

## **Bahraini government to give more training to teachers**

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Government teachers from the primary and secondary levels are scheduled to undergo an intensive development programme as part of the National Education Reform Initiatives spearheaded by the Ministry of Education and Economic Development Board (EDB) during the first quarter of 2008.

The reforms focus on three main areas of development including training, management and recruitment.

EDB officials believe that the teachers' development reforms have come late but nonetheless stand as an integral element for the success of the programme.

"All professions need to be trained and re-trained during the process of any career. Teachers are the single most influential people in any child's life; we need to ensure that our children are well taught. Teachers help develop a nation, we need to be prepared for the future," said the Minister of Education, Dr Majid bin Ali Al Noaimi.

"With additional training, teachers will be provided with revised teaching methods and techniques at par with international standards. Principals and assistants will undergo leadership trainings to help them give proper directives to teachers. Management of teachers' progress will help us keep track of their experience and acquired merits for promotion. Changes will also be made in the way we recruit our teachers under the reforms," he said. EDB Communications Manager, Isa Khalaf, said that there are numerous key issues that need to be addressed and an independent body would be more successful in identifying the problems.

"The Ministry of Education and EDB have been collaborating for many years to determine the strides we need to take towards reforms. The National Institute of Education (NIE) from Singapore has been chosen as our international partner to carry out the programme. NIE with a team of local staff will be responsible for training, evaluation and produce proposals for improvement," said Isa Khalaf.

A retired primary schoolteacher, Ruqaya Al Anwar said the programme sounded very promising: "It is about time the government devised ways to improve the quality of our teaching. Thirty years into the profession, I found it particularly frustrating that we did not have any continuous training programmes. It was always more of a budget problem than anything else, but I strongly believe that this will lead to a positive outcome."

More than 13,000 government school teachers posted all across Bahrain are reportedly employed by the Education Ministry.