

The Research on the Reform of Regional Middle and Primary Countryside Joint-Run Schools

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Abstract: The reform in primary and secondary countryside schools is a big policy which wants to optimize the structure of rural compulsory education, allocate the education resources properly in rural areas, and accelerate the reform and development of compulsory education in rural areas. This thesis mainly analyzes the existing problems and the reason in the countryside schools reform in some areas at present. On the basis of research above, it proposes our countermeasures and suggestions of promoting the middle and primary countryside schools' reform steadily, and offers the prospect of future development.

Keywords: countryside; regional school operation; reform; countermeasures

Reform of regional jointly operating schools in rural areas is a work to improve the rural primary and secondary education quality and scale by converging dispersed rural primary and secondary schools properly and re-laying out the primary and secondary network in one area. This reform bases on the area's natural conditions and economic and social development needs. This work is a systematic project, which will benefit the rural compulsory education's sustained and healthy development. As a trend, since the 90s of last century, especially since 2001, "the State Council Decision on Basic Education Reform and Development" adjust the rural compulsory schools as a high priority; reform of regional jointly operating schools in rural areas has achieved fruitful results. According to the "2004 Report of China's education development" statistics (issued by Ministry of Education), our country has reduced 31,700 primary schools and 973 secondary schools. The total amount is about 40,000 schools, and most of them are countryside schools. In general, the reform optimized the students, teachers, school buildings, teaching equipment, and many other resources, and improved efficiency in school management. But we must also soberly aware that currently there are some new problems come out from the process of adjustment need to solve in some rural primary and secondary schools. The problems mainly from the following aspects:

1 Problems in the reform of jointly operating regional schools in rural areas

1.1 Security concern in remote distance to school

According to adjustment policy of the geographical distribution of primary and secondary schools, primary schools should be distributed within 1.5 km. After the reform of regional jointly operating schools, the distance to school became longer than before, comparing to entering a school near to one's home in old time. Many stu-

dents who's home is farther away from the schools in order to ensure they do not go to school late, had to get up before dawn, walk to school in the dark and get back to home in the dark. In remote mountainous areas in western China, there are steep slopes, woven rivers. And the mountain road will get muddy, mountain torrents, landslides and other natural disasters have occurred sometimes in the raining day. Sometimes animals come and go in the mountains. So that students in these areas will undoubtedly have security concern. Currently, traffic accidents have become the "second killer" for children's accidental injury.

1.2 Increasing teacher works affect the teaching quality

The school class size is more than 70 people, and some even up to a hundred people in the combined central primary schools. Currently, most of the central schools are complete-closed boarding management, but rural school teachers are not adequate. The teachers not only have to take the teaching responsible, but also have to assume the management of students and assure the personal safety of students. After combined the schools, many students has to walk a far way to go to school. The teachers worried about students, especially the Head teacher, worried too much. Because no body can afford this responsibility if something happens to the students on the way home. So many, things go wrong easily. So, the teachers rarely have a leisure time from morning to night, bearing too much big pressure all day.

1.3 Improper adjustment of the layout, the drop-out rate rebounds

With improving the efforts to adjust the layout, instead, drop-out rate of children in rural areas increased. Tracing the source, there are many reasons for drop-out of school. The adjustment of rural schools distribution is emerging as one of the most important reason. The layout has been adjusted, but the farmers' burden has increased, and some

children from poor families could not afford room and board costs, drop-out was inevitable; and then there is a prone that the conflicts between the immigrant students and the students from receiving places. This always led to fights and causes the dropping out of school. Many students give up their studies because they have to climb hills and walk too long to go to school.

2 Cause analysis on above problems

2.1 The lack of investment funds caused capital gap

Funding for basic education is to maintain the school public property operates healthy, which account for a small proportion of the financial provision of education. Before the reform of taxes and charges, the primary and secondary education funds in rural areas have been supplied by peasants' educational surtax and education raising charges. After the reform of taxes and charges, peasants' educational surtax and education raising charges were cancelled. The basic construction of rural primary and secondary schools funded solely by government.

Meanwhile, the occupation of compulsory education funding is obvious because the education funding there is still lack of supervision. Rural compulsory education is mainly funded by local government; the local government has absolute control over the education fund. Because of the absence of effective constraints on local government investment, the "three growth" funding for education in some areas does not meet the requirements and public funds is in downward trend.

