2019

**Increasing state subsidies to increase equality in schools**

The government introduced in 2018 state subsidies to strengthen equality and knowledge development in schools. The subsidies are distributed according to the number of pupils and their socioeconomic background. The one billion Swedish crowns in 2018 was increased to 3.5 billions in 2019 and is now proposed to increase to 4.9 billions for 2020. The planned amount for 2021 is up to 6.2 billions.

[More information in Swedish](#) [1]

**Increased mandate for the Swedish Schools Inspectorate to close schools**

The government has appointed an investigator to assist the Ministry of Education and Research to investigate and propose an increased mandate for the Swedish Schools Inspectorate to close independent and public schools with serious and recurring shortcomings.

A goal is that the legislation, as far as possible, should be the same for both independent and public schools.

The investigation should be reported by 15 August 2020.


**Automated marking of national exams to facilitate for teachers**

The Swedish National Agency for Education was commissioned by the government to develop and provide digitized national exams and these are now partially in use at Swedish schools. Now the government has commissioned the Swedish National Agency for Education to develop automated marking of national exams for those parts where this is possible in order to decrease the administrative burden of teachers.

In addition, the Swedish National Agency for Education is commissioned to investigate how centralized marking of national exams could be introduced.

[More information in Swedish](#) [3]

**Teacher assistants and other professions to relieve teachers**

Sweden has a teacher shortage that the Government is taking measures to turn around. In the Spring
Fiscal Policy Bill for 2019, the Government proposed that SEK 475 million should be allocated to a state grant in order to employ more teacher assistants. The objective is for teachers to be able to focus more on teaching. The Swedish National Agency for Education is tasked with developing support material concerning how teacher assistants, social workers and other professional groups can work to relieve teachers.

The support material should provide guidance to school organizers and school heads about how they can relieve the teachers by allowing other occupational groups to perform certain tasks. In the assignment, the Agency is tasked to identify which tasks, according to the school regulations, need to be performed by teachers, and give examples of what can be performed by other professions. The work with the support material must be permeated by teachers who are responsible for planning and implementing the teaching.

The assignment is given through an amendment to the Swedish National Agency for Education’s appropriation directions for the financial year 2019 and should be reported to the Government no later than 28 February 2020.

Information in Swedish. [4]

The Government wants to increase knowledge about Agenda 2030 and the national environmental goals in schools

The Government has given the National Agency for Education an assignment to show how the global goals in Agenda 2030 and the national environmental goals connect to the school’s steering documents and increase knowledge about how sustainable development can be integrated into teaching.

The objective of the assignment is to give school heads and school staff an increased awareness of Agenda 2030 and the national environmental goals and thereby improve the conditions for education for sustainable development. The three dimensions of sustainability economic, social and ecological should be included in the teaching.

The assignment is given through an amendment to the Swedish National Agency for Education's appropriation directions for the financial year 2019 and should be reported to the Government no later than 31 January 2020.

More information in Swedish. [5]

The Swedish National Agency for Education wants to strengthen the content of the curricula regarding sex and cohabitation

In 2018 The Swedish National Agency for Education was commissioned by the Government to review the curricula and if necessary, propose how it can be clarified in order to better support teaching in the field of sex and cohabitation. The assignment relates to the curricula for the compulsory school (grundskolan [6]) and corresponding school forms, upper secondary school (gymnasieskolan [6]), upper secondary school for pupils with learning disabilities (gymnasiesärskolan [6]) and municipal adult education (kommunal vuxenutbildning, komvux [7]).

The Agency was instructed to pay particular attention to issues of honor-related violence and oppression, consent and pornography.

In the final commission report which was published 31 May 2019, the Swedish National Agency for
Education among other measures proposes that the name of the knowledge area sex and cohabitation should be changed to sexuality and relationships, which provides a more accurate description of the knowledge area. The proposals emphasizes that education should promote the health and well-being of all pupils and that the pupils should respect other people's bodily and personal integrity as well as strengthen the ability to make conscious and independent choices, contribute to an understanding of one's own and others' rights. An important change is that the school head's responsibility is clarified in the proposal.

In Sweden, the introductory chapters of the curricula has general formulations to not limit the content of the education. Instead of using the concept of honor-related violence and oppression, the Agency proposes formulations with a broader perspective so that other forms of structural violence and oppression are included. In addition to honor-related violence and oppression, other forms of structural violence, such as violence in close relationships and violence linked to different sexual identities are proposed to be introduced in the curricula.

