancing Development of Ordinary High Schools in Counties (2021)

The Action Plan for the Development and Enhancement of County-Level General High Schools during the 14th Five-Year Plan Period is a strategic initiative designed to thoroughly implement the spirit of the 5th Plenary Session of the 19th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. Its goals include further improving the accessibility and inclusivity of preschool education, strengthening the development of county-level general high schools, and promoting the high-quality development of basic education. The plan was jointly issued on December 9, 2021, by nine government departments, including the Ministry of Education, the National Development and Reform Commission, the Ministry of Public Security, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security, the Ministry of Natural Resources, the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development, the State Taxation Administration, and the National Healthcare Security Administration. The plan establishes one overarching goal and five specific objectives.²⁰ The Overall Goal is that by 2025, the overall educational standards of county-level general high schools will be significantly enhanced. A coordinated development mechanism between county-level and urban general high schools within

municipal administrative regions will be basically established, general high school education and secondary vocational education will be integrated for coordinated development, and the gross enrollment rate in senior high school education will exceed 92%. The five Specific Objectives include: (1) Regulating Enrollment and Reversing Student Loss. Enrollment across public and private general high schools will be fully regulated, and the issue of student attrition from county-level high schools will be fundamentally resolved. (2) Strengthening Teacher Recruitment and Development. A sound mechanism for teacher recruitment and incentives will be established, with significant improvements in the professional development of principals and teaching staff at county-level high schools. (3) Ensuring Adequate Funding. A robust funding mechanism for county-level high schools will be established, providing a reliable guarantee for their operational budgets. (4) Improving School Infrastructure. The facilities of underperforming county-level high schools will be significantly improved, with school construction achieving basic standardization. (5) Deepening Educational Reforms. Educational and teaching reforms will be further advanced, leading to a notable improvement in the quality of education at

20. Notification of the Nine Departments including the Ministry of Education on Issuing the Action Plan for Promoting the Development and Quality Improvement of Preschool Education during the 14th Five-Year Plan Period and the Action Plan for Promoting the Development and Quality Improvement of County-level Ordinary High Schools during the 14th Five-Year Plan Period

county-level high schools.

Focusing on achieving the main objectives, the County High School Improvement Plan outlines four key tasks: (1) Deepening the Reform of Enrollment Management. Local governments are required to fully implement an enrollment model based on junior high school academic proficiency test scores, combined with comprehensive quality evaluations. Efforts should focus on establishing a standardized, orderly, and well-supervised enrollment mechanism. Illegal cross-regional recruitment of top students must be strictly prohibited to prevent excessive loss of student enrollment from county high schools and to maintain a healthy educational ecosystem. (2) Strengthening the Development of Teaching Staff. Local governments must promote the rational distribution of outstanding talents to prevent the outflow of skilled personnel from county high schools. Greater efforts should be made to recruit more teachers for county high schools, optimize the allocation of teaching resources, enhance teacher training, and ensure teachers' salaries and benefits. The goal is to build a teaching workforce for

county high schools that is sufficient in quantity, well-structured, high-quality, and relatively stable. (3) Addressing Weaknesses in School Operations. Regions are required to strengthen the standardized construction of county high schools, fully eliminate large class sizes, and effectively control the size of large-scale schools. Additionally, efforts should be made to upgrade subject-specific classrooms, innovation laboratories, experimental facilities, and information-based teaching tools, to enhance school culture development, and to improve living conditions, including boarding, catering, and sanitation facilities. (4) Improving the Quality of Education and Teaching. Localities should deepen curriculum and teaching reforms, actively promote the application of exemplary teaching practices, and improve systems for course selection, flexible class arrangements, comprehensive quality evaluations, and student development guidance. By leveraging agricultural and rural resources, labor education and practical activities should be strengthened to develop a distinctive talent-cultivation model for county-level general high schools with unique regional characteristics.²¹

21. Source: Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China | Q&A with the person in charge of the Department of Basic Education of the Ministry of Education on the Action Plan for Promoting the Development of Preschool Education during the 14th Five-Year Plan Period

