

Georgia

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1. Overview

In 1921, the first democratic Republic of Georgia adopted its constitution, which guaranteed the right to education, freedom of science and teaching, public type of teaching- education, independence from religious organizations. The constitution provided the right to establish private schools as well.

However, the same year the Republic of Georgia was occupied by the Soviet Russia and the constitution of independent Georgia ceased its existence. The soviet occupation lasted for 70 years.

In 1991, after Georgia became free from the Soviet occupation and restored its independence, the ground was laid for the first private educational institutions. In 1995, Georgia adopted a constitution, which is based on key principles of the constitution of Georgia back in 1921. The constitution guarantees the right to receive education and select its form. The obligation to provide preschool education depends on the State, while primary and general education was announced as mandatory. The State took on a responsibility to fully fund general education. The citizens of Georgia were given the right, approved by the law, to receive professional and higher education by the state funding. In order to encourage educational institutions, enhance teaching quality, the constitution declared the state obligation to support educational institutions.

95

In accordance with the constitution, in 1995 the Government approved “State Program for Education Reform and its Implementation Plan”, which could be discussed as a first draft conception in education released in Georgia after the Soviet rule. Already, this document recognized those key principles, which should have become a basis of education reform in Georgia, in order to replace the x well rooted Soviet education system with: democracy, autonomy, transparency, and diversity. With this purpose the law on „education” was adopted in 1997. Despite a number of positive innovations (autonomy of educational institutions, recognition of educational institutions, role of quality assurance given in embryo) it could not avoid the Soviet legacy (financing only state educational institutions by the state, negligence of demands of a free labor market and competition among educational institutions, inefficient autonomy of educational institutions (with a view to form management bodies, allocate funds and quality assurance), inefficient harmonization with international/European educational systems and failure to eradicate corruption in the field of education and protectionism, which was intensively present in the years 1999-2003. Since 2001 with the support of the World Bank large scale school reforms were planned, the purpose of which was to bring up a generation better trained for the market economy and considering demands of the democratic society; education system should have helped students to become well-developed, innovative citizens with critical thinking abilities.

After the “Rose Revolution” in 2003, significant reforms were implemented to harmonize the Georgian Education system with international standards, to ensure equal access to education, autonomy of educational institutions, quality of education, enhancement and provision of competitiveness on

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a global labor market, also to overcome corruption and protectionism in the education system of Georgia. Within the framework of reforms, as a result of wide public discussions the Government of Georgia approved a document on National Goals of General Education, which became a basis of further reforms in general education. The laws on “general education” (2005), “higher education” (2004), and “vocational education” (2007), “education quality enhancement” (2010) created the legislative basis to meet these goals. The reform is an ongoing process. At this stage, it is only partially implemented. The legislation in the field of education undergoes changes until today, the goal of which, on the one hand, is to support the implementation process and refine the existing regulations and on the other hand, to review particular decisions and find new ways to regulate.

2. Structure of Schooling

The stages of general education in Georgia are: primary, basic and secondary. The length of an entire educational program is 12 years.

Primary education continues for 6 years and includes I-VI grades. Primary education is fully funded by the government. The goal of primary education is to create the basis for students to study effectively on a basic level; create conditions to reveal and develop intellectual, physical and cultural qualities or inclinations; also to gain information and develop those skills and attitudes that are needed during their entire life. The starting age on a primary stage of general education is an age of 5. but

The basic stage continues for 3 years and includes grades VII-IX. The basic education is fully funded by the State. At the same time, if a student after 12 years of study has failed to complete the basic stage, funding might continue until he/she achieves the basic level. The key task of basic education is to help students achieve aims described in a document of National Goals of General Education; create conditions for future choice, if a student plans to continue studies and assist in planning; create conditions for students to gain information, develop skills and attitudes necessary during their entire life.

