2020

Work of the Ministry of National Education on regulations on teachers' disciplinary liability

Reform status: proposal, 4 June 2020

The Council of Ministers’ legislative work is focussing on a bill amending the Teacher's Charter act and some other acts. The amendment to the bill concerning teachers’ disciplinary liability has been prepared in response to educational community’s expectations. In the near future the bill will be submitted to public consultation.

One of the requests presented was the need to modify the method for notifying a disciplinary commissioner about committing an offence that violates the rights and welfare of the child, as well as the time limit over which disciplinary action can be initiated.

These issues were worked on by the Team for the Professional Status of Education Staff, which is composed of representatives of the government, teacher trade unions and local government corporations.

The following amendments of the Teacher's Charter are assumed:

1. Extending the time limit for notifying a disciplinary commissioner about a suspicion that a teacher has committed an offence against the rights and welfare of a child to 14 days and specifying cases in which no notification should be made.
2. Amendment to the provisions of the Teacher's Charter act specifying the deadline for submitting a request to initiate disciplinary action and changing the time limit over which disciplinary action can be initiated:
   ○ setting a maximum time limit for a disciplinary commissioner to submit a request to initiate disciplinary action (such a request can be submitted no later than within 4 months of pursuing the inquiry);
   ○ regulating issues relating to disciplinary action - it will not be possible to initiate it after the expiry of six months of the date on which the body at which a disciplinary committee of the first instance operates became aware of the offence (except for acts constituting a criminal offence);
   ○ repealing the provision stipulating that, if the offence infringes the rights and welfare of the child, disciplinary action can also be initiated after the expiry of three months of the date on which the body became aware of the offence breaching the dignity of the teaching profession or the duties referred to in Article 6 of the act;
   ○ reducing from 3 to 2 years the time limit from committing an offence, after the expiry of...
which disciplinary action cannot be initiated (except for offences constituting a crime).

3. Clarifying the provisions on suspending a teacher or headteacher in the performance of their duties by specifying that a headteacher is not obliged to suspend a teacher and a school governing authority does not need to suspend a teacher acting as the headteacher in the performance of their duties if a disciplinary commissioner in a request to initiate disciplinary action requests the imposition of a penalty of reprimand with a warning and, at the same time, the seriousness of the offence committed by them is of minor importance and it is not advisable to suspend them.

In the Ministry of National Education, work is continued on further legislative changes, including disciplinary liability of teachers, professional advancement, teachers' salaries, and distance learning. Due to the current epidemic situation in Poland, the meetings of the Team for the Professional Status of Teachers have been postponed to a later date.

After the resumption of the Team's work, the needs and directions for wider systemic changes will be discussed with teachers' trade unions and the local government, and draft solutions will be subject to wider public consultation.


Principles for administering examinations in 2020 - legal regulations

Reform status: implemented, 19 May 2020

Procedures, dates and descriptions of activities related to conducting external examinations in 2020: upper secondary school leaving (matura), primary school leaving, vocational and vocational qualification examinations - these are the main topics covered in the Order of the Minister of National Education signed on May 19.

Principles for administering examinations in 2020 - legal regulations

This school year, the upper secondary school leaving examination in compulsory and optional subjects will be carried out as a written examination only.

Matura exam results

An upper secondary school graduate will pass the examination and will be awarded a school leaving certificate if s/he scores at least 30% of the points that can be obtained for each compulsory subject for the written part and takes the written part of the secondary school leaving examination in at least one additional subject.

Oral examination for graduates from previous years

Graduates who declared that in 2020 they would take a matura oral examination again will not be able to enter for it. They will be awarded an upper secondary school leaving certificate, provided that in the previous years they have obtained at least 30% of points to be scored in each compulsory subject for the written part and have taken the examination in at least one additional subject.

Graduates who do not obtain the required 30% of points in 2020 will have to take an oral examination in compulsory subjects in subsequent years, if they want to resit the exam.

Examination supervising team
The chairman of the examination team will appoint from among its members teams responsible for supervising the primary school leaving examination and the written part of the *matura* examination.

In 2020, in the case of the upper secondary school leaving examination, the team supervising the written part of the examination in a given examination room will be composed of at least two teachers. One teacher should work at the school where the examination is conducted (and act the team leader), the other one should be employed at another school or education institution.

Also in 2020, if there are more than 30 students in an examination room where the primary or upper secondary school leaving examination is conducted, the number of members of the supervising team shall be increased by one person for every subsequent 25 students.

**Other solutions**

The Order also lists changes related to the administration of the following examinations: primary school leaving examination, upper secondary school leaving examination, vocational and vocational qualification examination.

New solutions have also been introduced with regard to post-secondary schools. New dates have been set for examination-related activities to be carried out by headteachers, district examination boards, and members of supervising teams. These include, e.g. the process of revoking an examination, raising objections, reviewing the examination papers that have been checked and assessed, examining an appeal submitted to the Examination Arbitration College, filing a statement on taking a resit exam. The regulation also described the principles for examiners training, the rules of appointing a team to supervise a given exam or a subject team. We have also indicated the deadlines for issuing certificates.

**Examination schedule**

The primary school leaving examinations will be conducted from June 16 to 18. Additional dates are set for July 7-9. The examination results will be announced by 31 July. The schools will receive certificates by this date.

The written part of the upper secondary school leaving examination taken by graduates of all types of schools will commence on 8 June 2020 and will be carried out until 29 June. No oral exams will be conducted this year.

Additional dates for upper secondary school leaving examination are set for July 8-14. The results of the examinations conducted on the main and additional dates will be announced on August 11. The resit examination will be administered on September 8 and the results will be known by September 30.

The vocational qualification examinations (Formula 2012 and Formula 2017) will be carried out from June 22 to July 9. The vocational examination (Formula 2019) is scheduled for August 17-28.


**Additional PLN 180 million for purchase of equipment for students and activities of the Ministry of National Education in the scope of distance learning**

_Reform status: implemented 11 May 2020_
The Ministry of National Education has directed an additional PLN 180 million to purchase computer equipment for students and teachers. This is another example of the joint efforts of the Ministry of Digital Affairs and the Ministry of National Education to support distance learning. Among the activities undertaken by the Ministry of National Education regarding distance learning are also the free Internet platform epodreczniki.pl, the Polish Education Network (OSE), the government programme entitled Interactive Whiteboard (Aktywna Tablica) and teacher training.

A figure with inscription - Additional PLN 180 million for the purchase of equipment for students

Thanks to this, tens of thousands of tablets and laptops have already been distributed to local authorities. Distance learning is a huge effort on the part of teachers. It requires new knowledge and going beyond standard lesson preparation. Distance learning is also a big challenge when it comes to equipment.

This is another act of support for local governments in building a digital school which comes in line with the government's Interactive Whiteboard programme, the Polish Education Network (OSE), and the free epodreczniki.pl Internet platform.