(5) Youth "Foundation" Project (2022)

The Youth Foundation-Laying Project is a key initiative guided by the overarching goal of forging a strong sense of community for the Chinese nation. Its aim is to cultivate young people by strengthening their education in ideals, convictions, and socialist core values, thereby laying a solid foundation for their future growth and development. During his 2022 visit to Xinjiang, General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized the need to "deeply advance the Youth 'Foundation-Laying' Project and build a shared spiritual home for the Chinese nation." Promoting the growth and development of youth from all ethnic groups across the country is a fundamental and strategic undertaking for building socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era. The Youth "Foundation-Laying" Project is centered on the following core actions: (1) Enhancing Youth Cognitive Competence. Extensive publicity and education are conducted on topics such as national and regional conditions, legal awareness, ethnic unity, and Chinese culture. These efforts aim to strengthen young people's "Five Identities", as well as their sense of national identity, civic responsibility, and legal compliance. (2) Strengthening Youth Communication Skills. Comprehensively promote education in the national common language and implement programs to improve youth proficiency in

learning and using the language. (3) Deepening Education in Ideals, Convictions, and Socialist Core Values. Cultivate a generation of youth with ideals, morality, knowledge, and discipline. Diverse and innovative initiatives for fostering spiritual and cultural development among youth will be carried out to guide them in deeply embedding a sense of family and national belonging.

In recent years, various regions have carried out numerous vivid practices around the Youth "Foundation-Laying" Project. In the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, the Youth "Foundation-Laying" Project has established an education system for forging a strong sense of community for the Chinese nation, with progressive content across different school stages and effective integration of various educational carriers. The region has invested 20 million yuan to strengthen the construction of related bases, and selected multiple universities, primary and secondary schools as research and practice bases as well as demonstration schools. In Shandong Province, more than 520 schools at all levels and of various types have launched the Youth "Foundation-Laying" Project. The province has innovatively created a "Three-Full Foundation-Laying" work model covering "all school stages, all disciplines, and all

fields," deeply planting the sense of community for the Chinese nation in the hearts of young students. In Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, this character-building program has developed a tiered educational framework that strengthens national unity consciousness throughout students' academic journey. With 20 million yuan invested in specialized facilities, the region has designated model institutions—including

selected universities and K-12 schools—as demonstration hubs for research and practical application. Shandong Province has rolled out this character-nurturing initiative in over 520 educational institutions of all types and levels. Pioneering a comprehensive "3-All" methodology (all grade levels, all subjects, all learning environments), the province ensures young minds internalize the concept of our shared national identity.

(6) Action for the Deepening of Curriculum and Teaching Reform in Basic Education (2023)

The *Deepening Action for Curriculum and Instruction Reform in Basic Education* is an important initiative launched to implement the decisions of the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China on deepening educational reform, fulfill the fundamental task of fostering virtue through education, promote the all-around development and healthy growth of students, and advance the high-quality development of basic education. The action aims to build a high-quality education system by deepening curriculum and teaching reforms, providing strong support for cultivating socialist builders and successors who are well-developed morally, intellectually, physically, aesthetically, and labor-wise.

The *Action Plan for Deepening the Reform of Basic Education Curriculum and Instruction* was released in May 2023. It consists of four parts: guiding ideology, action objectives, key tasks, and organizational implementation. The first part is the guiding ideology, which mainly includes the basic principles and directional guidance for promoting the curriculum and instruction reform. The second part is the action objectives. Actions are taken to address the main problems in the current curriculum and instruction reform. Launched in 2023, the reform aims to establish a regular and long-

term implementation mechanism by 2027, generating new momentum for basic education curriculum and instruction reform. The third part is the key tasks. From the five aspects of implementation of curriculum plans, instruction method reform, scientific literacy improvement, instructional evaluation guidance, and professional support and digital enabling, 14 measures are proposed. By firmly grasping the key links and important areas such as formulating curriculum implementation plans, tackling the difficult and key points of instructional reform, strengthening science education, and digitally enabling instruction, the curriculum and instruction reform is promoted to be effectively implemented. The fourth part is the organizational implementation, which mainly includes strengthening organizational leadership, providing conditional guarantees, and conducting publicity and promotion to ensure the smooth implementation of the curriculum and instruction reform.

