

THAILAND

Montessori Association of Thailand

Highlights

Thailand became an affiliated member of AMI at the Annual General Meeting in April 2015. This auspicious occasion officially connected AMI with Thailand's efforts to spread Montessori education throughout the country. The signing ceremony was attended by representatives from Montessori Association of Thailand (MAT) and witnessed by Dr Benjalug Namfa, Senior Advisor to the Secretary General of the Office of Basic Education Commission (OBEC), Ministry of Education, Thailand.

The MAT Board, (Kannekar Butt and Somruck Kitdech) and MAT's Advisors (Christine Harrison and Bill Conway) joined AMI's President, Philip O'Brien, in an official meeting with the Permanent Secretary and Deputy Minister of Education for Thailand. These formal meetings in January 2015 reinforced the close ties previously formed between MAT and the government education agencies operating the public schools where Montessori education has grown around the country.

Thailand hosted the fourth Assembly of Educateurs sans Frontières in August 2015, on the theme of "Sustainable Development, Innovative Solutions". More than twenty of the participants were from Thailand and we welcomed more than sixty international visitors. Many of the visitors extended their visit in Thailand beyond the EsF Assembly and were able to visit many of the Montessori classrooms in the area.

Thailand has a teacher training facility located in Wat Mingmuang Plaram, Buddhist temple, 360 km from Bangkok, North East Thailand.

The number of Montessori schools in Thailand has grown to:

- 350 Schools with a 3-6 programme
- 50 Schools with a 6-12 programme
- 300 Public schools (included above)

Mission

An ambitious plan of growth and development is central to our mission for Montessori education in Thailand. The rapid growth over the past 10 years has necessitated the development of a strategic plan focusing on quality practices in classrooms, mentoring teachers and raising local teacher trainers.

Events and Activities

Events in 2015 included:

- Assistance to Infancy module workshops (1/15, 3/15 and 4/15)

More than 120 teachers, administrators and parents attended this 3-week workshop conducted by Pam Staton, Jenny Williams, Sue Birdsall from Australia.

- Leaders and administrators workshop on mentoring (1/15)

School principals, programme leaders, teachers, and coordinators learned skills in helping teachers improve their practices in the classroom. The three day workshop was conducted by Kannekar Butt, Christine Harrison and Bill Conway from Australia.

- National Conference and Refresher (7/15)

More than 200 teachers, and administrators from throughout Thailand converged on the site that would immediately, after the conference, host the 4th Assembly of EsF. Presenters at the conference/refresher included many who would later participate or present at the EsF.

- EsF Assembly (8/15) (see Highlights)

- Whole School workshops (10/15)

Kannekar Butt conducted a 20-day workshop for administrators, teachers in primary (3-6) environments and teachers in lower elementary (6-9) environments to review principles, skill and practices that would help them put theory into working with children in their classrooms,

- Preparation for ToT and Mentor workshop (11/15)

Thirty Prospective teachers interested in a Training of Trainers programme and/or to become mentors for primary environments gathered for 3 days to hone their skills and discuss ways in which they could further imbed Montessori principles in classrooms.

Collaborations and partnerships

The Montessori movement in Thailand is supported within the country by the Ministry of Education under direct line of authority through the Office of Basic Education Commission, the Office of Permanent Secretary, the Office of Private Education and the Office of Compulsory Education.

For international support, there were many individuals interested and groups such as the Australia Thailand Montessori Support committee (ATMs) assist with professional development, strategic planning, and assisting volunteers/mentors coming from outside of Thailand. Nienhuis/Heutink International has supported Thailand on a quality materials outreach accessible programme. The Montessori Administrators Association, USA has made contributions to Thai government schools. AMI-EAA is actively organising volunteers to assist the pioneer group of AMI elementary trained teachers to implement quality programmes.

Publications & Media

A video has been produced to highlight the benefits of Montessori education in Thailand. This video has been used to support the national policy on early childhood education reform; it is used to promote the understanding on Montessori benefits for the National Reform Steering Committee on Education.

Memberships

Membership in MAT has grown to 680.

Board and committees

The MAT Board and sub committees consist of the following people:

Kannekar Butt, President

Tounjai Nantakit, Vice for Finance

Preyanuch Satavornmani, Vice for Public Relation

Somruck Kitdech, Vice for Administration

Boontin Lamson, Vice for Government Liaison

Charurat Suksamran, Secretary

Wanpen Techapalokul , Treasurer

Jiraporn Eiamrahong, Committee

Supranee Ra-ngumpit

Preda Boonsang

Nuchanart Jitprom

Dinanapha Phonpatweerakul

Wichien Rongrungboriboon

Tachpong Meekaew

Sirinapa Asaipanit

Patamaporn Puranan

Anek Chantaraseni

Nopawong Jirawat

Tassanee Sakamitr

Pensri Chantaraseni

Eurmporn Yangyuen

Kanchana Phunark

Ploynapas Rutchat

Jinda Anuphan

Kamonrat Kamonsuthi

Kannekar Butt

President