

# ***THAILAND***

## **“The Role of Special Classes, Resource Rooms and Other Arrangements in Regular Schools – Meeting Individual Educational Needs While Forming Cohesive Society in Thailand”**

***Somporn Warnset***

**Director, Office of Basic Education Commission  
Ministry of Education, Thailand**

In Thai law since 1999 and the national education policy for children with disabilities the provision of educational opportunities for students with disabilities include all children in education for all of Thai citizens. This is the overall rights of every child throughout Thailand. People with disabilities in Thailand no longer have to stay at home, or learn a particular skill to earn their livings by themselves. They can make their own choice and have a school education, as far as they wish to go or to their full potential. Persons with disabilities, as a large population of Thailand, are certainly included in this country's recognition. With the belief that persons with disabilities have the potentials to be human resources of the country to establish an effective rehabilitation strategy for persons with disabilities, so they can become productive contributing citizens as other good social human capital. Thailand also believes that every person with disabilities can be improved through appropriate and “tailored-to-fit” education.

The Thai government also took the opportunity to proclaim 1999 as the “Year of Education for Persons with Disabilities” with the national policy, “Any persons with disabilities who wish to go to school, can do so”. The result was an incredible increase of the numbers of children with disabilities in the public schools, which more than doubled, and the policy of equalization became national practice in urban and rural areas. The major key of the force behind the movement was the representative of individual disabilities groups sitting together with the high-ranking officers, headed by the Minister of Education, having full consumer participation, of people from organizations of and for the disabled involved in the process.

Learning methodology, learning environment, learning opportunity, and learning community must be integrated into the system of education. On the basis of relevant educational research and curricula, projects for learning in these fields would have to be developed and carried out. Plans would be put to action by full support of street implementers, and the results would ensure a good overall learning atmosphere.

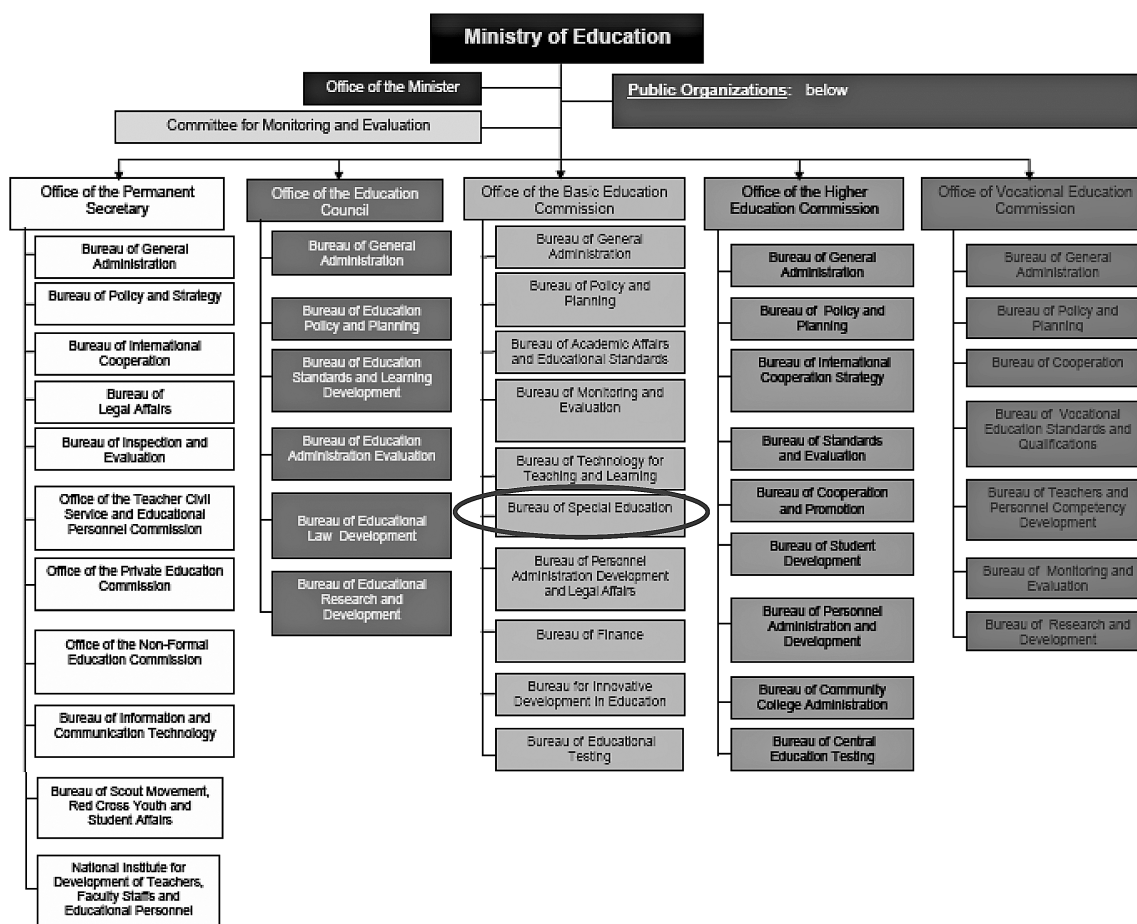
The legal framework and education policies of persons with Disabilities under the Office of Basic Education Commission (OBEC), Ministry of Education. In addition, the development of administrative structures as well as the implementations of the policies through different activities for the past seven years (2002 - 2008) have ensured the availability, accessibility, acceptability, and adaptability of education for persons with disabilities.

The Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand (1997): Section 30 and 55. Tracing back to the development of legal framework and national plans, Thailand has prioritized equal opportunity in education as a key element towards the successful development of persons with disabilities in Thailand.

The National Education Act B.E. 2542 (1999): Section 10. The remarkable turning-point in the history of education for persons with disabilities is the promulgation of the National Education Act B.E. 2542 (1999). The Act aims at protecting the rights of persons with disabilities to education in accordance with their rights under the Constitution

The Ministry of Education Ministerial Regulations on accessibility, materials, services and other related supports. On 19 August 2002, the Ministry of Education issued a Ministerial Regulation on accessibility, materials, services, and other related supports for all students with disabilities. They will have the right to the services and supports as specified in their Individualized Program (IEP). Schools work with parents as well as professionals from medical, paramedical, special education, therapist, and non-government agencies in their communities. It is stipulated that from now on, it is the responsibility of every school having students with disabilities to support teachers to adapt curriculum, teaching techniques, evaluation methods for students with special needs in order to accommodate all students with different needs in integrated education.

About Thailand educational system, The structure of the Ministry of Education therefore comprises 5 major offices and a unit and The Bureau of special education with in the Office of Basic Education Commission (OBEC) as follows:



## **The function of special classes, units, resource rooms and other arrangement in regular schools**

The function of special classes in Thailand: worked to 1) evaluate the performance skills and make student schedule or IEP changes or other adjustments if need be 2) meeting with the parent(s) and others on the IEP team and finding a way to teach the student those skills can be the difference between a future college graduate and a future illiteracy statistic. 3) provide other things for them to learn in your class : materials , environment and activities 4) provide a chart for weekly or daily grades and do what it takes to make sure that your students are getting something out of resource class.

## **The resource rooms and other arrangement in regular schools.**

This room provides one-on-one instruction in a friendly, intimate environment include multisensory strategies, structured approaches to teaching some subject .The Resource Room is available to general education students with IEP's that indicate the student is in need of additional help with their courses. Students may take exams with extended time in this location.

The room has computers with Internet access, CD ROM for all subject areas which is available for all assignments, CAI for repeat practice by 3'R technique (Routine Repeat Relax) by a special education team. The learning activities for the Resource Room include 1) Learn to study :Student can be graded on things such as illustrated flashcards for words they're learning, or paraphrased notes, or oral quizzes on the material they reviewed. 2) Practice basic skills. 3) Learn something else of interest: Some students will work on an independent 'project' in a subject of interest especially if they are provided with structure and feedback throughout the process 4) Learn to keyboard. Keyboarding is a tangible, marketable skill and one that can be learned relatively independently. 5) Learn from commercial comprehension materials. The strategies for this room include 1) Task analysis 2) Peer tutoring 3) Buddy system and 4) Cooperative learning. There are many products designed to engage the independent reading and writing levels of students.

## **How they are utilized to meet special education needs of individual children.**

Thailand, at this moment, is working on living policies which are more flexible and efficient in action. In Early Intervention which is seen as key to providing the children with Disabilities the best possible start, expansion is urgently needed as regards the number of services in order to access the target group as a whole. The activities Implemented 1) Early Intervention to provide services to children with Disabilities since birth or as soon as their disabilities 2) Curriculum Development to prepare the school for integrated education of students with Disabilities. 3) In-service training for teachers, parents and personnel 5) Academic vacation camps for students with Disabilities 6) Integrated education & Assistive Technology through Coupon system in accordance with IEP.

In issues involve and innovative efforts made, Thailand used School-Based Management (SBM) and SEAT Framework (Student, Environment, Activities and Tools) to manage of integrated education. This project is currently being evaluated and the year-end symposium will be organized for each school

to present its best practice. In this project, Individualized Education Programs (IEP), which indicate special needs of children with Disabilities, were written by teachers. In accordance with IEP, provision of education coupons for assistive technology and special services has been accommodated. From 2006, we have 23,350 integrated education rooms, 269,408 disabilities students in inclusive schools, 11,962 students in informal schools, 53 severe autistic child rooms in 46 inclusive schools, and 2,000 schools. Nowadays Thailand have, 42,800 disabilities students in. 2,570 inclusive schools, and 500 severe autistic students in 111 rooms in academic year of 2008 (OBEC, 2008)

However, nowadays the majority of our students disabilities are going to mainstream schools over 80 per cent. The Disabilities students are entitled to a coupon a year, minimum 2000 baht (\$50) per head, which they can exchange for assistive technology as well as additional services. They can also access the educational fund for people with disabilities, which help with access to such things as higher education.

Thailand, continue to develop integration schools. This is National award scheme, benefits for both disabled and non disabled children. The best practice should be highlighted. The earlier a child receives help, the less the problems are later. The early intervention (EI) should form a major part of the role of Regional and Provincial centers. EI is most effective when carried out locally. Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) is strategy to support inclusive school. Special Education Center through out of Thailand should be train local people in disability awareness, making appropriate environment, explaining rights and daily living support. However, the world is changing, Thailand is changing, Special Education is changing, our job is to try to manage the change. If we achieve this, we will make Special Education truly..... Special!

※The report of Thailand was presented by the seminar host on behalf of the delegate of Thailand, so there was no Q&A session.