Overall, *the Action Plan for Deepening the Reform of Basic Education Curriculum and Instruction* has not only enhanced students' comprehensive quality and teachers' teaching capabilities, but also optimized education quality, promoted educational

equity, fostered a healthy educational ecosystem, injected strong momentum into the high-quality development of basic education in China, and provided a solid

foundation for cultivating socialist builders and successors with all-round development in morality, intelligence, physique, aesthetics, and labor.²²

22. www.gov.cn | Action Plan for Expanding and Improving the Quality of Basic Education

(7) Action Plan for Expanding and Improving the Quality of Basic Education in the New Era (2023)

The *Opinions on Implementing the Action Plan for Expanding and Improving the Quality of Basic Education in the New Era* was released in August 2023. It is an important guiding document dedicated to deepening the supply-side reform of basic education, constructing a high-quality basic education system, and promoting the fairness and high-quality development of basic education. This action aims to deepen the supply-side reform of basic education, further expand the "cake" of high-quality educational resources, accelerate the construction of a high-quality basic education system where children can receive excellent preschool education and students can enjoy high-quality teaching, fundamentally solve the contradiction between the overall shortage of high-quality educational resources and the people's aspiration for "good education", and enhance the people's sense of gain, happiness, and security in education.

The primary objectives of the initiative are as follows. By 2027, a framework for high-quality and inclusive development will be basically established for preschool education, high-quality and balanced development for compulsory education, high-quality and characteristic development for general senior high schools, and high-quality and integrated development for special education. (1)

Preschool Education: Strive to increase the proportion of children enrolled in public kindergartens to over 60% (compared to 54% in 2022). (2) Compulsory Education: Expand the number of new high-quality schools and significantly increase the supply of high-quality school places. (3) Senior High Education: Cultivate a number of high-quality and characteristic senior high schools, steadily advance the diversified development of general senior high schools, and continuously improve the gross enrollment rate in senior high education. (4) Special Education: Ensure that special education schools basically cover all counties with a population of over 200,000, and maintain the enrollment rate of school-age children with disabilities in compulsory education at over 97% (compared to 96% in 2022). The specific measures of the initiative include eight major actions: Inclusive Guarantee for Preschool Education, Strengthening School Quality in Compulsory Education, Connotative Development of General Senior High Schools, Care for Students in Special Education, Enhancement of Quality-Oriented Education, Construction of a High-Quality Teacher Workforce, Digital Strategy Implementation, Comprehensive Reform Tackling Key Challenges.

Since 2024, 14,000 existing high-quality primary and secondary schools have developed school-specific plans for potential-tapping and capacity-expansion. Additionally, 1,609 new high-quality primary and secondary schools have been added, providing a total of 1.937 million new high-quality school places.²³ The initiative is committed to deepening the

supply-side reform of basic education, expanding the "cake" of high-quality educational resources, accelerating the construction of a high-quality basic education system that ensures excellent preschool education and high-quality schooling for all, and striving to meet the people's need for "good education".

23. www.gov.cn| Opinions of the Ministry of Education, the National Development and Reform Commission, and the Ministry of Finance on Implementing the Action Plan for Expanding and Improving the Quality of Basic Education in the New Era.

(8) "Classic Glories of China" Themed Reading Initiative (2023)

The "*Classic Glories of China*" Themed Reading Initiative is a key policy to strengthen the promotion of the national common language and writing system, inherit and develop excellent traditional Chinese culture, and effectively advance the national reading campaign for adolescents.

