

Teachers and Equitable Education

SINGAPORE



Ministry of Education
SINGAPORE

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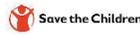
Good Cases to Promote Equitable Education through Teachers Under COVID-19 And Beyond



Executive summary



Singapore's education system has evolved over the last five decades, from a survival-driven model in the 1960s and 70s where education served as a means to boost the country's industrialisation effort through a one-size-fits-all system, to a values-based, student-centric model in the last decade with diverse pathways that cater to different interests, strengths and aspirations by which we aim to instil in students a love for learning. Our multiple education pathways cater to the different strengths and interests of every student. At the same time, education equity has and always been a priority for Singapore. We aim to give every child a good start in their early years, regardless of backgrounds, to offer them the best chance to maximise their potential, and we do this by improving the accessibility, affordability and quality of education. We have a spectrum of interventions including financial assistance, educational support, as well as community support and mentorship. The pandemic has reminded us of our evergreen objective that education remains a social leveller and an uplifting force. Even as we adjust in response to a new normal, we will continue to ensure that education in Singapore remains equitable so that all our students are well prepared for the future.

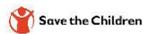


The Ministry of Education (MOE) values every teacher as part of the MOE family, and is committed to supporting and developing their potential to the fullest. The Academy of Singapore Teachers (AST) was set up to spearhead the professional development of MOE staff and provides a variety of opportunities for teachers to grow and reach their personal and professional best, in line with their aspirations and interests. AST also partners the National Institute of Education (NIE) for the pre-service training of Allied Educators (AEDs) which equips them with the necessary skills and knowledge to fulfil their responsibilities in supporting teachers to enhance the teaching and learning of students in both academic and non-academic areas.

In this digital era, it is important for our students to be equipped with the necessary knowledge, skills and dispositions to thrive in an interconnected, diverse and rapidly changing world. The move towards Blended Learning helps to enrich our students' educational experience by enabling them to benefit from multiple modes of learning. Coupled with additional resources and training for teachers, we hope to help students develop into self-directed and passionate lifelong learners, and provide time and space to explore wholesome personal interests beyond the curriculum.



Summary of current status



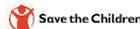
No student should be excluded from education, regardless of their needs and backgrounds, and we are committed to sustaining opportunities throughout one's life – from pre-school to the world of work – to offer them the best chance to maximise their potential.

In the schooling years, additional resourcing goes to those with greater needs to support targeted interventions, such as levelling up programmes for academically weaker students and looking after student well-being and care through the provision of after-school care. We recognise that students from disadvantaged backgrounds need a different kind of intervention, one that requires a more collaborative approach pulling together various governmental agencies. The Uplifting Pupils in Life and Inspiring Families Taskforce (UPLIFT) was set up in Oct 2018 as an inter-ministerial taskforce with the aim to strengthen support for students from disadvantaged backgrounds to enable them to realise their full potential. Through UPLIFT, coordination across schools, agencies and community partners resulted in support measures being strengthened, in the form of educational or motivational programmes for students, including after-school care or engagement activities and community programmes and services for families. UPLIFT builds on existing programmes and initiatives that support disadvantaged students (e.g. financial assistance, learning support and after-school care), with particular focus on enhancing collaboration across government agencies, as well as strengthening partnerships with the community



In response to COVID-19, our approach has been to keep schools open safely as far as possible, and to put in place alternative arrangements to keep learning going. On top of existing financial assistance schemes, additional support of meal and transport subsidies and temporary relief were provided to the disadvantaged students. The pandemic has also highlighted the digital divide that exists in many countries, including Singapore, and we made additional provisions to minimise this gap. During Home-Based Learning (HBL), we provided additional support for disadvantaged students. Over 20,000 computing devices and 1,600 internet-enabling devices were loaned to students who did not have those resources. Teachers were on-hand to supervise their learning

They also conducted activities such as non-contact sports, baking and dance to keep them engaged.



