

Implementation of the 15-Year Free Education with Quality Policy
Ministry of Education, Thailand



List of free items

1. Tuition fees;
2. Textbooks;
3. Learning materials;
4. School uniforms; and
5. Activities to promote quality improvements among students

Introduction

The Thai Constitution of B.E. 2550 (2007) requires that government provide a minimum 12 years of basic education of quality, free of charge. However, the current government, recognizing the importance of education, assigned the Ministry of Education to go beyond this requirement and to increase educational opportunities for all children nationwide through the launch of 15 years, free, quality education for all. Poor children and the disadvantaged receive particular attention.

The Education Ministry has drawn up a list of free items to be provided to Thai students under the new policy. The five items include: tuition fees, textbooks, learning materials, school uniforms, as well as other activities which promote quality improvements among students. From the outset, educational quality has been at the core of education reform in Thailand.

For clarification purposes, this document presents the rationale, key principles and detailed information on how the above-mentioned free items are to be distributed and managed. All sectors and responsible personnel are expected to act in accordance with these policy guidelines for the benefit of all Thai children and learners.

Ministry of Education

March, 2009

Preface



The Minister of Education, Mr. Jurin Laksanawisit, reported on the 15 Years Free Education with Quality policy at the parliamentary session of 28 January, 2009. This policy, with budget proposed and approved under the Act of Additional Budget Expenditure B.E. 2552 (2009), aims to address the challenges Thailand faces due to the current global economic downturn, and to provide educational opportunity for poor children and the disadvantaged nationwide.

Implementation of the policy follows inputs from public hearings which took place in all regions of the country, focusing on 4 key principles: 1) saving national budget, 2) working with transparency, 3) ease of implementation and 4) networking of educational institutions. These public hearings were organized by the Ministry of Education. Representatives from public and private sector, students, teachers, parents, school administrators, educational executives, entrepreneurs, housewives, various community groups and distinguished educators, participated in the hearings.

Details regarding the implementation of the 15-Year Free Education with Quality policy are explained further in this document.

Summary on Budget Allocation under the 15-Year Free Education with Quality Policy



1. Tuition fees will be allocated according to the actual number of students enrolled per institution.

2. Budget for textbooks and activities to promote quality improvements among students will be allocated and managed by each school.

3. Budget for learning materials and school uniforms will be distributed to parents via the school.

Tuition Fees

The Ministry of Education allocates tuition fee budget for students nationwide based on the actual number of students enrolled at each institution. Following Cabinet approval, this amount is calculated according to level and type of education, as shown below :

A. Formal Education

- Pre-elementary	1,700 baht per student per year
- Primary	1,900 baht per student per year
- Lower Secondary	3,500 baht per student per year
- Upper Secondary	3,800 baht per student per year
- Lower Vocational and Technical Education	
(Industrial Technology)	6,500 baht per student per year
(Commerce)	4,900 baht per student per year
(Domestic Sciences)	5,500 baht per student per year
(Fine Arts)	6,200 baht per student per year
(General Agriculture)	5,900 baht per student per year
(Reformed Agriculture)	11,900 baht per student per year

B. Non-Formal Education

- Primary	1,100 baht per student per year
- Lower Secondary	2,300 baht per student per year
- Upper Secondary	2,300 baht per student per year
- Lower Vocational and Technical Education	4,240 baht per student per year

Notes:

1. There will be an increase in tuition fee subsidies for 3-year-old, pre-elementary students attending private schools
2. There will be a 10% increase in tuition fee subsidies to all private schools



Textbooks

The budget allocation for textbooks will be transferred by the Ministry of Education to schools. Schools are expected to manage the budget themselves in line with

government regulations. At the beginning of each course, students will receive copies of course textbooks which they must return to the school upon course completion. The selection of textbooks will be by mutual agreement between the school board, and four main parties, namely: teachers, parents, student committee members and community representatives.

Detailed budget for textbooks:

A. Formal Education

- Pre-elementary	200.00 baht per student
- Primary Grade 1	483.20 baht per student
- Primary Grade 2	347.20 baht per student
- Primary Grade 3	365.60 baht per student
- Primary Grade 4	580.00 baht per student
- Primary Grade 5	424.00 baht per student
- Primary Grade 6	496.00 baht per student

- Lower Secondary Grade 1	739.20 baht per student
- Lower Secondary Grade 2	564.80 baht per student per
- Lower Secondary Grade 3	560.00 baht per student
- Upper Secondary Grade 1	1,160.80 baht per student
- Upper Secondary Grade 2	805.60 baht per student
- Upper Secondary Grade 3	763.20 baht per student
- Lower Vocational and Technical Education	1,000.00 baht per student

