6 March 2008

Dear Broadwayers,

In a warm spring morning after the long and cold winter, I write this letter to all Broadwayers concerning a major breakthrough in Hong Kong education history of ethnic minorities.

Education is a process composing of three distinguishable stages. They are teaching, assessment, and further advancement. Ethnic minorities in Hong Kong have long been disregarded by society since they have no place to fit in throughout these three different stages. To be specific, teaching ethnic minorities Chinese formally in classroom only began less than 10 years ago in Hong Kong. For assessment, the solitary Chinese syllabus and HKCEE assessment restricted the attempt of teaching Chinese in schools as well as further advancement in local universities as a pass in HKCEE Chinese was a must for admission.

There is a great leap forward recently advocated by the Education Bureau in two different perspectives, namely the assessment and university admission.

A document called **'Consultation paper on developing a supplementary guide to the Chinese language curriculum for Non-Chinese speaking students'**[1] was just issued in January 2008 by the Education Bureau. Most importantly, this paper admits the special need of ethnic minorities in learning Chinese.

Furthermore, **'Further flexibility in the application of Chinese language requirement for the admission of students into UGC-funded institutions under JUPAS'**[2] has also been announced recently that ethnic minority students will be considered for the admission into local universities by other means of Chinese assessment such as GCSE.

The recent External School Review (ESR) report[3] praises us that 'In line with the school motto, "Harmony in Diversity", the school places strong emphasis on maintaining a harmonious learning environment, including helping students from a variety of ethnic backgrounds to develop positively and adapt to the local community'. The latest development in ethnic minority education in Hong Kong is really encouraging and our work which appeared to be fruitless a decade ago has been recognized by the government and even become part of the government policy.

Shared much with Ms Bernadette Linn, the Deputy Secretary for Education, in a casual correspondence with her, she wrote, 'I do hope that this latest development will give our ethnic minority students a clear message that they do have the avenue to compete for higher education even though they may not be as proficient in Chinese Language as native speakers. I hope that this would give them the incentive to try their best.' This brings Hong Kong to become a better place.

I really hope that 'HOME' is not only an acronym of our mission but also our feeling towards Delia Broadway and even our feeling towards Hong Kong.

Dr Chan KP

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[1] Please refer to http://www.edb.gov.hk/FileManager/EN/Content_93/devt_of_sg_to_chi_ncs_summary_e.pdf
[2] Please refer to http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/200802/25/P200802250221.htm.
[3] Please refer to the linked file at school website.