



**IDEAS**  
INSTITUTE FOR DEMOCRACY AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

# Education in Malaysia

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# EDUCATION SYSTEM IN MALAYSIA

## The Structure

### Federal

- Policy-setting and macro-planning

### States – *Jabatan Pendidikan Negeri (JPNs)*

- Coordinating and delivery of planning, providing the vital link between policy development and on-the-ground implementation
- Customise implementation of programmes and initiatives based on the different needs and segmentation of districts within their state
- Responsible for monitoring the progress of each PPD; support collaboration and sharing of best practices across districts
- Manage stakeholders at the federal level and within the state to coordinate resources to have a greater impact

## The Structure

### Districts – Pejabat Pendidikan Daerah (PPDs)

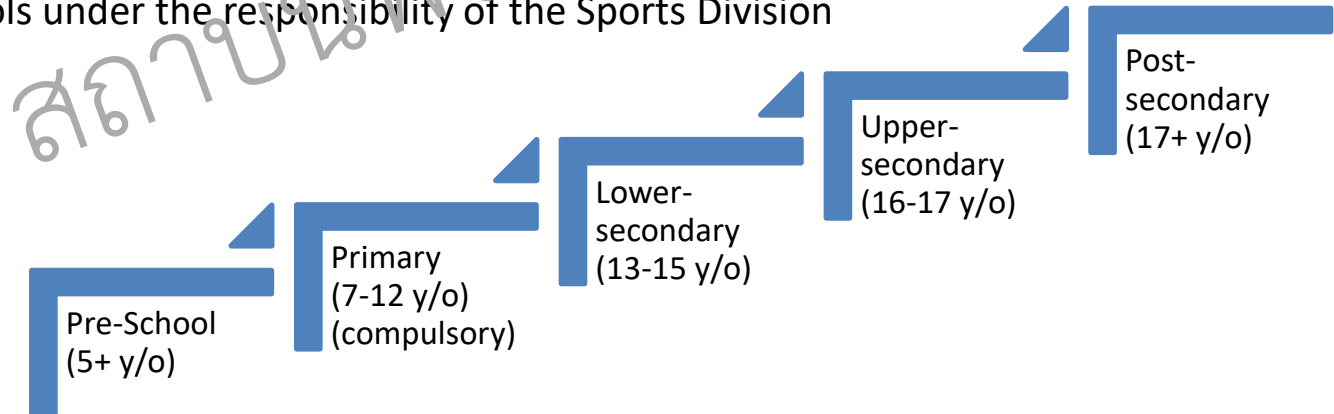
- The primary communication channel to schools, integrating all directives from the federal or state offices and reducing bureaucratic confusion and gridlock
- Analyses school data, diagnose underlying problems, and design differentiated support for schools
- Assist schools in engaging parents and the broader community to maximise the impact of the delivery provision
- Provide direct support to schools and managing their performance.



# The Structure

## Schools

- Five phases of education overseen by MOE: preschool, primary, lower secondary, upper secondary, and post-secondary/tertiary
- Other educational institutions established:
  - Special education schools under the responsibility of the Special Education Department and;
  - Sports schools under the responsibility of the Sports Division



# Centralized System

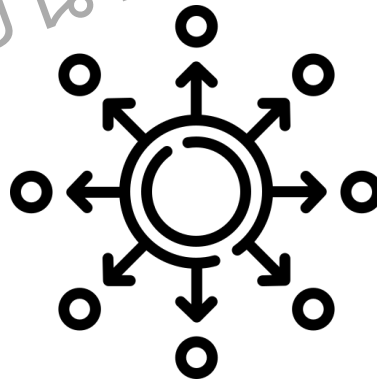
## Highly centralized structure of the organization

- Current organizational structure is similar to that of a rectangle with the federal, state, and district all featuring similar staffing levels
- Very few ministry personnel are sent nearer to schools; thus ministry personnel are further from where learning occurs
- large pool of support staff, 50-80% of staff are support staff at each level
- The Ministry's Head Office has 36 divisions highly centralized

“Malaysia arguably has one of the largest central (federal) education administrations in the world, relative to the number of schools.”  
(UNESCO 2012 review)

## MEB Plans to Decentralize Roles and Responsibilities

- State and district roles currently mirror that of the federal itself; leads to the significant overlap in functions across multiple levels
- MOE will revise existing roles and responsibilities to provide a clear delivery channel from the centre down to individual schools
- The Ministry will streamline and clarify decision-making rights between the federal, state, district, and school levels based on these new roles and responsibilities