We see this as an opportunity to go beyond education equity while rethinking pedagogical and instructional design. With Blended Learning becoming an integral feature of the Singapore schooling experience post-COVID, the National Digital Literacy Programme (NDLP) aims to equip students with the necessary digital skills and values. We will be equipping all students in secondary schools with their own personal device for learning by 2021, seven years ahead of our original plan, and the cost of such devices will be kept affordable via subsidies and financial support from MOE. We will also provide resources and guidance to teachers, including design considerations of HBL Days, guidelines for curriculum coverage and student-initiated learning, and useful resources to support schools in implementing HBL. Teachers can access resources on teaching and learning ideas for Blended Learning for their respective subjects, which will include subject examples on how to design teaching and learning experiences to implement Blended Learning. Under the SkillsFuture for Educators framework which is a professional development roadmap for teachers, teachers will be provided with professional development opportunities (e.g. workshops, webinars and self-paced micro-learning units) in the area of e-Pedagogy to enhance their capacity to deliver technology-mediated Blended Learning effectively, while mitigating potential cyber wellness issues that students might face. Beyond professional development



opportunities offered under e-Pedagogy, workshops on ways to leverage the Singapore Teaching Practice to plan and design seamless in-school and out-of-school learning experiences in different subjects would also be offered. We have implemented a Professional Development programme to equip our teachers with the competencies to design effective Blended Learning experiences for their students. Teachers can access online learning modules and participate in Networked Learning Communities, where they can learn from and collaborate with one another in the design of Blended Learning experiences for their students. Teachers can also access curriculum resources on the Singapore Student Learning Space for their use and adaptation in delivering Blended Learning.

¹The Singapore Teaching Practice is a model of teaching and learning to guide and strengthen effective teaching. Co-developed by educators and researchers for teachers in Singapore schools, it articulates the beliefs of the teaching fraternity on teaching and learning and described the Pedagogical Practices that are customized for our context.



Current situations and challenges faced by teachers



Approach to Educational Equity

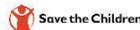
Achieving equity in education requires a concerted effort at all levels. In Singapore's context, the key approaches to this end are as follows:

- Expand the definition of success to go beyond the academic sphere, where it also recognises students with different skill sets and dispositions, given the various strengths and interests of our students.

- Further embrace diversity and allow every student to pursue his talent and interests through its increased number of educational pathways and programmes available

- Ensure that every child has access to an inclusive and good-quality early childhood care and education.

- Safeguard social mobility and strengthen support for students from disadvantaged families



Broadening the Definition of Success

Given the expanded definition of success, it is paramount that teachers be given the time and space to engage in professional learning to deepen their knowledge and skills, so that they can nurture the 21st Century competencies, values and dispositions in their students.

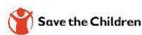
- Teachers will need to nurture in students a disposition of entrepreneurial dare and curiosity as they continually upgrade their skills and digital literacies, unlearn and relearn to remain relevant and productive as active contributors of society throughout their lives. To do so, teachers need to constantly be kept abreast of how society and the economy are changing, so that they can keep learning relevant and authentic for their students.
- They will need to be able to explain to students and their care-givers that it is not so much the academic achievement in specific subjects that will be used as a single yardstick to measure their success, but that it is more important to pay attention to the process of studying, develop soft skills that support lifelong learning, and pursue one's passion with a spirit of excellence and grit.

³With the re-making of secondary school pathways through Full Subject-Based Banding (FSBB), a significant shift in Singapore's secondary education system will take place from a structure that is more course-centric to one that is more student-centric. Every student gets to pursue a course of study best suited to his readiness level and strengths. FSBB aims to help all students have the chance to experience the joy of learning and makes the education system more adaptive and responsive to our students' learning needs.



Besides being skilled in catering to the diverse learner profiles of their students in the teaching of the hard subjects according to the curriculum, teachers will also need to keep abreast of the various pathways of institutes of higher learning available and the different forms of curricula offered, depending on learning preferences and occupational work goals of their students.

- Teachers would need to be able to offer meaningful and purposeful educational and career guidance that allows each child to realise his full potential, regardless of social background or educational qualifications.
- Given that teachers spend much of their working hours in one school setting, it would be incumbent on the educational system to support teachers in gaining exposure to the different industries and work settings beyond their school through work attachments.