An additional PLN 180 million for distance learning

Recently, PLN 187 million has been transferred under the Distance Learning programme aimed at supporting online learning. This week, we are launching the Distance Learning+ programme, which translates into an additional PLN 180 million in funding. This time the local authorities will be able to apply for higher amounts of support, from PLN 35 thousand to PLN 165 thousand. Under the Distance Learning programme, the support available was ranging from PLN 35 thousand to PLN 100 thousand.

The co-financing grant criterion will be based on the number of families with multiple children living in a given municipality and benefitting from the municipal support. The only difference from the previous programme is that only municipalities will be able to receive the support, while both municipalities and districts were able to participate in the original Distance Learning programme.

The funding will cover, as in the previous programme, not only the purchase of both computers and laptops, but also software, equipment insurance, mobile Internet access and other reasonable expenses related to distance learning (e.g. accessories).

2731 out of 2790 local governments (98%) have submitted an application for funding under the Distance Learning programme, which was announced at the end of March. All of the applications were approved.


E-materials of the Ministry of National Education

For years, the Ministry of National Education has been carrying out work for the creation of generally accessible and modern educational digital resources. Pupils and teachers can use them free of charge.

Resources for those at all stages of general education and for vocational education and training have already been created and are still undergoing further development. The materials are created while taking into account WCAG accessibility standards, so they can be used by students with special educational needs. All these resources are currently available at [www.epodreczniki.pl](http://www.epodreczniki.pl) [4].
Free education platform epodreczniki.pl

The education platform epodręczniki.pl is receiving a record level of interest from students and teachers. The website offers teachers and students materials and functionalities that they can utilise at work and for distance learning respectively.

The platform consists of over six thousand educational materials for all stages of education, both general and vocational. Almost every learning material includes open questions or interactive exercises.

All content on the epodręczniki.pl Internet platform is available via a web browser and does not require installation of additional software. After logging in, users can search for material by keywords or by browsing through the content of the software base. The searched materials can be saved as favourites in the user’s profile and shared with students.

A number of possibilities - epodreczniki.pl platform

On the epodręczniki.pl Internet platform you can find: curricula, lesson plans and additional e-materials to be used at school or for independent student work as well as links to external resources prepared by third parties, such as the Institute of National Remembrance or the Office of Rail Transport, together with a description of the content, along with materials in the form of e-books, which were created in the Human Capital Operational Programme. Some of the content has been assigned to the new core curriculum and is available in the form of separate materials.

Teachers can provide students with ready-made, existing material available on the platform, or their own, created either from scratch or based on existing e-material, to which they can add an external resource, e.g. a link from YouTube, vod.tvp.pl or ninateka.pl. Editor tools available for teachers allow them to modify or create their own e-materials. Teachers also have access to a module that allows them to monitor students’ progress.

In addition, the platform publishes materials and information that are useful to schools in conducting distance learning, e.g.:

- a guide for schools on distance learning,
- a list of materials and tools useful for language learning,
- information about electronic versions of textbooks and teaching materials made available by publishers,
- materials of external entities intended for general and vocational education and for students with diverse educational needs.

Thanks to the new solution, we have brought the Ministry of National Education's platform closer to the experience already known to users from online shops - the ‘folder’ function for creating materials works in a similar way to a shopping cart.

Let us remind you that the Integrated Educational Platform epodreczniki.pl currently offers over six thousand educational materials, intended for all stages of education, both general and vocational.

We are pleased with the great interest on the part of students and teachers who are eager to use materials recommended by the Ministry of National Education during distance learning. Approximately half a million users utilise the resources available on the epodreczniki.pl platform on a daily basis.

We are constantly improving the service by introducing new functionalities, such as real-time contact
between teachers and students and the ability to add comments to the viewed materials. Teachers not only can use the already available e-materials, but also create their own content and share it with students.

Currently, each user can submit their observations and comments through the form available on the platform. Their questions are also analysed, with particular emphasis on the period after the implementation of new functionalities. Based on this data, both the interface and naming are being optimised.

The Integrated Educational Platform has an easy-to-use material sharing system, and its functions after integration with the Educational Information System (SIO) are much more user-friendly.

Guides for students and teachers on distance learning

To support teachers and headteachers, as well as students and parents, we have prepared guides on distance learning. The first of them, Distance Teaching (Kształcenie na odległość), are guidelines, recommendations for use while working with students. The next one was developed in cooperation between the Ministry of National Education and the Personal Data Protection Office and contains advice and information on personal data security, which should be kept in mind when using techniques and methods related to distance learning. The materials are available on the website of the Ministry of National Education:


Personal data safety during distance learning [6]

Free online teacher training

Free online training entitled Lesson: Enter (Lekcja: Enter) offers support in getting acquainted with the techniques and methods of remote work for teaching staff. Teachers of primary grades 1-3, and teachers of humanities, mathematics and natural science, arts, and computer science from primary and secondary schools can participate in them. The training participants are enrolled by the school’s headteacher. Detailed information about the project, including a list of entities to which you can apply for training, can be found at https://lekcjaenter.pl/strona/19/o-szkole [7]

Zdalnelekcje.pl – website for students and teachers

The Ministry of National Education together with the Ministry of Digital Affairs and NASK have prepared proposals for conducting distance learning with students for teachers and headteachers [8]. You can find there topics for every day and for every subject, as well as suggestions of materials based on which you can remotely conduct classes for primary and secondary school students.

Our intention is to make the website not only an inspiration for teachers, but also a support tool in their work. Hence, among other things, there is the concept of the ‘timetable’ containing proposals of content for each day. However, it is just a suggestion. We leave teachers with the full freedom to pick and choose published lessons and topics.

Guide for headteachers and teachers on digitisation

The summary of initiatives implemented in the area of school digitisation and actions taken by the Ministry of National Education in connection with the coronavirus pandemic are the most important issues of the new guide for school headteachers and teachers. The publication includes a description of the epodreczniki.pl platform, as well as a list of information materials and websites useful for online
The material also introduces training projects for teachers in the field of improving digital competencies and activities increasing the role of information and communication technologies in the teaching process.

The publication contains a description of information materials in the field of distance learning, including the guide by Ministry of National Education on the organisation of distance learning, as well as a guide dedicated to data security prepared by the Personal Data Protection Office in cooperation with the Ministry of National Education.

The Digital teaching materials section contains a detailed description of epodreczniki.pl and a list of materials prepared by the Central Examination Board and the Education Development Centre. This section also introduces websites useful for online learning as well as the educational offer of the TVP tv station.

The subsequent part of the material includes a description of training projects for teachers focusing on raising digital competencies and other projects implemented in the field of school digitisation, such as the Interactive Whiteboard programme and the Polish Education Network (OSE).

**The Interactive Whiteboard government programme**

Between 2017 and 2019, the Interactive Whiteboard (*Aktywna tablica*) government programme was implemented to develop school infrastructure and the competencies of students and teachers in the field of information and communication technologies.

