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International Trends in Education: The Singapore Story and Challenges for Singapore Educators

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An Institute of



TRANSFORMING TEACHING
INSPIRING LEARNING

Overview

- Education in Focus
- Accountability and Performance
- Education in the 21st Century
- The Singapore Context
- Challenges

Education in Focus

- Education is the most important concern in all countries
- Gleny Stacey. Head of the Office of Qualifications & Examinations Regulation (Ofqual), UK.

“I believe that to be a very significant and important debate in this country: What is it that we actually expect to achieve and what do we value as a society?”
(The Guardian, UK, 1 Nov 2013).

Education in Focus

- Shakeup of examination system in England set for 2017:

“England could be awarded the grades measured against their peers in countries such as Singapore, in an effort to tackle under-performance in international education league tables”

(Gleny Stacey)

Education in Focus

- Swedish Education Minister, Jan Bjorklund, is concerned that Swedish pupils have fallen behind their international peers [The Economist, (UK), 2 Nov 2013]
- He was referring to the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)
- Swedish results have been declining since 2000

Accountability and Performance

- TIMSS 2011 (Trends in Mathematics & Science Study)
Assessed students achievement in Mathematics and Science at the 4th and 8th Grades in 63 countries and 14 States/Regions.
- PIRLS 2011 (Progress in Reading Literacy Study)
Assessed student achievement in Reading at the 4th Grade in 49 Countries and 9 States/Regions.
- TIMSS & PIRLS are designed to measure trends in achievement and to show growth or decline over time.”
- [<http://timss.bc.edu>]

Accountability and Performance

- PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment)
It aims to evaluate education system worldwide, every 3 years by assessing 15-year-olds' competencies in the key subjects of Reading, Mathematics and Science. 70 Countries have participated since 1997.
- Next PISA result is due on 3 December 2013
- [www.oecd.org/pisa/]

Accountability and Performance

- Singapore came in top 5 in TIMSS and PISA, along with other East Asian Countries.
- The results of Singapore students showed consistency across the different surveys which signals that we are on the right track.
- The success factors according to PISA are:
 - Home environment and pre-primary education
 - School environment
 - Teachers – Teacher selection and preparation
 - Students' attitudes.

Education in the 21st Century

- Developing intelligence is about learning to solve problems.
- Problem solving in real-world contexts involves multiple ways of knowing and learning.
- Harnessing intelligences
 - From within individuals,
 - From groups of people and
 - From the environment to solve problems

Education in the 21st Century

Not creating value in education if we...

- Teach content and routines that do not relate to real world living
- Impart skills that are not sufficiently transferable across situations
- Use learning processes that do not impact on independent life-wide learning
- Use learning environments that do not encourage motivation, independence and collaboration

It's about the Real World.....



World of Change and a Living Curriculum

- 21st CC (e.g., Global Awareness, Critical & Inventive Thinking, Information & Communication Skills and Collaborative Team Work)
- Learning in relation to Real World Living, Thinking and Working (environment and tools)

World of Change and a Living Curriculum



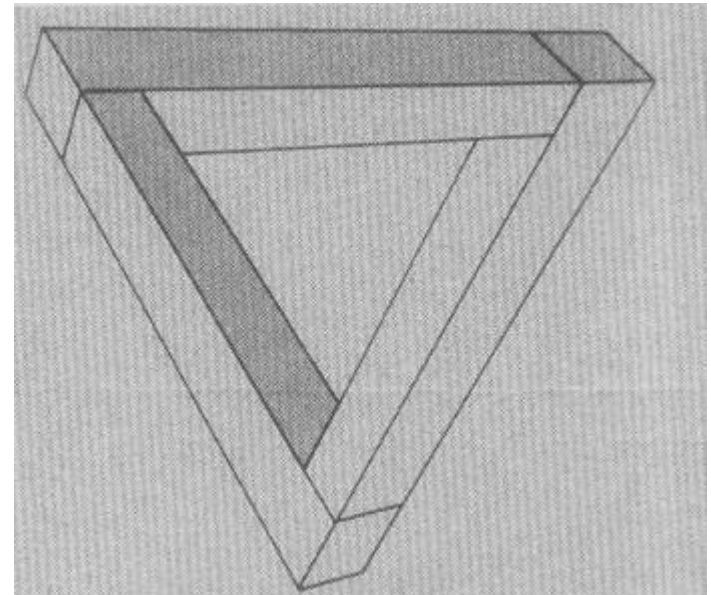
*"No, you weren't downloaded.
You were born."*

Singapore's Key Success Factor: Tripartite Partnership

- Transforming teacher education is a task NIE cannot achieve in isolation
- There is a need for unified commitment and alignment of efforts from all key stakeholders – NIE, MOE and schools.
- Schools are important partners in strengthening the theory-practice linkage.