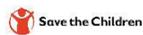
Providing Quality Pre-school Education and Transition Support to Primary School

Even as our teachers equip themselves with the knowledge and skills for supporting our students to making meaningful and relevant post-secondary educational choices, it would be equally useful for teachers to gain awareness of the upstream process of supporting students as they transit from pre-school education to learning in primary school. This is especially so as MOE ramps up the building of MOE kindergartens (MK) to provide accessible quality pre-school education to all. Teachers need to understand how the MK curriculum intentionally imbues in the pupils key knowledge, skills and dispositions along a continuum that spans from pre-school to primary education, and will need to be versed in the pedagogies used in the MKs to ensure continuity as the pupils transit to primary education.



Strengthening Support for Students with Social-Emotional Needs

Teachers increasingly need to manage students with learning, behavioural and emotional needs while at the same time, build a strong rapport with their students, establish a positive discipline working model and cater to their socio-emotional needs. In this regard, teachers together with school leaders, middle managers and counsellors form the Student or Case Management Team to better manage and coordinate efforts. A timely and systematic identification, assessment and provision of support for students with such needs will maximise their chances of successful integration in mainstream schools and realise their potential in life. With the prevalence of social media and ubiquity of smart devices, our students are also facing new pressures while growing up. To help them cope with these pressures and build emotional resilience, our teachers will need to teach about mental health and cyber wellness explicitly in Character and Citizenship Education lessons across primary and secondary levels. Teachers also need to foster a peer support culture, where students look out for one another



Strengthening Support for Students with Special Education Needs

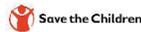
With support for students with special educational needs (SEN) being enhanced, teachers need to be equipped with a basic understanding of SEN, and the skills and strategies to support students with SEN through more extensive coverage of SEN in the pre-service curriculum. Teachers in our schools have access to new online learning modules developed by MOE. These modules feature locally produced, evidence-based resources that will enable our educators to apply their learning in the local context.

Preparing for the Future of Learning and Teaching

To help our students adapt to the changes brought about by the pandemic and the VUCA world, Singapore's education system refreshes the school curriculum to ensure that the knowledge, skills, and values taught remain current and relevant. MOE is aware that more can be done to ensure that education remains equitable for all students, and is looking into other educational policies that shape the future of learning and teaching, so that our teachers are well equipped to help all students be future-ready for the workplace and for society.

IV

**Good cases of
professional
development of
teachers to be
the leader to
promote equitable
education
on the ground**



Recognising that the quality of education system is only as good as the quality of its teachers, MOE strongly encourages its teachers to continually deepen their expertise. This strong belief in the importance of quality professional development begins at the initial teacher preparation phase, where any individual interested in teaching in Singapore national schools must attend a relevant Initial Teacher Preparation (ITP) programme pegged to their entry qualifications at the National Institute of Education (NIE), Nanyang Technological University.

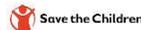
Being the sole institution in the country dedicated to conducting initial teacher preparation programmes, NIE seeks to develop our pre-service teachers as creators of knowledge, facilitators of learning, shapers of character, architects of learning environment and leaders of education change. Through the different ITP programmes, pre-service teachers are also equipped with the core knowledge and skills required of Singapore teachers to cater for to the learning needs of diverse student profiles, such as students with special educational needs.

In terms of continual professional development, Singapore adopts a teacher-driven culture of professional excellence guided by the professional development philosophy of 'Teacher Ownership and Teacher Leadership (TOTL) of Professional Learning', where every teacher is provided 100 professional learning hours for them to take ownership of learning and to lead fellow teachers in professional learning. This is further complemented by the Professional Development Leave (PDL) Scheme and Professional Development Packages (PDP) for teachers who wish to pursue relevant courses to advance their craft.



Upon graduation from NIE, Singapore teachers will grow towards the five desired teacher outcomes throughout their professional journey, which is guided by the Teacher Growth Model (TGM). Teachers can look forward to continued support in their professional learning journey by taking ownership of opportunities, such as school-based mentoring support and in-service courses for beginner teachers. Such professional development opportunities are provided by an ecosystem of PD providers at the school level, AST and NIE.

To ensure support in planning of PD opportunities for all teachers within and beyond the school, every school is also entitled to a middle management headcount of a School Staff Developer, who supports school leaders in planning and overseeing the professional development provisions for all teachers based on the Learning Dimensions and Learning Areas in the TGM. And at the national level, Teacher Leaders (Senior Teacher, Lead Teacher, Master Teacher and Principal Master Teacher) lead the fraternity in enhancing their pedagogical knowledge and skills through workshops and courses, and leadership in Networked Learning Communities in areas of interest for different groups of teachers.



