

Decision of the GAC on Reforming the Educational System

(Adopted at the 97th GAC Meeting on August 10, 1951, and promulgated on October 1, 1951)

The existing educational system in our country (i.e., the system of various levels and types of schools) has many shortcomings. The most significant among them is the inadequate status of workers' and peasants' cadres' schools, various supplementary schools, and training classes within the school system. The method of six years of primary school education divided into primary and secondary levels makes it difficult for the children of the vast labouring people to receive complete primary education. Technical schools lack a fixed system, failing to meet the requirements for cultivating talents for national construction. These shortcomings urgently need to be corrected. Although there are still some difficulties in achieving complete uniformity in the national educational system at present, it is necessary and possible to determine the appropriate positions of the existing and newly established schools, reform various unreasonable durations and systems, and facilitate the coordination of schools at different levels. This is essential for the improvement of the cultural level of the broad labouring people, the further education of workers and peasants, and the promotion of the national construction cause. The current educational system in China is hereby stipulated as follows:

I. Preschool Education

Preschool education is organized through kindergartens. Kindergartens admit children aged three to seven, ensuring their physical and mental development before entering primary school.

Kindergartens should first be established in cities with suitable conditions and then gradually expanded.

II. Primary Education

Primary education includes elementary education for children, as well as elementary education for youth and adults. The schools providing elementary education for children are primary schools, which should provide comprehensive basic education. The schools providing elementary education for youth and adults who have missed schooling in their early years include expedited elementary schools for workers and peasants, part-time elementary schools, and literacy schools (winter schools, literacy classes).

A. Primary Schools:

The duration of primary school is five years, implementing a consistent system and abolishing the segmented system of primary and secondary levels. The standard enrolment age is seven. After graduation, students may enter middle schools or other secondary schools through examinations.

To ensure that primary school graduates who are unable to continue their education receive appropriate further education, primary schools may establish various supplementary classes or specialized training classes. Students who have received education in such supplementary or training classes may enter appropriate classes in secondary schools through examinations.

B. Elementary Schools for Youth and Adults:

(1) Expedited elementary schools for workers and peasants have a duration of two to three years, admitting workers, peasants, and other laborers who have missed schooling and providing education equivalent to the level of primary school. After graduation, students may enter expedited secondary schools for workers and peasants or other secondary schools through examinations.

(2) Part-time elementary schools admit workers, farmers, and other youth and adults, providing part-time education equivalent to the level of primary school; the duration of study is not currently specified, and graduation is based on completing the prescribed curriculum. After graduation, students may enter part-time secondary schools or other secondary schools through examinations.

(3) Literacy schools (winter schools, literacy classes) aim to eliminate illiteracy, and the duration of study is not specified.

III. Secondary Education

Schools providing secondary education include various secondary schools, namely high schools, expedited secondary schools for workers and peasants, part-time secondary schools, and vocational secondary schools. High schools, expedited secondary schools for workers and peasants, and part-time secondary schools should provide students with comprehensive general cultural knowledge; vocational secondary schools should implement various types of vocational education according to the needs of national construction.

A. High Schools:

The duration of high school is six years, divided into junior and senior levels, each with a three-year duration, and they may be established separately. The teaching content adopts a consistent system while also catering to the needs of segmentation.

Junior high schools admit primary school graduates or those with equivalent qualifications, with an enrolment age of twelve; after graduation, students may enter senior high schools or other equivalent vocational secondary schools through examinations.

Senior high schools admit junior high school graduates or those with equivalent qualifications, with an enrolment age of fifteen; after graduation, students may enter various higher education institutions through examinations.

Graduates of junior and senior high schools who do not continue their education should be guided by the government to seek employment.

B. Expedited Secondary Schools for Workers and Peasants:

Expedited secondary schools for workers and peasants have a duration of three to four years, admitting workers, peasants, and industrial workers who have participated in revolutionary struggles and production work for the specified period and possess qualifications equivalent to primary school graduation. These schools provide education equivalent to the level of secondary school; after graduation, students may enter various higher education institutions through examinations.