In November 2023, the State Language Commission issued the Guidelines for Deepening the Implementation of the "*Classic Glories of China*" Themed Reading Initiative (hereinafter referred to as the *Guidelines*). The Guidelines consists of three main parts: (1) Overall Requirements: Including guiding ideology, work objectives, and basic requirements. Notably, the guiding ideology is rooted in Xi Jinping Thought on Culture. (2) Key Tasks: Eight measures are outlined, including promoting integration into education and teaching, strengthening teacher training, enhancing brand visibility of activities, improving digital empowerment, deepening research and interpretation of classics, expanding activity platforms, enhancing service quality, and advancing classical exchanges and dissemination. (3) Supporting Measures: These include strengthening organizational leadership, enhancing coordination, establishing long-term mechanisms, and reinforcing publicity and promotion.

The *Guidelines* focuses on implementing

the fundamental task of fostering virtue through education, putting forward goals such as enhancing adolescents' "one capability and two awarenesses" (competence in using the national common spoken and written Chinese language, awareness of consciously standardizing its use, and awareness of consciously inheriting and promoting excellent Chinese language culture), and advancing the construction of "bookish campuses." It clarifies basic requirements such as upholding the cultivation of morality and spiritual development, emphasizing the need to grasp the connotation and extension, coordinate various resources, and integrate them into the entire process and all fields of school, family, and social education. It also highlights the role of various member units of the National Language Commission to promote integrated development. Aiming at accelerating the construction of an education power, the *Guidelines* proposes key tasks such as integrating into education and teaching and improving the level of digital empowerment, stressing the need to enhance service quality and efficiency, and paying attention to classic reading among adolescents in rural and ethnic minority areas, as well as special groups. Regarding the improvement of management mechanisms, local authorities and schools are required to include the "Classic Glories of

China" themed reading initiative in their annual work plans and arrangements, making overall plans in terms of planning guidance, policy support, organizational guarantees,

and mechanism building. It emphasizes the need to collaborate with relevant units to jointly promote and implement the initiative.²⁴

24. www.gov.cn | "Classic Glories of China" Themed Reading Initiative

(9) Special campaign for "Safety Safeguard" in Off-campus Training for Primary and Secondary School Students (2023)

To comprehensively strengthen the standardized management of off-campus training for primary and secondary school students, prevent various accidents, and ensure the personal safety of students, China's Ministry of Education, Ministry of Public Security, and National Fire and Rescue Administration jointly launched a national "Safety Safeguard Special Campaign" from October to December 2023.

The campaign aimed to identify potential safety risks in training facilities, fire safety, and personnel qualifications. It also aimed to establish comprehensive safety management systems, raise awareness of safety training, improve service standards, and crack down on crimes that harm the physical and mental health of minors, thereby safeguarding the safety of students in off-campus educational settings.

The campaign centered on five key tasks: (1) strengthening safety management of training institutions by thoroughly inspecting venues and facilities and maintaining strict safety protocols; (2) reinforcing fire safety supervision and eliminating fire hazards; (3) implementing strict entry regulations for staff, verifying their qualifications to ensure personnel safety; (4) cracking down on crimes such as sexual assault to protect the physical and mental well-being of minors; and (5)

strengthening safety education and public awareness campaigns to raise the safety consciousness of institutions, students, and parents.

The campaign emphasized that all regions should raise their political awareness, adhere to a people-centered approach, and take timely, practical, and comprehensive actions to improve safety management systems, raise safety awareness, and enhance service quality—which are the baseline requirements and key tasks in off-campus training governance. Strong leadership, a clear division of responsibilities, and detailed planning were required to ensure the campaign's effectiveness and protect the legitimate rights and interests of the public, ultimately boosting satisfaction with education.

Since the launch of the "Safety Safeguard Special Campaign," the central government has guided local authorities to focus on inspecting and rectifying hidden dangers related to training facilities, infrastructure, fire safety, and staffing. A total of 239,600 personnel has been dispatched nationwide, and 156,200 training institutions have undergone safety checks. These efforts have led to extensive problem correction, significantly improving public satisfaction and confidence in the safety of off-campus training.²⁵

25. www.gov.cn | Special campaign for "Safety Safeguard" in Off-campus Training for Primary and Secondary School Students

(10)"Standardized Management Year" Action in Basic Education (2024)

In May 2024, the Ministry of Education launched the “Year of Standardized Governance” campaign by issuing the Notice on Launching the 'Year of Standardized Governance' Campaign in Basic Education'. The initiative aims to fully implement the Party's education policy, enhance law-based administration in kindergartens, primary and secondary schools, improve overall education management, and raise public satisfaction with basic education.

