

# DEVELOPING PROFESSIONAL CAPACITY FOR EDUCATION ADMINISTRATORS AND TEACHERS FOR THE 2018 GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

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## **Abstract**

*The 2018 General Education Program was issued under Circular No. 32/2018/TT-BGDĐT dated December 26, 2018 of the Ministry of Education and Training. The program has many new features and is built in an open direction, with the goal of developing student competence and qualities, giving autonomy to schools for the implementation. Accordingly, education administrators and teachers of schools need to be trained and given specific instructions to be able to master changes and know how to overcome barriers to implementing the program as required for quality insurance. Since 2019 the Ministry of Education and Training has issued official documents guiding the implementation of the program; assigning Universities of Education and the Academy of Educational Management to train education administrators and teachers on implementing the 2018 General Education Program. However, after more than 3 years of implementing the program at all levels, there are still shortcomings to be removed. This article summarizes the implementation process and training results to implement the 2018 General Education Program, identifying issues to be resolved for improvements.*

**Research methods:** *Discussion, interviews; seminar attendance; document research; product research; summary of experience.*

**Keywords:** *General Education Program 2018, guidance, managers, teachers, training.*

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## **BỒI DƯỠNG CÁN BỘ QUẢN LÝ VÀ GIÁO VIÊN THỰC HIỆN CHƯƠNG TRÌNH GIÁO DỤC PHỔ THÔNG 2018**

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### **Tóm tắt**

*Chương trình Giáo dục Phổ thông 2018 được ban hành theo Thông tư số 32/2018/TT-BGDĐT ngày 26 tháng 12 năm 2018 của Bộ Giáo dục và Đào tạo. Chương trình có nhiều điểm mới, được xây dựng theo hướng mở, với mục tiêu phát triển phẩm chất, năng lực học sinh; trao quyền tự chủ cho nhà trường trong thực hiện. Theo đó cán bộ quản lý, giáo viên các trường phổ thông cần được bồi dưỡng, hướng dẫn cụ thể để có thể làm chủ những thay đổi, biết cách vượt qua rào cản triển khai thực hiện chương trình đúng yêu cầu, đảm bảo chất lượng. Từ năm 2019 đến nay, Bộ Giáo dục và Đào tạo đã ban hành các công văn hướng dẫn thực hiện chương trình; giao các trường đại học sư phạm, Học viện Quản lý giáo dục tổ chức bồi dưỡng cho cán bộ quản lý, giáo viên về thực hiện Chương trình Giáo dục Phổ thông 2018. Tuy nhiên sau hơn ba năm học triển khai thực hiện chương trình ở các cấp học, vẫn còn những bất cập cần tháo gỡ. Bài viết này khái quát quá trình triển khai và kết quả bồi dưỡng cán bộ quản lý, giáo viên về thực hiện Chương trình Giáo dục Phổ thông 2018, nhận diện những vấn đề cần tiếp tục giải quyết, cùng một số đề xuất trong thực hiện bồi dưỡng và hướng dẫn thực hiện Chương trình Giáo dục Phổ thông 2018 để khắc phục các bất cập.*

**Từ khoá:** *Bồi dưỡng, cán bộ quản lý, Chương trình Giáo dục Phổ thông 2018, giáo viên, hướng dẫn.*

## 1. Problem Statement

To implement the 2018 General Education Program (GEP), the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) has issued a list of training modules for core teachers and education administrators of core general educational establishments under Decision No. 4660/QĐ-BGDĐT December 4, 2019. Accordingly, education administrators and teachers of core general educational establishments are trained in 9 modules partly online. The implementation started from late 2019 to late 2021. This gained a number of positive results have been achieved. Core teachers and education administrators of core educational establishments have participated in offline and online training for modules 1, 2, 3 and online training for modules 4, 5 and 9. The remaining modules are assigned to localities for their proactive implementation. However, after more than 3 years of schooling, there are still education administrators and teachers who have difficulties and confusion in implementing the 2018 GEP who need to be trained and guided. Through document research, experience summary, product research combined with interviews, semi-structured discussions and seminars, the author summarizes some advantages and limitations in developing professional capacity for teachers and education administrators to implement the 2018 GEP. Accordingly, there are proposals to update and supplement program implementation instructions and train education administrators and teachers to meet the implementation requirements of the 2018 GEP.