The secondary stage lasts for 3 years and includes grades X-XII. The law of Georgia “on general education” notes that if a student is not able to successfully complete three years of general education at the secondary stage, it will be possible to prolong state funding. The main task of the secondary stage is to create conditions to refine described aims given in a document of National Goals of General Education; the State is obliged to offer students education relevant to the international standards; as a result of learning on secondary stage, a student will become able to make a correct choice with regard to his/her future professional development.

The key bodies to manage education system in Georgia are the Parliament of Georgia, Government of Georgia and Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia (later- the Ministry), and specialized management bodies within a system of the Ministry. The school itself, an institution equipped with a wide autonomy, could be considered as a major unit within the education system.

The Parliament of Georgia defines the state policy and basic trends in management in the field of general education, develops relevant legislative acts and supervises the activities of the Government in the field of education.

The Government of Georgia has developed National Goals of General Education and defined an amount of per student funding (voucher).

The Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia is a major body to manage the system of general education. It develops a common State policy and is responsible for implementation of the legislation of Georgia in the field of general education. This is basically expressed in establishing education system management instruments by approving bylaw normative acts (National Curriculum, authorization and accreditation, teacher certification rules) and through State control of Legal Entities of Public Law

(LEPLs)- schools (later, public schools). The State control includes supervision on the completion of acts issued by the Ministry and requirements of the Georgian legislation for public schools. At the same time, public schools located on the territories of autonomous republics (Autonomous Republic of Adjara and Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia) exercise state control through education ministries with relevant autonomy.

Today the territory of autonomous republic of Abkhazia is occupied by the Russian Federation and Georgia cannot protect its sovereign rights on these territories.

Specialized Bodies are significant components in education system management. These are Legal Entities of Public Law (LEPLs) within the system of the ministry – National Curriculum and Assessment Center, Teacher Professional Development Center, National Center for Education Quality Enhancement, the competencies of which are to establish instruments for education system management, expand and develop. Such as:

a) National Curriculum and Assessment – Schools are obliged to lead a learning process according to the National Curriculum, which is developed by the National Curriculum and Assessment Center and is approved by the Ministry. The described document includes time distribution for all stages of general education, conditions for organization of the learning environment and recommendations, minimum student workload, list of achievements (skills and knowledge) students should have after completion of each stage and description of skills and knowledge acquisition. Effectiveness of the National Curriculum and amendments to it is evaluated on the basis of a national assessment implemented by the same center. The requirements of the National Curriculum apply to public as well as private schools.

b) Teacher Certification- Qualified, certified teachers have a right for pedagogic activities at schools. The rule for teacher standards and certification is developed by the Teacher Professional Development Center and approved by the Ministry. Thus, schools have the right to assign an individual with certified, relevant education to act as a teacher. Restrictions are spread on public as well as private schools.

c) Authorization - Schools are obliged to comply with the minimum standards for education quality assurance, which includes minimum requirements for educational programs and human and material resources. The authorization standards are developed by the National Center for Education Quality Enhancement and approved by the Ministry. This center provides for authorization process management, and within its frames the relevance of the institution with minimum standards is tested once in five years; authorization is mandatory for private and public schools.

The School is the basic unit for the education system. According to the law of Georgia “on general education”, the school has a wide autonomy whether it is private or public. The autonomy of private schools is particularly broad and restricted only by external mechanisms of quality assurance (relevance of an institution with the authorization standards, requirement for teacher certification, relevance of an academic process with the National Curriculum), while autonomy of public schools is relatively restricted and its frames are defined by the law “on general education” and normative acts of the Ministry. In Particular, the administrative and financial independence of public schools are guaranteed: school management bodies (director, school board), are elected basically by school teachers, parents and students. Public school management bodies protecting interests of school teachers, parents and students have freedom based on the National Curriculum to plan an academic process, develop and fulfill school curriculum that specifies workloads given in the National Curriculum, define a list of school textbooks and offer students extra curricula services; they have the right to select themselves teachers (certified teachers) and administrative personnel, plan and fulfill a school budget and make decisions about the financial and material resource management of the school independently. At the same time, autonomy of public schools, in addition to the external mechanisms of quality assurance that are common for private and public schools, is further restricted by the law in certain cases. More specifically:

