

Empowering students to use digital technology

By [Luqman Hakim](#) - November 30, 2023 @ 9:53pm



The Digital Education Policy aims to produce students who are digitally proficient, capable of using cutting-edge technology to tackle future challenges. - NSTP/MOHD FADLI HAMZAH

THE Digital Education Policy by the Education Ministry is a testament to the government's commitment to transform the national education system in line with rapid global technological advancements.

Minister Fadhlina Sidek said the policy, approved by the cabinet on May 26, emerges as a core agenda during her tenure, which began in December last year.

In highlighting the six strategic pillars outlined in the Digital Education Policy, she said each is propelled by short-term, medium-term and long-term action plans.

These six pillars are: Digitally Proficient Students, Competent Digital Educators, Visionary Digital Leadership Culture, Enabling Infostructure and Infrastructure, High-Quality Digital Content and Committed Strategic Partners.

"The policy is designed to empower students to use digital technology seamlessly, fostering creativity, innovation, responsibility and ethical practices.

"It aims to cultivate a generation capable of creating innovations, scientifically analysing data, problem-solving, and effective communication and collaboration," she said in a speech during the launching ceremony at Bangi Avenue Convention Centre, Bangi, on Tuesday.

Fadhlina also highlighted several actions taken by the ministry to address the existing digital gap between urban and rural students while reducing the disparity in learning resources.

To address the limited access to learning materials in rural and remote areas, 367 Teachers' Activity Centres and 16 Educational Resources and Technology Sectors had been transformed into Centres of Excellence (COE), she said.

"These COEs, equipped with state-of-the-art digital studios and Digital Maker Hubs (DMH), serve as hubs for students and teachers to enhance digital competencies, develop content, and implement innovative teaching and learning practices.

"The activities conducted in COEs include video production, robotics, programming and virtual reality (VR) experiences.

"Furthermore, there is the provision of Phase 1 ICT equipment to 3,910 schools, including 75,354 laptops, 3,804 printers, 3,800 projectors and 3,228 charging carts, for teaching purposes.

"This initiative aims to replace outdated ICT equipment and enhance the digital learning ecosystem.

"Phase 2 and Phase 3, covering a total of 7,340 schools, are underway and expected to be completed early next 2024," she said.

Fadhlina also stressed the importance of digital competency for teachers by including training and periodic courses related to digital technology.

Digital knowledge assessment and verification, a key aspect of the policy, involves screening the digital competency levels of educators.

"As of October, 301,844 teachers have undergone screening to determine their competency level, of which 22 per cent are in basic, 76 per cent in intermediate, and two per cent in advanced.

"The ongoing screening is expected to be completed by year end, providing valuable insight into the digital competency of educators.

"Until Oct 31, 25,370 Continuous Professional Development (CPD) activities related to digital or ICT have been implemented through the ministry's Training Management System to encourage educators to develop digital competencies independently."

She said principals and school administrators also play a crucial role in shaping the educational vision of the school.

"The ministry pledged to support and provide resources to instil a visionary digital leadership culture among educational leaders.

"This involves broadening their digital worldview and fostering the wisdom to implement technology strategies effectively.

"To strengthen the skills of educational leaders in technology, we are reinforcing their technological capabilities to ensure that they can guide schools in the right direction in an increasingly complex digital world."

The ministry's Educational Resources and Technology division director Zainal Abas said the policy aligns with Malaysia's Education Development Plan 2013-2025.

The initiative, he said, specifically focuses on the Seventh Shift of the Transformation Aspiration in Education Performance and Delivery Unit of the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025: Leveraging on ICT for Quality Education, which empowers and enhances the use of ICT in classrooms.

"The Digital Education Policy is a comprehensive approach that encompasses the development of human capital.

"The primary goal is to produce digitally proficient students capable of using cutting-edge technology to tackle future challenges.

"This policy extends beyond students to include teachers within the classroom environment, emphasising a holistic approach," he said in an interview prior to the launching ceremony.

Zainal said to ensure quality digital content, online learning materials, ebooks, and digital resources must be in line with the national curriculum.

"To overcome this, the ministry introduced the Digital Educational Learning Initiative Malaysia (DELIMa) since July 2019.

"DELIMa offers a variety of interactive and enjoyable digital educational resources, expanding opportunities for students to learn and boosting motivation, performance, and overall potential.

"Over 5.3 million users, including primary and secondary school students, post-secondary students, teachers and lecturers can access DELIMa anytime, anywhere."

He said the platform enables teachers to contribute and share their teaching-learning materials, allowing others to ask questions and provide ratings.

"This collaborative approach aims to create a dynamic ecosystem where educators across the country can access a wealth of teaching resources and perspectives.

"The ongoing efforts, from infrastructure development to teacher training and digital collaboration platforms, reflect Malaysia's dedication to providing a robust and inclusive digital education system for all students and educators."