

## Words from the Minister...



Minister of Education Pan Wen-chung is signing his first official document of the ministry after taking office.

### *Learner-oriented Education: The Right to Learn is Replacing the Right to an Education*

A core principle of the Ministry of Education's approach is to "replace the right to an education with the right to learn, for all citizens, and make education genuinely learner-centered." Students are at the heart of education, and students' learning is our critical goal, and so the government must keep improving the education system to achieve this. We must pay serious attention to differences between individual learners and their learning experiences: it is not appropriate to continue indiscriminately applying uniform standards and education pathways to all students. Respect for diversity and ensuring students' learning is developmentally appropriate means that we must provide opportunities for each student to have their individual strengths identified and nurtured. This will require teachers to

transcend their familiar traditional role of dispensing knowledge and become guides for their students' individual learning. This will also entail adapting and transforming teaching methods and teacher staffing arrangements. Education is a life-long endeavor and a constantly evolving process. Continuously striving to improve is an essential part of this. The Ministry is working to achieve the goals of: making learning enjoyable; lightening parents' burdens; keeping education up-to-date; and having all our citizens fully educated and trained. Our educational philosophy is staunchly people-oriented and we are committed to creating high-quality preschool, elementary school, and junior high school education environments; to vitalizing teaching, progressively implementing flexible and developmentally suitable teaching and learning practices in the 12-year Basic Education program; and to invigorating technological and vocational education with academia and industry working together and linking what students learn in classrooms with practical workplace training.



President Tsai Ing-wen and Minister of Education Pan Wen-chung visit the Qianhua Elementary School, Shihmen District, New Taipei City.

In the higher education sector, we are encouraging our universities and colleges to be innovative centers of excellence that help create strong local vitality. We will also continue leading students to dare to think critically and to be concerned about social issues. Their teachers will be trained to teach in ways that cater for diversity and respect differences, and encouraged to independently engage in ongoing professional development, and to nurture their students' confidence and skills to vigorously face future challenges. We will ensure a stable supply of teachers and quality teaching so that students in remote regions and disadvantaged students enjoy their right to access teaching and learning. We will continue to create learning environments in which diversity is respected and students' different needs are catered to, and encourage young people to explore career options and engage in community affairs. We will improve lifelong learning opportunities, in order to build a strong civil society, and we will actively incorporate an international outlook into all aspects of education, as we

implement the New Southward Policy. We will also continue working to increase the general population's fitness by promoting regular exercise for all, and at the same time boost Taiwan's athletic competitiveness. The Ministry will continue to nurture a fair society by ensuring quality education for all. We will vigorously use a range of developmentally appropriate teaching practices to students' interest and engagement, and provide diversified learning pathways to achievement. We will fairly distribute resources to bring social justice to life; go beyond citizen's "right to an education" and replace it with the "right to learn". And we will enhance our citizens' capacity to meet whatever the future brings, with the goal of making Taiwan a better country for all its people.■

*Wen Chung Pan*

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