

Special Education: An Important Field of Aesthetic Education Infiltration Action

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Abstract: In order to deepen the study and implementation of the spirit of the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, further strengthen the work of school aesthetic education, and enhance the educational function of school aesthetic education, in December 2023, the Ministry of Education issued a “Notice on the Comprehensive Implementation of the Infiltration Action of School Aesthetic Education,” which proposed that by 2027, the quality of aesthetic education courses and teaching will be comprehensively improved and the aesthetic and humanistic literacy of students will be generally improved. In recent years, significant progress has been made in the reform and development of school aesthetic education in China. However, aesthetic education is still a weak link in its development compared to special education, and there is an urgent need to understand further and deepen its value, role and function.

Keywords: Special education; Aesthetic education; Infiltration action

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1. Preface

Since the 18th National Congress, the Party and the government have attached great importance to the work of aesthetic education. In 2018, the National Education Work Conference proposed to cultivate socialist builders and successors with comprehensive development in morality, intelligence, physical fitness, aesthetics and labor. In 2020, the General Office of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and the General Office of the State Council issued the “Opinions on Comprehensively Strengthening and Improving School Art Education in the New Era,” which systematically elaborated on the nature, function and goals of school art education while making comprehensive arrangements for school art education work. In 2023, the Ministry of Education issued a “Notice on the Comprehensive Implementation of the Infiltration Action of School Aesthetic Education” (hereinafter referred to as The Notice), which is a comprehensive and specific deployment to fully implement the Party’s educational policy, implement the fundamental task of cultivating morality and talents and further strengthen and improve school aesthetic education work. According to the arrangement of the Ministry of Education, the comprehensive implementation of the school art education infiltration action has been included in the outline of the Education Strong Country Plan as a major project in the construction of an education-strong country.

2. The role and significance of aesthetic education in special education

Aesthetic education is an important part of enhancing a country's cultural soft power and enhancing its core competitiveness. It has the valuable function of cultivating sentiment, warming the soul and stimulating innovation and creativity. The 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China proposed strengthening the inclusive development of special education, improving the school family social education mechanism and building a high-quality education system. Due to the special nature of special education service recipients, they bear development pressure far beyond ordinary education. In the process of constructing the basic public special education service system, a series of problems have emerged, such as imbalanced system construction, low standardization and low level of systematization and specialization ^[1]. Therefore, using "infiltration of aesthetic education" as a carrier to comprehensively enhance the cultural understanding, aesthetic perception, artistic expression and other core literacy of special education groups from the perspective of aesthetic education is an important symbol of measuring social civilization progress, enriching the spiritual and cultural life of special education groups, constructing a new ecology of special education aesthetic education and empowering the new development of special education aesthetic education.

2.1. Promote the improvement and excellence of special education

In recent years, the General Office of the State Council, in collaboration with multiple departments, has issued a series of policy documents to promote the development of special education, including the "Special Education Enhancement Plan", "Regulations on Education for Persons with Disabilities" and "Action Plan for the Development and Enhancement of Special Education during the 14th Five Year Plan Period." The document requires accelerating the pace of improving the special education system, promoting the high-quality development of special education and proposing that special education schools should start from the actual situation of students, strengthening moral education, physical education and aesthetic education work in a targeted manner. They should organize extracurricular cultural performance groups for students, carry out diverse extracurricular art activities and enrich their extracurricular life.

Since the reform and opening, the government have legislated to provide legal protection for compulsory education for special needs children ^[2]. On the other hand, by increasing funding, the scale of special education has been expanded and the conditions for running schools have been improved. Nowadays, there are nearly 900,000 special education students in China, an increase of 541,000 compared to 2012, with an increase of 142.8% ^[3]. Aesthetic education is not only a core element in promoting the improvement and optimization of special education but also determines the work blueprint of the infiltration of aesthetic education in all aspects throughout the process and with the participation of all staff. It is also the key to forming a modern school aesthetic education system with Chinese characteristics that is fully covered, diversified and of high quality.

