

## **The Ministry of Education Launched Taiwan Foreign English Teacher Program in Academic Year 2022–2023**

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The K-12 Education Administration of the Ministry of Education (MOE) has been promoting the Taiwan Foreign English Teacher Program in Senior High Schools, assigning foreign English teachers to public senior high schools, where they are hired to work with Taiwanese bilingual teachers in schools to prepare the curriculum. It has been eight years since the implementation of the program which has been well acclaimed. As a result, the number of participating schools has increased each year, from eight schools in 2014 to 34 schools in the academic year 2022-2023. In the future, the K-12 Education Administration will continue to welcome applications and aim to improve the quality of English education and help schools create school-based English curriculums.

MOE stated that in order to enhance national competitiveness and strengthen English skills, the Taiwan Foreign English Teacher Program is targeted at schools focusing on arts, health and physical education, integrative activities, and technology. MOE will review the applications based on the number of applications as well as "past visits and results", "completeness and feasibility of the application", "balance between urban and rural areas", and "assistance for disadvantaged groups". Public senior high schools receiving the fund can hire foreign English teachers to teach full English classes for up to 20 to 22 hours a week as needed.

The K-12 Education Administration of the MOE commissioned the National Experimental High School at Hsinchu Science Park to carry out the program. For schools that have successfully recruited foreign English teachers, an advisory group will visit the school once to twice every academic year to provide assistance. With experts, scholars, principals, and English teachers as visiting members, the group will not only sit in classes and interview students to understand the effectiveness of teaching and students' learning needs, but also provide assistance to school administration and offer recommendations and strategies for the program.

Take National Pingtung Senior High School as an example. The foreign English teachers integrated English education into daily life and local culture so as to enhance students' incentive to communicate in English and align with the school's vision of "From Local to Global", enabling students to express the cultural and environmental features of Pingtung in English. In another example, the foreign English teachers at National Pei-men Senior Agricultural and Industrial Vocational School turned real-life situations into dialogue-based curriculums that combined everyday English with local characteristics in a way that makes English lessons interesting. According to the participating schools, foreign English teachers commonly designed activity-based curriculums to introduce foreign customs and cultures that brought a breath of fresh air and energy to the schools.

The K-12 Education Administration of the MOE stated that Taiwanese English teachers will remain a vital part of promoting bilingual education in senior high schools, and the program is focused on creating the English-speaking environment in high schools and enhancing the effectiveness and motivation in learning English. In the future, we will continue to promote the program, strengthen innovative English education in non-mountainous and non-urban schools, and provide regional resources to benefit more students.