The programme was addressed to all primary schools, and its objective was to:

- equip or supplement schools qualified for the programme with teaching aids necessary for the implementation of curricula using ICT;
- provide students from primary schools which qualified to the programme access to teaching aids, in particular interactive whiteboards with a projector, speakers or other devices enabling the transmission of sound or interactive touch screens to train the competencies of students and teachers in the use of ICT and to develop students' interests and talents as part of extracurricular activities;
- provide students, as well as their teachers, with training enabling effective use of interactive whiteboards or interactive touch screens.

For the purchase of teaching aids, schools could receive a maximum amount of PLN 14 thousand. The school governing authority was obliged to make a minimum contribution of its own to the sum of PLN 3.5 thousand.

Within the framework of the programme, primary schools were equipped in particular with: interactive whiteboards, projectors, and loudspeakers, as well as touch screens.

In total, in 2017-2019, more than PLN 163 million from the state budget was allocated to the Interactive Whiteboard programme, which represents support for 12,016 primary schools in Poland and abroad.

The next edition of the programme is planned to be launched in 2020. Work on its final shape is in progress.

**Project “School with TVP” (*Szkoła z TVP*) and live lessons**

Polish Television (TVP), in cooperation with the Ministry of National Education, has been intensively
supporting educational activities aimed at children and young people since the beginning of the suspension of classes in kindergartens, schools and educational institutions. It has launched the "School with TVP" campaign addressed to primary school pupils from grades 1-8. The materials are broadcast from Monday to Friday on public TV channels. The "School with TVP" project is sponsored by the Ignacy Łukasiewicz PGNiG Foundation.

The lessons can be viewed on four channels: TVP3, TVP Rozrywka, TVP Sport and TVP Historia in two programme blocks: morning - always starting at 8:00 a.m. and a repeat - at 12:30 p.m. The schedule of "School with TVP" is available on a dedicated website - https://www.tvp.pl/47304588/szkolaztvp [9]. All aired materials are available on https://vod.tvp.pl/ [10] in specially prepared services devoted to each individual grade of the primary school.

TVP Kultura, TVP Sport, TVP Rozrywka and TVP HD began broadcasting educational materials addressed to secondary school students. Lessons can be watched daily, from Monday to Friday. The main broadcasts take place on TVP Kultura and TVP HD from 9am to 1 pm. Repeats are aired on the same day at 5pm on TVP Sport and TVP Rozrywka.

**Polish Education Network (OSE) - Internet and equipment for schools**

The Polish Education Network project has been implemented since 2017. It is a joint initiative of the Minister of National Education and the Minister of Digital Affairs. The project operator is NASK. The main objective of the OSE is to enable all schools access to a safe broadband Internet connection.

By the end of March 2020, 19.6 thousand schools had declared their willingness to join the OSE, and 18.6 thousand had filled out technical questionnaires, which paves the way for schools to join the OSE. Over 14.5 thousand school headteachers have already signed contracts for OSE services. There are already nearly 12,563 schools connected to the OSE, 7730 of which exclusively use the services of the OSE.

Additionally, the OSE operator has already donated 4 thousand laptops to 250 schools selected by the Ministry of National Education from among the winners of the competition, as schools with the greatest hardware needs. In the following weeks of April, the next instalment is planned to be distributed - almost 8 thousand laptops will be distributed to 764 schools.


**Health sciences, climate protection and economics to be discussed during form periods**

Reform status: planned, 13 April 2020.

In accordance with draft amendment to the Ministry of National Education's regulation on framework curricula [12], starting from September 1, in primary and secondary schools topics of social importance will be discussed during form periods.

Last April, the amendment to the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 3 April 2019 on framework curricula for public schools (O.J., item 639) was submitted to public and inter-ministry consultation.

Taking into account the requests of many circles and entities (including the Minister of Health), the amended regulation lists topics concerning major social problems (health, law, finance, climate and
environmental protection), which in particular should be highlighted and discussed during classes with the form teacher in primary and secondary schools starting from the school year 2020/2021.

Because of civilisation-related challenges and threats of the modern world, the need to pay special attention to issues that shape health promoting attitudes and strengthen students’ knowledge on climate protection or highlight the benefits of knowledge of the law and financial resource management, is justified. Discussion on these topics during form periods can be held with the participation of experts in a given field, volunteers, representatives of associations and other organisations whose statutory goal is to educate or expand and enrich teaching, educational, caring and innovation-related activities of the school.

New solutions to make distance learning easier - amendment to regulations

Reform status: approved, March 2020

The possibility for local authorities to loan distance learning equipment to students and teachers free of charge, decisions made during remote teaching staff meetings, changes in the organisation of subject olympiads, competitions and tournaments, the possibility to submit documents online or announce the results of student enrolment procedures on school websites– these are the most important changes contained in the amendment of an order of the Ministry of National Education.

Clarification of the way in which schools and institutions carry out their tasks

The introduced changes result from the need to clarify the way in which the tasks of schools and educational institutions are carried out at a time of temporary limitation of their operations. The amendment concerns the Order of the Minister of National Education of 20 March 2020 on special solutions in the period of temporary limitation of the operations of the education system organisational units in connection with preventing, counteracting and combating COVID-19 (O.J. item 493).

Local authorities can lend equipment to students and teachers free of charge

School governing authority can lend to students and teachers, free of charge, on the basis of a civil law contract, equipment necessary for distance learning. School headteachers can be authorised by the school governing authority to carry out this task.

A remote teaching staff meeting can make binding decisions

At a time when the operations of schools and other institutions are limited, teachers meetings can make decisions remotely, using various means of electronic communications.

Collegial bodies of education system’s organisational units can adopt decisions by circulation. The only requirement is such that all decisions taken must be recorded in the form of minutes, notes or otherwise.

These solutions will allow for exercising the powers of a teaching staff meeting, such as giving opinions on the organisation of the school’s or other institution’s work or amending the statutes, without teachers being physically present at school. This regulation also allows for the use of electronic communications by a headteacher when conducting activities related to the preparation of a school’s comprehensive education plan.
New legal regulations on distance learning


Legal regulations that make it possible to provide distance learning during temporary restrictions on the operation of schools and educational institutions in connection with preventing, counteracting and combating COVID-19 have been amended. The principles of distance learning and provided opportunities for student assessment and classification have been defined. The new legislation will be in place from 25 March 2020 to 10 April 2020.

What should distance learning look like?

At a time when the operations of schools and educational institutions are restricted due to epidemiological threats, teaching is provided in a form of distance learning.

In the event when difficulties with the organisation of classes arise, the headteachers, acting in consultation with the school governing authority, should determine a different way of conducting them. They must also inform the chief education officer about the selected method.

Headteachers are responsible for organising distance learning at a given institution. They are obliged to inform parents how the learning will be organised. Teachers have an opportunity to verify the curriculum used so far in order to adapt it to the selected distance learning method.

Students' safety and psychophysical abilities are a priority

Headteachers must also agree with the teachers the weekly scope of material to be covered by each form, with taking into account, among other things, the even work load with classes on each day, the diversification of the classes and the students’ psychophysical abilities. Headteachers are also to determine the forms of contact or consultation between the teachers and parents and pupils.