MOE

Schools

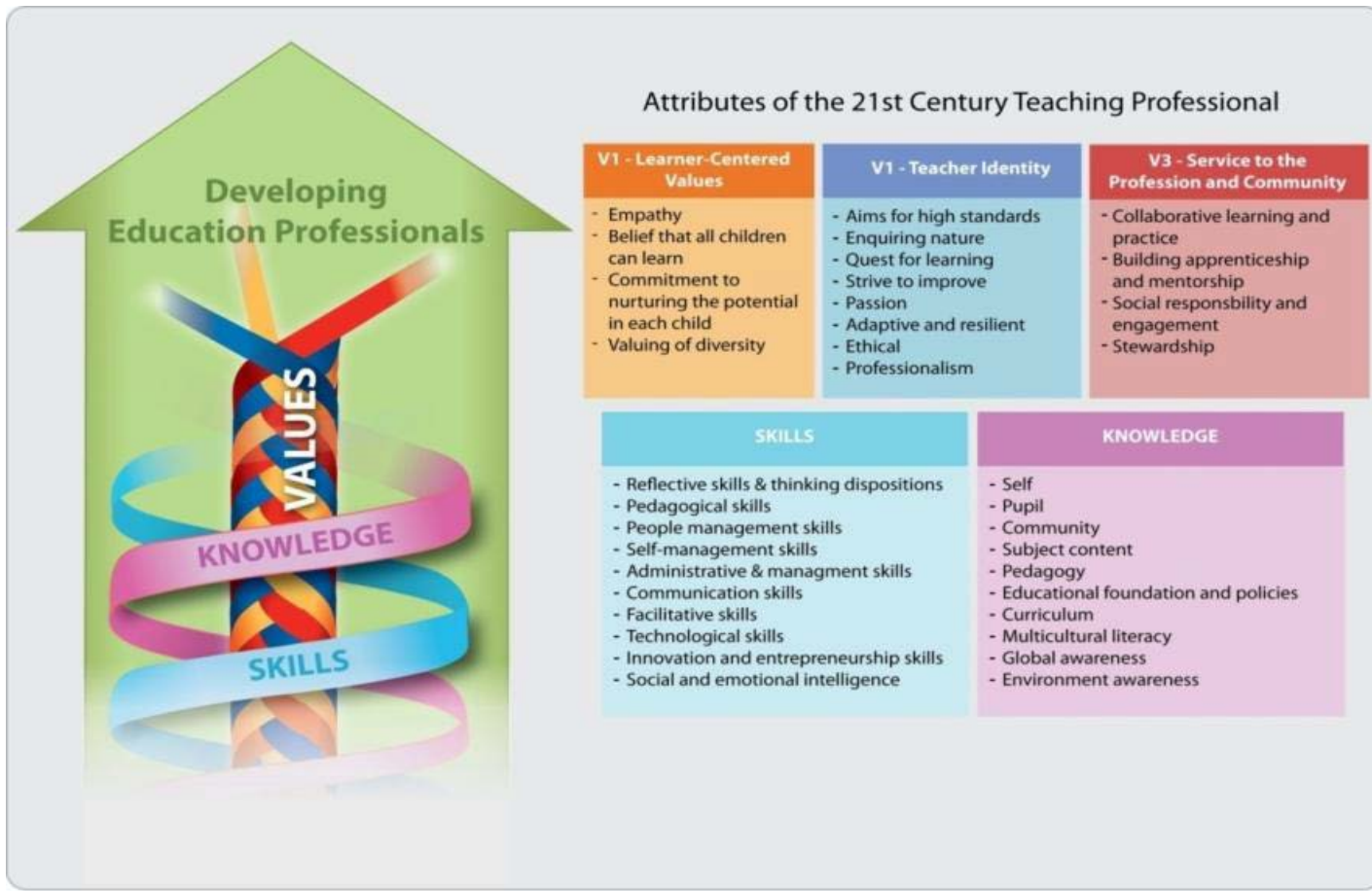


NIE (University)

Teacher Education in Singapore

- Teacher Education (TE) reflects Singapore's approach to education and aims to be well-grounded in the pragmatics of the school's role in **developing the child as a holistic learner**.
- TE asserts the university's role of NIE in **advocacy and advancing the frontier of knowledge and practice** (research and evidence-based).

Emphasis in Teacher Education Programme in NIE



New Momentum

- Value-based teacher education (V³SK)
- Professional learning community (School, AST, NIE, others)
- Developing teachers with a world view (Ecological validity)
- Empowering evaluation (new approaches to assessment)

Professional Learning and Development

- Teacher lifestyle of improving practice in student-centric thinking (teaching practice and e-portfolio)
- Professional habits of thinking and models of improving practice (constructing teacher identity in different phases of development)
- Approaches and framework for role as collegial critic and professional learning (social co-construction of learning, etc)

Challenges

“A teacher is not just a teacher of the subject but more importantly a **teacher of the learner** and a **preserver and custodian of the values of society.**”

Tan Oon Seng, 2012
Dean, Office of Teacher Education
National Institute of Education

Challenges

- Recognition of Changing World
- Changing Nature of Knowledge
- Changing Profiles and Participation of Learners

Challenges

- 21st Century skills integration
- Changing students' profile
- Complex environment
- Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, Ambiguous
- New Assessment for Applied Learning
- Creativity
- Critical thinking
- Intrinsic motivation
- Accountability
- Workload
- Appraisal
- Professional development
- Promotion
- Parental pressure, etc
- Customized programme
- Technology

TEACHER

- Nurturing leadership
- Conducive environment
- Collegial team
- Mentors
- Appreciative students
- Planned professional development
- Access to relevant resources
- Developmental review/appraisal
- Professional learning communities
- Clear career development

THE PROFESSIONAL



Exporting the NIE model



The End