

Translation



The following plan lists China's near- to medium-term priorities for its education system. The initial portions of the plan are heavily focused on the Communist Party's use of schools and the education system as a vehicle for ideological indoctrination. A later section of the plan calls for improving basic research at universities and increasing collaboration between academic institutions and corporations to strengthen China's technological self-sufficiency. It also advocates for improved AI education and the use of AI tools in educational evaluation and policymaking.

Title

Outline of the Plan for the Construction of China into an Education Powerhouse (2024-2035)
教育强国建设规划纲要(2024—2035年)

Authors

The Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party (中共中央) and the State Council (国务院)

Source

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Outline of the Plan for the Construction of China into an Education Powerhouse (2024-2035)

Xinhua News Agency, Beijing, January 19, 2025: Recently, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) Central Committee and the State Council published the *Outline of the Plan for the Construction of China into an Education Powerhouse (2024-2035)*, and also issued a notice requiring all regions and departments to conscientiously implement it in light of their actual conditions.

The main contents of the *Outline of the Plan for the Construction of China into an Education Powerhouse (2024-2035)* are as follows:

This plan has been formulated to fully implement the strategic deployments made at the 20th Party Congress for accelerating the construction of China into an education powerhouse.¹

I. Overall Requirements

Guided by Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era, this Plan fully implements the guiding principles of the 20th Party Congress and the Second and Third Plenums of the 20th CCP Central Committee. It comprehensively implements General Secretary Xi Jinping's important expositions on education, thoroughly understands the decisive significance of the "Two Establishes,"² and resolutely upholds the "Two Upholds."³ It adheres to the principle of giving priority to education in development, fully implements the Party's directives on education, unswervingly follows the educational development path of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and upholds the socialist orientation in school operations. It emphasizes the political, people-centered, and strategic nature of education, and implements the fundamental task of cultivating moral people (立德树人). It aims to cultivate talent for the Party and the country, fully serve the cause of Chinese-style modernization construction, and conduct education rooted in China's own context. The Plan calls for accelerating the development of a high-quality education system and nurturing socialist builders and successors equipped with a well-rounded moral, intellectual, physical, aesthetic, and labor education (德智体美劳). It seeks to accelerate the construction of an education powerhouse of socialism with Chinese characteristics with strong ideological guidance, talent competitiveness, scientific and technological (S&T) support, assurance for the people's livelihoods, collaboration with society, and global influence, thereby providing powerful support for building China into a modernized

¹ Translator's note: This translation renders the Chinese word 强国 qiángguó—which literally means "strong nation"—in English in two different ways, depending on context. Where the translator judges that qiángguó is used in the general geopolitical sense, it is translated as "world power." Where the translator judges that the text refers to a specific flavor of qiángguó, it is translated as "powerhouse," as in the phrase "education powerhouse" (教育强国). For a more thorough discussion in English of the Chinese word qiángguó, see:

<https://www.newamerica.org/cybersecurity-initiative/digichina/blog/lexicon-wanlue-qiangguo/>.

² Translator's note: The "Two Establishes" (“两个确立”) are: (1) establish Comrade Xi Jinping's status as the core of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) Central Committee and the core of the entire Party, and (2) establish the guiding status of Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era (确立习近平同志党中央的核心、全党的核心地位, 确立习近平新时代中国特色社会主义思想的指导地位).

³ Translator's note: The "Two Upholds" (“两个维护”) are: (1) firmly uphold General Secretary Xi Jinping's status as the core of the CCP Central Committee and the core of the entire Party; and (2) firmly uphold the authority of and the centralized unified leadership of the CCP Central Committee (坚决维护习近平总书记党中央的核心、全党的核心地位, 坚决维护党中央权威和集中统一领导).

socialist world power (社会主义现代化强国) and comprehensively advancing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

In our work, we must achieve the following: Uphold the Party's overall leadership over education; emphasize promoting fairness and improving quality; strengthen strategic guidance and support for development; deepen reform, innovation, and coordinated integration; and remain committed to independence and self-confidence while embracing the entire world (胸怀天下). We must correctly handle the relationships between supporting national strategies and meeting people's livelihood needs, knowledge learning and all-round development, talent cultivation and meeting social needs, standardization and order and stimulating vitality, and remaining rooted in the Chinese context and drawing on international experience. We must comprehensively build an ideological and political education system that consolidates the foundation and forges the soul (固本铸魂), a fair and high-quality basic education⁴ system, a self-reliant and excellent higher education system, a vocational education system that integrates industry and education, a ubiquitous and accessible lifelong education system, an S&T support system led by innovation, a teaching workforce system of outstanding quality, and an open international cooperation system featuring mutual learning by example. Through this, we will achieve a systemic leap from big (大) to strong (强).