Non-Formal Education

- Primary	290.00 baht per student per year
- Lower Secondary	360.00 baht per student per year
- Upper Secondary	400.00 baht per student per year
- Lower Vocational and Technical Education	500.00 baht per student per year

Implementation

1. Schools should check the list of textbooks approved by the Ministry of Education.
2. Textbook distributors will be invited to attend a meeting where they will be informed of how to purchase the selected products.
3. Comparative information with regard to textbook quality and price will be displayed.
4. Textbook selection will be agreed at a meeting between the school board and four concerned parties.
5. Selected textbooks will be purchased in accordance with government regulations.
6. Schools will stamp, “loan books”, on the purchased textbooks.
7. A complete list of loan books will be compiled for further inspection.
8. A system will be set up to ensure that all students receive the necessary textbooks on loan and return them to pass on to future students.

Learning Materials

The budget allocation for learning materials will be transferred by the Ministry of Education to schools, and will subsequently be distributed by the institutions to parents in the form of cash payments. To ensure accountability, parents must submit

all receipts of purchase to the institution for further consideration by the school board and four concerned parties. The amount received by parents should not exceed the actual amount money paid by them for learning materials.

Learning materials include exercise books, notebooks, pencils, pens, erasers, rulers, geometric tools, computer materials (CDs), A4 paper, plasticine and crayons.

Detailed budget for learning materials:

- Pre-Elementary	100 baht per student per semester
- Primary	195 baht per student per semester
- Lower Secondary	210 baht per student per semester
- Upper Secondary	230 baht per student per semester
- Lower Vocational and Technical Education	230 baht per student per semester

Implementation

1. Education institutions will conduct a survey to establish the actual number of students in need of financial assistance for the purchase of learning materials
2. Education institutions will conduct a survey on local learning materials retailers.
3. Education institutions will develop their individual plans for the provision of learning materials, taking into account the number of students involved and estimated quantity of materials.
4. Cash payments will be made to parents, and balance sheets will be created
5. After purchasing learning materials, parents will return all receipts to the institution.
6. The school board and the four concerned parties will meet to conduct an overall inspection of the administration of the learning materials budget
7. Schools will submit a report to the Ministry of Education

School Uniforms

The budget allocation for school uniforms will be transferred from Ministry of Education to education institutions, and will be distributed by the institutions in the form of cash payments to all parents. To ensure accountability, parents must return all receipts to the institution for further consideration by the school board and four

concerned parties. The amount received by parents should not exceed the amount paid for school uniforms.

Detailed budget for school uniforms :

- Pre-Elementary	300 baht per person per year
- Primary	360 baht per person per year
- Lower Secondary	450 baht per person per year
- Upper Secondary	500 baht per person per year
- Lower Vocational and Technical Education	900 baht per person per year



The budget allocated per head is based on average prices and covers the cost of two school uniforms per year. If parents wish to buy school uniforms at a higher price, responsibility for the excess amount will rest with the parents. This budget can also be used by parents towards the purchase of belts, socks, shoes, sportswear and uniforms for boy scouts or girl guides

if their children already have enough school uniforms.

In addition, schools are encouraged to keep a record of parents who voluntarily decline financial support and purchase school uniforms by themselves. These parents will receive a thank you letter and the remaining budget will be used to help other poor schools later.

Implementation

1. Schools will conduct a survey to explore the number of students in need of financial support to purchase school uniforms. A thank you letter will be sent to all parents who decline such assistance.
2. The education institutions will conduct a survey of local school uniform retailers/manufacturers.
3. Comparative information with regard to the quality and price of school uniforms will be displayed.
4. Money will be given to parents and balance sheets will be created.
5. After buying school uniforms, parents will return all receipts to the school.

6. The school board and the four concerned parties will meet to conduct an overall inspection of budget administration.
7. Schools will submit a report to the Ministry of Education.

Activities to Promote Quality Improvement among Students

The Ministry of Education budget allocation for activities to promote quality improvements among students covers the four activities listed below:



1. Academic activities (at least once a year)
2. Activities to boost ethics and moral, such as a boy scout and girl guide camps (at least once a year)
3. Study visits (at least once a year)
4. ICT services (at least 40 hours a year)

Further activities will be subject to consideration by the school board and the four concerned parties, focusing on quality-oriented results for students.

Detailed budget for activities to promote quality improvement among students :

A. Formal Education

- Pre-elementary	215 baht per semester
- Primary	240 baht per semester
- Lower secondary	440 baht per semester
- Upper secondary	475 baht per semester
- Lower Vocational and Technical Education	475 baht per semester

B. Non-Formal Education

- Primary	140 baht per semester
- Lower secondary	290 baht per semester
- Upper secondary	290 baht per semester
- Lower Vocational and Technical Education	530 baht per semester

**Translated by
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