# MEB Plans to Decentralize Roles and Responsibilities

## Federal

The Head Office will retain its functions of policy-setting and macro-planning

## States - JPN

- Will focus on coordination and delivery planning, providing the vital link between policy development and on-the-ground implementation
- Customize implementation of programmes and initiatives based on the different needs and segmentation of districts within their state
- Be responsible for monitoring the progress of each PPD and encouraging collaboration and sharing of best practices across districts
- Manage stakeholders at the federal level and within the state to coordinate resources in order to have greater impact

## MEB Plans to Decentralize Roles and Responsibilities

### Districts - PPD

- In line with the District Transformation Programme, PPDs will act as support partner and monitors to schools
- PPDs have the capability to analyse school data, diagnose underlying problems, and design differentiated support for schools
- Assist schools in engaging parents and the broader community to maximise the impact of delivery provision
- The primary communication channel to schools, integrating all directives from the federal or state offices and reducing bureaucratic confusion and gridlock



## Vernacular and different types of schools (Public)

Sekolah Kebangsaan (SK)
Sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan Cina (SJKCs)
Sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan Tamil (SJKTs)
Sekolah Agama Bantuan Kerajaan (SABKs)
Special Education
Sekolah Berasrama Penuh (SBPs)
Technical/Vocational Schools
Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Agama (SMKAs)

# EDUCATION EQUALITY / INEQUALITY

## Equal Access in terms of federal constitutions

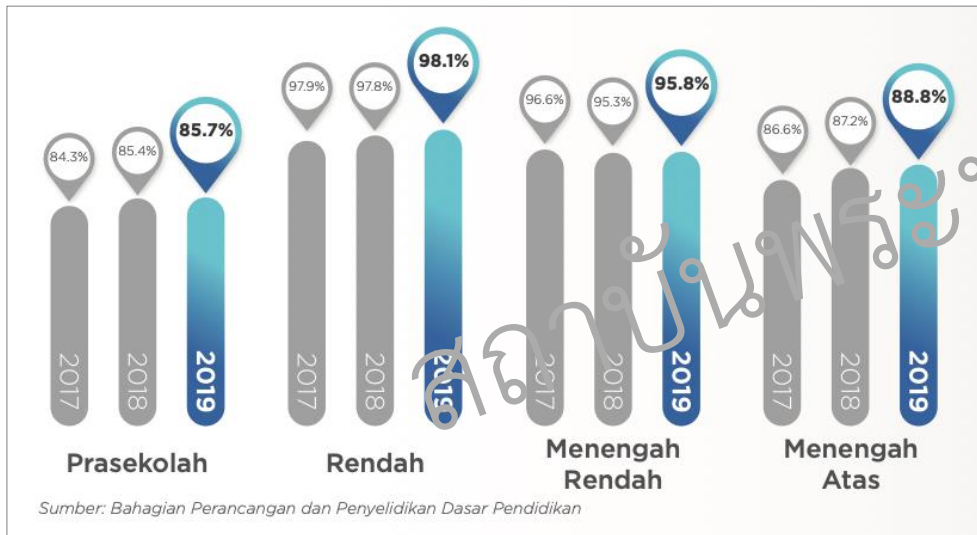
### Education as enshrined in the constitution:

access to education as enshrined in the constitution (Article 12): no discrimination against any citizen on the grounds of religion, race, descent or place of birth, no discrimination of any educational institution maintained by a public authority and in the admission of pupils or students or the payment of fees



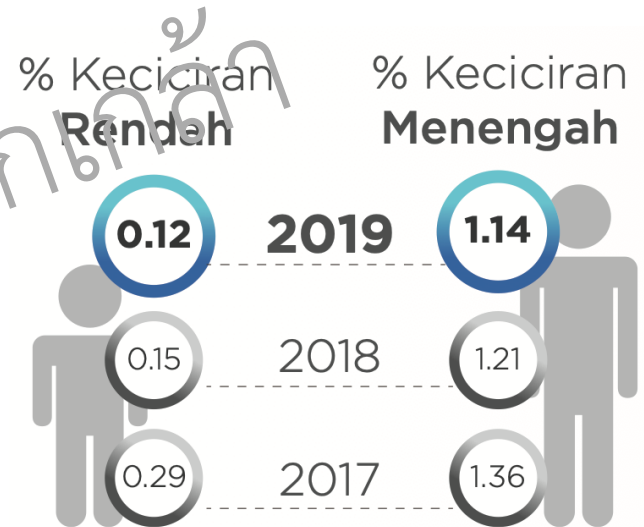
# Enrollment in Primary and Secondary School

Figure 1: Enrollment of all levels of education



Source: MOE, 2019

Figure 2: Dropouts



Source: MOE, 2019

## The Gaps

Achievement gaps between and within states across Malaysia: In 2011, almost 20-percentage-point difference in the UPSR grade point averages between the better-performing larger states such as Johor, and the lowest-performing state, Sabah. 10 out of 20 lowest-performing districts in SPM were in Sabah and Sarawak.