The main objectives are: By 2027, we will achieve significant incremental results in the construction of China into an education powerhouse. The degree of ubiquity of education at all levels will have continued to consolidate and improve, a high-quality education system will have been initially formed, the people's sense of gain from education will be significantly enhanced, the quality of independent (自主) talent training will have comprehensively improved, elite innovative talents will continue to emerge, substantial progress will be made in reforms in key areas, the education layout and structure will be more in line with the needs of high-quality economic, social, and population development, and the construction of important education centers with global influence will reach a new level. By 2035, we will establish China as an education powerhouse. The institutions and working mechanisms of the Party's overall leadership over educational undertakings will be systematic and complete, a high-quality education system will be comprehensively established, our level and quality of basic education will be reliably ranked among the best in the world, a learning society (学习型社会) will have been fully formed, the people's satisfaction with education will significantly increase, education's ability to serve national

⁴ Translator's note: China follows the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) in defining basic education (基础教育) as primary and lower secondary (junior high school) education. Basic education in China is thus equivalent to K-9 education in the United States.

strategies will significantly increase, and educational modernization will have been achieved generally.

II. Create a new pattern of cultivating moral people (立德树人) and train new people of the era (时代新人) who can shoulder the great responsibility of national rejuvenation

(1) Strengthen and improve ideological and political education in schools in the new era. We must persist in using Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era to educate and cultivate people, and strengthen the theoretical interpretation of General Secretary Xi Jinping's important expositions on education. We must implement the new era project of cultivating moral people, insist on the simultaneous advancement of ideological and political course construction and the arming [of students and teachers] with the party's innovative theories, accelerate the construction of a curriculum and textbook system with Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era as its core content, and integrate school ideological and political education into various academic discipline systems, teaching systems, textbook systems, and management systems as well as ideological and moral education, cultural knowledge education, and social practice education, in order to ensure that students are always loyal to the Party, the country, the people, and socialism, firmly believe in Marxism and socialism with Chinese characteristics and have firm confidence in the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. We must do a good job of launching and teaching the class "An Introduction to Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era," systematically refine the curriculum standards for ideological and political courses in primary and secondary schools, comprehensively optimize the curricular design of such courses in universities, and advance integrated reform and innovation of ideological and political education across primary, secondary, and higher education. We must create a number of "big ideological and political course" brands. We must promote the normalization and institutionalization of education in ideals and beliefs, and strengthen education on the socialist core values concept (社会主义核心价值观). We must strengthen education on the history of the Party, the history of New China, the history of reform and opening up, and the history of socialist development. We must deepen education on patriotism, collectivism, and socialism, and carry out education on the spiritual lineage of the Chinese Communists. We must persist in our cultural self-confidence, strengthen education on socialist advanced culture, revolutionary culture, and China's excellent traditional culture, and integrate them into ideological and political education in an orderly manner according to different educational stages. We must strengthen education for forging consciousness of the community of the Chinese nation (铸牢中华民族共同体意识). We must improve long-term mechanisms that allow leading cadres in

the Party and government to carry out ideological and political education on campuses and carry out basic training for Party members in the education system. We must strengthen the political and organizational functions of schools' grassroots Party organizations and allow them to play their role as battlefield fortresses.

(2) Strengthen the structured and academically rigorous research and interpretation of the Party's innovative theories and the application of the results. We must offer an in-depth explanation of the scientific connotations and practical requirements of the Party's innovative theories, strengthen the discipline of Marxist theory, and construct an academic discipline system, academic scholarship system, and discourse system. We must comprehensively promote the transformation of the Party's innovative theoretical research achievements into corresponding academic discipline directions and curriculum textbooks, and integrate the success stories of great changes in the new era and the principles, theories, and philosophies they contain into schools' ideological and political education.

(3) Expand the space and positions of practical education and online education. We must coordinate the promotion of value-based guidance, practical experience, and environment creation, and explore education mechanisms that integrate in-class and out-of-class learning, unify on-campus and off-campus efforts, and blend online and offline approaches. We must organize students to experience and reflect on the vivid practices and great achievements of the new era, increase the proportion of practical teaching, give full play to the educational function of red resources (红色资源), and support students in participating in red study tours. We must promote the in-depth integration of ideological and political work with information technology (IT), develop distinctive brands of online ideological and political education, strengthen education on cybersecurity awareness, good manners, and behavioral habits among young students, and shape a cyberspace and educational environment conducive to the healthy growth of young people.

(4) Promote students' healthy growth and comprehensive development. We must thoroughly implement character education (素质教育), improve the system for all-round cultivation in moral, intellectual, physical, aesthetic, and labor education, and accelerate efforts to address weaknesses in physical education, aesthetic education, and labor education. We must implement the concept of making health number-one in education, carry out the student physical fitness enhancement program, ensure that primary and secondary school students engage in at least two hours of comprehensive physical activity each day, strengthen campus soccer development, and effectively control rates of nearsightedness and obesity. We must advance the in-school aesthetic education immersion initiative. We must implement a labor habit cultivation program and enhance students' hands-on practical abilities, ability to solve complex problems,

and social adaptability. We must promote mental health education, establish a national student mental health monitoring and early warning system, and improve service mechanisms corresponding to each education stage. We must strengthen education on the Constitution and rule of law, national security, and national defense. We must thoroughly implement the youth student reading initiative.