Marx advocated "replacing family education with social education" ^[4]. At present, the infiltration of aesthetic education should be taken as an opportunity to implement a multi-level education system, achieving full coverage of preschool, primary, intermediate and advanced education ^[5]. The education sector should expand and transform the educational function of special education schools, strengthen organizational leadership, enhance policy support and financial security, and establish a sound and long-term working mechanism ^[6]. Besides, it should promote the reform of aesthetic education teaching in special education schools, strengthen aesthetic education practice, produce high educational effects, enhance the educational ability and quality of special education schools, and serve the major needs and tasks of high-quality development of special education. Educators should fully utilize the advantages of the platform, adhere to beautifying people, create an educational environment, reconstruct the personality of special education students through "immersive"

aesthetic education, improve the life of special education students and lead the comprehensive development of special education students.

2.2. Effective ways to promote the integration of “Five Ways of Life”

Marx’s view on the sociality of education is: “Human beings develop in society and it is the sum of all social relationships... Educated individuals can survive independently and interact equally in society with their abilities”^[7]. China has the largest group of people with disabilities in the world and is also the country with the largest scale of special education. As an important component of China’s education industry, it faces multiple challenges of popularization and improvement^[8].

Aesthetic education is closely related to moral education, intellectual education, physical education and labor education. Aesthetic education not only involves the healthy development of individual morality and mind but also relates to the value orientation of special education groups towards society. The Notice also emphasizes: “Strengthen the integration of aesthetic education with moral education, intellectual education, physical education and labor education, and explore and utilize the rich aesthetic education resources contained in various disciplines, such as moral beauty, social beauty, scientific beauty, health beauty, diligence beauty and natural beauty.”

Special education schools should focus on the comprehensive growth of special education groups through aesthetic education, based on the practical need for the integration of the “Five Ways of Life” of special education groups. Through infiltration, they should enhance their abilities to discover, feel, express, appreciate and create beauty, promote the integration and development of different special education groups in moral education, intellectual education, physical education, labor education, etc., enhance the moral sentiment and imagination of special education groups while achieving the educational goals of educating people with aesthetics, beautifying them, and cultivating them with beauty.

2.3. Realizing the fundamental task of cultivating virtue and talent

In 2018, at the National Education Conference, the fundamental issue of “What kind of people to cultivate, how to cultivate them and for whom to cultivate them?” was raised. It was proposed to fully implement the government’s education policy, with the work goal of consolidating people’s hearts, improving personality, developing human resources, cultivating talents and benefiting the people. Based on the basic national conditions, following the laws of education, it is important to adhere to the fundamental task and main idea of “cultivating morality and talents” in education.

Aesthetic education is an important component of the education policy of the government and the state. It can effectively alleviate the psychological defects caused by physiological reasons of special education groups and also help them return to society. At the same time, it complements and promotes morality, intelligence, physical fitness and labor, allowing special education groups to integrate into society while also feeling the significance of being a good person^[9]. Aesthetic education enables special education groups to have the emotions and fun of normal people and is an important way to implement the fundamental task of cultivating virtue and nurturing people. The comprehensive development of education, is an important carrier for practicing socialist core values and is an important content of building a harmonious society.

In summary, under the background of high-quality education development, the cultivation and education of special education students should be more specific and comprehensive. Therefore, it is important to adhere to theoretical innovation, practical innovation and institutional innovation, widely gather social consensus, create a good environment and strong atmosphere of common concern and create a new chapter of the Chinese path to

modernization special education.

3. The main measures for implementing the infiltration action of aesthetic education

Under government leaders' advocacy and clear requirements, the General Office of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and the General Office of the State Council issued the "Opinions on Further Strengthening and Improving School Aesthetic Education Work." The Ministry of Education fully implemented the infiltration action of school aesthetic education, and school aesthetic education work received unprecedented attention. As art education enters a new stage of development, we must continuously improve the mode and measures of "infiltration" actions in the implementation process to promote the high-quality development of art education work continuously.

3.1. Building a special education aesthetic education curriculum system

Art education is not the entirety of aesthetic education but undoubtedly the most core content. To build a comprehensive aesthetic education curriculum system with art as the main subject, fully leverage the role of art education as the main channel in special education aesthetic education, deeply explore the aesthetic education value and function contained in each art curriculum and strictly carry out relevant course teaching according to the curriculum standards of different stages of special education ^[10]. It can be done by strengthening the selection and cultivation of special education students with artistic talents, broadening the channels for the growth of special education talents and improving the monitoring and feedback mechanism for teaching implementation. Besides, teaching reformation can be promoted vigorously to create high-quality classrooms for aesthetic education courses, innovate teaching methods, stimulate the enthusiasm of special education objects, improve participation, and demonstrate the confidence and charm of special education objects.