When organising distance learning for students, the headteachers must be mindful of the principle of safe use of electronic communication devices by students. This means that the selection of tools for this form of education should take into account current medical recommendations concerning screen time (use of computer, TV, telephone) and the availability of relevant devices at homes, the age and stage of development of pupils/students, as well as their family situation.

Distance learning delivery modes

Distance learning can be provided by offering materials prepared by the teachers, in particular those recommended by the Ministry of National Education (especially those available on www.epodreczniki.pl educational platform), the Central and District Examination Boards, as well as the public television and Polish radio programmes.

In the case of children attending kindergartens and primary school grade 1-3 pupils, the teachers are obliged to inform parents about available materials, as well as possible ways and forms of learning at home.

Free platform with educational materials

The www.epodreczniki.pl platform is an IT tool, on which free educational materials are posted. We encourage students, parents and teachers to explore the resources posted there and make extensive use of them.
All contents are available through a web browser and do not require installation of additional software. Additionally, the platform offers to logged-in users, i.e. all students and teachers who open an account on the platform, a module for tracking learning progress.

A headteacher of a school or other institution who decides to use the platform can open accounts for students and teachers on it. The regulations allow the processing of students' and teachers' data for the purpose of opening the accounts.

**Assessment of students’ work**

Headteachers must agree with the teachers how the students’ knowledge and progress will be monitored and verified.

**Distance learning and vocational subjects**

Vocational training classes will be conducted mainly in the scope of theoretical vocational subjects and, to a limited extent, also in the scope of practical classes, only if the curriculum of a given occupation provides for such a possibility.

**Adapting the practical training curriculum**

We have introduced provisions that allow for the modification of practical training curriculum so that a part of it that cannot be taught as part of distance learning could be learnt in subsequent years, and some of the classes to be taught in subsequent years can be learnt online in this school year.

Students of technical secondary and post-secondary schools will have an opportunity to serve their apprenticeships until the end of the school year 2019/2020.

Acting in agreement with the employer, young workers trained at stage I sectoral vocational schools will be able to serve their practical training until the end of the current school year or in subsequent school years. Employers will keep their entitlement to the training cost funding.

**Continuing education providers**

All forms of out-of-school continuing education, including those carried out so far in the form of a theoretical further training period for young workers, can be carried out at as remote learning. On the other hand, practical training courses that cannot be provided can be attended when the difficulties are resolved.

**Organisation of special needs education**

We also provide opportunities for special needs education online. When offering distance learning, teachers and specialists are obliged to adapt the ways and methods of work to the needs and capabilities of pupils/students, including these resulting from individual educational and therapeutic programmes.

In the case of students with moderate, considerable or severe intellectual disability, teachers will be required to inform parents about the available materials and possible forms of learning to support the pupil/student/participant in remedial classes. The same applies to parents of children benefiting from early development support.

**Teachers' work**
During the period of temporary suspension of classes, the obligation for teachers to provide work on the school premises is limited, except where it is necessary to carry out classes with students online or otherwise, or where it is necessary to ensure continuity of school operations.

Rules of accounting for the working time of teachers and classes taught using distance learning methods and techniques or other forms of education

Teachers conduct classes using distance learning methods and techniques or any other form of education within the framework of their current weekly teaching hours and educational and care giving activities conducted directly with students or on their behalf. Once this number of hours is exceeded, these activities can be counted as overtime.

The school headteacher’s task is to determine the rules for including in the working hours individual classes taught using distance learning methods and techniques or other forms of education.

Teachers who conduct classes using distance learning methods and techniques or other forms of education are remunerated for work including the components and numbers specified in their entitlements. Teachers receive overtime payment for classes conducted in excess of their weekly mandatory hours.

On the other hand, to teachers who do not perform work within a certain period of time for reasons attributable to the employer provisions of Article 81(1) of the Labour Code apply. It stipulates that an employee who is ready to perform work and has been prevented from doing it for reasons attributable to the employer is entitled to remuneration for the time of non-performance of work, in accordance with relevant classification in grade.

Thus, over the period when teachers do not work for reasons attributable to their employer, but are on standby duty, they retain the entitlement to basic salary at the amount resulting from their classification in grade and the function-related allowance.

Administration and service staff

The limitation of the obligation to provide work on the premises of a kindergarten, school or other education institution also applies to administration and service staff, except in the cases where it is necessary to ensure continuity of operation of these institutions.

The headteacher decides on the organisation of work of these staff members. The headteacher can instruct staff members to perform remote work, provided that the nature of the tasks performed by them allows it. If it is necessary to ensure the continuity of the institution’s operations, they can also instruct staff members to carry out specific tasks at the premises.

However, if for reasons attributable to the employer, an administration and service staff member does not provide work over a certain period of time, they are at the disposal of the headteacher and ready to resume work.

Legal basis:

The Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 20 March 2020 on special solutions in the period of temporary restriction of the operations of the education system organisational units in connection with preventing, counteracting and combating COVID-19.

The Order of the Minister of National Education of 20 March 2020 amending the Order on temporary limitation of the functioning of the units of the educational system in connection with preventing,
Planned legislative changes concerning inclusive education

Reform status: planned, February 2020

Since July 2018, Polish Ministry of National Education has been implementing a project called Support for improving the quality of inclusive education in Poland as part of the European Commission's Structural Reform Support Programme (SRSP).

The project has been implemented at the request of the Minister of National Education. The aim of the support, which is specified in the request, is to provide the Ministry with support from the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education (EA) in the process of designing legal solutions and implementation measures that will allow to improve the quality of inclusive education in the daily practice of Polish kindergartens and schools. Inclusive education is understood as the provision of high quality services to all students with different educational needs who learn in kindergartens, schools and in their places of residence.

The implementation of the project is related to the work initiated in 2017 aimed at providing comprehensive solutions that will improve the quality of education. Actions taken under the project supported the work of the Team for the development of a model of education for students with special educational needs (the Ministry Team).

The first stage of the project was completed in February 2019 with producing recommendations on necessary changes in legal regulations and implementation measures to be undertaken in order to achieve the goal assumed by the Ministry of National Education. The recommendations were developed on the basis of an analysis of existing legal solutions and educational policy and conclusions of meetings with representatives of various stakeholders (headteachers, teachers, parents, students, representatives of school supervisory bodies, universities and local government units, other ministries, the Children's Commissioner, and the Commissioner for Human Rights). The recommendations were subject to public consultation in the form of meetings and through the online platform launched by the Ministry of National Education. The participants of the consultations supported the recommended directions of changes and implementation measures.

The second stage of the project started in September 2019 and it is scheduled to be completed in the first quarter of 2021. The aim of the second stage is to develop, based on the recommendations produced at the first stage, draft principles for legislative changes and public consultation of the draft. The results of this work will form the basis for initiating legislation aimed to improve the quality of inclusive education in Poland. The next step will be a broad public consultation concerning the principles developed during the workshop. The whole process will end with draft legislation and a description of the pilot programmes, which will support the implementation of solutions that will improve the quality of inclusion in the system of education in Poland.