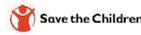
SkillsFuture for Educators (SFEd), which was jointly developed by MOE and NIE, is an example of a professional development roadmap for all Singapore teachers that was introduced in 2020 focusing on nurturing future-ready learners. SFEd articulates four levels of practice that guide teachers on the level of their classroom practice and where they could work towards. Additionally, Singapore teachers are supported by the Singapore Teaching Practice, a model for teaching and learning guided by the Singapore Curriculum Philosophy, and informed by the research and theories on teacher and teaching, and student and learning in the Knowledge Bases, which acts as a PD resource for teachers to engage in professional conversations to hone their pedagogical knowledge and skills.

The design of the NIE ITP programmes is underpinned by NIE's philosophy of teacher education as embodied in the V³SK (Values, Skills and Knowledge) Model . It is a reiteration of NIE's belief that the child is at the centre of NIE's teacher education mission. Bearing in mind the profile and the desired outcomes of the 21st century learner, it articulates the values, skills and knowledge that will shape well-rounded, quality 21st Century teachers who will provide our children with the best education possible to nurture their potential to become active contributors to the community.

³More information on NIE's philosophy can be found here: <https://www.nie.edu.sg/our-people/programme-offices/office-of-teacher-education>.



NIE's ITP programmes equip student teachers to consider learners' readiness, profiles and interests when preparing and enacting lessons, and to select appropriate instructional strategies. Student teachers are also trained to understand learners with SEN and to support students with SEN in their classroom learning, in consultation with experienced colleagues. Through modules that emphasise Service Learning and Curriculum Studies, pre-service teachers would be equipped with knowledge on inclusive education and engage in discourse on principles of differentiated instruction and supporting students with special education needs.



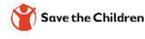
Guided by the belief in the Singapore Curriculum Philosophy that every child can, and wants to learn, the AST in-service PD programmes help equip our teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills to recognise every student as an individual with unique strengths, and who brings with him/her a wide range of experiences, beliefs, knowledge, and skills. Teachers learn how to cater to the students' diverse learning needs, and how to adapt their teaching pace, approaches and assessment practices to be developmentally appropriate for learning. Through subject-based professional learning opportunities, teachers learn to effectively engage students with diverse needs, including but not restricted to students with special education needs and low progress learners. Teachers who are keen to deepen their understanding and practice in supporting students with specific needs could attend certificate courses offered by the NIE, e.g., Certificate in Educational Support, and Certificate for Teachers Trained in Special Needs. The former is a certificate programme that aims to deepen the professional knowledge and skills of participants in relation to supporting the specific socio-emotional and learning needs of low-progress learners. The latter provides mainstream teachers in the primary and secondary schools with more in-depth knowledge, skills and understanding of the special needs of diverse learners and foster the development of teachers' education.



In the spirit of TOTL of professional learning, teachers from different schools could engage in collaborative learning on equitable education through their participation in informal Networked Learning Communities (NLCs). At AST, each NLC is guided by a Master Teacher who serves as a resource expert in the area of focus, and who facilitates the co-construction of new knowledge that advances equitable education among the teachers, curricular experts and NIE faculty. Across schools, the NLCs could be advised by a Master Teacher from AST and led by Teacher Leaders from different schools.

Within each school, the Professional Learning Community (PLC) serves as a sustainable platform for teachers to learn from and with each other on how to facilitate the learning of every student to address his/her learning needs, and to help students attain curricular outcomes and realise their potential. Dedicated time (one hour weekly), and a process and framework for professional learning are created, enabling and empowering teachers to learn and explore ways to achieve quality learning outcomes for all students and the teachers themselves.

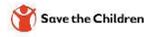
All schools are given a training grant to support teachers in their PD. In general, most teachers do not have to pay or seek funding for their PD. MOE also has Professional Development Leave (PDL) packages to encourage teachers to take up part-time Masters courses, attend ten-week attachments or programmes that is of interest to the teachers and relevance to the schools, as well as upgrade themselves in areas such as SFEd. Milestone programmes are also organised for newly-appointed Heads of Department, Senior Teachers and Lead Teachers.