## 2. Contents

### 2.1. Results achieved in training education administrators and teachers in implementing the 2018 General Education Program

After nearly a year of promulgating the 2018 GEP, the implementation of training activities for teachers and education administrators of core general education establishments was carried out. With efforts from many parties, the provision of teachers and education administrators with basic understanding, the requirements and implementation methods of the 2018 Education and Development Program has achieved positive results.

Since 2019, MOET has selected and assigned Pedagogical Universities and the Academy of Educational Management to prepare and compile

documents and coordinate to organize and deploy training activities complying with the unified process, supervised by independent experts. Module documents are compiled to a consistent structure, commented on, and seriously evaluated in several standard steps. Courses designed on the LMS (Learning Management System) system has a user-friendly interface.

Before the training courses, MOET organizes a workshop for groups of authors and reporters to exchange ideas and agree on the contents and implementation methods. Training courses are directed to actively engage learners' activities, enhance discussion, practice, and sharing of practical experiences. Over the LMS system, students are required to read documents, watch videos, infographics, answer multiple choice questions, and exercises connected to practice. At the end of the training courses, the exercises are assigned to participants for a plan development to implement the training content into school practice and send it to the system to be evaluated and recognized for the course completion.

In the role of a reporter, participating in direct training of a number of modules for education administrators of core educational establishments (modules 1, 2, 4, 5, 9), the author realized most participants had serious learning awareness and high personal responsibilities. Many participants interacted well in group work, obtaining the basic content of each module. The rate of completing assignments on time is about 80%.

Evaluating participants' final assignments found that if well guided by reporters in a systematic and logical way, participants will identify and clearly understand new points, requirement and implementation direction of the 2018 GEP. Participants are aware that in order to implement the 2018 GEP in an open direction, promoting the autonomous role of the school, each school needs to organize the construction of a school education plan in accordance with the standard process and sufficient content, which focuses on clarifying the unique characteristics of the school, determining the implementation direction to concretize the educational goals, school education program, progress, implementation measures and the assignment of implementation organization,

combining with the plan evaluation Rubric reference to complete the best school education plan. Accordingly, many participants have applied what they have learned well to complete practical exercises to build school education plans as required. In other modules, at the end of the training course, participants are required to develop a plan to apply what they have learned into practice in association with the content of the module. Basically, participants have built plans with complete content as required. Some participants see doing the final exercises as an opportunity to receive comments and feedback from the reporters, so they have built specific, clear plans with clear contextual analysis, identifying the work that needs doing and the way to perform the task is practical and feasible.

## **2.2. Adjustments in guiding and training education administrators and teachers on implementing the 2018 General Education Program**

Although the training of education administrators and teachers implementing the 2018 GEP has achieved positive results, it is still necessary to conduct activities to review, adjust and update new documents into the training content, guide and continue diverse training activities in accordance with actual requirements for 2018 GEP implementation to ensure quality.

### *2.2.1. Training modules and content*

(i) *The updateability of content:* Since 2020, during the implementation of the 2018 GEP, MOET has issued a number of new documents related to adjusting the high school education program stipulating job title and position standards in general education institutions, the list of minimum teaching facilities to implement educational programs at each educational level, plans to implement digital transformation strategies in education; therefore, some content in related modules needs to be reviewed, updated, supplemented and adjusted accordingly.

(ii) *The specificity of module content associated with the requirements for implementing the 2018 GEP:* According to interview responses from some education administrators and teachers, some aspects in content modules need to be clarified, supplemented and adjusted on implementing the 2018 GEP. For example, an education administrator (from a secondary school in a Northern mountainous

province) commented: "In managing the quality of education in primary schools/junior middle schools/high schools, when implementing the 2018 GEP, there are certainly new points in the requirements for teaching staff, physical facilities, and student assessment. What is new in managing the quality of school education, what should be noted and how to manage these must be more specific" (Department of Teachers and Educational Administrators, MOET, 2023a); or an elementary school teacher in Hanoi stated: "Certainly when implementing the 2018 GEP in the spirit of autonomy, along with the requirement to build happy schools that have recently received a lot of attention, building the school culture, developing relationships with family and society in that context must have new points that need to be specified in the training content" (Department of Teachers and Educational Administrators, MOET, 2023a). These opinions show that education administrators and teachers are well aware of the problem.