- Restrictions in decision-making - in particular cases when public school management bodies fails to make decisions in accordance with the law, the ministry has the right to interfere in direct management of a public school and make decisions instead of the school management body: For example, the ministry may appoint a director, if a supervisory body fails to choose one; „dismiss a director elected by a school board if he or she violated the law and the supervisory body failed to ensure his or her dismissal; to dismiss the school board, if the board does not fulfill its obligations under the law; negate decisions made by school management bodies that are not in conformity with the requirements of the law and replace them with decisions consistent with the law.
- Restrictions in an academic process management - The start and end of an academic year in public schools, number of teaching days and length of school holidays and the length is defined the Ministry.
- Restrictions in financial resource management – a public school is obliged to conform with the Ministry’s standards with respect to the number of teachers and administrative personnel and minimum salary scales, as well loans.
- Restrictions in material resource management – A public school is required to have a consent from the Ministry in order to manage in long-term use Immovable Property granted by the State to a school.

3. The Legal Framework

The legal basis for regulation of general education in Georgia is the Constitution of Georgia (1995), Law of Georgia “on general education” (2005), Law of Georgia “on education quality enhancement” (2010), on the basis of law, normative acts published by the Ministry.

According to the article 35, point 1, “All have the right to receive education and select its form.” The formation of this sentence starts with a word “All,” which connects the constitutional right of education to the constitutional principle of equal rights. Every person is equal in taking advantage of a constitutional right in education despite race, color, gender, religion, political and other views, national, ethnic and social ownership, origin, property and social status, location and, among them, citizenship, the constitutional right on education is the right of all to have equal opportunity of development.

An important aspect of equality considered in point 1 article 35 of the Constitution is to create conditions and provide education to persons with special needs. It is also important to make an accent on freedom to choose a form of education, which includes an individual choice of a person with a view to specific forms of education (general, vocational, higher), as well as freedom to select educational institutions, its private or public status, which is an immediate precondition to create a competitive education market.

According to point 2, Article 35 of the Constitution, the State should provide for harmonization of an educational area of the country with the international education area. Based on this norm, the State takes an obligation to make a shift from an old-fashioned, Soviet teaching system to new, modern, international standards relevant to the teaching system. This means, first of all, starting with quality assurance system - establishment of internal and external evaluation for education institutions (self-assessment, authorization, accreditation); harmonization of educational programs and qualifications with the western systems and development of their quality; certification of teachers and establishment of their professional development system; enhancement of educational infrastructure.

According to point 3, article 35 of the Constitution, the State provides for preschool education by the rule defined in the Law. Primary and Basic education is mandatory. The State fully funds general education by the rule defined in the Law. The citizens have the right to receive professional and higher education by the state funding defined by the rule of the Law.

According to point 4, article 35 of the Constitution, the State will support educational institutions defined by the rule of the Law. The mentioned norm grants the State an obligation to support functioning of educational institutions, their development despite their private and public status.

The significant legal basis for regulation of general education is Law of Georgia “on general education.” This Law presents principles and rules to manage general education and principles and rules of funding, conditions for implementation of school activities, their establishment, activities, reorganization, liquidation, rules for authorization and accreditation, as well as rules and procedures to manage teacher activities of general education institutions. The Law “on education quality enhancement” defines the quality assurance mechanisms in the field of education as well as the field of general education.

4. Freedom to establish non-state schools

According to the Law of Georgia “on general education”, a school can be established with the form of Legal Entity of Public Law or Legal Entity of Private Law. The school established with the form of Legal Entity of Private Law could be non-entrepreneurship or entrepreneurship (profit- oriented).

The Public school is based on the law of “Legal Entity of Public Law”, but a private school – is established according to the civil code of Georgia. Schools provide general education on primary, basic and/or secondary stages of general education.

The public school is established only by the State, and any individual or legal person has the right to establish private schools. Since the academic year 2011-2012, the State has the right to establish a school with a form of Legal Entity of Public Law, as well as to reorganize Legal Entity of Public Law into Legal Entity of Private Law. However, it should be considered that the school established by the State cannot be profit-oriented.

