

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

Main Points

What we examined?

- As of 31 December 2021, a total of 10,224 schools under the Ministry of Education (MOE) have been built. The schools were constructed to provide a more comfortable, conducive, and complete learning environment. In addition, it is to accommodate the growth in students' number in nearby schools due to the increase in population and the development of new housing areas as well as to make the schools as single session.
- The audit focused on new school construction projects between 2016 to 2021 which covered new projects under the Eleventh Malaysia Plan (11MP) and ongoing projects from the previous Malaysia Plans. The audit also focused on 87 new school construction projects with the objective to cater excess students and to make schools as single session. The Audit sample covered 19 projects in the Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur and the states of Selangor, Negeri Sembilan and Melaka.
- The project performance was evaluated based on two main audit areas, namely the achievement of output and outcome. The evaluation for project management included financial performance and project implementation.

Why is it important to audit?

- To assess whether the implementation of this project is in line with the Malaysian Education Blueprint (MEB) 2013 - 2025 which is accommodating excess students to a maximum number of 35 and making schools a single session.
- A total of 87 new school construction projects amounting to RM2.899 billion implemented in the 11MP.

What we found?

- The audit concluded that the management of school construction projects were less efficiently and less effectively implemented. There were weaknesses at every project level ie planning, pre - implementation and project implementation by the MOE,

consultants and contractors. In addition, the issues in coordination with the state government, local authorities and utility companies as well as on the readiness of project sites also caused the delay in project implementation. This has resulted the objective to construct new schools to accommodate excess students and the change of school system to a single session is difficult to achieve. Among the weaknesses are as follows:

- Six projects were completed between four years two months to six years two months after the Economic Planning Unit (EPU) approval. Nine projects are still under construction and three projects are delayed between four to 11 years to appoint contractors after the EPU approval.
- The plan to construct two new schools were only proposed after the number of students in nearby schools exceeded 35 students per classroom.
- Construction projects for three new schools were delayed and resulted in scope changes and reduction in the number of classrooms. In addition, current requirements on classroom scope review were not implemented.
- Based on an average of additional 41 schools with single session per year, the remaining of 1,211 dual session schools in 2021 will take 30 years to transform into single session by 2051 compared to the MOE's target of 2025.
- Weaknesses in the design by consultants for five projects resulted in additional costs amounting to RM2.16 million, while weaknesses in identifying the requirement of local authorities and utility companies for six projects resulted in additional costs amounting to RM1.26 million
- A total of RM1.56 million were paid to consultants for four projects before the contracts were signed.

What do we recommend?

- To overcome the weaknesses highlighted and to ensure that no recurrence in the future, the National Audit Department recommends the following actions:
 - MOE is advised to conduct engagement sessions with all parties at the federal and state levels as well as to finalize the project site before the project's proposal is submitted for

EPU's approval to reduce the risk of project implementation delays.

- MOE must ensure that lands to be handed over as education reserve by developer are suitable for construction and do not require additional complicated earthworks.
- MOE must streamline the procedures and implementation process of school construction projects to ensure the process comply with all regulations.
- MOE should conduct a review on the scope of the delayed projects to identify their current needs before starting to implement them.

