

MOE Launches Cultural Orientation Programs for Students from Culturally-blended Families to Help Children of New Inhabitants Blend in Local Society

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The number of new inhabitants in Taiwan has reached 470,000. A new inhabitant refers to a foreigner who marries a Taiwanese citizen and gives birth to a child in Taiwan. Because of linguistic and cultural differences, how to help new inhabitants adapt themselves to the life in Taiwan and develop their ability to educate children has become a new issue.

Since 2004, the K-12 Education Administration of the Ministry of Education has subsidized city and county governments in implementing “Cultural Orientation Programs for Students from Culturally-blended Families”, and subsidies have been allocated to the following 9 categories: (1) counseling programs; (2) parental education seminars; (3) multi-cultural or International Day activities; (4) workshops discussing educational methods; (5) teachers’ seminars on multi-culture; (6) Chinese remedial instruction courses; (7) editing, printing, photocopying or purchasing teaching materials on multi-culture; (8) national competitions on multi-culture-based teaching plans and (9) courses for teaching mother tongues.

These programs have been promoted for several years. As of 2013, the municipal city and county governments have received approximately a total of NT\$390,000,000 in funding for enforcing such educational and counseling programs for students from culturally-blended families. In 2014, a total of NT\$37,000,000 will be allocated to local governments, who have received 1,248 applications from schools. It is estimated that the number of participants will be 572,191.

In the cultural orientation programs of this year, a Kaohsiung student surnamed Lin was brought up by a Vietnamese maternal grandmother. Lin had not return to Taiwan until early December in 2013. Because the student had never had formal education, communication with him in Chinese was impossible, causing many kinds of daily-life inconveniences. With active assistance from Kaohsiung City Government Education Bureau, Lin obtained governmental funding to attend Chinese remedial instruction courses for this special case.

By implementing such programs, the Ministry of Education expects to provide children of new inhabitants with more learning and instruction opportunities. Meanwhile, it is also hoped that Taiwanese citizens can become familiar with foreign cultures, understand, respect, show care to, and accept one another. With this come the prospects of a peaceful multi-cultural society.