Recommendation i: The New $V^3SK$ Model
RECOMMENDATION I: The New V³SK Model

Our review takes a futuristic perspective of preparing the 21st century teacher to support the 21st century learner. A 2008 report by the International Alliance of Leading Education Institutes states that teachers are required “to engage with the moral and social purposes of schooling ... to value and sustain the intellect, to work collaboratively with other stakeholders in education, to be responsible and accountable and to be committed to lifelong learning and reflexivity”5.

In the last decade, NIE has progressively evolved from its original ASK model (Attitudes, Skills and Knowledge) to the VSK model (Values, Skills and Knowledge). The VSK framework has guided the development, delivery and enhancement of our programmes. Its implementation represented a major shift where values are central to the calling and development of the teacher. Furthermore, the high regard for learning and mutual respect between teachers and students in the learning environment must be further rooted culturally and professionally. This can be achieved by creating a role-modelling environment which goes beyond a didactic setting and embraces the teacher as a facilitator of learning, a mediator of the knowledge milieu and a designer of learning environments.

The new enhanced version, known as the V³SK, is first and foremost a reiteration of NIE’s belief that the child is the centre of our teacher education mission. Bearing in mind the profile and the desired outcomes of the 21st century learner, it is 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. The V³SK Model illustrated in Figure 5 also takes into account the recently articulated Vision for the Teaching Service.

The desired outcome of the V³SK is therefore the child-centred teacher – one who is attuned to the needs of the child as a learner with respect to their individuality, development and diversity. In striving to develop a strong teacher identity through high standards and drive to learn, teachers will be able to improve their craft and thus create greater impact on those they teach. The value of serving the profession and the community fosters collaborative teaching and learning among peers. The advancement of the profession will positively affect the progress of teaching and learning in schools, thereby benefiting our children. Also embodied in the V³SK are the knowledge and skills that form the basis of teachers’ scholarship, which in turn informs their practice of classroom teaching. These three important concepts are entwined in the V³SK to develop education professionals in the service of Singapore’s children, our future.
Recommendation I is a re-conceptualisation of the VSK paradigm to further strengthen the characterisation of the 21st teacher that NIE produces. The enhanced V^3SK focuses on expanding the values perspective as a three-dimensional paradigm that will permeate our programmes and curricula.

**Figure 5: New Values, Skills and Knowledge (V^3SK) Model**
A central value proposition of the learner-centric approach is the need to understand the challenges that the 21st century learner is likely to face as a learner. The 21st century learner must be equipped to acquire new competencies in this age of rapid information transfer. Key traits include technological sophistication which is required to equip students to function effectively as citizens in a high-tech globalised society, as well as new competencies such as the ability to self-direct and self-monitor learning. In addition to new basic competencies, there is an increased need to emphasise higher-order thinking skills. Students have to be prepared with a different set of intelligences—which involve not only learning how to do things, but also the ability to deal with novelty as well as the capacity to adapt, select and shape their interactions with the environment—in order to function effectively in a new world in which traditional notions of transmission of knowledge, skills and attitudes are already inadequate.

In the MOE C2015 report, the competencies and mindsets required of citizens and workers of the 21st century span four domains. The first relates to the confidence of the individual and includes abilities such as being able to communicate effectively, think independently and collaborate effectively with others; the second relates to the self-directedness of learners. They question, reflect, persevere, and are able to use technology adeptly, while taking responsibility for their own learning. The third domain relates to the disposition of being a concerned citizen, one who actively participates in classroom activities, is informed about the world and local affairs, and emphasises respect for other individuals. In the last domain, individuals are adaptable, innovative and resilient; they also exercise initiative and take risks, setting high standards for themselves.8

In the PERI report, MOE has also identified core knowledge and skill sets for 21st century living as key foci for primary education in the new economy. “Core knowledge skills” refers to knowledge of world issues and current affairs as well as literacy encompassing the numerical, linguistic, cultural, scientific and technological domains, while 21st century skill sets include life-long learning skills, the ability to manage ambiguity, complexity and novelty, as well as the ability to communicate new ideas.7

Teaching today is increasingly complex and demanding. It necessitates adaptability in existing as well as new competencies which draw on 21st century skill sets. Therefore, in order to prepare teachers of 21st century learners, there is a need to shift away from the traditional programmes which have an over-preoccupation with content towards the development of 21st century skill sets including life-long learning skills, the ability to manage ambiguity, complexity and novelty, as well as the ability to communicate new ideas. These need to be complemented by the development of pedagogical practices through which teachers can promote the development of these skill sets in their students. Teachers need to learn how to engage students in independent learning, to act as mediators of learning, to teach heuristics, to provide scaffolding and connect students to the milieu of knowledge available in texts, various other sources and the World Wide Web, and to engage in co-learning with their students.