The project involves regional meetings to which the following stakeholders are invited: headteachers, school, kindergarten and other education institution teachers and other staff members, students, parents, representatives of school supervisory bodies, universities and employees of other sectors who cooperate with education in carrying out tasks for the benefit of children and their families. Representatives of the European Commission, the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education and the Ministry of National Education will also take part in the meetings. The meetings are organized in cooperation with the regional chief education officers.

The results of the activities carried out under the SRSP project are used in other activities of the
Ministry of National Education, which aim to implement changes with the view of improving the quality of education for all students in Poland, including those with disabilities. The recommendations developed at the first stage of the project are used in projects implemented under the governmental programme Accessibility Plus, which is a pilot programme for dedicated centres that support inclusive education (the new role of mainstream and special needs schools), piloting services provided by assistants to students with special educational needs and staff training.

The Ministry of National Education also cooperates with the Ministry of Regional Funds and Policy in the implementation of the project entitled Accessible school space, which provides for the development of accessible school standards and improving accessibility of 150 schools. The principles for legislative changes and implementation measures developed at the second stage of the project, carried out in cooperation with schools, will be taken into account in the preparation of proposals for the Ministry activities in the new EU financial perspective.

"Lesson: Enter" - a digital project

Reform status: project, 16 January 2020

Teachers and school heads from all over Poland have been invited to participate in a project „Lesson Enter” („Lekcja: Enter”). The initiative aims at the development of digital competences in Polish schools. Over 75 thousand teachers will be trained within this project - they will learn how to use ICT during every day work with pupils. Enrolment has been open since the beginning of January 2020, and first training sessions will take place in February.

The project aims at developing teachers’ digital competences and increasing the importance of ICT in the teaching process. One of the crucial aspects is to prepare teachers for developing their own e-materials and using the existing ones available at the web page www.epodreczniki.pl [4]

The project is supported by the EU funds and implemented by three institutions which won the competition Orange Foundation, Foundation for the development of the Information Society and the Institute of Public Affairs.

„Lesson: Enter” project is dedicated to all types of teachers. The project leaders have designed 9 different training paths. Early childhood education and care teachers, teachers of humanities and sciences, artistic subjects but also ICT can participate - from both primary and post-primary schools.

In the framework of this project every teacher will undergo a 40- hour training, prepare two lesson scenarios with the use of ICT and teach a class in his/her school. Participants will have access to a special educational platform, will use webinars and tutorials which will show them how to use different tools and applications in everyday school activities.

School heads will be additionally invited to take an advantage of an online module „Active lesson with ICT”. Its purpose is to support them in the preparation of implementation plan of digital teaching methods in the given school.

Organisation of training sessions is left to the grant holders discretion (e.g. CPD centres).

Detailed information including a list of institutions offering the training sessions is available at https://lekcjaenter.pl/ [14] section „For school heads”.

Lessons on health will start in the new school year

Reform status: proposal, 15 January 2020
Deputy minister of health has agreed with the representatives of ministry of education that lessons on health topics will be introduced in schools in the school year 2020/21. Health topics will not be taught as a separate subject but will be introduced e.g. as part of so called hours with home room teachers.

Introduction of a school subject „Knowledge about health” has been included in the National Oncological Strategy which is under intersectoral consultation at present.

The Commissioner for Patients' Rights has appealed for an introduction of a school subject „Knowledge about health” into the school curricula. He has proposed the following teaching content and skills to be taken into consideration while teaching it:

- Healthy lifestyle;
- Rights and duties of patients;
- Basic information on the health care system;
- Basic information on support to persons with long term illnesses;
- Learning about chosen illnesses – information on treatment, reactions to diagnosis (e.g. flu, cardio vascular diseases, diabetes, allergy, infectious diseases);
- First aid;
- Basic information on healthy diet;
- Stress reduction methods;
- Assessment of pro-health measures and the importance of sport;
- Knowledge on vaccinations and check- ups recommended for particular age groups;
- Health related definitions e.g.: patient, medical product, dietary supplement, cosmetic.

The Commissioner recommends introduction of such subject into school education at different levels starting with early school education.

More information on Prawo.pl

2019

Training schools

Reform status: EU-funded competition by the Ministry of National Education, October 2019

The Ministry of National Education has started a competition addressed to bodies running at least one public school to launch a training school.

A training school is a place which offers future teachers an opportunity to test in practice the knowledge they had gained during their studies, and provides qualified teachers with the opportunity to work out and improve their work skills.

The model for the training school was developed by the Education Development Centre with the aim to provide teachers with effective teaching strategies and methods, in particular those suitable to develop student key competences and universal skills.

The development of the project involves cooperation with a university and the involvement of at least one educational institution such as: a pedagogical library, a psychological and pedagogical counseling centre or a teacher training institution.

The maximum value of one project cannot exceed PLN 1 347 747 (Source: POWR.02.10.00-IP.02-00-003/19). Within that framework extra teaching aids necessary for the operation of the training school will be provided to existing school subject laboratories.
Indications for state educational policy in the school year 2019/2020

Reform status: announced

Indications for state educational policy in the school year 2019/2020

Main indications for the state educational policy for the coming school year as established by the Ministry of National Education:

- Prevention of addictions,
- Development of digital, mathematical and entrepreneurial skills and creativity,
- Implementation of core curricula in sectoral vocational education.

The Minister has also defined tasks for regional education authorities in the area of pedagogical supervision:

- functioning of visual monitoring systems in schools,
- organisation of individual classes,
- psychological –pedagogical support,
- correlation between sectoral vocational education and a new classification for vocations.

The Minister has also defined the areas of monitoring and supervision for regional education authorities:

- implementation of compulsory physical education classes,
- transfers of students to special education settings,
- introduction of innovation to schools and implementation of core curricula for sectoral vocational education.

The amendment to Teachers’ Charter Act has been approved for implementation

Reform status: approved 4 July 2019

The Act of 13 June 2019 on amendment of the Teachers’ Charter Act (Karta Nauczyciela) and other related acts was approved on 4 July 2019. Among others it provides for an increase in teachers’ salaries in September 2019, a new allowance for beginner teachers, a guaranteed minimum of 300 PLN allowance for home room teachers, shortening of the professional advancement path and reverses some recent (2018) changes to the teachers’ appraisal system.

Appraisal of teachers is no longer obligatory, but the opinion of parent’s council in this process becomes compulsory. Appraisal of teachers upon completion of induction phase is also restored.

The following elements of professional advancement path were also amended: time required between completion of one stage in the process and beginning of the following stage was reduced to 9 months for trainee teacher aspiring to the post of contract teachers, to 2 years for contract teachers aspiring to the post of appointed teachers and to one year for appointed teachers aspiring to the post of chartered teachers.
The same regulations have been applied to teachers working abroad in schools with the Polish curriculum (szkoły polonijne). Most regulations will be implemented starting 1 September 2019.