(5) Create high-quality textbooks that cultivate the foundation and forge the soul (培根铸魂), and enlighten the intellect and enhance wisdom (启智增慧). We must implement the state's authority (国家事权) over textbook development so that they reflect the will of the Party and the state. We must strengthen the development of key textbooks under projects for the research, development, and construction of Marxist theory in the new era. We must advance the development of textbooks for ideological and political courses. We must thoroughly summarize the great practices of the new era, introduce original "China Series" textbooks, and build an independent textbook system. We must develop a batch of scientific textbooks for basic education, create a batch of high-quality vocational education textbooks, construct a batch of first-class core textbooks for undergraduate and graduate education, and select and introduce a batch of high-quality cutting-edge textbooks in science, engineering, agriculture, and medicine. We must accelerate the digital transformation of textbooks. We must improve the textbook management system and establish a graded and categorized (分级分类) responsibility mechanism at the national, local, school, and publisher levels. We must improve the system for commendations and rewards related to textbook development. We must standardize the management of supplementary teaching materials and extracurricular reading materials.

(6) Promote and popularize the common national spoken and written language. We must implement campaigns to expand the use of the common national spoken and written language and improve its quality. We must enhance the language and cultural literacy of the entire population. We must improve the system of standards and norms for language and writing, and build a new-type national language corpus. We must carry out surveys on the national language situation and language-related national capacity. We must strengthen guidance on the standardized use of language and writing in cyberspace. We must thoroughly implement a series of projects for the transmission and development of national language and culture. We must strengthen linguistic and cultural exchanges with Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan.

III. Strengthen and improve basic education and solidify the strategic foundation for comprehensively enhancing the caliber of citizens (国民素质)

(7) Improve the mechanisms for overall planning and allocation of basic education resources in line with population changes. We must thoroughly implement

the project to expand and improve the quality of basic education. We must explore the gradual expansion of the scope of free education. We must establish a monitoring and early warning system for changes in the school-age population at each stage of basic education, and optimize the layout of primary schools, secondary schools, and kindergartens. We must improve the quality and level of public education services, enhance universality, accessibility, and convenience, and strengthen the overall allocation of educational resources in both the near and long term. We must establish an “integrated city–county” basic education management system, adapt to local conditions to enable the use of educational resources corresponding to different stages, strengthen dynamic adjustments and reallocation across different education stages, and expand the supply of educational resources in urban areas with net inflows of school-age population. We must support counties (or cities, districts, or banners) with populations over 200,000 in operating at least one standard-compliant special education school, and encourage qualified areas to build 15-year integrated special education schools. We must strengthen the development of specialized schools and specialized education programs.

(8) Promote high-quality and balanced development of compulsory education⁵ and integration between urban and rural areas. We must strengthen the standardization of compulsory education schools, and gradually narrow the gaps between urban and rural areas and between different regions, schools, and groups. We must promote coordinated allocation, rotation, and exchange of outstanding school leaders and key teachers within regions. We must advance small-class teaching in an orderly manner. We must improve the conditions and management level of boarding schools, and ensure the proper operation of small-scale rural schools where necessary. Push [local governments to allow] children of eligible rural migrant workers to enjoy the same right to compulsory education as children with local household registration (户籍) in the places where they reside, improve the care systems and working mechanisms for left-behind children⁶ and children with disabilities, and improve the regularized mechanisms for preventing dropout and ensuring school attendance. We must continue to implement the “team-based” education talent support program for key counties receiving national rural revitalization assistance. We must carry out in-depth evaluation and supervision of high-quality and balanced compulsory

⁵ Translator's note: Under China's system of compulsory education (义务教育), all children between the ages of six and 15 (that is, grades one through nine) must attend school. Students who wish to continue in school beyond the ninth grade must pass an entrance examination.

⁶ Translator's note: In China, rural people who migrate to cities for work often leave their dependents behind in their home villages, usually because the migrant workers are not permanent residents of the cities and are barred from using certain public services there such as public education for their children. These children are known as “left-behind children” (留守儿童).

education at the county level, and advance the development of high-quality and balanced compulsory education at the city level in an orderly manner.