3.2. Enhance the aesthetic education literacy of special education teachers

From 2014 to 2022, the Ministry of Education has continuously introduced a series of special education improvement plans, listing teacher team construction as an important guarantee mechanism for promoting the development of special education and proposing to actively cultivate a high-level teacher team that meets the needs of special education development ^[11]. For aesthetic education, the main focus is to match special education aesthetic education teachers, strengthen the aesthetic education awareness and literacy of aesthetic education teachers, carry out monitoring of the quality and ability of aesthetic education teachers, improve their teaching and professional abilities, reform the evaluation methods for special education aesthetic education teacher titles, and stimulate the work enthusiasm of aesthetic education teachers ^[12]. Schools should establish studios for special education and aesthetic education teachers at the provincial, municipal and county levels to enhance the attractiveness of the profession of special education teachers and stabilize the special education team. Schools should build a community for the growth of special education aesthetic education teachers and build a group of high-level research platforms for special education aesthetic education teachers.

3.3. Creating a campus aesthetic education culture for special education

Schools can create a cultural atmosphere of truth, goodness and beauty in special education campuses, establish diverse art clubs in special education schools, establish performance and activity exchange mechanisms for clubs, strengthen the venue guarantee required for practical activities of art education clubs and integrate art education into all aspects of special education campus life. At the same time, schools will establish and improve the construction standards for special education and aesthetic education demonstration zones, demonstration

schools and demonstration groups and launch a batch of typical cases and promote successful experiences.

3.4. Popularize special education art practice activities

Schools can promote a normalized art exhibition and performance mechanism for special education groups so that every special education object can have the opportunity and platform to showcase ^[13]. Schools can also widely carry out art practice activities that integrate aesthetics, innovation and humanistic sublimation, promote display and exchange at different levels such as class, grade and school, and hold exhibitions with the participation of all provincial, municipal and county-level staff. In addition, schools can also actively promote the art achievements and works of special education through multiple channels, aspects and channels, standardize management to correctly guide special education objects at different stages to participate in art practice activities and improve the coverage and participation of special education art practice activities ^[14].

3.5. Optimize the evaluation mechanism for aesthetic education in special education

Schools can deepen the reform of the aesthetic education evaluation mechanism in special education, give full play to the guiding role of evaluation, explore diversified evaluation methods and carry out process evaluation, experiential evaluation, performance evaluation, and application evaluation. Emphasis should be placed on the individual growth of special education recipients, respecting and protecting their individuality and uniqueness besides comprehensively examining their ability to discover, feel, express and create beauty. Schools can also optimize and improve the evaluation system for different stages of special education, incorporate aesthetic education evaluation into the comprehensive quality file of special education objects and explore a special education aesthetic education evaluation mechanism with Chinese characteristics.

3.6. Establish a guarantee mechanism for the inclusive development of aesthetic education in special education

Confucius said: “Old people are not only close to their relatives, not only have children, but also support those who are widowed, lonely or disabled.” The 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China also proposed to strengthen the inclusive development of special education. Throughout history, a series of discussions have been pursuing and building an equal, simple and inclusive society, while also reflecting the basic concept of “socialist core values.”

At present, efforts should be made to strengthen the inclusive development of aesthetic education in the field of special education, enhance the conditions for implementing aesthetic education in special education, establish institutional support for the inclusive development of aesthetic education in special education, strengthen supervision, ensure the effective implementation of aesthetic education in the inclusive development of special education, fully implement the major decisions and deployments of the Party Central Committee and the State Council, enhance the aesthetic literacy of special education students, achieve value shaping, improve personal character and promote social harmony ^[15].

4. Conclusion

This article explores the role of implementing aesthetic education infiltration actions in current special education, reveals the significance of aesthetic education infiltration actions in special education in the new era and explores the main measures for implementing aesthetic education infiltration action plans in special education to assist in the integration of aesthetic education infiltration action plans. It is believed that under the strong leadership of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council, the system

and mechanism of special education and aesthetic education work will be more sound with the coordinated promotion of education departments in various regions. The infiltration of aesthetic education actions will also widely gather social consensus, form a new situation of integrating and promoting the development of special education and aesthetic education work with Chinese characteristics.

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