New technologies at schools

Reform status: implemented, July 2019

In the school year 2018/2019, 3690 schools benefited from the government's "Active Whiteboard" programme. They received total funding amounting to PLN 51.2 million. With these funds, schools can purchase multimedia devices replacing traditional blackboards in classrooms, as well as projectors and loudspeakers. The programme is scheduled to last 3 years (2017-2019), and PLN 224 million has been allocated for its implementation in the state budget.

Free e-learning resources and e-materials

The epodreczniki.pl educational portal offers free educational resources. The portal is being systematically expanded to feature e-resources for general and vocational education and training. New functionalities are developed to allow teachers and students to collect their own materials, modify existing ones, create new interactive educational content, and to share, comment on and review it.

Moreover, e-materials for artistic education are being developed, as well as those aimed at developing key competences and interests of students.

Also a competition was announced for the development of 10,125 e-resources for basic and advanced courses in physics, chemistry, biology, geography, Polish, history, philosophy, civics, mathematics, and computer science taught at four-year general secondary schools and five-year technical secondary schools.

Plans for additional contents include multimedia resources to support career guidance for all age groups (data on occupations and qualifications, videos featuring individual professions, student and graduate statistics, tools and materials useful for career guidance counsellors, resources to be used by students, their parents and other adult users of the system).

The plans also include the development of 800 e-resources for vocational education and training.

Digital competences of teachers

In 2018, nearly 17,000 teachers participated in contact seminars, training workshops in the regions, professional development workshops and on-line courses on teaching programming to primary school grade 1-3 students, all these as part of the eTwinning programme.

More than 800 teachers were trained in the use of Information and Communication Technologies and cybersecurity.

In order to support teachers, the Centre for Education Development has prepared a publication entitled Teacher training in programming at the first and second stage of primary school education, programming lesson scenarios for the first and second stage of primary school education, as well as 30 other lesson scenarios.

Within the Digital Poland programme, 75,000 teachers of general education subjects (including mathematics) will be trained in using and creating their own e-materials. The project worth PLN 50 million will be carried out until 2023.

Implementation of the National Educational Network
The school year 2018/2019 is another year of providing broadband Internet access to schools within the National Educational Network (Polish: Ogólnopolska Sieć Edukacyjna - OSE). There are 8,900 schools registered in OSE. In 2019, about 12 thousand schools will be provided Internet access. According to the Act on the National Educational Network, in 2020 all schools in Poland will have free, fast and safe Internet access, and students and teachers will be able to take full advantage of new forms of digital education.

**Information System on Education**

Since 1 March 2019, one integrated system of information on education has been in operation. Works on the National Educational Data System are under way. The new system will eliminate the need for making multiple entries of identical data in different systems, e.g. by school heads or employees of district examination boards.

**mStudent Card**

mStudent Card has been developed in cooperation with the Ministry of Digital Affairs. mStudent Card is a free, mobile version of a traditional student card and it can be stored on students’ mobile devices. In order to make the mStudent Card available to students, a school head or other person designated by him/her needs to fill in a form posted on the website of the Ministry of Digital Affairs.

**School Health Services Act**

**Reform status: approved**

On April 12, 2019, the Sejm of the Republic of Poland passed a law on school health services. This is the first legal act to standardise the scope of health care for students. The act was adopted to ensure equal access to preventive health care and to dental care, i.e. to ensure uniform service levels, to all students regardless of their place of residence and the type of school they attend. It also aims to improve the efficiency of publicly funded health services. Coordination of activities and improved communication between service providers form an important element of changes envisaged in student health care. The act provides for ensuring health services at schools and guarantees children and youth access to dental surgeries. Preventive health care is provided to students until they reach the age of 19 and in the case of students holding special needs education certificates until they complete secondary education. Dental care is provided to students until the age of 19. Health services are provided by: school nurses, school hygienists and dentists, in the scope of dental care. The place of health services provision:

- preventive health care services will be provided by a school nurse or a school hygienist in a surgery located at school,
- dental services will be provided by a dentist in a dental surgery at school, a dental surgery located outside the school or a mobile dental surgery (bus).

Parents will have the right to choose another place for dental services to be provided by a dentist. Dental services, in the scope stipulated in the act, require the consent of parents or students who are of age. A school governing authority provides to students access to a surgery offering preventive healthcare at school and a dental surgery. In the absence of a dental surgery at school, the school governing authority will conclude an agreement with a provider of dental services to children and youth, in
which it will determine the manner of organising the provision of such services. The act defines the scope of cooperation between:

- parents and a school nurse/school hygienist,
- school health service providers: school nurse/school hygienist, primary care team, dentist,
- entities providing organisational conditions for such care: head teacher, school governing authority, teachers and other school staff (school counsellor).

The act also provides for the organisation of health care at school for chronically ill or disabled students. Such care will be provided by a school nurse or school hygienist who cooperates with a general practitioner, parents, adult students, head teacher and school staff. Such cooperation will consist in establishing the way, in which care will be provided to students, which will be adapted to their health condition in a situation when administering medicines and performing other activities during a child's stay at school are required. Moreover, the Minister for Health can publish a notice featuring recommendations for providing care to chronically ill or disabled students at school prepared by relevant national associations or medical societies, which bring together medical specialists in a given field of medicine, in accordance with their statutes. School health care is financed by the National Health Fund. 


New standards for teacher education

Reform status: proposal

The government is preparing new standards for initial teacher education. The Government Legislation Centre has just published a draft regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education to that end. A strong emphasis is to be placed on practical training and the adaptation of the education process by teachers to special education needs of their students. The presented draft defines the standard for initial education of teachers, including preschool teachers, early-school education teachers, special school teachers, special form teachers and teachers conducting classes for children and students with special education needs (details are included in annexes to the regulation). The need to prepare new regulation resulted from the expiry of current legislation covering these topics. Moreover, as indicated by the Ministry, starting on 1 October 2019 fields of study such as preschool and early-school pedagogy and special needs pedagogy will be offered in the form of one-cycle master's degree programmes, so it was necessary to define separate standards for initial education of preschool and early-school teachers (grades 1-3 of primary school) as well as special school teachers, special form teachers and teachers conducting classes for children and students with special education needs. As announced by the Ministry, new standards “aim at ensuring high quality of education and proper selection of learning outcomes in order to optimally prepare students for practising the teaching profession, with taking into account its specific character.” The proposed solutions place special emphasis on practical training, as well as on education in the field of special education needs and adaptation of education process by teachers to cater for special educational needs of students - reads the explanatory memorandum. The ministry stated that the academic year 2018/2019 was the last year in which universities offered initial teacher training on the basis of former rules (the existing programmes will continue their offer on the basis of former curricula). The new standards are to be applied from the academic year 2019/2020.
Increasing the number of hours at headteacher’s disposal

Reform status: approved in April, comes into force in September

Increasing the number of hours at headteacher’s disposal, which can be devoted to developing interests and talents of pupils and students at every stage of their education, increasing the number of hours devoted to vocational education and training and introducing Latin and ancient culture into the catalogue of optional subjects in a 4-year general upper-secondary school and a 5-year technical upper-secondary school are the main amendments of the regulation on framework teaching plans for public schools.

