



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Sunday, December 9, 1973

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EDUCATION DEPARTMENT AND SPONSORING BODIES CO-OPERATION

Essential For Development Of Schools

Co-operation between the Education Department and sponsoring bodies is essential in order to accomplish the demanding targets now set for the number and variety of school places to be provided at both the primary and secondary levels.

This was stated by Mr. J. Whiteley, Assistant Director of Education (Development), this afternoon at the Dedication Ceremony and Open Day of St. Philip Lutheran School at Yau Tong, Kowloon.

This primary school is one of 67 free standing estate schools built by the Government as part of a housing estate and then handed over to a sponsoring body to operate.

"The cost of building such a school at present day prices is about \$850,000," Mr. Whiteley said.

The Government also pays the recurrent costs under the Subsidy Code. The sponsors pay for the equipment and furniture for the school and for any improvements they wish to make to the school building itself.

For this particular school the Lutheran Church contributed some \$140,000.

"This is an example of the type of co-operation between the Education Department and sponsoring bodies in running schools that I mentioned earlier as being essential in order to provide the required number of schools," the Assistant Director said.

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Speaking about the development of this type of primary school building, Mr. Whiteley said it was a vast improvement on the type that was provided in the resettlement estates almost 20 years ago.

"At first the schools were provided on the rooftops of the domestic blocks, then on the ground floor, then on the top floor and now they are provided in separate buildings like this one. In the latest estate schools to be built the roof playground has been covered in to provide an assembly hall.

"The development of the estate school will not stop at this point because the Education Department is now working on new ideas to improve the physical **standard and layout** of the school building," he said.

Now that a free place has been provided for every child at all primary levels, Mr. Whiteley then spoke about the provision of secondary school places for the Yau Tong district.

During the last 18 months, two fully subsidized secondary grammar type schools have been opened in Yau Tong.

In addition there are plans to provide two more secondary schools in Yau Tong in the near future - a Government secondary technical school and a private non-profit making secondary school.

The Government technical school for which plans are at an advanced stage is to be built on a site very near to St. Philip Lutheran School at the eastern end of Ko Chiu Road. Work will begin as soon as the site is available. This school will accommodate 920 boys and girls and will offer classes from Form I to Form VI.

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The private secondary school will be built with the aid of a Government interest-free loan, on a site in Yau Tong Road next to the Po Chiu College. "This again will be co-educational and offer accommodation for some 920 pupils from Form I to Form VI level," Mr. Whiteley said.

In addition, a Government Technical Institute is now actually under construction in nearby Kwun Tong and is scheduled to start operating in September 1975.

"I am sure you will welcome these additional educational facilities at the post-primary level," he said.

The Assistant Director thanked the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, Hong Kong Mission, for its concern for the education of Hong Kong children.

"Throughout the Colony the Church sponsors kindergartens, primary, secondary and special schools for handicapped children both during the day and in the evenings. Further, the Church also operates boys' and girls' clubs in certain housing estates. Therefore, you will appreciate that the Church is heavily involved in education of many kinds from the kindergarten stage to secondary level," Mr. Whiteley said.

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HIGH QUALITY EDUCATION

Challenge To Private Non-Profit-Making Schools

Private non-profit-making schools in Hong Kong offer in some respects the greatest challenge to any group of educators aiming at providing high quality education at a price that the generality of parents can afford, the Assistant Director of Education (Examinations), Mr. D.B.M. Board said this afternoon.

He was speaking at the Dedication Ceremony of the Wing Kwong College, Lung Cheung Road, Kowloon.

This secondary school, built with the aid of a Government interest-free loan, is run by the Pentecostal Holiness Church.

Mr. Board said overseas visitors "may find the local educational scene deplorable, even chaotic; but there are certain important merits in our approach to the up-bringing of our children which should not be overlooked.

"In particular, the existence of two large private sectors, profit-making and non-profit-making, ensures that the wishes of the general public, in terms of curriculum and language-medium of instruction, are plain for all to see.

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"This is not to deny that the professional educator has genuine insights into the needs of children, which may not be fully appreciated by all parents; but it does mean that we are not in the grip of a monolithic system dictated by experts of one kind or another.

"For good or ill, public opinion is an effective force in Hong Kong education, which theorists ignore at their peril," Mr. Board said.

The Assistant Director pointed out that the Education Department's syllabuses were merely "suggested", and the Certificate of Education syllabuses were drawn up by subject committees on which the schools were strongly represented.

It was simply not true as it was sometimes said that there was little experimentation in Hong Kong schools because they were bound, hand and foot, by the syllabuses of the Department or the public examination.

Mr. Board said: "My colleagues in the Inspectorate are only too anxious to consider sympathetically any reasonable proposals by individual schools; and likewise it is the firm policy of the Board of the Certificate of Education, which is an independent board, to meet any reasonable request for new subjects, alternative syllabuses and modes of examination, and the like."

He added: "Similar principles apply to the Secondary School Entrance Examination, which is quite rightly kept under constant and careful scrutiny.

"At this time we are especially concerned to improve it, and in the Examination Division of the Department we shall be delighted to receive any suggestions, verbally or in writing, concerned either with the examination itself or with the associated allocation procedures; and this applies also, of course, to the Certificate of Education Examination."

/Mr. Board

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Mr. Board who unveiled the Dedication Stone of Wing Kwong College, congratulated the Pentecostal Holiness Church for bringing the building project to a successful conclusion.

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Release Time: 3.30 p.m.