(9) Promote the universal availability and inclusivity of preschool education and the diversified development of senior high schools (高中). We must steadily increase the supply of seats in public kindergartens, and implement and improve support policies for inclusive (普惠性) private kindergartens. We must support qualified kindergartens in enrolling children aged 2 to 3. We must coordinate the diversified development of senior high schools within cities, and accelerate the expansion of ordinary (普通) high school education resources. We must explore the establishment of a number of ordinary high schools with a focus on science education, and do a good job of running comprehensive (综合) high schools. We must thoroughly implement the county-level ordinary high school revitalization plan.

(10) Coordinate the advancement of the “Double Reduction”⁷ policy and the improvement of education and teaching quality. We must consolidate the achievements of extracurricular tutoring governance, strictly control subject-based (学科类) training, and regulate non-subject-based training. We must adhere to law-based governance, and strengthen digitalized and full-process management. We must reinforce the primary role of school education, comprehensively improve classroom teaching quality, and strengthen support for students with learning difficulties. We must reduce repetitive homework and decrease the frequency of routine tests and examinations. We must improve the quality of after-school services and enrich service content. We must strengthen science education and enhance the cultivation of core competencies.

IV. Enhance the overall strength of higher education and create a force for strategic leadership

(11) Advance the reform and development of universities by category. We must implement pilot programs for comprehensive higher education reform. According to the basic institutional positioning of research-oriented, application-oriented, and skills-oriented universities, we must distinguish between comprehensive and specialized development directions, clarify the development positioning of each type of university, and support differentiated development of universities in science, engineering, agriculture, and medicine, as well as the humanities, social sciences, arts, and sports. We must establish categorized management and evaluation mechanisms, and provide differentiated support in areas such as institutional conditions, enrollment

⁷ Translator's note: China's "double reduction" (双减) policy refers to reducing the amount of homework that students in compulsory education (grades 1-9) have to do, and reducing the amount of tutoring these students receive outside of school.

plans, degree-granting authorization, and funding allocation. Based on the functional positioning, actual contributions, and distinctive strengths of different types of universities, we must establish a resource allocation incentive mechanism to guide universities to leverage their strengths and develop distinctive features in different fields and tracks.

(12) Optimize the layout of higher education. We must coordinate the development of universities affiliated with central ministries and those administered by local governments. We must increase efforts to develop high-level research universities and accelerate the transformation of local universities into application-oriented institutions. We must support the accelerated development of universities jointly established (合建) by ministries and provinces, and optimize the regional layout of such institutions. We must suitably tilt new higher education resources toward the central and western regions and ethnic minority areas. We must improve partner assistance⁸ work mechanisms. We must encourage high-level foreign science and engineering universities to cooperate in running schools in China. We must support universities in improving student housing and other institutional necessities. We must expand the enrollment scale of high-quality undergraduate education in an orderly manner, increase the scale of graduate education, steadily raise the proportion of doctoral students, and vigorously develop graduate education for professional degrees.

(13) Accelerate the construction of world-class universities and well-positioned (优势) disciplines with Chinese characteristics. Focusing on the essential requirements of Chinese-style modernization, we must independently and scientifically define the standards for “world-class university and world-class curricula” construction, and moderately expand the scope of this “double world-class” development⁹ with a focus on well-positioned disciplines. We must improve the monitoring and evaluation system oriented toward quality, distinctiveness, and contributions; strengthen mechanisms for dynamic adjustment and diversified input; and increase resource allocation efforts. We must establish mechanisms for adjusting discipline structures and talent training models based on S&T development and national strategic needs. We must implement the initiative to strengthen first-class curricula, promote interdisciplinary development,

⁸ Translator's note: "Partner assistance" (对口支援) refers to a relatively wealthy entity—such as a local government, company, or university—partnering with a weaker or poorer entity to help develop the latter.

⁹ Translator's note: The Chinese government launched the "world-class universities and world-class curricula" (世界一流大学和一流学科) initiative, abbreviated "double world-class" or "double first-class" (“双一流”), in 2017 with the aim of increasing the number of Chinese universities that rank among the world's best. As of September 2022, the government had bestowed the "double world-class" label on 147 universities in China.

make exceptional deployments for urgently needed disciplines and majors, strengthen the construction of basic, emerging, and interdisciplinary disciplines, and support endangered and neglected disciplines. We must deepen the reform of doctoral education, build a globally influential doctoral education system, and continuously enhance the capacity for independent cultivation and the attraction and concentration of high-level talent.

(14) Improve mechanisms for identifying and cultivating top-notch innovative talent. We must focus on strengthening innovation capability training, and implement the “Fertile Soil Program” (“沃土计划”) to cultivate scientific literacy among primary and secondary school students, as well as the “Standout Program” (“脱颖计划”) for high school students with innovative potential. We must explore new models for cultivating elite Chinese innovative talents in strategically needed and emerging fields. We must deepen the development of new engineering, new medicine, new agriculture, and new liberal arts disciplines; strengthen the coordination of S&T education with humanities education; promote integration between science and engineering, linking of different engineering disciplines, fusion of medicine and engineering, and crossover between agriculture and engineering; strengthen designations such as the National Elite Institutes of Engineering (国家卓越工程师学院) and the National Industry-Education Integrated Innovation Platforms (国家产教融合创新平台); and thoroughly implement the National Outstanding Medical Talent Training Program (国家卓越医师人才培养计划). We must develop first-class core courses, textbooks, practical training projects, and faculty teams.