In all the PD provided, teachers are encouraged to reach out to every child in the classroom. Teachers learn to value students' qualities beyond academic grades, offer academic and career counselling, identify and care for students with social emotional needs, and most importantly, acquire a repertoire of pedagogies and deploy them suitably to cater to the students. As the students' profile become more diverse in recent years, teachers are also deepening their skills for differentiated instruction.



**Good cases
of support
mechanisms for
teachers**

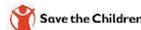


Our teachers are mission-minded educators who are intrinsically motivated to help every student realise his or her potential to the fullest. They hold firm to the belief in the Singapore Curriculum Philosophy that every child can, and wants to learn. Every student is valued as an individual, and adds to the diversity of the classroom by bringing with him his unique experiences, beliefs, knowledge, and skills. Our teachers plan for differentiated instruction and adapt their teaching pace, approaches and assessment practices to be developmentally appropriate according to the learners' profiles.

Both school staff and members of the public, including students, recognise the efforts of the teachers in effectively catering to their learning through various platforms. Outstanding and caring teachers are recognised for their innovation and effort in the teaching of their subject, or in developing all their students holistically through awards given at school and national levels. These teachers get the opportunity to participate in learning or exchange programmes overseas like the Distinguished Fulbright Awards in Teaching, or the Outstanding Youth in Education and President's Award for Teachers. In all these platforms or awards, there is a strong focus on the teachers' care for their charges, especially those with learning needs or come from disadvantaged backgrounds.



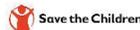
Teachers are encouraged to share effective teaching practices with their work colleagues, or even across schools at cluster, zonal and national professional learning platforms like workshops and conferences. There are NLCs focused on supporting students with learning needs in general as well as in specific subjects. In these NLCs, the teachers learn from the Master Teachers strategies and pedagogies to support these students. In recognition of their commitment to leading their peers in professional learning in equitable education, the Academy of Singapore Teachers' Academy Award is given to these teachers. Teachers are also recognised for their efforts in promoting equitable education through the education officer's performance appraisal process, which emphasises the quality learning and character development of all students as key result areas.



Teachers in school are supported in class by the Allied Educators (Learning and Behaviour Support) when teaching to cater to students with SEN who benefit from individual or small group intervention or skills training. All schools also provide classroom teachers with expert support through the Teachers Trained in Special Needs (TSN). These TSN provide learning support and plan instructional strategies and adapt lessons for students with special educational needs, and share strategies with the other teachers in school. Primary school teachers get the support from the School-based Dyslexia Remediation (SDR) Programme and partner the Dyslexia Association of Singapore (DAS), who which provides remediation to support students with dyslexia in mainstream schools with dyslexia. Moreover, those with students who are hearing impaired, visually impaired and/or physically impaired get are supported by school-based specialised educational services (e.g. Mayflower Primary School) or/and services provided by voluntary welfare organisations, including the deployment of specialised teachers for sign language and braille instruction.



As part of MOE’s needs-based resourcing approach, schools can flexibly determine the classroom sizes and deployment of teachers, so that teachers can provide greater attention and care to students who may need more learning support. For example, teachers teaching the learning support programmes have class enrolment sizes of eight to 10. Foundation subjects in upper primary are taught in smaller classes, between 10 and 20 students in most instances. At the secondary level, depending on the student profile and suitability of subjects, schools could adopt smaller class sizes. This allows students who require greater academic support to receive more individualised attention. Teachers are supported in catering to students from disadvantaged backgrounds with complex needs — not just in academic and learning support, but also in other areas with the provision of Student Welfare Officers and Allied Educators. These allow teachers to identify, monitor, and extend support to such students. The school’s Student Development Team oversees areas such as special educational needs and student well-being, and is led by a Vice-Principal and comprising Key Personnel in charge of student development matters such as Year Heads.



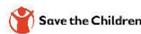
Teachers also get a dedicated time of one hour a week to engage in collaborative learning, where they seek to identify the learning needs of students, and the teaching strategies that can be enacted to addressing them, as well as ways to extend and deepen their students learning. Teachers learn from each other about suitable ICT tools to leverage in supporting the learning needs of their diverse student profiles.