C. Part-time Secondary Schools:

Part-time secondary schools are divided into junior and senior levels, with a duration of three to four years each. They may be established separately and admit graduates of part-time elementary schools or part-time junior high schools, or individuals with equivalent qualifications. These schools provide part-time education equivalent to the level of junior high school or senior high school. The enrolment age is not uniformly specified.

Graduates of part-time junior high schools may enter senior high schools, part-time senior high schools, or equivalent vocational secondary schools through examinations. Graduates of part-time senior high schools may enter various higher education institutions through examinations.

D. Vocational Secondary Schools:

(1) Technical Schools (Industrial, Agricultural, Transportation, etc.):

Technical schools have a duration of two to four years, admitting graduates of junior high schools or individuals with equivalent qualifications. The enrolment age is not uniformly specified.

Junior technical schools have a duration of two to four years, admitting graduates of primary schools or individuals with equivalent qualifications. The enrolment age is not uniformly specified.

Graduates of junior technical schools and technical schools should serve in the production sector. After serving for the specified period, they may, through examinations, respectively enter technical schools, senior high schools, or various higher education institutions.

Various technical schools may establish short-term technical training courses or technical supplementary classes.

(2) Normal Schools:

Normal schools have a duration of three years, admitting graduates of junior high schools or individuals with equivalent qualifications. The enrolment age is not uniformly specified.

Junior normal schools have a duration of three to four years, admitting graduates of primary schools or individuals with equivalent qualifications. The enrolment age is not uniformly specified.

Normal schools and junior normal schools may establish expedited normal classes with a one-year duration, admitting graduates of junior high schools or individuals with equivalent qualifications. They may also establish in-service primary school teacher training classes.

Preschool normal schools have a duration and admission criteria equivalent to normal schools. Normal schools and junior normal schools may also establish preschool normal science departments.

Graduates of junior normal schools, normal schools, and preschool normal schools should serve in primary schools or kindergartens. After serving for the specified period, they may, through examinations, respectively enter normal schools, senior high schools, teacher training colleges, or other higher education institutions.

(3) Medical and Other Vocational Secondary Schools (Trade, Banking, Cooperative, Arts, etc.):

The duration and admission criteria for these schools are to be referenced from the regulations for technical schools.

IV. Higher Education

Schools implementing higher education include various higher education institutions, namely universities, specialized colleges, and vocational schools. Higher education institutions should provide advanced specialized education to students on the basis of comprehensive general cultural knowledge, cultivating talents with advanced specialized knowledge for the nation.

The duration of universities and specialized colleges is guided by the principle of three to five years (four years for teacher training colleges). They admit graduates of senior high schools and equivalent institutions or individuals with equivalent qualifications, with no unified age requirement for admission.

The duration of vocational schools is two to three years, admitting graduates of senior high schools and equivalent institutions or individuals with equivalent qualifications. There is no unified age requirement for admission.

Various higher education institutions may establish specialized courses with a duration of one to two years, admitting graduates of senior high schools and equivalent institutions or individuals with equivalent qualifications. There is no unified age requirement for admission.

Universities and specialized colleges may establish research departments with a duration of two years or more, admitting graduates of universities and other related colleges or individuals with equivalent qualifications. In cooperation with the Chinese Academy of Sciences and other research institutions, these departments aim to cultivate faculty and scientific research talents for higher education institutions.

Various higher education institutions may establish preparatory classes or supplementary classes to facilitate the enrolment of workers, peasants, ethnic minority students, and overseas Chinese children.

The government allocates jobs for graduates of higher education institutions.

V. Political Schools at All Levels and Political Training Classes

Political schools at all levels and political training classes provide revolutionary political education to young intellectuals and old intellectuals. The levels of these schools, duration of study, admission criteria, etc., are separately specified.

In addition to the above-mentioned schools, people's governments at all levels may establish various levels and types of supplementary schools and correspondence schools to meet the needs of widespread political and professional studies. Governments at all levels should also establish special schools for the deaf, blind, and individuals with other disabilities, providing education for children, youth, and adults with physical impairments.

The Ministry of Education of the Central People's Government formulates the implementation plan for the educational system, especially considering the characteristics of minority areas. The regulations for various schools are approved and implemented by the GAC of the Central People's Government.