(15) Build an independent knowledge system for philosophy and social sciences in China. We must focus on major theoretical and practical issues in the construction of Chinese-style modernization, use the Party’s innovative theories to guide knowledge innovation, theoretical innovation, and methodological innovation in philosophy and social sciences, and build an independent knowledge system centered on discipline-defining concepts and original theories in each field. We must implement major research initiatives on Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era and on philosophy and social sciences with Chinese characteristics, and accelerate the pace of building an independent knowledge system that covers all first-level disciplines (一级学科) in philosophy and social sciences. We must improve practice-oriented education and training mechanisms in law schools. We must promote the development of innovation platforms and teams in philosophy and social sciences, strengthen the development of National Key Institutes of Marxism (全国重点马克思主义学院), and build high-quality philosophy and social science laboratories in universities.

V. Cultivate and strengthen national strategic S&T forces to provide strong

support for achieving high-level self-reliance (自立自强) in science and technology

(16) Implement a breakthrough plan for basic disciplines and interdisciplinary subjects. We must strengthen the role of high-level research universities as the main force in national basic research and as sources of major S&T breakthroughs, raise the level of organization in basic research, and establish effective mechanisms by which S&T innovation and talent cultivation support each other and jointly drive the high-quality development of academic disciplines. We must build university–enterprise–local government joint innovation platforms, strengthen the development of large-scale S&T infrastructure and resource repositories, cultivate first-class leading S&T talent and innovation teams, achieve breakthroughs in basic disciplines, and lead interdisciplinary integration and re-innovation.

(17) Promote the growth and development of young S&T talent. We must vigorously promote the spirit of scientists and foster a positive environment that encourages exploration and tolerates failure. We must train and develop a group of high-level faculty and academic leaders.

(18) Improve the effectiveness of conversion of S&T achievements into practical applications (科技成果转化) in universities. We must rely on national university S&T parks to build regional technology transfer and conversion centers in universities, strengthen coordination with various technology transfer platforms and high-tech zones, establish platforms for joint university–enterprise research and development (R&D), proof-of-concept, and pilot expansion (中试熟化), and build a strong workforce of professionals specialized in technology transfer and conversion. We must develop brands such as high-end achievement trade fairs (高端成果交易会) and university student innovation competitions.

(19) Establish institutes for advanced study (高等研究院) to open up new pathways for revitalizing regional development. We must establish institutes for advanced study in regions such as the central and western areas and the northeast, promote strong partnerships between high-level universities, well-positioned disciplines, key industries, and leading enterprises, select projects based on needs and form teams based on projects, and create new integrated models that combine talent cultivation, scientific research, and technology transfer through industry-education integration and science-education fusion (科教融汇).

VI. Accelerate the development of a modern vocational education system to cultivate craftsmen of a great power (大国工匠), skilled artisans, and highly skilled talent

(20) Shape new models of diversified education and industry-education

integration. We must promote pilot programs for new models of provincial-level modern vocational education systems, and ensure local governments fulfill their responsibility as the primary entity for coordinating vocational education development. We must strengthen city-level industry-education alliances and sector-based industry-education integration communities, and optimize the layout of vocational education to align with regional development and industrial distribution. We must encourage eligible regions to extend higher vocational education resources down to the city and county levels. We must support enterprises in establishing or participating in vocational education institutions, and promote in-depth cooperation between schools and enterprises in school operation, talent cultivation, and employment. We must improve mechanisms for integrating moral and technical education and combining work and study and cultivate more craftsmen of a great power on the front lines of industry.

(21) Expand student growth and development pathways by intermingling vocational and general education. We must support ordinary primary and secondary schools in offering career awareness education and labor education. We must promote the integrated development of secondary vocational education and ordinary high school education. We must strengthen alignment and joint cultivation between high-quality secondary vocational schools and higher vocational schools. We must enhance the alignment between teaching and examinations, and optimize the content and format of the vocational education university entrance examination. We must encourage application-oriented undergraduate institutions to establish vocational and technical colleges or offer vocational and technical majors. We must steadily expand the number and enrollment scale of vocational undergraduate institutions.

(22) Enhance the key institutional capabilities of vocational schools. We must optimize the implementation of plans for the development of high-level higher vocational schools and majors, and build a number of high-level vocational undergraduate schools with distinctive institutional features. We must accelerate efforts to ensure that vocational schools meet all operational standards. We must implement reforms targeting the key elements of vocational education and teaching; systematically advance reforms in majors, curricula, textbooks, teachers, and internships and practical training; and build internship and practical training bases that integrate practical teaching, real-world production, and technical services.