At NIE, student teachers would have learnt the core knowledge and skills in recognising and assessing the learning needs of students, including SEN students. For those who are interested to deepen their competencies in the area of promoting equitable education, the certification course for Teachers Trained in Special Needs, and the other professional learning offerings under the SFEd Areas of Practice for Differentiated Instruction, e-Pedagogy and Support for Students with SEN are available.

To improve equity practices, school principals provide ongoing and concerted support to teachers in several areas. They spell out and role model expectations for teachers to deliver a holistic school curriculum to all students. Teachers benefit from being part of teams organised based on addressing the physical, cognitive and psycho-social needs of diverse students (e.g. through professional learning teams that can be based on subject, level or project).



School principals promote the establishment of protocols and procedures for teachers to be able to identify their students' learning needs and wants, and to come up with agreed upon interventions that provide the necessary scaffolding the students need. Principals also oversee review processes for teaching and learning, as well as for the provision of teaching resources (e.g. human resource, funding and space) that allow teachers to carry out equitable education. They structure in dedicated time for these teams to meet, problem-solve and innovate solutions that will allow teachers to plan how to scaffold instruction appropriately, keep students engaged in rigorous curricular content, and utilise protocols and tools to properly assess students along the way.



They assemble strategic teams with balanced skill sets, experience levels, and expertise to support our teachers in creating the necessary teaching and learning resources that can be employed for home-based learning or hybrid learning, especially given the pandemic circumstances. Additionally, they ensure that teachers are given not just the time and space to collaborate on teaching and learning issues, but also the tools necessary to conduct the teaching and learning effectively. School principals also ensure that teachers are given the necessary professional development to carry out targeted remediation and support the students need, and that teachers benefit from additional expertise that comes from establishing school partnerships and connections with parents, external stakeholders and community support organisations to help students who may need targeted learning support within and beyond school. Finally, they see to the wellness of teachers, where teachers are provided with access to mental wellness programmes, and social and psychological support so that they can give of their best when promoting equitable education.



AST provides teachers with the support of the academies' Master Teachers, who demonstrate pedagogical content leadership in the respective curricular subjects. The Master Teachers design professional learning packages and teaching resources that help teachers leverage technology to cater to the diverse learning needs of their students. They conduct model lessons for teachers to learn from, and spearhead networked learning communities among teachers according to subjects and student learning profiles for teachers' professional learning to be sustained.

MOE ensures that all schools in Singapore are deployed with a fair share of teachers who demonstrate strong curricular and pedagogical leadership. In line with a needs-based resourcing approach, teachers are deployed where they can maximise their impact. More teachers are allocated for students at the earliest grade levels or with greater needs e.g., learning support programmes. With the flexibility accorded to school leaders in deployment within school, teachers are able to dedicate more time to holistic development programmes, and can offer more attention to students who require more support.



**Good cases
to promote
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and beyond**

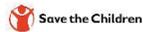


COVID-19 had a big impact on students from disadvantaged families. Many of these children depend on the school environment to provide structure, and even their meals. Some may face financial struggles, or their home environment may not be conducive for learning.

There was a period where Singapore had to implement a national circuit breaker in response to the COVID-19 situation, where all schools had to quickly shift to full HBL. This required teachers, students and parents to adjust to new routines and approaches in how education was delivered. During this period, our teachers had to keep a closer watch on the students with higher needs through the following:

- Face-to-face engagement.

Special arrangements were made to keep schools open to allow a small group of students to return to school regularly, with safe management measures in place. These might be students who lack a conducive learning environment at home or whom schools felt would benefit from more regular face-to-face support. Primary schools also facilitated the enrolment of some of these students into school-based Student Care Centres. Besides providing academic support to help these students keep up with their HBL, teachers organised various activities to keep them meaningfully engaged



- Closer monitoring of students.

Teachers closely monitored the well-being of all their students through online and other remote channels, particularly those with less family support. For example, students who already experience challenging family relations could face increased strain due to the extended period of time they had to spend at home. Recognising this, teachers and support staff kept an active lookout for these students' home situations, socio-emotional well-being and mental health needs. Depending on the specific challenges and needs of the students, referrals would be made to Social Service Offices and Family Service Centres, if necessary. Also, teachers and other support school staff were allowed to make home visits for urgent cases to ensure the wellbeing of the students are taken care of.

