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## REPORT ON IDEA98

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The initial idea of establishing a dialogue between the Sultan Hassanah Bolkuah Institute of Education (SHBIE) and the National Institute of Education (NIE) in Singapore came from the Yang Dimuliakan, Pehin Vice-Chancellor, Hj Abu Bakar bin Hj Apong in September 1997. The Dean of SHBIE, Professor Sim Wong Kooi, and the Dean of the School of Education at NIE, Associate Professor S. Gopinathan, agreed that the first Interinstitute Dialogue on Educational Advances in 1998 (IDEA98) should focus on research, recent or in progress. As a platform for exchange of ideas on common issues, brief overviews of teacher education would also be included.

A comprehensive list of NIE projects was then circulated to the SHBIE team, who ranked the projects according to the likelihood of future collaboration. A total of 14 projects were selected for presentation at IDEA98. A list of SHBIE projects was similarly transmitted to NIE for preferential ranking. Eight projects were then selected for presentation by SHBIE representatives.

A team of 20 SHBIE academic staff led by the Dean, Professor Sim Wong Kooi, arrived in Singapore on 17 May 1998 for a three-day programme. The opening ceremony on 18 May was attended by the Director of NIE, Professor Leo Tan. Professor Tan expressed the hope that the dialogue would result in serious and real cooperation between the two institutes. Both Deans gave an overview of the key research concerns of their respective research centres. They also highlighted the major curriculum reviews that are taking place in their respective countries. While NIE is coping with the increased intake of students and the implementation of the three initiatives of "Thinking Schools, Learning Nation", SHBIE is attempting to address the universal shortcomings of teacher education.

Research leaders from both Institutes gave short presentations of their projects which had been identified earlier on the second day. On the last day, small group counterpart meetings were held to discuss the possibilities of collaboration between related projects. More NIE projects were also presented. Participants from both Institutes found the small group meetings most fruitful.

In discussing the tentative agenda for IDEA99, which is expected to be held in the University of Brunei Darussalam, it was agreed that priority should be given to the discussion of projects for which collaborations have begun and that more time should be given to small group meetings in special areas, especially in language education. It was also agreed that two areas, the practicum in teacher education and the permeability of postgraduate programmes, including the mobilisation of postgraduate students to select research studies related to institutional research agenda, could be included in IDEA99. The tentative date set for IDEA99 is in April 1999.

The following areas of research have been specially highlighted for collaboration between the two Institutes:

- 1) Adaptation of JOBS
- 2) The mathematics projects
- 3) Accelerated development of prospective thoughtful schools
- 4) Research on initial teacher training
- 5) Research involving postgraduate students
- 6) Problems of adolescence.