(23) Improve the policy environment for the development of skilled talent. We must increase policy support in areas such as industry, government fiscal funding (财政), finance, and employment, and allocate additional education funding to strengthen support for vocational education. We must actively promote equal treatment for vocational school graduates and ordinary school graduates in areas such as relocation,

employment, recruitment and hiring, professional title evaluation, and promotion. We must implement the “New Eight-Level Vocational Skill Ranking” System,¹⁰ and raise the wage levels of skilled workers on the front lines of production and services based on their skill levels and contributions to innovation. We must promote the spirit of model workers, the spirit of labor, and the spirit of craftsmanship, and foster a positive environment in which everyone can realize their potential and succeed.

VII. Build a learning society (学习型社会) and open up new development pathways and advantages through education digitalization

(24) Enhance the public service level for lifelong learning. We must establish a lifelong learning system based on a qualifications framework, supported by a school credit bank (学分银行) platform, and focused on the recognition of learning outcomes. We must strengthen the sharing of educational resources and the construction of public service platforms; build learning-oriented cities and learning-oriented communities; improve the Open University of China system; and develop the Seniors University of China. We must enhance the digital infrastructure of a learning society and build a Digital University of China (国家数字大学). We must improve and strengthen institutional guarantees for continuing education, self-study examinations, and non-degree education, and build a learning society where everyone can learn, learning is available everywhere, and learning is accessible at all times.

(25) Implement the national education digitalization strategy. We must adhere to an application-oriented and governance-based approach, promote integration, intelligentization (智能化), and internationalization, strengthen and make good use of the Smart Education of China platform (国家智慧教育公共服务平台), and establish a digital education system that provides coordinated services both horizontally and vertically. We must develop new types of digital educational resources. We must develop a national education big data center, and build dedicated education networks and compute-sharing networks. We must advance the construction of smart campuses, explore effective approaches to enabling large-scale personalized instruction and innovative teaching through digital technologies, and proactively adapt to changes in learning methods. We must develop public products such as the World Digital Education Conference, the World Digital Education Alliance, the Global Digital Education Development Index, and authoritative digital education journals, and

¹⁰ Translator's note: The "New Eight-Level Vocational Skill Ranking" System (“新八级工” 制度) is a new system for classifying technical workers' level of skill that China began adopting on a trial basis in 2022. The new system consists of the ranks of apprentice (学徒工), junior worker (初级工), intermediate worker (中级工), senior worker (高级工), technician (技师), senior technician (高级技师), elite technician (特级技师), and chief technician (首席技师). The old system had only five ranks: junior worker, intermediate worker, senior worker, technician, and senior technician.

promote the global dissemination of high-quality massive open online courses (MOOCs).

(26) Promote educational transformation empowered by artificial intelligence (AI). In response to the development of the digital economy and future industries, we must strengthen curriculum system reform and optimize discipline and major configurations. We must develop and improve digital literacy standards for teachers and students, and deepen the application of AI in teacher workforce construction. We must develop large-scale AI education models. We must establish cloud-based schools (云端学校) and other related infrastructure. We must build systems for education evaluation and evidence-based policymaking supported by big data and AI. We must strengthen cybersecurity protections and reinforce data security, AI algorithm safety, and ethical safety.¹¹

VIII. Build a high-quality, professionalized cadre of teachers and solidify the foundation for building China into an education powerhouse

(27) Implement the Initiative to Forge Strong Teachers who have the Spirit of Educators (教育家精神铸魂强师行动). We must promote the integration of the spirit of educators throughout the entire process of teacher training and development, covering classroom teaching, scientific research, and social practice, and build a supportive ecosystem for teacher development through daily immersion, project empowerment, and platform support. We must strengthen ideological and political work among the cadre of teachers, enhance the construction of Party organizations within the teaching workforce, and give full play to the exemplary role of Party-member teachers. We must uphold professional ethics and conduct as the top criterion, improve long-term mechanisms for strengthening teacher ethics and conduct, and strictly implement a “zero tolerance” policy for ethical violations.

(28) Enhance teachers’ professional competence and capabilities. We must improve the teacher education system, expand the implementation of the National Program for Cultivating Outstanding Primary and Secondary School Teachers, launch teacher education in high-level universities, and improve the way teacher-training institutions are run. We must strengthen the development of school counselors (班主任) in compulsory education. We must improve training systems and systems for practical experiences at businesses for high-level vocational education teachers, and

¹¹ Translator's note: The Chinese word 安全 encompasses the meanings of both "safety" (protection from accidental harm) and "security" (protection from deliberate harm). In this translation, it is variously translated as "safety" or "security" at the translator's discretion.

enhance the development of the cadre of “doubly qualified” teachers.¹² We must recruit high-level teaching staff globally, strengthen international exchange and cooperation in teacher training, and improve support service systems for faculty development in universities. We must strengthen comprehensive training for all teachers and improve the tiered research and training system (分级研训体系) at the national, provincial, city, county, and school levels.

