



Treasure every life

Value every blind kid

Golden Key Newsletter

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Pilot Project of Blind High Students Integrated Class

Project Background



There are more than 8 million VI people in the Chinese mainland and, according to incomplete statistics, there are more than 100 thousand VI children. The Central Education Department's policy regarding special education is: with special education schools as a backbone and special education and integrated classes in general schools as the main body. Since the start of Golden Key Project in 1996, there have

been thousands of VI students studying in general schools. At present, there are a number of blind elementary school students who have graduated and need to continue to study in junior high school, but there is no mature experience for reference in China. According to data provided by the China Association of the Blind, the rate of sighted internet users is 10% of the whole population; while the rate of VI internet users is 0.1% among the whole VI population. The rate in Taiwan is 13% and in Hongkong it is 40%.

Project Object

1. To maintain that VI children and young people should have equal quality education: "equal education" means that the blind will not only study in elementary school, but also study in high school and university; "quality" means no matter which school the blind student attends, they should be given teaching of various subjects, including math, physics and chemistry.

2. To maintain the blind's right to enter the information era like normal people: the basis of information is math, physics and chemistry. The source of information is the computer. We help blind students with their math, physics, chemistry and computer studies, to allow them to enter the information era together with normal people and equally survive in mainstream society.

3. To promote inclusive education and remove the old concept: at the end of the 80s in the 20th century, the term "Integrated Education" formally appeared in documents of the National Education Committee. It means making VI children study together with normal children in mainstream schools. It was advanced, at that time, according to international thoughts on intergrated education. It answered for thoughts of international integrated education then. But nowadays, Inclusive Education is powerfully promoted around the world. The central government emphasizes education on the "principle of humanism". Everyone is a part of the main body of education, we therefore must reform education to meet all children's needs for education and teaching. We will change integrated education "Study Along with the Class" into "Study in the Same Class", in order to promote understanding and implementation of Inclusive Education for all.

4. To carry through special training, according to difficulties met in math, physics, chemistry, computer studies and other courses by blind students going to high school. To search for practical experiences of integrated education for blind high school students, in order to provide reference for all.

Training Content

Participants: VI students, related teachers and supervisors from Chifeng City and Tongliao City from Inner Mongolia and Xianyang City from Shannxi Province.

Training Content: Use of braille math, physics and chemistry symbols and teaching methods for every subject (including teaching tools and experiments), use of specialized computers, individual teaching plans for blind high school students, intergrated teaching plan for every subject and so on for other courses.



Instructors: supported by the principals of Beijing, Tianjin and Qingdao schools for the blind, under Golden Key Research Center of Education for the Visually Impaired's unified arrangement, the carefully chosen teachers prepared for lessons and taught after being examined and approved.

Source of Fund: Supported by Beijing Disabled Persons Federation, Beijing Blind Massage Guidance Center took charge of rear service, Beijing Disabled Persons Federation paid the related expenses; Golden Key Research Center of Education for Visually Impaired Children took charge of teaching, payment of learning tools purchased and participants and conductors' travelling expenses. The funding was from Mr. Donald L. Evans, CEO of The Financial Services Forum and Hongkong Christian Ministry

to Visually Impaired Persons.

Main Achievements

1. Science teachers from grass roots schools have got to know handling rules of Braille math, physics and chemistry symbols, characteristics and difficulties of science teaching for the blind, methods of organizing science experiments and they have set up a foundation for future teaching and consulting services.

The blind students have begun to learn Braille symbols of math, physics and chemistry, initially to know how to learn in the future, how to make experiments, and have accepted some rudimentary knowledge.

2. Computer teachers from grass roots schools have mastered how to use specialized computers expertly and they are able to be responsible for future computer teaching for the blind.

The blind students who participated in the training have begun to handle computers, learn some simple operations and set up a foundation for the future. Each blind student has got a specialized computer, a printer and related software; the low vision student has got closed circuit TV magnifier which will be put in school, to be used by VI students in the long term, the proprietary right belongs to the resource/guidance center.

3. Teachers from the resource/guidance center and itinerant teachers have entirely learned basic knowledge of teaching science and computer studies to blind students, and have set up a foundation for directing implementation, research and summing-up experience of the project in the future. City level supervisors have got to know the above knowledge and it is propitious for their future guidance and support of the pilot project.

4. All of the participants have learned “Individual Teaching Plan”, “Integrated Teaching Plan” and other courses, so that to establish a foundation for implementation of the pilot project guided by the spirit of inclusive education.

Comment from Supervisors

Mr. Li Weihong, Administrative vice-chairman of China Association of the Blind: I agree to change “studying along with sighted students” into “studying together with sighted students”, which also means “intergrated education”, for it shows real equal teaching concept. The rate of VI internet users in Chinese mainland is only 0.1% of sighted internet users, much lower than rate of VI internet users in Hongkong and Taiwan. Nowadays, we have entered the information society, the situation needs to be changed urgently, the implementation of blind high school students intergrated education pilot project will make blind students accept quality equal education, which I fully support.

