Chapter 12

Exploration on Building of Parents Committee in Primary and Middle Schools in Shandong Province

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Abstract

Three parties have jointly promoted the building of the parents committee in primary and middle schools (中小学家长委员会) in Shandong Province since the end of 2009. Shandong Provincial Department of Education took the initiative to reform with administrative power; Qindao Publishing Group strongly supported the reform with public welfare funds; the non-governmental organization, Beijing Enrich the Family Center, provided routine professional services. This model effectively integrated the executive power of education administration, professional specialties of non-governmental organization and the funding support from public welfare foundations. Such model has profound meaning as a reference to the building of parents committee in primary and middle schools in future.

Keywords

Parents Committee in Primary and Middle Schools – Parents’ Right to Participate in Education – Professional Organization – Enterprise Collaboration

In March 2012, the Ministry of Education of China issued the ‘Instructions on the Establishment of Parents Committee in Kindergarten, Primary and Middle Schools’ (关于建立中小学幼儿园家长委员会的指导意见). The establishment of parents committee serves as an important part of the building of the modern school system. At that time, the building of the parents committee in primary and middle schools in Shandong province has been going on for

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around three years. Three major forces have been involved in the advancing of the parents committee in primary and middle schools in Shandong province over the past three years. They are: first, Shandong Provincial Department of Education gave an enormous impetus to the project; second, the Qindao Publishing Group strongly supported the reform; third, the first professional non-governmental organization focused on developing family relations and family-school relations, Beijing Enrich the Family Center actively involved in the project. This unique case of the collaboration among government, enterprise and non-governmental organizations has provided valuable experiences for the building of parents committee in China.

I Three-party Collaboration Lead by Government Administration

Since 2008, the quality-oriented education reform in Shandong province has brought great impact all around the country. It is referred to as a ‘quality-oriented education tempest’. The reform makes efforts to bring primary and middle school education back to the essence of education, through standardizing school management procedures, giving students more time, suggesting a healthy life to students and encouraging students’ self-motivation in learning. Similarly, schools and teachers were able to get what should have belonged to them. The next step would be empowering the parents of students. This has been the background of the establishment of the parents committee in primary and middle schools since the end of 2009 in Shandong province. At December 2, 2009, Shandong Provincial Department of Education issued ‘Measures for Establishing and Administering Parents Committee in Regular Primary and Middle Schools (for Trial Implementation)’ (山东省普通中小学家长委员会设置与管理办法(试行)), which took the lead in promoting the establishment of parents committee in primary and middle schools throughout the province in mainland China.

What should be rights of the parents in the school teaching system? Apart from the right to be informed of the their children’s learning situations and to get involved in the school teaching, parents as a group should have the right to involve and supervise the school management and to take part in the school teaching. The legal term for such right is parent’s collective education involvement right. The establishment and operation of parents committee is a way to practice parents’ right.

On February 17, 2012, the Ministry of Education of China issued the ‘Instructions on the Establishment of Parents Committee in Kindergarten, Primary and Middle Schools’, which explicitly required all kindergarten, primary and middle