On 3 April 2019 the Minister of National Education signed the regulation on framework teaching plans for public schools. The signed regulation was sent for publication in the Official Journal of the Republic of Poland. The regulation will enter into force on 1 September 2019.

Increasing the number of hours at headteacher’s disposal is in line with the request made by the Minister of Education to trade union representatives in January 2019. It will be one additional hour at the first, second and third stage of education (in general and technical upper-secondary schools). These additional hours are to be used for the development of students’ interests and talents.

In technical upper-secondary schools, the hours at headteacher’s disposal can also be used for classes related to the development of occupational competences and for the teaching of individual subjects at an advanced level, if education in the occupation forming part of trade education requires that.

The regulation also introduces the following changes to framework teaching plan at technical upper-secondary schools:

- the number of hours devoted to vocational education and training was increased from 51 to 56 (over a five-year period of instruction) and the number of hours at headteacher’s disposal was increased from 3 to 4 hours (the hours were reallocated within the existing number of hours);
- technical upper-secondary students can choose one subject taught at an advanced level, and if the headteacher of a given technical upper-secondary school avails of human resources, organisational and financial capabilities, the students will be able to choose the second subject taught at an advanced level (also using the hours at the disposal of the headteacher). The number of hours devoted to the teaching of subjects at an advanced level has been reduced (from 14 hours to 8 hours) so as to enable the headteacher to identify the subject to be allocated at least 6 hours or 8 hours per week (over a five-year period);
- changes have been introduced to the use of hours at the headteacher’s disposal, which in technical upper-secondary schools can be allocated for the teaching of subjects at an advanced level, if education in the occupation forming part of trade education requires that;
- the number of hours of occupational training in the highest grade of technical upper-secondary school was reduced from 9 to 7 hours (weekly) shifting these hours to lower grades, so that students of the fifth grade of technical upper-secondary school can take occupational examination in January or February of a given year.

The regulation modifies framework teaching plans for trade upper-secondary schools and post-secondary schools because of the change in the organisation of education in these types of schools.

Starting from 1 September 2019 post-secondary schools and from 1 September 2020 trade upper-secondary schools will no longer be divided into schools for youth and schools for adults, and they will offer full-time and part-time education.
A meal - at school and at home in 2019

Reform status: beginning of implementation, January 2019

On 1 January 2019 a programme called „A meal - at school and at home” („Posiłek w szkole i w domu”) was launched. The programme includes support to the elderly, the disabled and children from families in difficult circumstances. The programme’s budget has been earmarked at 550 million PLN a year. 40 million PLN a year will be directed to schools in the framework of the module dedicated to the organisation of school cafeterias. The total programme’s budget for the programme’s duration will amount to 2.75 billion PLN.

The „A meal - at school and at home” programme is intended to support local authorities financially in providing food to the locals in need. The programme offers support in such forms as serving meals, financial support dedicated to the purchase of food, and provision of food products. Support to pupils will take a form of serving hot meals in school cafeterias. This will help to improve supervision over the quality of products and the process of preparing meals.

The programme supports bodies managing public primary schools (including artistic ones) in organising school cafeterias and other premises where children can have their meals. This measure refers to both improvement of already existing cafeterias as well as establishing new ones.

Interestingly the head of regional administration (wojewoda) can increase the amount earmarked for this type of support by 5%. This applies to those schools which run their own kitchens and cafeterias.

The Programme’s implementation is planned for years 2019-2023.

2018

The government is directing 200 million PLN to school cafeterias

Reform status: approved for implementation, 2 October 2018

The Council of Ministers has adopted a decree on a multinannual programme „A meal – at school and at home”.

The programme planned for years 2019 – 2023 will be implemented in the whole country.

School cafeteria

„A meal – at school and at home” is complemented by a module enabling schools to organise school meals to be prepared and served at school premises. This approach gives schools better insight into quality of purchased products and their processing.

The programme includes the following measures:

1) improvement of standards and functioning of school cafeterias (own kitchen and dining room) or upgrading of existing ones which are closed at present so they can function again, or establishment of new ones.

2) support to adapting and fitting of the cafeteria premises including dining rooms.

Support will be offered to school managing bodies in a form of targeted subsidy, and in the case of
schools supervised by the relevant minister of culture and protection of national heritage – in a form of co-financing.

In 2019-2023 the Programme will be supported by 200 000 000 PLN coming from the State Budget:

1. 2019 – 40 000 000,
2. 2020 – 40 000 000,
3. 2021 – 40 000 000,
4. 2022 – 40 000 000,
5. 2023 – 40 000 000.

Participation in the programme involves a requirement of co-financing by the schools’ managing bodies (funds or in kind) of 20% of funds necessary for implementation of the given investment.

The total funding in the whole financial perspective of the programme amounts to 2.75 billion PLN.

„A meal – at school and at home” will be implemented starting 1 January 2019 and will replace a programme „State support to school meals provision” for the years 2014-2020.


**Governmental programme „Good Start”**

**Reform status: under implementation**

Good Start („Dobry Start”) is a programme offering financial support of 300 PLN a year to all pupils whose parents apply for it. Support is to offer help with covering the costs of books, school materials and other items necessary in school education.

**School education priorities for the school year 2018/19**

**Reform status: approved in July 2018**

School education priorities for the school year 2018/19 have been defined as follows:

- 100th Anniversary of regaining independence – education for values and encouraging patriotic attitudes among pupils
- Implementation of the new core curriculum for general education. Education for independence, creativity and innovativeness of pupils
- Vocational education based on close cooperation between schools and employers. Development of vocational guidance
- Development of digital competences of pupils and teachers. Safe and responsible use of Internet resources.

**School laboratories - means to help schools buy natural science lab equipment**

**Reform status: approved, 10 May 2018**

On Thursday, 10 May 2018, the Minister of National Education, presented at Copernicus Science
Centre (CSS) the Ministry’s actions aimed at supporting schools in equipping natural science laboratories.

Both funds for local governments to co-finance the purchase of teaching aids for school subject laboratories and the Modular Natural Science Lab Project are new – after the “Active Board” government programme – Ministerial responses to the need for providing the right educational environment for elementary school pupils.

Money for lab equipment comes from the educational reserve, which amounts to 0.4% of the general subsidy for 2018. The Ministry of National Education met the request of local governments and school principals and created new division criteria for the reserve.

Local governments can already apply to the Ministry for co-financing of the purchase of teaching aids necessary for fulfilling the requirements of the core curriculum regarding natural sciences (biology, geography, chemistry and physics) in elementary schools. This year, we plan to allocate approx. PLN 80 million for this purpose from the reserve. The programme of co-financing the purchase of subject lab equipment is planned for 4 years. In total, we will fund local governments in the amount of approx. PLN 320 million.

