

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION PROFILE

BASIC FACTS ON EDUCATION

Total Number of Schools

ECE	Primary	Secondary	Technical
790	732	173	13

Student Population

ECE	Primary	Secondary	Technical
11,340	147,027	68374	2795

Teacher Population

ECE	Primary	Secondary	Technical
1004	5140	5454	176

OUR VISION – Quality Education for Change, Peace and Progress.

OUR MISSION – To provide a holistic, innovative, responsive, inclusive and empowering education system that enables all children to realize and appreciate their inheritance and potential contributing to peaceful and sustainable Fiji.

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES – In education, the child is the center of everything that we do. In all other services we provide, our customer are of high priority. The delivery of all services is guided by our commitment to:

- Recognise the importance of strong and healthy partnerships with all stakeholders
- Maintain a high level of professionalism in all that we do
- Ensure relevance and responsiveness as required characteristics of all endeavours
- Maintain high levels of quality and excellence
- Improve access, equity, accountability and transparency in education and respect our constitutional rights and responsibilities

OUR VALUES

The Ministry's values are derived from the Fiji's 2013 Constitution and are relative to Administration, Citizenship and Character. These are:

Accountability, Transparency, Fairness, Honesty, Integrity, Commitment, Impartiality, Loyalty, Teamwork, Patriotism, Peace, Perseverance, Compassion, Cooperation, Respect, Tolerance, Civic Pride and Environmental Ethics.

MAJOR FUNCTIONS AND CORE SERVICES

The Ministry of Education Heritage and Arts is responsible for the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of educational legislations, policies and programmes in Fiji. The Ministry provides the structures, human resources, budget and administrative and management support to ensure that the quality of service delivery is maintained at a high level.

The Ministry is specifically tasked to conduct and deliver education services to the following:

- Early Childhood Education
- Primary and Secondary
- Technical Vocational Education and Training through TEST and Technical Colleges
- Special Schools for children with special needs
- Students in the years of compulsory schooling (Year 1-Year 12) and those participating in Year 13 studies
- Professional development and training of teachers
- Training of school managers and controlling authorities

In addition, the Ministry also looks after the:

- Implementation of the Higher Education Promulgation 2008 through the Fiji Higher Education Commission

- Coordination of the Culture Sector in the country and responsible for the safeguarding of Fiji's cultural diversity and unique heritage
- Identification and address problems arising out of drug and substance abuse through the National Substance Abuse Advisory Council.
- Provision of library services to schools and communities and
- Modernization and provision of archival services to government and the citizens of Fiji

BRIEF HISTORY

- 1835 - Formal education began in Fiji with the Methodist missionaries who set up a very informal education system whereby reading and arithmetic formed the basic curriculum. The goal of such an education system was to establish a core group of students who could read and interpret the bible and to act as evangelists, spreading God's message to the locals.
- 1838 - Fijian grammar had been completed and a printing press has been established. The missionaries diligently compiled vocabularies and dictionaries and began translating the Bible and other related material into the various dialects of Fiji
- The missionaries set up mission schools beginning with primary level and extending later to secondary.
- Also part of the system was a strong technical/vocational component, the continuation of which we see forming the basis of technical education in the country today.



pupils in mission schools

- 1868 – The teaching order of Marist Missionaries also established schools.

- 1869 – Calvert, the then Mission Superintendent, claimed 107,000 converts with 56,000 in schools.
- 1879 - Schools were however provided for European children in the towns of Levuka and Suva (from 1883).
- 1898 – The first schools for Indians were started by the Methodist Mission and the Marist Brothers.



The "Dilkusha" Staff and Orphans.
4-7-1914. M.R. p.2

- 1900 – Due to the efforts of the missions, there were schools in most Fijian villages offering up to four years of schooling.
- 1916 - The first Education Department was set up in Fiji to undertake the provision of all educational services in the country. The Department started to register all schools and centralized all educational services from curriculum to the recruitment of teachers.
- In the same year Anglicans and Indian religious groups such as Arya Smaj and Muslims were also operating schools for Indians.
- 1930's – Establishment of Provincial schools to offer higher primary education
- Mid 1930's – Primary schooling was relatively widespread and Secondary increased sporadically.
- 1940's - The government encouraged the voluntary sector especially churches to play an active role in education.
- However, one of the most important aspects of education not centralized was the ownership of

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schools, which was left with the communities and other controlling authorities.

