

K12EA introduces a range of training programs to assist teachers in carrying out Inquiry and Practice courses

(Photo/text by Wang Kuan-Wei, Division of Academic Senior High Education)



The K-12 Education Administration (K12EA) has set up the North Branch and South Branch of the Curriculum Center for Inquiry and Practice in the Affiliated Senior High School of National Taiwan Normal University and National Tainan First Senior High School respectively in order to assist mainstream senior high schools in the implementation of Inquiry and Practice courses, which have been newly introduced in the updated curriculum with the objective of identifying the aptest way for each child to learn through the processes of inquiry and practice. The center seeks to promote and develop such courses in the areas of natural sciences and social studies and train educators working in these fields. As such, the center held the Forum on Imagination and Practice in Inquiry and Practice Courses on October 6, 2020.

This event was jointly organized by the North Branch of the Curriculum Center for Inquiry and Practice, working with curriculum development units in New Taipei City and Taipei City, to take attendees through the design of the Inquiry and Practice courses, including a sharing on the principles behind the conception of these courses. Speakers also shared about how educators can

facilitate teaching and learning in the classroom through curriculum planning with the participants of the forum, who include college professors, current senior high school teachers, and other parties with an interest in educational matters present at the event.

Hung I-Wen, Executive Secretary of the North Branch of the Curriculum Center for Inquiry and Practice, pointed out that last year, 32 schools implemented the Inquiry and Practice in Grade 10; this year, the majority of schools in Taiwan, including community senior high schools and schools in remote areas, implemented the curriculum in Grade 11. The center is stepping up efforts to cater to the needs of all high schools when it comes to helping teachers conduct effective lessons. In line with this goal, the center conducts analyses on the curriculum plans of all high schools in New Taipei City in order to have a complete overview of curriculum planning in schools.

Other than organizing Inquiry and Practice teacher-training courses in the natural sciences and social studies through both the North Branch and the South Branch of the Curriculum Center for Inquiry and Practice, K12EA is also working with the resource centers of Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Earth Sciences, History, Geography, and Civil Service and Ethics to conduct other relevant training courses for educators.

K12EA is also working with the team behind the Senior High School Actualization Program to hold sharing sessions on the experiences of schools in Taipei and New Taipei City when it comes to developing their curricula. In addition, the North Branch of the Curriculum Center for Inquiry and Practice runs a series of workshops on Inquiry and Practical Teaching Materials and Pedagogy. All these measures aim to elevate the quality of teaching and learning in Taiwan.

K12EA shared that the South Branch of the Curriculum Center for Inquiry and Practice has collaborated with the Taiwanese Sociological Association to organize 12 workshops on Research Methods and Curriculum Design in Social Studies, spanning 4 tiers, in the north, center, and south of Taiwan since the start of the 2020 academic year. This is in line with the

step-by-step launch of the improved Inquiry and Practice Social Studies electives. The workshops aim to assist teachers in learning how to apply and analyze research ethics, interviews, fieldwork, and quantitative data. At the same time, teachers were divided into groups to discuss their experience in Inquiry and Practice curriculum planning, and this allowed the educators to look at their experience from a fresh perspective and review the courses they have conducted. K12EA hopes that such a collaborative learning model will enrich the teaching profession and provide a guiding light to every student to help them identify research questions that interest them, as well as help them develop the ability to integrate knowledge in the process of doing research, exploring a given topic, and develop enhanced problem-solving skills.