Local governments may choose to purchase lab equipment available on the market and meeting the needs of particular schools. Modular Natural Science Labs are an example solution which local governments may – but do not have to – choose.

At the request of the Ministry of National Education, Copernicus Science Centre prepared a proposal for a new way of educating pupils in grades IV–VIII of primary school. The project is carried out in co-operation with the Foundation for the Development of the Education System, which finances it.

The concept of Modular Natural Science Labs (MNSL) emphasizes students’ independent learning about the world by means of observation and experimentation. The proposed research method, inspired by how scientists work, activates and engages pupils. For them, just like for scientists, the world is full of unknown phenomena and processes. They should have the opportunity to get to know it not only via textbooks or lectures but also via asking questions, posing and testing hypotheses and drawing conclusions. That’s when learning becomes a process of acquiring knowledge as well as developing competences of a creative and critical search for answers – abilities indispensable in the 21st century.

Each module comprises equipment and tools – in quantities which guarantee the creation of both individual and team work conditions, also in classes with 30 pupils – enabling all students to carry out simple, safe experiments. It also offers additional materials for teachers, helping them to organize various activities (additional and field ones, educational trips or student projects). In order to make it easier for teachers to plan and carry out the proposed activities they have been linked to the current core curriculum in the following subjects: nature, biology, geography, chemistry and physics.

**Modular Natural Science Labs (MNSL)**

The equipment together with the didactic materials for pupils and teachers are a proposition of educational kits useful in conducting nature, biology, physics, chemistry or geography lessons.

Copernicus Science Centre has developed and produced a pilot series of the first module entitled Water.

The proposed equipment has been verified in projects realized by CSS. It is simple and mobile, possible to use in any classroom and does not need any kind of specially prepared infrastructure. Its
modular construction will make it possible to broaden the educational offer in the future based on pupils’ needs and interests.

The pilot series comprises 50 educational kits with several dozen proposed activities: observations and experiments. The kits are meant for students in grades IV-VIII of primary school. Each kit contains equipment and materials enabling the pupil to work using the research method. Specialists from Copernicus Science Centre have also prepared worksheets for students and subject-matter materials for teachers both on phenomena and processes thematically connected with water and on transferring knowledge with the use of methods which activate pupils. Practical activities during lessons can support the development of natural science, mathematical, technical, IT, team work and communication competences as well as creativity and entrepreneurship.

Upon completion of the pilot use of the first module entitled Water, a report and recommendations will be drawn up for popularizing the project in subsequent schools and for creating new modules.

Pay rise for teachers - Ministry of National Education information

Reform status: approved, April 2018

Raising the prestige of the teaching profession, promoting high quality work and ensuring good conditions for its realization – those are the priorities of the Ministry of National Education.

In line with earlier announcements, on 1 April 2018 the Ministry began to carry out the plan of raising teachers’ salaries by approx. 15.8% in 3 years. This proportion is comparable to the forecasted increase of the average salary in this period in the national economy by approx. 15.9%. Subsequent pay rises will be introduced from January 2019 and January 2020. It’s worth noting that this is the first increase in teachers’ remuneration in 6 years as the last took place in 2012. What is more, last year for the first time in 5 years we guaranteed teacher salary adjustment and its financing in the total amount of PLN 418 million.

Augmenting teachers’ salaries translates into additional means in the state budget. In 2018 the subsidy for local governments increased by approx. PLN 1.2 billion, and since 1 April this year teachers’ average remuneration has become 5.35% higher.

It is worth remembering that teachers’ pay is made up of the base salary (whose amount is each year determined by a relevant regulation) and allowances defined in the Teachers’ Charter Act. These are:

1) length of service allowance,
2) allowance for acting in a managerial role,
3) function allowance for internship supervision,
4) function allowance for class educators,
5) function allowance for advisor teachers,
6) function allowance for consultant teachers,
7) allowance for work conditions,
8) allowance for work arduousness,
9) commemorative award,
10) award from a special award fund,
11) additional remuneration for nighttime work,
12) motivational allowance,
13) additional annual remuneration,
14) retirement and pension pay, as well as payment resulting from termination of employment,
15) overtime and ad-hoc replacement hours.

According to regulations certain allowances (e.g. length-of-service and overtime) are directly proportional to the amount of the basic salary.

In effect, increase of the basic pay automatically means an increase of allowances dependent on it.

For teachers who hold the highest degrees (i.e. Master’s degree in a specific field with a confirmation of teacher training) increase in base salary as of 1 April presents itself as follows:

for trainee teachers – the remuneration increases by PLN 123 and amounts to PLN 2,417 (gross),
for contract teachers – the remuneration increases by PLN 126 and amounts to PLN 2,487 (gross),
for appointed teachers – the remuneration increases by PLN 143 and amounts to PLN 2,824 (gross),
for chartered teachers – the remuneration increases by PLN 168 and amounts to PLN 3,317 (gross).

With regard to teachers’ average pay, it is:

for trainee teachers – PLN 2,900.20 (increase of PLN 147.28),
for contract teachers – PLN 3,219.22 (increase of PLN 163.48),
for appointed teachers – PLN 4,176.29 (increase of PLN 212.09),
for chartered teachers – PLN 5,336.37 (increase of PLN 271).

Currently, over 60% of teachers hold a professional promotion position (chartered teacher).

It is worth mentioning that average salary is guaranteed by law for groups of teachers who have been awarded particular professional promotion positions. If the duty to pay the average remuneration in the promotion groups is not realized, it is the local government’s obligation to pay a supplement.

**New core curriculum for post-primary schools - new regulation by the Minister of National Education**

**Reform status: approved**

The new regulation on core curriculum for general education for 4-year general upper secondary school, 5-year technical upper secondary school and 2-year stage II sectoral vocational school was signed on the 30 January 2018.
New core curriculum for post-primary schools is to be implemented starting in 2019/2020 (in grade I) of:

- 4-year general upper secondary school;
- 5-year technical upper secondary school;
- 2-year stage II sectoral vocational school.

The following educational aspects have been addressed in the new core curricula:

- Focus on the development of key competences;
- Improving the efficiency of mother tongue teaching through introducing pupils to cultural tradition and literature, which serves rooting in the past, developing one’s identity and cultural continuity;
- Improving the efficiency of modern foreign language teaching giving pupils a framework for continuing and systematic foreign language learning (two languages) and a possibility of bilingual education;
- Return to learning of history as a separate subject for all pupils taking into consideration a wide context of internal and international situation;
- Development of entrepreneurship, creativity and ICT skills not only for educational purposes but also for everyday life, with a focus on all aspects of ICT teaching and introduction of coding for all pupils;
- Development of knowledge and skills in maths and science through teaching of separate subjects of biology, chemistry, physics and geography at the II educational stage – with continuation at the III educational stage;
- Return to the growth based learning approach through repetition, enhancement and development of knowledge on the subsequent levels of education;
- Replacing of subject integration concept with a subject correlation one (in the field of humanities and in the field of science).