- This has been acknowledged worldwide as strength of the education system in Fiji. Often in the face of economic hardships and adversities, communities devote significant human and physical resources to raise funds in the name of educating the young people of the nation.
- This has been a major driving force in our high participation rates in the system, particularly in the basic years of schooling.
- 1948 – Establishment of Nasinu Teachers College
- 1956 – Grant in aid system was extended to secondary
- 1960's – Increase demand for education. Both Primary and Secondary enrolment increased significantly and apparently the demand for post-secondary education. Examination used as the formal means of elimination
- 1968 – Opening of the University of the South Pacific and establishment of the Curriculum Development Unit to standardize the curriculum.
- After World War II, Cambridge overseas Curriculum was offered to selected Fijian students.
- In the early 1970s, Fiji adopted the New Zealand curriculum and the local students [Year 11 and 12] sat for the New Zealand School Certificate and the New Zealand University Entrance examinations while the Years 7 – 10 students were offered the curriculum prepared by the UNDP and UNESCO.
- The development of local prescriptions began in the early 1980s after which students sat for the first national Fiji School Leaving Certificate Examination in 1989.
- The development of education in Fiji has been the subject of a number of Education Commissions and Education Reports since 1909. These include;

1910 Fiji Education 1910: Fiji Education Report

1909 Legislative Council Paper No. 30/1910

1926 Fiji Education Commission Report 1926
Legislative Council Paper No. 46

- 1936 Mayhew, A.T Report on Education in Fiji
- 1955 Lewis-Jones, W. W Report on Education in Fiji
- 1966 Morris, C. Report on Higher Education Mission to the Southern Pacific, London
- 1969 Fiji Education Commission: Education for Modern Fiji
- 2000 Report of the Fiji Islands Education Commission

The 2000 Report was critical in redefining the direction of the development of the curriculum. It led to the development of the Fiji National Curriculum Framework which changed the emphasis from prescriptive to outcomes-based curriculum and from teacher centred to child centred learning.

Fijian Education is a combination of multiculturalism and multiracialism and allows for the guidance and administration of numerous religious organizations.

EDUCATION REFORMS 2015 – TO DATE

Taking in to account critical achievements in education over the years compels the emphasis to ensure stronger deliverance to articulate the provision of quality education to all Fijian children.

Being mandated through the Government policy direction saw major shifts in all sector of delivery. Fiji is also on the right track to deliver on the SDG 4 on Education 2030 which focuses on access, inclusion, equity and quality at all levels. The Ministry remains ever determine to achieve critical target at all levels and maintain focus on realization of SDG 4.



The Ministry of Education, Heritage and Arts implemented major reforms in 2015 and 2016 based on the four pillars:

Pillar 1: Content Review and Development

The development saw the need to strengthen the Curriculum Development Unit through the appointment of subject matter specialists. There was also the need to benchmark curriculum in line with other countries to ensure it is responsive to the dynamics of the changing societal needs. It gives birth to the provision of free textbook and learning resources based on the new curriculum. This scheme has assisted parents greatly.

To continuously monitor academic development and to reflect on the important strategies for improvement comprehended the need to reintroduce examination. It raised the need to improve focus on various

Examination	2015 % Pass	2016% Pass
Year 6	40	48
Year 8	70	65
Year 10	42	45
Year 12	60	61
Year 13	55	65

techniques to improve results such as, teacher performance, scrutinizing student/teacher attendance, improving facilities, efficient data collection and implications, development of online resources, extra classes etc. There is a constant improvement in the examination results for the last two years.

All School based annual exams have been replaced by a Final exam prepared by the Ministry. This is based on important rationales to ensure:

- i. All students, no matter at which School he or she is sitting the exam, the coverage of the exam is same (and that will be 100% of the syllabus);

- ii. That the exam paper is of the same level and standard;
- iii. That the marking intensity is same across the Schools in Fiji.



Despite having exams from Year 6, students are still allowed to progress till Year 12. At certain level preferably Year 10, students may choose on which stream they wish to further their education, the Higher Education Stream or the Technical Education Stream.

A total of 13 campuses of Technical College have been set up and Certificate II (Level I and Level II) courses in trade areas are being offered with provision of Short Courses. By far in 2016, 353 students have graduated in Certificate II and 9000 short course Certificates have been awarded to approximately 7000 students in 2015 and 2016.

The Ministry is also making bold steps to prioritize Early Childhood Education. Over the past two years, 149 Early Childhood Education Centers have been established. A major National Conference was also organized for all ECE stakeholders in 2016. Student grant and teacher salary has been increased. Over the past two years, a total of 1223 ECE teachers have been trained in Basic First Aid. Teaching and learning resources are being developed and setting up of libraries is in progress.

Promotion of lifelong learning opportunities is also an important hallmark fulfilling the aspiration for SDG 4. The Ministry is working hard to improve provision and



support for ICT education, literacy development, numeracy proficiency, adult education and training opportunities. The scheme has resulted in the renovation and construction of new ICT Labs and Libraries in schools. The Libraries have been restocked with new books. Literacy and Numeracy programmes are implemented from ECE Curriculum.