- Digital access.

To help students who lacked access to devices and the Internet, our schools loaned out over 20,000 computing devices and more than 1,600 internet-enabling devices to students.



Even after Singapore exited the circuit breaker and students started returning to school, teachers kept a very close watch on students to ensure that they were able to re-adjust to school life.

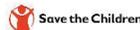
- Teachers monitored their well-being closely. For those whose families might be facing financial difficulties, teachers proactively reached out to them to apply for financial assistance, where needed. Counsellors worked closely with students who faced social-emotional issues or difficult home situations.

- Teachers resumed their after-school engagement programmes, as soon as possible while putting in place the necessary safe management measures, to re-establish school connectedness with their target students.

In shifting onto HBL, MOE worked closely with school leaders to overcome teething issues faced by teachers such as technical glitches and also ramp up support for teachers by establishing new practices and processes.

- For instance, MOE scaled up the Singapore Student Learning Space (SLS), a central online learning platform set up by MOE, to support a much larger number of concurrent users and greater intensity of use, and significantly accelerated the provision of SLS' educational resources.

- Lesson packages designed by Master Teachers, as well as other teaching resources, were uploaded onto the Singapore SLS for teachers' adaptation and use for online teaching. The Teachers' Conference and ExCEL Fest 2021 offered teachers a virtual professional learning experience with its 153 concurrent sessions and 109 poster exhibits by their peers and Master Teachers, as well as school exhibits of innovative ideas in teaching and learning.



Teachers also worked together to plan for full HBL, sharing resources and expertise, which ultimately helped to ease the workload in preparing teaching materials during that period.

- For example, the SLS 'Community Gallery' feature allowed teachers to share their SLS lessons with other teachers across Singapore, who could then adopt or adapt them to meet the needs of their own students, making lesson planning more efficient.

- MOE's '**Singapore Learning Designers Circle**', an online community for teachers on educational technology, also served as a crucial source of crowd-sourced lesson ideas and peer support for teachers during full HBL.

MOE also supported teachers by facilitating the support offered from the community, to complement the support for the disadvantaged students.

- MOE facilitated an online reading programme to support a number of primary schools, arranging for secondary school and JC students to read to the primary school students online regularly. This not only supported their learning and kept them meaningfully engaged, but also provided the young readers a befriender during that period.

- MOE worked with an arts charity, supported by corporate donors, to offer online arts enrichment activities to keep the students coming to school meaningfully engaged. MOE also collaborated with a number of social service agencies to convene volunteers to provide tele-befriending to complement our schools' efforts in monitoring and supporting vulnerable students at home.



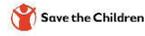
- Industry partners and the community also stepped in to donate devices to supplement what schools provided, such as laptops and WiFi routers.

Teachers demonstrated resourcefulness, teamwork and resilience in quickly adapting to teaching remotely, leading to many innovative HBL lessons, allowing for the continued learning of all students, including the disadvantaged students, throughout the COVID pandemic.

In catering to the learning needs and safety of students during the pandemic, teachers' workload increased on the whole, and MOE has put in place measures to support them in managing it. MOE gave guidance to schools to review schools' strategic plans to pace out the work for teachers and to defer programmes as school leaders deem fit. School leaders were advised to protect teachers' time to fulfil their responsibilities, relieve them of projects where feasible, and provide flexibility for them to self-manage their work.

MOE provides resources, such as workshops, for teachers to strengthen their emotional literacy and practical skills for self-care. MOE also provides a counselling service for teachers who need additional support, and these were augmented with government-wide online resources and counselling services to safeguard public officers' mental health.

Schools have structures in place with a Staff Well-being Committee and Staff Well-being Champion to plan and implement well-being measures for their teachers. MOE introduced a 'Wellness Ambassador' initiative in 2021 where selected school staff would be trained to provide an added layer of peer support to colleagues in schools.



The importance teacher well-being was emphasised by the Minister for Education Chan Chun Sing who gave focus to this topic at the 2021 MOE Workplan Seminar. MOE also signalled to school leaders the importance of setting a positive school tone and culture to support teachers' well-being and teachers were encouraged to tap the resources provided by MOE and schools.

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