The Notice outlines five key objectives. First, it calls for further strengthening the political, legal, and procedural awareness among frontline education administrators, teachers, and teaching researchers. Second, it aims to intensify efforts to identify and correct unlawful practices, violations of educational principles, and short-sighted, utilitarian tendencies in the basic education sector. Third, it seeks to further establish and improve long-term mechanisms for governance that is law-based, strict, and standardized. Fourth, it focuses on enhancing schools' management capacity and the overall quality of teaching and student development. Fifth, it aims to further raise the public's satisfaction and sense of fulfillment with basic education.

The Notice highlights three key governance priorities and a “negative list” of twelve explicitly prohibited actions. The

three priorities focus on maintaining fundamental safety standards, restoring order in daily school operations, and addressing misconduct in teacher ethics. The negative list bans acts such as making statements or engaging in behavior that oppose the Party or socialism, distort historical facts, or glorify acts of aggression; bullying in schools, including group bullying, the strong targeting the weak, or older students bullying younger ones, as well as teachers ignoring or condoning such behavior; organizing entrance exams in compulsory education for the purpose of selecting students, or using competition certificates and similar credentials as admission criteria; and violating academic calendar regulations by starting semesters early, delaying scheduled holidays, or organizing collective make-up classes during weekends, public holidays, or school vacations.

The Notice outlines a four-step implementation plan for the entire year of 2024. From now until the end of May, provincial-level authorities are to initiate and organize the campaign; from June to September, schools across the country are required to conduct thorough self-inspections and implement necessary corrections; from September to October, key self-checks and targeted guidance will be carried out at the provincial level; and from November to December, a summary and feedback process

will be conducted to assess the outcomes of the Year of Standardized Governance campaign.

The Notice also requires all regions to establish four long-term institutional mechanisms to promote sustained, law-based, and refined governance in basic education. First is a reputation evaluation system to document non-compliant practices by education authorities and schools, which will serve as a key reference for awards and recognition of schools and teachers. Second is a capacity-building system, which involves establishing model schools as standardized governance bases and providing structured leadership training and targeted professional development for principals and Party secretaries. Third is a responsibility enforcement system, emphasizing stronger local governance, delegated authority, and tougher penalties for violations. Fourth is a supervision and disclosure mechanism, which includes open reporting channels for misconduct, public exposure platforms, and the strengthening of social oversight.

The “Year of Standardized Governance”

campaign in basic education is a strategic move to comprehensively enhance the quality of education in the new era. As China advances its national agenda to become a strong education power, basic education has entered a critical phase where quality must be significantly improved. The Notice provides a clear roadmap and timeline for reform, centered on the fundamental principles of optimizing the educational environment and improving the quality of student development. It emphasizes the importance of establishing responsibility enforcement and supervision mechanisms to deepen reform in basic education. Local education authorities are expected to strengthen leadership, promote positive messaging, and build effective collaboration between schools, families, and communities. Schools and families should be guided by a scientific view of education, make full use of high-quality educational resources, and work together to foster a new generation of socialist builders and successors equipped with comprehensive development in morality, intellect, physical fitness, aesthetics, and labor.²⁶

26. China Education Daily, Basic Education “Year of Standardized Governance” Campaign

(11) Special Campaign for Transparent Admissions in Compulsory Education (2024)

The 2024 “Special Campaign for Transparent Admissions in Compulsory Education” was launched by the Ministry of Education to the national call for promoting high-quality and balanced development in compulsory education. It aims to strengthen the overall management of admissions and enrollment, advance educational equity, and safeguard the vital interests of the people.