Inclusive Education is also packaged as part of the reform as per Goal 4 of the SDGs, under the banner of inclusion and equality. The Ministry targets access to education for all especially, for those with Special Needs and Disabilities. The Ministry has relooked at the Inclusive Education Policy and amended it to suit the needs of special students. It entails training of teachers and furnishing schools with needed infrastructure. The budgetary allocation has increased substantially from \$550,000.00 to \$1.1 million in 2016 thus, raising the per child grant from \$250 per term to \$500 per term.

Pillar 2: Delivery by our Teachers

To allow optimum focus in teaching and learning, teachers administrative load have been reduced by a minimum of 60%. All schools have been tasked to appoint full time Admin Assistant in every Primary and Secondary Schools to attend to all the administrative work/data entry that was previously undertaken by teachers. It includes update of bus fare voucher, FEMIS data entry and other important administrative work.

To effectively mitigate discipline, First Aid and OHS matters teachers have been taken through by the Ministry on basic training in these important areas. The move is to ensure all students acquire skills in basic First Aid and OHS.

The Ministry through its Library department is working hard to ensuring libraries are appropriately resourced and staff has appropriate training.

Pillar 3: Improvement of Infrastructure

To improve and maintain conducive teaching and learning environment, the Ministry has worked closely with schools having dilapidated infrastructure to uplift and improve from the current state.

The focus area for development works in schools has been the upgrading of libraries, ablution blocks, science labs, new classrooms, boarding facilities, teachers' quarters, ECE Centre development, school fencing, construction of dining hall and repair and maintenance of existing structures and resources. From 2015 till date, the Ministry has financially assisted a total of 584 school projects for infrastructural development.

Beside infrastructure improvement the Ministry has also made tremendous progress in ensuring improved access to all Fijian students. The Free Education Scheme provides a major relief to parents and guardians. This is complemented by the introduction of Free Transport Assistance that has greatly enhanced access especially for students in the rural, remote rural and maritime zones. In 2015 and 2016, a total of 40 schools were assisted with boat and engines.



Pillar 4: Parental Engagement in Education

The Ministry is building greater emphasis on Parental Engagement Framework. Education in the current era demands parents to work together with the Ministry order to achieve desired outcomes from their children. Thus, greater parental engagement in schools through greater communication, awareness leading to better intervention to issues such as, indiscipline, absence, non-readers, slow learners, special needs students, understanding of MoEHA's objectives and general common drive for better holistic development of the child, is being promoted. It is envisaged that close involvement will greatly assist the quest for in the External Examination results.

LAWS AND OTHER BASIC REGULATIONS CONCERNING EDUCATION

Section 39 of the 2013 Constitution stipulates that every person has the right to basic education and to equal access to educational institutions.

The Education Act of 1978 specifies that the Minister of Education may, with the consent of parliament, by order, specify any area or areas of Fiji in which all children of such age or ages as may be specified in such order shall be required to attend a school. The Minister may make regulations to secure that every child of the age specified in such order shall receive education in a school.

The Compulsory Education Regulations of 1997 and subsequent Orders of 1997, 1998 1999 and 2000 (issued for completion of compulsory education in different districts) provide for the gradual achievement of compulsory education for children aged 6-15 years. Compulsory school attendance requires that school attendance at grade 1 shall be compulsory for all children turning 6 years old by 30 June of any year. Children shall be required to remain at school until they have completed grade 8 or Form 2 level education, or at the end of the year the child turns 15 years of age. It has been observed that the minimum age for completion of compulsory education varies throughout Fiji from 12 to 15 years.



The Ministry of Education employed a sector wide approach in drawing up its Strategic Plan. Invited stakeholders are asked to provide their views on issues including: compulsory education; fees and levies; management of schools; rights of parents and students; rights of school management; disciplinary procedures; examinations and assessments; curriculum; religious education; communities and health and safety. In August 2009 the Ministry of Education announced the decision to enforce a policy for all students to complete 12 years of education, in order to ensure that students do not drop out of school until they have completed Form 6.

The Higher Education Promulgation No. 24 of 2008 provides for the establishment of the Higher Education Commission, and regulated the establishment, recognition, operation and standard of universities and other higher education institutions.

The Higher Education Regulations dated 23 November 2009 (which came into force in January 2010) contain additional specifications related to the applications for recognition and registration of higher education institutions.

The Teachers Registration Board Promulgation No. 25 of 2008 provides for the establishment of the Board responsible to the Minister for the registration of persons qualified to be registered as teachers and keeping teacher registration in Fiji under continuous review.

The Fiji National University Decree No. 39 of 2009 provides for the establishment of the Fiji National University to serve the needs of the post-secondary and higher education sector.

The Higher Education (Qualifications) Regulations of 2009 (which came into force in January 2010) provide for the establishment of the Fiji Qualifications Council whose primary role is to administer the Fiji National Qualifications Framework (approved by the Higher Education Commission) for registration of national standards and qualification.