

Forward-Looking Infrastructure Special Budget Aims to Build Local Kindergartens 170 Additional Classes in 2021

(Courtesy of Shu-Min Shih at the Division of Preschool Education)



With the expansion of the public kindergartens as one of the main pillars of the Ministry of Education's policy, the Ministry of Education implemented a program in 2017 to transform schools into communities to “develop a childcare-friendly space and to increase kindergarten buildings,” projects that governed under the government’s forward-looking infrastructure construction programs. It also strove for special subsidies for local governments to utilize the school space to build new kindergarten buildings. A total of 354 classes in 71 kindergartens in 14 cities and counties have been approved to be added through this program, which is expected to create around 9,600 vacancies. Among them, 33 kindergartens have opened in the school year of 2020 with around 4,900 vacancies for small children. The K-12 Education Administration, Ministry of Education, stated that an additional 170 classes in 35 schools are expected to be added in the school year of 2021 so as to mitigate the burden of childcare on the families.

In the school year of 2021, each kindergarten is designed under the theme of nature while in line with local characteristics, enabling children to observe and interact with nature during the

learning process. For example, the Tainan City Silaya Non-profit Kindergarten uses a large circular walkway to separate children's play space and outdoor space. The outdoor atrium is covered with natural pavement, such as turf and sand pits; as such, children can have sufficient space to adjust before entering the classroom. Meanwhile, it is adopted as an outdoor playground, in which children can participate in physical activities freely, so as to develop a learning environment with a diverse play space.

Taichung Fengle Non-profit Kindergarten buildings feature irregular graphics, texts, and color changes to create lightweight, look-through, and smooth visual effects. The open space design, which incorporates landscapes, corridors, an air bridge, and other architectural elements, simulates a kingdom in the forest for small children.

In addition, the Qinggou Elementary School Affiliated Kindergarten in Yilan County incorporates landscape elements, including river and field, into the winding corridor at the entrance and exit to make the overall style appear lively. Meanwhile, the indoor and outdoor playground spaces are adopted as a space for children to adjust their moods during games.

K-12 Education Administration stated that Keelung City, New Taipei City, Taoyuan City, Hsinchu City, Miaoli County, Taichung City, Changhua County, Nantou County, Tainan City, Pingtung County, Kaohsiung City, and Kinmen County are expected to add another 170 classes in 35 kindergartens in the school year of 2021, which is expected to increase 4,700 vacancies for young children. The Administration emphasizes that expanding public kindergartens is one of the main pillars of the Ministry of Education's policy. In the next four years (2021–2024), more than 50,000 vacancies will be added to alleviate the financial burden on parents. It is hoped that young people will, thus, be "willing to marry, dare to have children, and happy to raise them".