Mr. Li Tianshun, deputy director of basic education department of Central Ministry of Education showed support after listening to the report of “Blind High School Intergrated Pilot Project”.

Comment from Beijing Disabled Persons Federation

Ms. Zhao Yanhong, Director of Beijing Disabled Persons Federation: Beijing support of Inner Mongolia is the central government's decision. Beijing Disabled Persons Federation began to support the projects for disabled in Inner Mongolia in 1993. The "Blind High School Students Intergrated Education Training" is also a support for education for disabled in Inner Mongolia. During the training, all participants updated their knowledge and improved their understanding, I hope the teachers will work creatively by using learned new concepts, knowledge and methods; I hope the blind students will study hard and will not let all down and take the responsibility of providing experiences to the other blind students.

Comment from UNESCO

Ms. Sun Lei, the principal of education project from UNESCO China Office: UNESCO has applied itself to provide quality inclusive education to VI children. Since the Salamanca World Conference on Special Needs Education (1994), UNESCO has committed itself to promoting the inclusion of children with disabilities within ordinary educational settings. Experiences throughout the world have demonstrated that inclusion does not only benefit children with disabilities, but also all those who are marginalized and/or excluded from education.

Thanks to Golden Key and, in particular, its Director Mr Xu Bailun, we have those good examples to show. Through its dedication and work, the Golden Key has proven that it is very possible to create schools that are inclusive even without costly investments. With partners like the Golden Key, UNESCO has confidence that we will move towards achieving our collective goals of Education For All by 2015.

Comment from Zealand Education Counsellor

Ms. Guergana Guermanoff, New Zealand Education Counsellor in Beijing: the NZ Government's objectives: (1) Encouraging an inclusive society that respects and values the lives of disabled people; (2) Improving education so that all children will have equal opportunities to learn and develop in their local, regular educational centres; (3) Enabling disabled people to work in the open labour market and maintain an adequate income; (4) Providing opportunities for disabled people to have their own homes and lives in the community.

The New Zealand Ministry of Education has particular responsibility for implementing the objective of providing the best education for disabled people. This involves ensuring that no child is denied access to their local, regular school; ensuring that teachers understand the learning needs of disabled people; and ensuring that disabled students, families and teachers have good access to resources available to meet their needs. However, as we all know, Government policies are about setting the framework for action. Implementing those policies also involves the cooperation of agencies, schools and communities. This is where the work of Golden Key Research Centre and educators like yourselves is of vital importance.

Appraisement from Foreign Friends

Michael from Boeing China. Dan Sandifer-Stach from Congregation of the Good Shepherd gave speeches at the graduation ceremony and gave affirmation of the deep meaning of the pilot project on human rights, social equality and other aspects. Representatives from German Embassy Church, German Christian Charity Bazaar and Radisson SAS Hotel expressed congratulations to the start-up of the pilot project.

A Little Participant's Self Introduction

My name is Ding Lili, I'm from a poor farming family from Baoguo village, Aohanqi, Chifeng City, in Inner Mongolia. Ever since I arrived into this world, cruel misfortune has brought only darkness to my life. I've never had a chance to see the colorful world. When I was at the age to



attend school, most of the children my age went to school, I desperately wanted to attend as well. But my mother said, "Dear daughter, how can you go to school without vision?" At that moment, I realized I was different from others. I often thought, if I could only see with my own eyes, I could go to school just like my friends. That will be awesome! Just then, the Golden Key Project started in Inner Mongolia, and I finally got the opportunity to fulfill my dream of going to school! My teachers were trained in special education, and I also got help and support from the rest of society. My teachers taught me how to use Braille to study. I cherished this God given opportunity; I was often in tears of happiness.

This year I was enrolled into a local junior high school. My teachers and I now face a new challenge of teaching and learning additional subjects, for instance, especially, Mathematics, Physics, and Chemistry. At this time, my school principal brought me good news. My teacher and I were invited to go to Beijing and attend a training program. As soon as we heard this news, my mother and I burst in tears. When the villagers heard this news, nobody would believe that a blind child could travel to Beijing. This is all thanks to the sponsors and supporters from the Beijing Disabled Person Federation, the Beijing Blind Massage Guidance Center, and the Golden Key Research Center of Education for the Visually Impaired.

During this training program, I learned Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, and Computer Operations. In order for me to learn with hands-on experience, they even provided me with a computer. I was born unfortunate, but I was the lucky one among the millions of other blind children. I will study very hard. I will not disappoint anyone who believed and supported me. Not only will I be a good student, I will become a self-supporting citizen who will be helpful to rest of society.

Compiled by Golden Key Research Center of Education for Visually Impaired

Address: [Golden Key Research Center of Education for the Visually Impaired, Enjili Bldg. 33, Haidian, Beijing](#); Zip code: 100036

Email: goldkey@public.bta.net.cn, gkrcevi@126.com; Tel: 86-10-88122497 (Fax) 88126524; Website: www.goldenkey.org.cn