(iii) *System of evaluation question:* The system of multiple-choice questions in some modules has not been scientifically invested to help students be able to evaluate the level of completion when self-studying, to reinforce the basic content of each module through answering questions, which needs to be reviewed, edited and completed.

(iv) *Duration distribution:* Evenly distributing the duration to the modules is not really appropriate. There are modules that require more time for students to practice (for example, module 1, building a school education plan, is a new issue that requires more time for students to practice).

(v) *No separate train for subject heads:* In implementing the 2018 GEP, the role of subject heads is very important. The subject group of each school must be the team to organize and develop teaching plans for subjects and educational activities to suit student characteristics, school and local conditions on the basis of the national framework program. However, among the training content, there is no specific design for subject heads. There is only 1 item in module 1. Based on the survey results on training requirements for administrators of ethnic minority boarding schools, ethnic semi-boarding schools, and ethnic minority schools with semi-boarding students within the framework of the National target programme on socio-economic

development in ethnic minority and mountainous areas for the period 2021-2025 of the Teachers and Educational Managers Department 2023 (MOET, 2023a), many opinions suggest that there must be a separate training program for professional subject heads on organizing the implementation of the 2018 GEP. When asked, administrators and core teachers of these schools said that the modules have not included much content for managers/teachers to guide and support students in the transition periods between educational levels. There is a lack of content guiding communication skills with stakeholders on changes in the implementation of the 2018 GEP.

### *2.2.2. Problems encountered in the practical implementation of the 2018 General Education Program*

On meeting with administrators and teachers participating in training classes from the 2020-2021 to the 2023-2024 school year to discuss the 2018 GEP and the process of implementing the program, participating in the seminar on "Reviewing, supplementing proposals, and updating the content of training materials for teachers and educational administrators implementing the 2018 GEP" organized by the Teachers and Educational Managers Department, the author has found:

#### *a. No deep understanding of the 2018 General Education Program and the use of textbooks*

A significant part of administrators and teachers have not fully identified the new points of the 2018 GEP for each educational level and the basic requirements in implementation. There is still concern that when schools choose different textbooks, students will face difficulties when changing schools.

#### *b. Confusion in developing educational plans*

The development of school education plans does not clearly demonstrate autonomy in implementing the 2018 GEP as prescribed. No strongly changing the way of analyzing the school context, therefore no appearance of specifically identifying the school's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges when implementing the 2018 GEP at the beginning of each school year; Determining school educational goals is mixed with other goals. The planning of experiential activities/vocational experience activities in the school education plan does not demonstrate openness in terms of space,

time, scale, participants and implementation progress. Discussing with some elementary school administrators about this issue, the author received these explanations: "According to Official Dispatch No. 3535/BGDDT-GDTH dated August 19, 2019 of MOET on instructions for implementing the content of extra-curriculum activities at the elementary level in the 2018 GEP from the 2020-2021 school year, we arranged the experiential activity schedule for 3 periods a week, 1 period for activities under the flag, 1 period for class activities, 1 period for specific theme activities, but the activities under the flag are sometimes not effective. During class activities, sometimes the form teacher has to implement some other content so it is not effective either" (Department of Teachers and Educational Administrators, MOET, 2023a); An elementary school administrator said, "When participating in the training class under module 1, I was given detailed instructions on building a school education plan, but according to the appendix in official dispatch No. 2345/BGDDT-GDTH dated July 7 The MOET June 2021 guidance on building educational plans for primary schools has some different points, so we are following this guidance. We believe that the content of training and the official dispatch guiding implementation should be unified to make implementation more convenient." (Department of Teachers and Educational Administrators, MOET, 2023a).