Secular (except political organizations) as well as religious organizations can establish private schools. They have a common legal regime.

Private as well as Public schools have the right to provide general education and award documents certifying education acknowledged by the State on a basis of authorization, since the appropriateness of general education institutions with the minimum program, human and material resources standards established by the State are approved. In particular, the Law of Georgia “on education quality enhancement” and law “on general education” define the legal basis of authorization. Authorization is a precondition to obtain the right on educational activities as well as an external mechanism of quality assurance of general education. Authorization is implemented by the National Center for Education Quality Enhancement. A school which fails to gain a right for authorization does not have a right to use a term denoting a general education institution (school) and does not have a right to implement its activities, as a general education institution, which issues documents recognized by the State to verify education.

In addition, the State is obliged to ensure independence of a public school from religious and political unions (associations), and private school independence from political associations. The law strictly defines a secular characteristic of public schools. According to the law, it is not allowed in public schools to use academic processes for religious indoctrination, proselytism or forceful assimilation purposes. This norm does not restrict the right to celebrate state holidays and historic dates in public schools, also managing events that are directed to establish national or democratic values. Distribution of religious symbols on the territory of public schools should not serve non-academic purposes. In addition, public school students have the right to voluntarily study religion or hold a religious ritual, if it serves to receive religious education after teaching hours.

It should be noted that a public school and a private school cannot be located in the same building starting in the 2011-2012 academic year.

5. Home schooling

According to the Article 35 of the Constitution primary and basic education are obligatory. According to the civil code of Georgia it is an obligation of each parent to bring up and provide education to his/her child. In addition, there are no restrictions in choosing a form of education according to the constitution. Thus, it is up to a parent, or a guardian in case of absence of parents to make a decision whether a child will receive mandatory general education in an educational institution or outside of the system, informally.

The law “on general education” grants a right to an individual to study general education programs independently. The rules and conditions to receive informal general education (eksternat) are defined by the Ministry. According to the afore-mentioned rule an individual has a right to independently study each course or a subject of general education on primary, basic and secondary stages.

In addition, the legislation of Georgia does not oblige parents to provide information to a government body in advance, if they are going to provide their child with education independently from a school, at home, although the legislation does provide sanctions for those parents, who avoid their obligation to bring up and provide education to their children.

To recognize informal education it is essential to pass exams (eksternat) approved by the State, which testifies that a person has reached an achievement level defined by the National Curriculum.

An individual has a right to pass an exam, if his/her age corresponds or exceeds an age group of students of a corresponding grade and he/she has overcome an educational program of a preceding grade.

Eksternat exams are organized by the Ministry, on the territories of autonomous republics (Autonomous Republic of Adjara and Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia) by corresponding ministries.

100

The exam is conducted in a written form and is taken:

- On a primary stage, in the same school where a student is enrolled. The school prepared the test;
- On Basic and Secondary stages, the exam is taken at a school defined by a territorial body of the Ministry – a resource center. The preparation of a test is ensured by the resource center.
- The resource center defined by the Ministry conducts an exam on a final grade of complete general education or a particular subject exam.

The procedural violations of eksternat exams are reviewed by the Ministry. A Special Appeals Committee is created in order to discuss complaints.

In case of mastering the achievement level of each stage/grade of general education given in the national curriculum testified by an eksternat exam, a document verifying education is issued, which is recognized by the State and its legal right of is not different from a document issued by a school. Based on this, an individual has a right to continue studies on a next level.

6. School choice not limited by family income

A parent has a right to freely select a school where he/she wants their child to study. The choice regarding private schools is not restricted with a socio-economic background of parents and neither with a specific geographic location. In addition, general education funding opportunities allotted by the State helps parents to make a free decision between public and private schools. According to the law “on general education,” funding of general education is implemented through vouchers, by “money

follows a student” principle, thus the State provides per capita funding to a student, despite the fact whether a student studies in a private or a public school irrespectively of family income.