In March 2024, the Ministry of Education initiated the “2024 Special Campaign for Transparent Admissions in Compulsory Education”, with a primary goal of thoroughly investigating key issues that have drawn strong public concern. The campaign focuses on improving the policies, regulations, procedures, and mechanisms behind “nearby school enrollment without entrance exams” and joint public-private school admissions. It also aims to enhance the scientific, standardized, and transparent nature of the admissions process, crack down on hidden operations and selective recruitment, strictly investigate fee-related misconduct involving admissions and establish a long-term mechanism to ensure fair access to education and to further improve public satisfaction with the education system. The 2024 campaign focused on five priority areas: optimizing

enrollment policies and measures, strictly regulating admissions practices, strengthening information transparency, streamlining admissions procedures, and ensuring access for students from special groups.

In March 2025, the Ministry of Education launched the “2025 Special Campaign for Transparent Admissions in Compulsory Education”, with the primary goal of consolidating and building on past achievements. The campaign aims to further eliminate hidden practices such as covert operations and selective recruitment, strictly control special types of enrollment such as pilot or experimental programs, and rigorously investigate misconduct and corruption throughout the admissions process. It seeks to continuously enhance the standardization, scientific rigor, and institutionalization of compulsory education enrollment, improve long-term mechanisms that ensure equitable access, maintain a healthy educational ecosystem, alleviate students' and parents' anxiety about school admissions, and further increase the public's sense of satisfaction and benefit from education—all in support of building a strong national education system.²⁷

27. Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, Notice from the General Office of the MOE on Launching the 2025 Special Campaign for Transparent Enrollment in Compulsory Education

The 2025 campaign includes seven key tasks: strict implementation of nearby school enrollment policies, enforcement of no-exam admissions, strengthened oversight of special enrollment types, standardized management of private school

admissions, enhanced support for the enrollment of migrant children, detailed support measures for special-needs groups, and the full implementation of the integrated “One-Stop Enrollment Service” initiative.²⁸

28. Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China | MOE Deploys 2025 Special Campaign for Transparent Enrollment in Compulsory Education

(12) Teacher Education Capacity Improvement Program (2025)

In May 2025, the Ministry of Education and the “National Development and Reform Commission jointly issued the “Notice on Implementing the Teacher Education Capacity Enhancement Program”, (hereinafter referred to as the “Notice”). The program outlines five strategic directions: building an innovative model for cultivating teacher talent, establishing new platforms for teacher education research, strengthening the foundations for reform in teacher education, developing leading centers that serve society, and opening new avenues for international exchange. The initiative focuses on supporting a group of high-level teacher education institutions to comprehensively strengthen teaching capacity and improve the teacher education system with Chinese characteristics.

The Notice is based on the strategic requirements of building a strong education system and is centered on cultivating a batch of high-level teacher education institutions that can serve as core engines and strategic pillars of the teacher education system with Chinese characteristics. It emphasizes focused planning, strategic layout, distinctive features, and critical development milestones. The program combines infrastructure investment with institutional innovation and prioritizes the development of future teachers' scientific knowledge and practical skills. The goal is to

build world-class teacher education colleges, disciplines, and curricula and to establish an autonomous and comprehensive disciplinary framework for teacher education in China.

The Notice also sets clear expectations for participating institutions in five areas: developing innovative teacher training models, creating research platforms, reinforcing reform foundations, building service-oriented leadership hubs, and expanding international collaboration. The Ministry of Education and the National Development and Reform Commission will design the institutional layout based on national teacher development needs, clarify basic requirements for selected institutions, and follow a phased approach to support institutions—advancing in batches according to readiness and implementation plans.

The “Notice on Implementing the Teacher Education Capacity Improvement Program” also highlights rich opportunities in the areas of professional training and academic development. These include subject-specific training, practice-based teaching workshops, international exchange programs, postgraduate education in teaching-related disciplines, reforms to integrated bachelor-master programs, and continuing education for in-service teachers.²⁹

29. Chinese Government Website, Teacher Education Capacity Enhancement Initiative