2.2 Too much emphasis on size, ignoring the actual situation

Without consider the local population density, geographic traffic, the financial burden of farmers and other practical factors, and also ignored the fact that lots of central schools can not afford to run the large-scale combined schools in finance, education, teacher resources and ancillary facilities, etc. The local government demands secondary schools, primary schools in the village to move to central schools unrealistically. Some children had to go to the central primary schools far from home. Long way to go to school, hardships, not only led to a security risk, and that some rural parents had to let children get a lift to school and have lunch outside. This also adds an additional transportation and lunch expenses. There are many parents had to have children in boarding schools for the long way to school. The accommodation costs and meals cost etc. are not a small sum for not rich or even just entering the "subsistence" farmers families, leaving some poor families in a very difficult position.

3 Countermeasures for the problems exist in Reform of regional jointly operating schools in rural areas

In order to promote the rural compulsory education to develop sustainably and healthily, it is very necessary to optimize and integrate the rural educational, and restructure the primary and secondary schools. Local government should always put the majority of farmers and their children's fundamental interests and their education right first, should always insist in the principle of seeking truth from facts, according to local conditions, adjust the layout of s rural primary and secondary schools scientifically, rationally, actively and safely.

3.1 Seeking truth from facts, step by step

Layout adjustment between primary and secondary schools involves families; people, financial, material, and many other aspects. Every region, the situation in the schools is quite different. Therefore, in the specific implementation process, we must proceed from reality. It is necessary to carry forward actively but also need to implement steadily. We should not engage in "one size fits all", "swarm". Especially we have to select school site strategically when we withdraw the old schools, we'd better choose the original school that has large-scale, accessibility, more advanced equipment to be the new school. And expand it base on the original scale. Meanwhile we have to consider the distance between the schools and each village and try our best to set up the school in the center of the village. This requires us to understand the central government's rural school restructuring policies correctly and scientifically. Adjustment of rural primary and secondary schools is not the same as simply "merge" or "shrink", but rather to promote the rural compulsory education develop healthily, and threat it as a fundamental starting point. To "withdrawal" or "combine", or "adjust "or" increase" rural primary and secondary schools scientifically and rationally.

3.2 Strengthen management and supervision

After regional jointly operating school, many schools just blindly follow others. There is some confusion in the daily development of the school. A lot of management is not in place, management objectives are not clear. For this situation, we should implement quantitative management. We need to quantify the school management, teacher management, teaching quality, teaching and research aspects. And set up the year-end standings, and reward the good and punish the bad. Use "evaluation" plus "seminar" approach to assess the schools under the jurisdiction on a regular basis or from time to time. Meantime, we need to select the appropriate form to adjust the layout. For example, using the "Merged-style" to the villages are not far from each other, or where there is no major differences between the village schools. So it concentrates the property, expands the scale of school, improves the school conditions and the operating efficiency.

In the process of the layout adjustment, we need to set

up the school board. The board consists of relevant leaders and teacher representatives. They will solve the problems in the layout adjustment by negotiations, such as the improvement of school conditions, teacher allocation, student placement and other issues. The boards can solve the problems efficiently.

3.3 Through multi-funding to ensure funding

The difficulty is in financing during the expansion of school construction priorities. We can raise the funds by "allocation, raising, advances, investment attraction, and loan" and many other ways. For example, the county and township finances for new or expanded school funding should be in place; and we can replace and lease unused school assets; we also can raise the money legally, carry out donations or coordinate the bank loans.

The government has increased the funds to promote the food supply and the housing situation; built the toilets, canteen, bath house and other facilities in merged boarding schools or the boarding schools plan to merge. The government improved the school infrastructure construction, met students and teachers' basic life needs.

3.4 Take corresponding measures to solve the traffic problem

To establish the "safety first, prevention first" thinking firmly, and carry out solid safety education extensively, and take effective measures to strive for a stable, united and harmonious excellent situation for the education development. In this regard, the educational administrative departments need adhere to the "doing two jobs at once", one is control quality, the other one is to ensure security.

At the same time, we need to keep some village-run schools and educational points in the remote rural areas

where they can not provide school buses. In some regions where their economic condition are better, we can consider the local government supply the funds to shuttle students free in the central schools in the village/town. Local governments should coordinate their finance, traffic, and transportation departments to add passenger trips, and let students from poor families can have a free ride and set up many other approaches and incentives to help solve the rural students' travel difficulties.

3.5 To strengthen the management of boarding schools

Local governments should pay full attention to the school after closing and merging of supporting the building of boarding schools and management, some have merged or plan to merge the boarding school should increase financial input and actively implement the students food, housing and other life supporting facilities, from The most basic building toilets, canteen and baths and other construction work to start and improve school infrastructure development, ensuring the students and teachers basic living.

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