The State funds 12 grade general education of each student in public as well as private schools. However, the law provides for continuing funding opportunities. Particularly, funding can be prolonged until overcoming a basic level of education by a student, if a student after 12 years of education fails to meet the requirements of a basic level educational program. The funding may also continue if a student failed to overcome a secondary level of general education for three years.

Provision of education is possible only by the State recognized – authorized general education institution (school).

In order to finance a student, a financial instrument per student, vouchers are used. In a public school the cost of education of a student does not exceed the amount of the voucher. Thus, education of a student in public schools is funded *fully* by the State. A private school defines itself the cost of its education, which may exceed an amount of the voucher provided by the State. In this case, a parent covers the difference between the amount of the voucher and the cost of education defined by the private school.

The law provides an opportunity to establish standardized or increased voucher by the State. The majority of schools are funded by standard vouchers. In addition, the volume of vouchers is different according to school types (urban, rural, high mountainous schools), in order to ensure an equal funding opportunity for a student considering different financial needs.

Furthermore, the Law of Georgia “on general education” obliges the State while defining an amount of a voucher to consider special needs of students, in order to ensure an equal opportunity for all students to receive general education. Thus, if it is impossible to receive general education with a standard voucher, the State funds a student with an increased voucher or/and grants a scholarship allotted within the frames of a target program run by the State. Increased vouchers or/and funding within a target program are used to fund public schools with a small contingent, students with special needs, and also students of non-Georgian schools.

Citizens of Georgia and persons without citizenship permanently residing in Georgia are eligible for funding.

Such a system of funding ensures the freedom of school selection and makes a process of student mobility easier, in addition, schools are interested to attract more students, which results in motivating them to improve the quality of education and plan better a student-oriented academic process.

7. School distinctiveness protected by law and policy

According to point 4, article 35 of the Constitution of Georgia, the State supports educational institutions with the rules defined by the law. This regulation includes support of schools with all types, profiles, fostering its difference and identity. In addition, according to the agreement (Concordat) signed between the Church of Georgia and Government of Georgia, the State will support operation of educational institutions of the Church. Furthermore, neither Concordat nor other legislative acts provide for restrictions for other religious organizations with regard to establishing schools.

The law of Georgia “on general education” obliges the State to ensure administrative and financial autonomy of schools. High level of autonomy and resources will give schools, among them public schools, an opportunity to be unique and keep their self-identity.

Independence of schools to offer students diverse and competitive education still requires them to meet the National Curriculum requirements approved by the State, that are created in order to achieve

the National Goals of general education and define the minimum requirements towards educational programs and academic environment.

The National Curriculum also provides for modified curriculum for students with special educational needs.

The National Curriculum, in contrast with the unified soviet educational standards, programs and textbooks, defines the goals of teaching and outcomes of general education on each level. Modern curriculum is outcome based instead of extensively regulating the processes and procedures.

In addition, the National Curriculum defines only minimum requirements and each school has a right to set higher demands with regard to teaching goals and outcomes. In addition, all schools can, within the frames of its resources, offer students additional educational, preschool and institutional care services.

According to the Law of Georgia “on general education” each school is obliged to create its own study plan. A school study plan includes a schedule of classes, which confirms minimum recommended workloads defined in the National Curriculum, list of textbooks, school plans to achieve goals of the National Curriculum, additional educational, preschool and institutional care services.

There are 2 461 schools in Georgia overall, among them, 2 179 are public schools and 283 are private schools.

There are the following types of public schools in Georgia:

- Public schools which provide for general educational programs;
- Schools that together with general educational programs implement vocational education and training.
- Schools that together with general educational programs implement sports education and training.
- Schools that are in line with general educational programs and offer a special educational program in military education and training.

