

## Distance Learning and Diverse Activities Benefit Children of New Immigrants

(Image/Text: Division of Education for Indigenous Peoples and Special Education)



Multicultural literacy is an important subject in the Curriculum Guidelines of 12-year Basic Education. Considering this, the K-12 Education Administration of the Ministry of Education is offering a curriculum in new immigrant languages in both physical and distance learning formats to lay the foundation for cultivating young talent. New immigrant children in elementary and junior high schools can study their father's or mother's native language from a choice of seven languages. According to data from the 2022-23 academic year, 1,166 schools in Taiwan have offered 5,390 new immigrant language classes to a total of 13,639 students, which is a significant increase from previous years.

The K-12 Education Administration explained that in order to address the lack of human resources in rural schools and the difficulty in recruiting teachers of minority languages, National Central University and the Commerce Development Research Institute were commissioned to plan a live distance learning option for the curriculum in the 2018-19 academic year. In the 2022-23 academic year, 277 schools offered 217 classes in this distance learning

format with a total of 662 enrolled students and have held a series of activities to showcase students' achievements.

For instance, in the 2020-21 academic year, the program held the "New Horizons - New Immigrants Essay Contest and Publication of Results," and in the following academic year, it held the "New Voices - New Immigrant Languages Children's Song Contest." The results of these events were published on the program's official website for the public to enjoy. As for the 2022-23 academic year, the program held the "New Energy - New Immigrant Language Distance Reading Contest and Results Exhibition" on April 22, providing a platform for elementary and junior high school children of new immigrants to show off their diverse talents.

In addition, since 2016, the K-12 Education Administration has been implementing a program to train teaching support staff in new immigrant languages and has subsidized local governments to offer training courses as part of this program. Currently, 3,650 teaching support staff for seven languages have been trained nationwide and added to the "Talent Pool of New Immigrant Language Teaching Support Staff," including 60 teaching support staff for second-generation children of new immigrants. The training program will serve to enhance the effectiveness of new immigrant language teaching.

The K-12 Education Administration stated that it hopes to accelerate the promotion of language learning for children of new immigrants through a two-pronged approach of live distance learning programs and diverse activities. The Administration also aims to promote language diversity as well as the goal of passing on cultural traditions and cultivating the talent of children of new immigrants.