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'Emphasise virtues in new school curriculum'

By Nuradzimmah Daim - May 16, 2024 @ 7:01am



The new school curriculum, which is expected to be introduced in 2027, should emphasise virtues besides involving all parties in student development, say teachers. — NSTP FILE PIC

KUALA LUMPUR: The new school curriculum, which is expected to be introduced in 2027, should emphasise virtues besides involving all parties in student development, say teachers.

A teacher at a secondary school in Melaka said discipline was one of the challenges in dealing with youths, especially relating to the use of electronic gadgets and social media.

"If we continue to be in denial, we will not be able to address the root cause of disciplinary issues.

The teachers, particularly hostel wardens, have a fairly good understanding of their students' problems. But our concerns are sometimes dismissed by school administrators, who prefer to sweep things under the rug," she told the *New Straits Times.*

While she lauded the Education Ministry's aspiration to come up with a better system, she said teachers often found themselves in a difficult situation when it came to developing their students' potential, especially when school administrators did not share the same view.



National Union of the Teaching Profession (NUTP) secretary-general Fouzi Singon said teachers should be given ample space to be creative in delivering content and testing assessing their students' mastery of a subject.

"For instance, the school-based assessment (PBS) supposedly gives us the freedom to think creatively to boost the students' capabilities.

"However, we sometimes have to limit ourselves due to pressure from administrators to keep standards low if they deem the students' level as such, not giving them the chance to grow and excel further," she said.

She said school administrators and education officials should be more receptive to addressing the concerns raised by teachers for the students' sake.

Furthermore, parents should be encouraged to get more involved in their children's education, both in academic and extracurricular activities, she said.

"Nothing makes us happier than to see our students succeed. If the teachers are happy, they will be willing to go the extra mile for their students."

A veteran primary school teacher, who wanted to be known only as Izzah, said the wellbeing of teachers should be taken into consideration under the new curriculum.

"We have seen a lot of changes over the years, and the teachers need support now more than ever.

"Teachers nowadays are burdened with administrative work like computerising their students' data, so it is hard to focus on classroom face-to-face interactions in the teaching and learning (PdP) process," she said.

National Union of the Teaching Profession (NUTP) secretary-general Fouzi Singon said teachers should be given ample space to be creative in delivering content and assessing their students' mastery of a subject.

He said teachers also needed continuous training in various fields to improve their skills.

The provision for teacher training needed to be increased, and its implementation must be more serious and earnest rather than simply giving out training requirements, he added.

He also said it was inappropriate to say that teachers did not have the confidence to implement methods to develop their students' talent.

"What happens is that students and teachers have less space to be creative in performing their tasks. The schools buy exam questions from certain drafters, and the teachers have to comply with the wishes of the administrators."

He said in a study that the NUTP conducted with Education International in its T3LFA Project, it was found that teachers could increase their mastery of assessment methods and student skills with the right training.

"The results of this study proved that the skills assessment strategy used by teachers can change if training is given professionally."

Recently, Education Minister Fadhlina Sidek reportedly said that teachers would have greater autonomy under the new school curriculum.

She said the ministry was preparing the group for the new curriculum's framework through a series of engagements.