(29) Optimize teacher management and resource allocation. We must improve the national teacher qualification and recruitment systems. We must optimize student-teacher ratios across schools of all levels and types, and coordinate staffing for boarding schools and public kindergartens. We must optimize the “county management of schoolteacher recruitment” (“县管校聘”) mechanism for managing primary and secondary school teachers. We must deepen the reform of teacher evaluation systems. We must optimize the structural proportions of teaching positions. We must encourage mutual part-time or adjunct appointments for vocational school teachers and enterprise-based skilled personnel in accordance with regulations. We must develop guiding standards for the hiring of university engineering faculty. We must thoroughly implement the National Gray-Haired Teacher Action Plan (国家银龄教师行动计划). We must promote the use of postdoctoral researchers as an important source of university faculty.

(30) Raise teachers’ political, social, and professional status. We must ensure fair compensation for teachers providing after-class services, optimize salary structures, and implement and improve living subsidies for rural teachers. We must strengthen pay and benefits assurance for high school and kindergarten teachers, improve performance-based pay assurance mechanisms for vocational school teachers, and advance the reform of salary mechanisms in universities. We must safeguard the professional dignity and legal rights of teachers, reduce non-teaching administrative burdens, implement preferential policies for teachers providing public services to society, and do a good job in arranging for teacher retirement. We must strengthen the selection of, recognition of, and propaganda on outstanding teachers, and enhance the social prestige of the teaching profession so that it becomes one of the most respected occupations in society.

IX. Deepen comprehensive education reform and stimulate vitality in education development

(31) Deepen the reform of education evaluation. Party committees and

¹² Translator's note: A "doubly qualified" teacher (“双师型” 教师) is a teacher at a Chinese vocational education institution who is competent in the theory of teaching and also has at least three years' work experience in the discipline the teacher teaches.

governments at all levels must establish the correct view on political achievements (正确政绩观), establish scientific approaches to education evaluation, and prevent and correct deviations such as “test scores above all else” (“分数至上”). We must advance reform of the high school entrance examination (中考) in an orderly manner. We must accelerate the expansion of high-quality high school enrollment quotas to specific schools, and carry out pilot programs for balanced allocation of placements. We must deepen the comprehensive reform of the university entrance examination and build an examination and assessment content system that guides students toward all-round development in moral, intellectual, physical, aesthetic, and labor education, with a focus on assessing key competencies, subject literacy, and thinking quality. We must deepen the differentiated selection process for academic and professional graduate degrees, and strengthen assessments of scientific research innovation ability and practical skills. We must promote the reform of examination and evaluation empowered by IT. We must deepen the reform of talent evaluation in universities, eliminate constraints created by the “titles and honors”(“帽子”) given to talents, emphasize innovation capability, quality, effectiveness, and contributions, and scientifically recognize iconic achievements. We must improve mechanisms for promoting high-quality and balanced compulsory education. We must guide and regulate the development of private (民办) education.

(32) Improve the alignment mechanism between talent cultivation and economic and social development needs. We must uphold the principles of overall alignment, dynamic balance, and positive interaction. We must improve the mechanism for talent demand forecasting and early warning, explore the establishment of a national big data platform for matching talent supply and demand, strengthen industry- and field-specific talent need analysis and effective matching of talent demands, and regularly compile and publish talent demand reports and catalogs. We must conduct follow-up surveys on employment outcomes, strengthen the linkages between employment status and enrollment planning and talent training, and enhance employment quality monitoring and feedback. We must plan discipline and major structures in advance and adjust them dynamically, optimize the allocation of school-operation resources, and improve internship and practical training systems for students. We must accelerate the development of a high-quality employment service system for college graduates and promote their high-quality and full employment.

(33) Raise the level of management of education according to law (依法治教和管理水平). We must improve the system of education-related laws, regulations, and rules, and conduct research to compile a legal code for education. We must improve school management systems, establish mechanisms to ensure the implementation of school charters, and safeguard the autonomy of school operations. We must strictly

punish academic misconduct and corruption, and improve training mechanisms for research integrity and academic conduct for teachers and students. We must improve education supervision systems for oversight by governments, schools, and evaluation bodies, and strengthen education supervisory institutions at the national, provincial, city, and county levels. We must establish intelligentized campus security systems, improve early detection, early prevention, and early intervention mechanisms for student bullying and violence, strengthen education on drowning prevention, traffic safety, and other areas, and improve mechanisms for diversified resolution of campus safety disputes and the sharing of safety risk responsibilities with the public.