It can be seen that in reality, many schools in the process of developing school education plans and lesson plans to implement the GEP 2018, both administrators and teachers still have confusion. Different reasons exist, among which there must be inconsistency between the training materials for administrators and teachers for implementing the 2018 GEP compiled by Pedagogical Universities and the Academy of Educational Management, and the regulations and some official documents guiding the implementation evaluated and developed by the MOET, leading to administrators and teachers' confusion in the 2018 GEP implementation.

#### *c. Confusion in assigning teachers to implement educational programs*

Feedbacks from many school administrators show that it is still difficult to assign teachers to implement experiential activities/ career guidance

activities and calculating teaching hours for those participating in this activity meets difficulties. Many schools consider this activity to be the responsibility of the homeroom teacher and general leader of Ho Chi Minh Young Pioneer Organization. In some schools, when experiential activities are organized as under the flag salutation, teaching hours are calculated for the principal or vice principal. For elementary schools, when implementing experiential activities according to the instructions in Official Dispatch No. 3535/BGDDT-GDTH, allocate 3 periods a week, of which 01 period of flag salutation, 01 period of class activities, leading to either superficial and inefficient activities due to combination with other content that needs to be implemented under the flag salutation or class activities.

At the elementary education level, many schools have difficulties in teaching Information Technology and Foreign Languages due to lack of teachers. At the workshop on "Reviewing, proposing and updating the content of training materials for teachers and educational administrators implementing the 2018 GEP" organized by the Department of Teachers and Managers in December 2023, many delegates mentioned that secondary schools have difficulty organizing the teaching of two integrated subjects: Natural Sciences, History and Geography, because the training of integrated teachers does not meet the requirements. At the high school education level, building career-oriented subject groups and coordinating with parents to guide students in choosing subjects still has limitations and does not meet the expectations of the 2018 GEP.

#### *d. Lack of teaching facilities*

In the reports of the provinces at the conference (Department of Teachers and Educational Administrators, MOET, 2023b), many ideas raised on untimely equipped teaching facilities to meet the requirements of teaching and education according to the 2018 GEP; Using old teaching facilities of poor quality; Some schools do not have enough classrooms for subjects; Some primary schools do not meet the conditions to organize 2 sessions/day.

### **2.3. Suggestions**

Educational program innovation is a big change. Before changes, preparing personnel to implement change needs to be emphasized, according to Kotter

(1995), more than 70% of failures in implementing change since the change implementation is not human-centered. The process of changing awareness, behavior, and attitude takes time and must be done scientifically. Not just one-time training but regular, continuous training with feedback, reinforcement, supplementation and adjustment must be done. To influence on the awareness and improve the capacity of administrators and teachers on implementing the GEP 2018, it is necessary to pay attention to implementing the following activities:

*Firstly*, MOET needs to review and adjust a number of documents guiding the implementation of the GEP 2018 (such as official dispatch No. 3535/BGDDT-GDTH dated August 19, 2019; official dispatch No. 5512/BGDDT-GDTrH dated August 18, 2019). 12, 2020) and should replace it with new, more appropriate guiding documents as a basis for implementing training for administrators and teachers to implement the GEP 2018. Guidance documents for implementing the GEP 2018 must be open oriented, promoting the autonomous role of educational institutions.

*Secondly*, Pedagogical Universities, Academy of Educational Management and education institutes with the function of training teachers and educational administrators need to update new documents in training modules (for example Update Circular No. 13/2022/TT-BGDDT on amending the Education and Training Curriculum issued under Circular No. 32/2018/TT-BGDDT; Official Dispatch 5636/BGDĐT-GDTrH guiding the development of teaching plans for Natural Science subjects, History and Geography, Experiential and Career guidance Activities at secondary school level in module 1; updating Circular No. 20/2023/TT-BGDDT guiding on job positions, official structure according to career titles and the number of people working in educational establishments and public specialized schools in module 2; Updating circulars promulgating the list of minimum teaching facilities at all levels in module 4...); Reviewing and adjusting some corresponding content. It is necessary to ensure consistency between training materials and documents guiding the implementation of the 2018 GEP; Reviewing the system of assessment questions in the modules (in the form of multiple choice) to ensure scientificity and focused assessment.