Achievement gaps between national and national-type schools are narrowing over time. Overall positive, gaps are consistently narrowing. However, at the primary level, SJKTs still lag behind both SJKCs and SKs by approximately 4 percentage points in 2011. The difference in performance between SK and SJKC is negligible at 0.3 percentage points in 2011.

Socioeconomic status and student performance: Largest achievement gaps in Malaysia are those driven by socio-economic status. Students from low-income families are less likely to perform and students from middle income or high-income households. Financial assistance schemes, e.g. KWAPM to support children from low-income families

## The Gaps

The “lost Boys” issue: The gender gap is significant and increasing. Girls consistently outperform boys, difference evident as early as UPSR level, increases throughout schooling. Boys are more likely to drop out, male to female ratio decreases from Year 1 to Form 5.

University: in some universities, female students comprise up to 70% of the latest incoming cohort. Boys from low-income families are also more likely to drop out of school to start work early to support their families. Calls for greater access to vocational training but places are limited invocation and technical schools.

Indigenous gap: Drop-out rates for Orang Asli students are higher, and consequently, educational outcomes are poorer than the national average. Only 30% of Orang Asli students complete secondary school, less than half the national average of 72%.

Compared to the national average of 87%, only 61% of students at SK Asli pass the UPSR national examinations' core subjects. Only 1% of public schools are in the poor performance band (Bands 6 and 7) compared to 35% of SK

## INITIATIVES By State and CSOs

### Teach for Malaysia (CSO and MOE)

- Aim: To transform education outcomes in underprivileged communities across Malaysia recruit passionate young leaders as Fellows to become agents of change in high-need communities at a grassroots level
- Impacts:
  - Students taught by TFM Fellows experienced 36% more academic growth compared to their peers
  - 88% Schools are satisfied with TFM Fellows and feel they have contributed to the betterment of the schools
  - 72% Alumni continue to work in the broader education and social sector after the Fellowship

### DTP-Aman (aka Projek Aman) in Kedah

- Aim: state-wide education programme focusing on the transformation at the system-level by impacting all three components of the state education system – the State Education Office (JPN), the District Education Department (PPD) and selected schools
- It is in collaboration with JPN Kedah, PPD and schools in Kedah
- Have impacted over 64 pilot schools in Kedah
- It is a top-down approach where JPN and PPD officers are trained and empowered to develop, implement, monitor and review the needs of the schools and students

# INITIATIVES

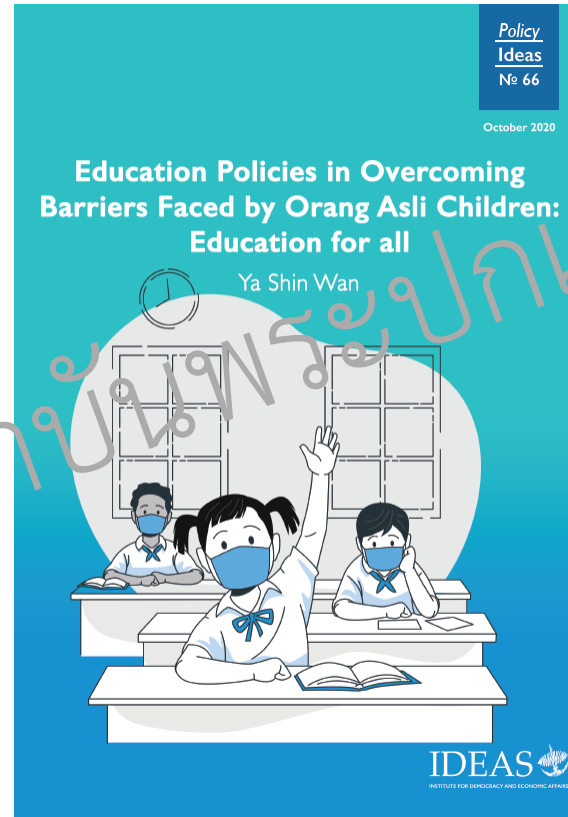
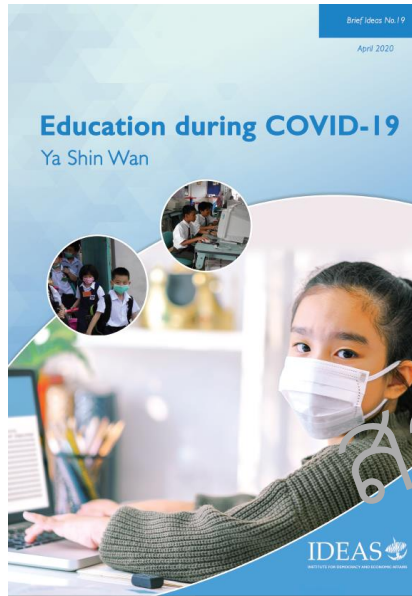
## By State, Local Government and CSOs