(34) Improve strategic investment mechanisms for education. Governments at all levels must increase fiscal input, establish mechanisms that combine budget appropriations with performance-based incentives and constraints, ensure that general public budget expenditures on education increase year by year without reduction and that per-student general public budget expenditures also increase annually without reduction, and ensure that national fiscal spending on education remains above 4 percent of gross domestic product (GDP). We must improve the budget appropriation system for education at all levels and of all types, reasonably determine appropriation standards and investment levels and increase them when appropriate, and establish a dynamic adjustment mechanism for student financial aid standards. We must gradually increase the share of budgetary investment allocated to education. We must optimize and improve transfer payments related to the education sector. We must establish a cooperative funding mechanism for collaborative education that deeply integrates universities, enterprises, and society. We must give full play to the role of education foundations at all levels, and guide and regulate investment in and donations to education by society. We must improve the reasonable cost-sharing mechanism for non-compulsory education. We must improve the student financial aid system covering all stages of education. We must improve the statistical system for education funding. We must optimize the structure of education expenditures and strengthen funding supervision and performance evaluation.

(35) Establish an integrated promotion mechanism for education, S&T, and talent. We must strengthen regular consultations among the main oversight departments (主管部门) and do a good job in collectively coordinating policies, programs, and resource allocation. We must improve mechanisms for the coordinated cultivation of talent through the integration of education and S&T, and strengthen the coordination of innovation resources and the organization of forces. We must strengthen the supporting role of education in S&T and talent development; closely align educational layout and reform pilots with the construction of international centers for science & technology innovation (国际科技创新中心) in Beijing, Shanghai, and the

Guangdong–Hong Kong–Macao Greater Bay Area as well as with the development of regional S&T innovation centers, national bastions of high-level talent (国家高水平人才高地), and platforms for attracting and gathering talent; and enhance the overall effectiveness of the national innovation system.

X. Improve strategies for opening up education to the outside and building major education centers with global influence

(36) Enhance the capacity to cultivate and gather global talent. We must strengthen educational guidance and service management for Chinese students studying abroad. We must reform the systems and mechanisms for government-sponsored overseas study, strengthen the branding and capacity building of “Study Abroad in China,” and improve entrance examinations and assessments for international students in China. We must encourage and support the selection of outstanding talent to pursue studies or research at internationally renowned universities and research institutions, expand youth exchanges between China and other countries, and implement programs such as international summer schools. We must enhance the international school-operating capacity of higher education institutions, improve mechanisms for international cooperation in vocational education that integrate industry and education and coordinate between schools and enterprises, and further develop branded initiatives such as the Luban Workshops (鲁班工坊). We must support more countries in offering Chinese language instruction.

(37) Expand international academic exchanges and cooperation in education and research. We must support high-level research universities in initiating and participating in major international science programs, constructing big science installations (大科学装置), and leading major international research projects. We must promote the establishment of discipline innovation and talent recruitment bases and international joint laboratories in top-tier universities. We must advance international collaboration in industry–academia–research (产学研) cooperation in a high-quality manner. We must actively participate in international cooperation on open science.

(38) Actively participate in global education governance. We must deepen cooperation with international organizations and multilateral mechanisms such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). We must establish education innovation cooperation networks and support the construction and development of international science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education research institutes. We must support domestic universities in establishing international educational organizations and academic alliances, and create internationally influential academic journals, indices, and reports. We must establish international education cooperation zones under the Regional Comprehensive

Economic Partnership (RCEP). We must implement a China education brand development program (中国教育品牌培育计划).

XI. Strengthen organizational implementation

To build China into an education powerhouse, we must improve the education leadership system characterized by unified leadership of Party committees, joint management by Party and government bodies, and division of responsibilities among departments. We must fully advance Party building in schools of all types and at all levels, firmly uphold the Party's leadership over ideological work in schools, implement the responsibility system for ideological work, deepen efforts in improving Party style (党风), clean governance, and the fight against corruption, and treat the construction of Party conduct and government style, teacher ethics and conduct, and school and academic style as important indicators in evaluating the school operation and governance capacity of school leadership teams. We must safeguard the political security and the harmony and stability of the education system. We must give full play to the role of the Central Leading Group for Education Work (中央教育工作领导小组) in overall coordination, integrated advancement, and supervision of implementation, promote the resolution of major issues in building China into an education powerhouse, and strengthen monitoring and evaluation of education powerhouse building. Party committees and governments at all levels must earnestly shoulder the political responsibility for building China into an education powerhouse, place its advancement on the important policy agenda, and implement this Plan in light of actual conditions. It is necessary to foster a favorable environment in which the entire society cares about and supports the construction of China into an education powerhouse, strengthen propaganda and public opinion guidance, improve mechanisms for collaboration among schools, families, and society in student development, and form a powerful synergy for building China into an education powerhouse.