*Thirdly*, organizing a survey of practical needs and research to supplement some training content for administrators and teachers of general education institutions. It can be done according to one of the following two options: *Option 1* adding necessary content to the built modules and adjusting the duration. For example: module 1 can be added with guidance content to support students during the transition period between educational levels; Adding to module 2 content on guiding administrators, teachers, and employees on managing emotions to prevent conflicts; Supplementing and clarifying module 5 on school education quality management associated with the requirements for implementing the 2018 GEP. In particular, it is necessary and educational activities satisfying the requirements of developing student qualities and abilities; to clarify the conditions for ensuring the quality of teaching staff, facilities, technology, teaching Adding to the module 6 issues of building happy schools and classrooms; Adding to the module 7 contents of building green - clean - beautiful - safe schools; Regarding measures to prevent school violence, including gender-based violence, and implement children's rights, the "leaders of change club" model should be supplemented as this has been effectively deployed in ethnic minority and mountainous schools to ensure consistency in the implementation process; Adding to module 8 requirements to innovate the content, form of organizing parent-teacher meetings, communication skills with parents about changes in the 2018 GEP, family responsibilities and implementation coordination requirements; Adding to module 9 the content of digital transformation in education; *Option 2*, building some additional training content for administrators and teachers based on themes, such as: digital transformation in education; communication skills with stakeholders in change management when implementing the 2018 GEP; emotion management skills; professional development models for teachers and their application in schools; guiding and supporting students during transition periods; Developing separate training content for subject heads on developing teaching plans for subjects and educational activities, guiding and supporting colleagues to develop their careers in the workplace;

*Fourthly*, along with training activities for administrators and teachers on implementing the

2018 GEP, it is necessary to review some issues in the content structure and instructions for using textbooks for published experiential and career guidance activities so that although textbooks are only important reference documents when implementing educational programs, they still ensure scientificity and consistency with program implementation instructions, and are convenient for teachers, students and relevant parties to use.

*Fifthly*, it is necessary to thoroughly grasp management principles and implement changes in the training process for managers and teachers. Because moving from the 2006 GEP to the 2018 GEP is a big change; To effectively implement change, it is necessary to help change agents correctly identify educational program changes and the requirements for implementing those changes, and develop plans and strategies to implement the change to suit the school and local context. On the other hand, when implementing change, it is difficult to avoid barriers. Those barriers may be due to lack of knowledge and skills of managers, teachers and stakeholders; afraidness of failure, satisfaction with the existing situations, no desire for change; lack of resources, consensus and support from stakeholders, lack of strategies... Each administrator, teacher and school needs to properly identify barriers and have appropriate strategies to overcome them.

### **3. Conclusion**

Training education administrators and teachers of general education institutions to implement the 2018 GEP is a continuous process. In addition to the modules issued by MOET and training courses organized at all levels across the board, it is necessary to deploy learning in the workplace to develop professional expertise for administrators and teachers. Promoting professional activities in teams and groups; Mobilizing teachers to participate in the process of building school education plans and school development, encouraging self-study through observation, evaluation, reflection... are paths for appropriate and effective professional development.

Along with that, it is necessary to mobilize resources to supplement facilities and teaching equipment to meet the requirements of implementing the 2018 GEP; Promoting mass communication activities to create consensus in implementing educational innovation. Communication with students' parents is very important.

Schools need to innovate parent-teacher meetings, create forums to exchange and share with parents about the implementation of educational programs and the responsibilities of each party to coordinate implementation; Encouraging the organization of open classes with the participation of parents so that they can understand and accompany the school.

Any change is accompanied with unavoidable difficulties. Tasic et al. (2011) and Teczke et al. (2017) stated that change management is considered the most difficult activity among management activities and requires many complex skills. Furthermore, changes in education always bring slower results because it is necessary to wait for feedback from students after they apply what they learn in school into practice and draw conclusions on the school education quality. Therefore, change in education always encounters more resistance than in other environments (Kanter et al., 1992). The important factor for successful change management in schools is the management of "participation of stakeholders in the school's education process" and must involve all members of the school to master change through fostering and guiding them with the necessary knowledge and skills.

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