The competition among ordinary public schools that implement general educational programs is becoming visible. In particular, there are emerging public schools that have specific profiles in physics, mathematics, natural sciences, teach a particular foreign language, encourage sports activities, inclusive education, using informational technologies during an academic process, intercultural, multilingual education and so on. This is supported by the funding system “money follows a student” principle, which increases the motivation of schools to attract more students by offering better quality and various educational services, as well as appropriate State target programs. Thus, diversification of public schools occurs by considering requirements of parents and existing school resources (human, financial, material). It is expected that further increases in funding general education and effective target programs will cause better diversification of public schools.

It is remarkable, that independence of public schools to define their own profiles of teaching content is not restricted by any formal conditions, except professional, sports and military profile schools. In order to implement this type of programs it is essential to have consent from an appropriate Ministry (culture, sports, defense) and meet the requirements defined by the legislation. In all other cases, if a public school meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and correspondingly, has received authorization, school management bodies can make decisions by considering the existing resources and parent requirements without any external interference, in order to define what type of various educational programs and services they can offer to students.

According to the legislation of Georgia certain public schools, in addition to educational services, implements special institutional care programs (daytime, 24 hours, special institutional services) for children who lack parental care, children with restricted abilities and students with special needs.

Public schools are absolutely free with no violation of authorization standards to define the teaching content and forms themselves. The Waldorf school merits attention among public schools and offers education with different methodology to students, so are the schools that offer bilingual educational programs harmonized with the educational systems of different countries and an opportunity of dual recognition of general education (in Georgia and a relevant foreign country).

Among faith-based schools, the private schools established by the Orthodox Church should be noted.

To support inclusive education for students with special needs is one of the top priorities of the Government of Georgia and within a framework of relevant state programs inclusive education is encouraged and supported in public as well as private schools.

8. Decisions about admitting pupils

During student selection it is necessary to consider age restrictions defined by the law. A student will be admitted to school only by meeting the age requirements defined by the law. The age restriction refers to the primary level only and consists of 6 years, but from an academic year of 2011-2012 it will be 5 years; this restriction applies for both public and private schools; maximum age of students is not restricted at schools.

The law of Georgia “on general education” mandates that any kind of discrimination with regard to admissions to private or public schools is prohibited. Non-discrimination does not rule out imposing restrictions with regard to admissions, which is fair and sensible, serves independent development and ensures equal opportunities for each person and group, among them, the possibility of holding competitions in those schools, which offer art, sports and military preparation. None of the schools, among them religious, are allowed to pose restrictions with regard to admissions based on religious belief.

The school has the right, only in case of violation of a disciplinary regulation by internal regulations to exclude a student from that particular school. According to the law, it is not allowed to leave a student outside the system of general education before achieving the basic level of education. Therefore, a student expelled from a school has the right to continue studies in another school and the State is obliged to provide further education to the student.

9. Decisions about staff

According to the Law of Georgia “on general education,” in order to receive a right to become a teacher it is essential to meet the following requirements:

- A Primary teacher should have a bachelor’s academic degree;
- A Basic and Secondary teacher should hold an academic degree in subject and pass a 60- credit educational program of teacher preparation
- Basic and Secondary level arts and sports teachers should have complete general education as well as higher arts or sports education and pass a 60 credit educational program of teacher preparation
- Special needs education teachers should pass a special accredited educational program
- Pass the probation period. Probation requires teaching at school during a certain period of time. Successful completion of a probation period is a precondition to admit teachers to certification exams.

- Pass teacher certification exams. It is important to pass certification exams to gain the right of teaching. The aim of the exam is to identify the relevance of an individual's knowledge and skills with the teacher professional standards.

Thus, a school is obliged to select an individual who has gained the right of teaching. This rule is applied in public as well as private schools. It is remarkable that a school has the right to specify additional criteria for teacher selection and in case of an opening to select a teacher. With the purpose to encourage an open competition and transparency in selection procedures of public school teachers, a common rule of holding teacher hiring competition is defined by the ministry. The National Center for Teacher Professional Development within the Ministry ensures accessibility of information on teacher position vacancies at schools for all interested persons.