Value Paradigm 1: Learner-Centred Values

- Empathy
- Belief that all children can learn
- Commitment to nurturing the potential in each child
- Valuing of diversity

Believing that all children and youths can learn, a teacher’s first and foremost characterisation as a professional is putting his/her care for the learner at the centre of all his/her work. Teacher education will emphasise awareness of the learner as an individual. This includes understanding the development, diversity and academic profiles of learners.
Value Paradigm 2: Teacher Identity

- Aims for high standards
- Enquiring nature
- Quest for learning
- Strives to improve
- Passion
- Adaptive and resilient
- Ethical
- Professionalism

Teachers should be characterised by high standards and a drive to learn. The latter is particularly important when one is charged with the responsibility of educating children in an era that is characterised by rapid and continuing change.

Teachers should be imbued with a sense of “self” as a teacher. This includes pondering over what it means in terms of a professional identity. It also should be characterised by a zest for learning as well as passion for their subject discipline, always understood in relation to their role as a teacher. Hence, as education systems around the world evolve to cope with the impact of the new economy, the teaching profession must evolve in tandem. This calls for a re-conceptualisation of teacher education along with a redefined professionalism comprising the following characteristics:

- the ability to use their specialised knowledge and skills appropriately in a variety of institutional contexts with diverse student demographics;
- adoption of an inquiry orientation to investigate pedagogical issues, and to be able to critically utilise evidence-based knowledge to inform professional practice;
- accepting responsibility for the academic and emotional outcomes of their students through setting realistic goals and structuring learning environments for learners; and
- engaging in continuous learning related to their own expertise and experiences so as to enhance student outcomes and strengthen professional identity.
Value Paradigm 3: Service to the Profession and Community

- Collaborative learning and practice
- Building apprenticeship and mentorship
- Social responsibility and engagement
- Stewardship

Teachers must be committed not just to the teaching profession but to the community as well. Teachers should always be looking to mentors and role models, and be prepared to mentor others at a later stage in their careers. They should also have a strong sense of responsibility to contribute to the future of the larger community - locally, nationally and internationally.

Commitment to the teaching profession requires that teachers take pride in, and take on the roles as ambassadors of their profession. In having a strong sense of belonging as a fraternity, their natural instincts should be to seek out mentors and role-models who can guide and inspire them in their apprenticeship phase. At a later stage when they have acquired sufficient maturity and experience, it will be their turn to step forward and serve as mentors to their juniors in the fraternity.

An important aspect of being part of a professional community is the ability to learn together with others in school and beyond in the more extended networks of teachers. It is also necessary for teachers to set aside sufficient time to integrate their learning from daily practice into a comprehensive change process. In this sense, schools can play a more active role by providing a supportive environment for teachers to participate in professional learning communities, as well as focused on-site professional learning opportunities.

Teachers should also have a strong sense of membership of a research-informed community of professionals, seeking common ground and collaborating with members of other professions. As such, teachers should seek to apply research findings in their quest to build their pedagogical knowledge to become better practitioners, transform classroom practices, and develop new research-based pedagogies.

The Skills and Knowledge Paradigm

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skills</th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reflective skills and thinking dispositions *</td>
<td>Self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedagogical skills</td>
<td>Pupil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People management skills *</td>
<td>Community *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-management skills *</td>
<td>Subject content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative and management skills</td>
<td>Pedagogy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication skills *</td>
<td>Educational Foundation and Policies *</td>
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<tr>
<td>Facilitative skills *</td>
<td>Curriculum</td>
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<td>Technological skills *</td>
<td>Multicultural literacy *</td>
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<tr>
<td>Innovation and Entrepreneurship skills *</td>
<td>Global awareness *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social and emotional intelligence *</td>
<td>Environmental awareness *</td>
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* new/ revamped

The skills and knowledge paradigms under the new V3SK Model are refinements of the existing model to address the requirements of 21st century skills. This gives NIE’s TE programmes the necessary currency in the light of the new landscape which is being shaped by globalisation, changing demographics, technological advancement and education policy changes.
The Vision for the Teaching Service was launched by MOE’s Director-General of Education, Ms Ho Peng, at the Teachers’ Mass Lecture on 26 August 2009.10

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By word and deed, through the care we give, we touch the lives of our students. We make a difference - leading and inspiring our students to believe in themselves and to be the best they can be.

As individuals and as a community of professionals, we seek continually to deepen our expertise. Respectful of fellow educators, we collaborate to build a strong fraternity, taking pride in our work and profession.

We forge trusting partnerships with families and the community for the growth and well-being of each student.

We Lead, Care, Inspire,
For the Future of the Nation Passes through Our Hands