### Penang Education Council

- Aim: to facilitate input from educationists on how to assist the State Government in developing and positioning Penang into a prominent centre for learning and education
- It was formed under the State Government Executive Council for
- It was set up to facilitate continuous quality improvement in cultivation of skills, mental, moral and aesthetic development as well as informal education
- Science and Technology Awareness Programme
  - Aspires to bring science and technology subjects closer to the student population through 'participatory learning'
  - It started as a pilot project in 1998
  - Organise talks, study trips, field study and camps with the aim to instil awareness of the importance of science, technology and environment in daily life; and also to encourage more students to study in the science stream.
- Penang International Kids Storytelling Festival
  - To cultivate reading habits among young children started with the message "Nurturing the Love for Reading"

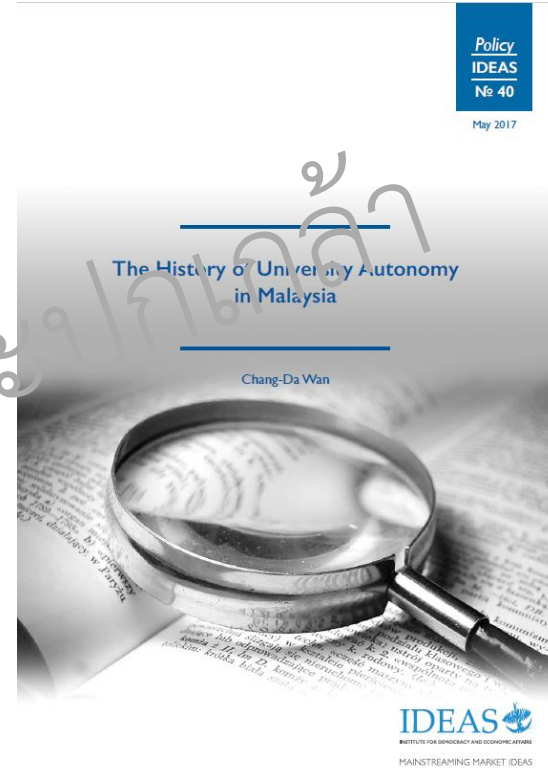
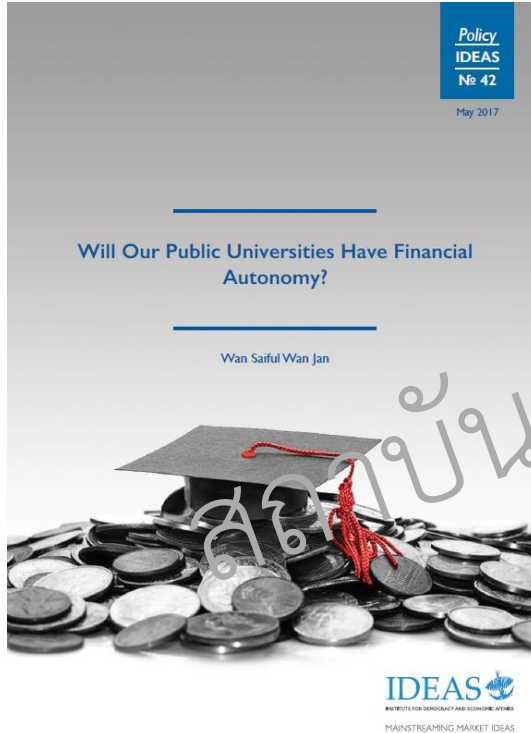
# IDEAS Publication on Education in 2020

Download from <https://www.ideas.org.my/>





# IDEAS Publication on Autonomy in Public Universities





Thank you

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