For more information in Swedish please see: (U2018/02877/BS and U2018/02960/S) Uppdrag om förslag till ändringar i läroplaner avseende kunskapsområdet sex och samlevnad [8]

Improved syllabi

The Swedish National Agency for Education (Skolverket [9]) wants to improve the syllabi in compulsory school (grundskolan [6]) and upper secondary school (gymnasieskolan [6]) and has presented proposals regarding how these improvements could be achieved.

Key elements of these proposals are:

- To emphasise factual knowledge more clearly in course and subject plans.
- To adapt the course and subject plans more clearly by stage, school form and teaching time or upper secondary school credits.
- To show the development of knowledge between the stages in the preschool and between the different upper secondary courses in a subject.
- To make the knowledge requirements less detailed.

The proposals have been developed based on a consultation with teachers, subject experts, researchers, interest organizations, trade unions and other authorities. Specific proposals for the new syllabi and knowledge requirements will be presented in 2019. If the changes enter into force, they could be applied from 2020.

Curricula changes for safety and study peace

Curricula changes aimed at increasing safety and study peace will enter into force on 1 July 2019. The Government has decided on changes to the curriculum for the compulsory school, preschool class and the leisure-time centre (Läroplan för grundskolan, förskoleklassen och fritidshemmet 2011 [10]), curriculum for the Sami school, the preschool class and the leisure-time centre (Läroplan för sameskolan, förskoleklassen och fritidshemmet 2011 [11]) and curriculum for the upper secondary school (Läroplan för gymnasieskolan 2011 [12]). The changes clarify the responsibility of the school head for security and study peace. The changes also emphasise that pupils should show respect and consideration for the school staff and other pupils. The changes are based on proposals in the School Commission's final report National Strategy for Improving Learning Outcomes and Equality (SOU 2017:35).

For more information about the proposals in Swedish with an English summary please see: (SOU
Technology for digital national tests

The Swedish National Agency for Education (Skolverket) is currently working with a government assignment to develop digital national tests in compulsory school and upper secondary school from 2017-2022. In January 2019 the agency published a list of the technical requirements that schools must have in place to fully implement digital national tests by 2022.

Examples of technical requirements that need to be in place:

- A stable internet connection that can handle sound and film material and allows all students in a school year or upper secondary course to do the tests.
- The school should have enough computers (portable or stationary) or tablets so that all students in a school year or upper secondary course can complete the tests simultaneously.
- Tablets should have a screen size of at least 9.6 inches.
- The computers and tablets should have a screen resolution of at least 1366 x 768.
- Headphones should be available for use in samples containing sound material.

The objective of the development of digital national tests is to increase pupils’ digital skills as well as contribute to ensuring that the national tests and the assessment becomes more equivalent, legal and effective.

The development is carried out in steps until the national tests will be fully digital in 2022.

2018

Increased movement in school

The government (regeringen) has assigned The Swedish National Agency for Education (Skolverket) the task to submit proposals aimed at increasing movement during the school day for all students, in compulsory school (grundskolan), education for pupils with severe intellectual impairments (särskolan), schools for pupils with impaired hearing (specialskolan) and the Sami school (sameskolan). The National Agency for Education will also consider and, if necessary, submit proposals for increased movement in the preschool class (förskoleklassen) and leisure-time centres (fritidshem).

Examples of The Swedish National Agency for Education tasks as a part of this assignment are:

- To report on relevant research within the field and its impact on school results. Focus will be on pupils with a sedentary lifestyle, and if results differ between the sexes, age or other relevant circumstances.

- To describe how municipalities and other school organisers currently offer daily physical activity during the school day.

- To analyse which measures are needed to provide more students with mobility during the school day and submit proposals.

The final assignment report is to handed to the government by 31 January 2019.

National tests taken into account when grading pupils

In 2018 the Education Act (Skollagen) was revised with an added rule that the national tests are to be taken into account when grading pupils. The pupils national test results are not to be the strongest
determining factor but can be used as a support in grading. The Swedish National Agency for Education has updated the general advice document for teachers regarding grading.