The teacher is obliged to renew his/her right of teaching until the expiration of certificate period, in order to continue pedagogic activities. It is essential to gain credits defined according to the teacher professional development scheme to renew teacher rights. In addition, a teacher can gather credits by passing professional development programs, by retaking certification exams, creating educational and pedagogic products (textbooks, ownership of educational programs, development of an educational project and so on).

The teacher certification system will be fully enacted in Georgia since 2015. Thus, only a certified teacher should teach at school by that time. Until then, schools can select individuals with higher education degrees.

10. Accountability for school quality

Amendments made in July 2010 to the law of Georgia “on general education” resulted in changing external mechanisms of education quality.

Until the changes of July 2010 in order to achieve the right for educational activities a school (private and public) should have gained a license in accordance to the requirements defined by the law, and accreditation was a precondition for the state recognition and state funding of schools, which was obligatory for all licensed schools. The accreditation process of schools should have started no later than a 2013-2014 academic year.

According to the law, to gain recognition of a general education document and receive state funding, authorization is essential. Authorization is a procedure to gain a school status. Authorization is mandatory for public and private schools.

Schools receive authorization provided that they meet program, human and material resource requirements defined by the Ministry. Private and public schools have a common standard. The difference lies only in the funding of authorization expenses. Particularly, authorization expenses of public schools are funded by the State, and a private school with its own financial resources ensures to cover expenses of an authorization procedure.

The authorization is provided by the Legal Entity of Public Law established by the Ministry – National Center for Education Quality Enhancement, which is independent in its activities. It carries out the activities based on the regulation approved by the Ministry. This body in case of meeting authorization standards grants authorization to a school, and in case of non-existence of a legal precondition has a right to abolish an awarded authorization. According to the law, it should be implemented before the launch of the 2015-2016 academic year.

In addition, the law provides for accreditation of general education institutions. Accreditation is a procedure to define relevance of accreditation standards with the educational programs of general

education institutions, its aim is to establish systemic self-assessment of an institution to enhance education quality and support development of quality assurance mechanisms. Accreditation is not mandatory.

11. Teaching of values

Value Education is one of the most important challenges of the education system considering a 70- year Soviet ideological legacy of the education system.

According to the law of Georgia “on general education”, the State defines National Goals of general education and teaching at school should ensure the achievement of National Goals of general education.

The National goals of general education are defined by the regulation of the Government of Georgia and according to the document, a system of general education in Georgia aims at creating favorable conditions to form an independent individual with national and common democratic values. Schools should develop among students intellectual and physical skills, give necessary knowledge, establish a healthy lifestyle. Schools should help students develop civic awareness based on liberal and democratic values and help them to become aware of his duties and obligations before his family, society and the State.

According to the document on National Goals of general education, as a result of receiving secondary education, a student should be ready to understand his responsibilities in terms of the interests of his country, traditions and values; keep and protect natural environmental conditions; effectively use technological or other intellectual achievements; live independently and take decisions; be creative, create values, in order not to live only at the expense of those already existing; continuous development of his own abilities and interests during an entire life and maximum realization inside and beyond a country; schools should develop among students an ability to protect human rights and respect to individuals. A student should be a law-abiding and tolerant citizen.

According to the National Curriculum, schools should particularly pay attention to development of values, such as dignity, fairness, mutual respect, understanding different views and recognition.

According to the National Curriculum, a student should be brought up on high moral values. Respect to human dignity and rights should be developed in him/her; compassion and care; love toward a home country; firm character and citizenry courage; tolerance and respect of law. The school should develop among students civic skills: formation of own position and protection, to critically evaluate own behavior; respect to people with different views, nationality, religion and culture.

In addition, the law of Georgia “on general education” defines that teaching at school, including teaching values, should be neutral, academic, objective and pluralistic. It is not permitted to politicize an academic process. It is prohibited to use an academic process for religious indoctrination, proselytism or forceful assimilation purposes. The school is prohibited to teach non-scientific values or theories as if scientific theories or evidence. Imposing these restrictions presents an attempt that education and school should never be used as an instrument of ideology, which widely occurred in the Soviet education system.