Government grants for an equivalent school 2018

The government (regeringen [19]) has assigned The Swedish National Agency for Education (Skolverket [9]) the task to allocate government grants to strengthen the equivalence and knowledge development within the preschool class and compulsory school during the autumn of 2018. Municipal (kommuner [7]) and grant-aided independent (fristående skola [17]) school organisers of preschool class (förskoleklass [17]) and compulsory education (grundskola [6]) can apply for the grant to increase ongoing initiatives or develop new initiatives which strengthen equivalence and knowledge development. The government grant is supposed to finance initiatives based on the school organisers analysis of local needs. These initiatives can for example relate to the school organisers, schools, classrooms or continuing professional development for teachers and staff.

The total 2018 grant is at SEK 1 billion (approximately EURO 97 million) and can be used for the school organisers costs of initiatives between 1 July and 31 December 2018.

Mentor

As of July 1, 2019 all students in upper secondary school (gymansieskola [6] and gymnasiesärskola [20]) will have a mentor who will follow the student's development and educational journey. While most students already have a mentor today, the government wishes to further institutionalise this right across all schools.

Transitioning schools

As of July 1, 2018 schools will be required to ease a student's transition from one school to another by providing the new school with necessary documentation and information regarding the student so the transition is as smooth as possible. Information could, for example, be about the student's study support, educational development, study results, and other information relevant to the student's study situation.

Responsibility for monitoring absence

As of July 1, 2018 the school principal will have the ultimate responsibility for following up on students' absence from upper secondary school and its equivalent for students with learning disabilities (gymansieskola and gymnasiesärskola [6]) regardless of whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. Reoccurring absence is a warning signal that the student may not be able to complete his or her education, so it is crucial that the reason for the student's absence is monitored and additional support provided where necessary. Read more about rules around school attendance here [21].

Increased support for students with disabilities

As of July 1, 2018 increased support will be available for students with disabilities in high school who are struggling to fulfill their educational requirements (gymnasieskola and gymnasiesärskola [6]). As opposed to mere adjustments, increased support refer more extensive measures such as private lessons, a reduced curriculum, or a specially designed schedule to meet the student's needs. Read more here [22].
**Mandatory preschool class**

The preschool class will be compulsory from the autumn 2018. All children living in Sweden will be required to attend the preschool class from the autumn the year they turn six. The school duty in Sweden is thus extended by one year and becomes a ten-year duty.

[More information](#).

**Mandatory practical working experience in primary and special schools**

The government has decided on mandatory practical working experience (praktisk arbetslivsorientering i skolan (PRAO)) in primary and special schools from the autumn 2018. The goal is to strengthen the link between school and working life. In elementary school, practical working experience must comprise at least ten days in total during grades 8 and 9. In the special school, the same extent applies to primary school but for students in grades 9 and 10.

**Strengthening digital skills**

The Swedish National Agency for Education ([Skolverket](https://www.skolverket.se)) developed a proposal on how to strengthen digital skills in schools, including programming. The overall mission is to strengthen students’ digital skills and to prepare them for a changing society. The pupils should get an understanding of how digitalisation affects the individual and society. They should also be able to use and understand digital systems and services and relate to media and information in a critical and responsible manner. The curriculum has been revised to reinforce and clarify digital competences. The changes apply from 1 July 2018.

More information in Swedish, please see [here](#).

**2017**

**Strengthened support in Swedish and Mathematics**

The government proposes that schools will be obliged to make a specific analysis of a student's knowledge development if there is an indication that the student will not achieve the minimum knowledge requirements in Swedish, Swedish as a second language or Mathematics. The analysis should take into account whether the student is in need of adjustments or support, and the necessary measures should then be introduced. A follow-up will be made at the end of the preschool class and at the end of year three. The legislative amendments are proposed to enter into force on 1 July, 2018. The Swedish School Inspectorate will supervise that the actions are taken.

For more information, in Swedish only, see [the Swedish government website](https://www.regeringen.se).

**Digitised national exams**

The Swedish National Agency for Education has been commissioned by the government to develop and provide digitised national exams. The tests should be anonymous and the assessor of the digital exam should be someone other than the pupils’ own teacher. The purpose of digitisation is to increase equality in the grading system and to make management of national exams more efficient. The national examinations in writing will be conducted on computer from the autumn term 2018. It is currently up to schools to decide whether students can use digital tools, but from the academic year 2018/2019 it becomes mandatory for some parts.
More precise allocation of teaching time

Schools currently differ in the number of teaching hours students get during certain academic years. In addition, schools can choose in which year for example language choices start, something that causes complications when students change schools. The government has, therefore, asked the Swedish National Agency for Education (Skolverket) to suggest how time could be allocated between stages of primary and lower secondary schools, compulsory education for students and children with intellectual disabilities, special schools for students and children with impaired hearing and/or with severe speech and language disabilities and the Sami schools. The revised time allocation will contain the minimum number of hours per subject and stage. The school must offer modern languages no later than year six. The aim of the changes is to reduce differences between schools and make it easier for students to change schools. The proposal will be presented to the government no later than 1 April 2018 and are the changes are intended to apply from 1 July 2018.

For more information in Swedish only, see the Swedish National Agecy for Education’s (Skolverket) webpage.

Reform to make school attendance compulsory from the age of six

School attendance is compulsory for all children resident in Sweden from the age of seven (year one) until year nine. The government is now proposing make preschool class (förskoleklass) a part of the compulsory school system. The purpose of the reform is to better prepare the children for their first school year. About two percent of all six-year-olds do not attend preschool class, which corresponds to approximately two thousand children a year. The changes are proposed to apply from 1 January 2018 and applies from the autumn term 2018.

For more information, please see the Swedish government official webpage.

Investigation into school health services

The Ministry of Education and Research (Utbildningsdepartementet) has appointed a special investigation in order to map and analyse student health services and other support functions helping students to attain the minimum knowledge requirements. The results of the investigation shall be reported by 20 January 2019.

For more information, please see the Swedish government official webpage.

New investments to reduce segregation between schools

The government plans two new initiatives in 2017 to reduce segregation in compulsory and upper secondary schools. First, SEK 500 million (€ 50 million) will be allocated in order to reduce income differences between schools which in turn will help more pupils to achieve sufficient grades for upper secondary school admittance. Secondly, a SEK 150 million (€ 15 million) investment is planned for the introductory program (introduktionsprogrammet) within the upper secondary school.

For more information, please see the Swedish government official webpage.

Compulsory work experience in secondary school

The government wants to reintroduce compulsory work experience
(praktisk arbetslivsorientering i skolan, PRAO) in the secondary school and the special school. The purpose is to give all secondary school pupils equal opportunities to try a profession and gain experiences that will help support their future choices of education and occupation. It is intended that the new regulations will apply from 1 July 2018.

For more information, please see the Swedish government official webpage.

**Improved education for children in care**

SiSAM is a collaborative model for continuous education aimed at children in care developed by the Swedish National Board of Institutional Care (Statens institutionsstyrelse) and the National Agency for Special Needs Education and Schools (Specialpedagogiska skolmyndigheten). The model was tested 2013-2015 by municipal social services and schools. Further development of the model will include children in familial homes (familjehem), emergency family home (jourhem), homes for care or residence (hem för vård eller boende, HVB) and assisted living facilities (stödboende). Three government authorities are involved in developing the model, the Swedish National Agency for Education (Skolverket), the National Agency for Special Needs Education and Schools (Specialpedagogiska skolmyndigheten) and the National Board of Health and Welfare (Socialstyrelsen).

For more information see the Swedish government official webpage.

**Pilot project to promote vocational training and education**

The government proposes a five year pilot project to improve and increase the interest for vocational education. The initiative establishes partnerships between upper secondary vocational education providers and business sector representatives. The purpose of the project is to address the decreased interest in vocational training and tackle a future shortage of competent personnel in many industries.

For more information see the Swedish government official webpage.

**Improved opportunities for minority language education**

The Swedish Ministry of Education (Utbildningsdepartementet) is conducting a survey to better understand what measures are needed to protect and strengthen the national minority languages. The query is partially due to EU's criticism against Sweden regarding minority language education. The assignment will be presented on August 31, 2017.

**Changes to the Discrimination Act**

As of 1 January, 2017 new regulations apply regarding active measures against discrimination. These regulations will apply to preschool, primary and lower secondary school and are regulated by the Education Act and part of the Discrimination Act. For more information see the Swedish National Agency for Education's new regulations.

**Curricula changes to promote gender equality and equal rights**

The Swedish National Agency for Education (Skolverket) will suggest changes to the curricula for primary and lower secondary schools, preschools, leisure-time centres, compulsory education for students and children with intellectual disabilities, special schools for students and children with impaired hearing and/or with severe speech and language disabilities and the Sami schools.
proposed changes will strengthen the schools' mission to counteract traditional gender patterns, to promote gender equality and to actively encourage equal rights and opportunities.

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