

## **Joint Agreement Signing Ceremony for the Quasi-Public Kindergarten, Witnessed by Parents, Children, Kindergartens, and the Government Representatives in Pingtung County**

(Courtesy of Chih Ying Kuo at the Division of Junior High, Elementary School and Preschool  
Education)



Pingtung County Government held a joint agreement signing ceremony for quasi-public kindergartens on September 22, 2018. The event was opened by the rhythm dance performance staged by children. The first wave of kindergartens that joined the program signed the agreement under the witness of Wan I Lin, Minister without Portfolio, Sun Lu Fan, Political Deputy Minister, and nearly a hundred of attendees. As of September 15, 2018, Pingtung County has a total of 36 kindergartens participating in this program, which will serve to relieve the childcare burden on around 3,000 families. In addition, the percentage of public and quasi-public educare services are on the path of rising from 30% to 50%. Such positive note, declared around the time of the Mid-Autumn Festival, is one of the best festival gifts for parents in Pingtung County.

The Executive Yuan and the Ministry of Education demonstrate gratitude for the participating kindergartens' support of the government's policy, which help to ease parents' burden and improve educarers' well-being through joining the quasi-public program. Through

the public and private collaboration, it aims to accelerate the process for children in Pingtung County, so they can enjoy more quality and affordable education opportunities. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Education announced that, in order to respond to parents' expectations, the application period will be extended by 15 days. If private kindergartens filed the application by September 30, 2018 and signed the agreement and became quasi-public kindergartens by October 15, 2018, the government's tuition subsidies will be retroactive to August 1, 2018. Furthermore, the kindergartens are able to apply for other subsidies from local governments, to enhance and improve their on-site facilities. The Ministry of Education calls on the private kindergartens that have the willingness to join the program to seize on the final opportunity and hopes that more childcare partners will join.

The Ministry of Education stated that the government cannot just sit on the sideline when faced with the challenges brought by the low birth rate crisis; instead, it must race against time. Furthermore, the government has to adopt multiple measures to provide sufficient quality and affordable educare services to address the childcare dilemma for parents and allow young people to take care of their family and workplace needs. Therefore, the government promotes public kindergartens and quasi-public kindergartens concurrently to meet parents' expectations of more "high-quality and affordable educare services."

The Ministry of Education emphasizes that the promotion and implementation of the quasi-public policy requires concerted efforts from all sides. Many of the private kindergartens that have been approved in each county and city are large in scale and enjoy a good reputation. Therefore, the public and the private sectors can really achieve the goal of "high-quality and affordable childcare" jointly, while creating a all-win situation for kindergartens, teachers, educarers, and parents. To assure the private kindergartens that have not yet joined the program, the Ministry of Education made a promotional video clip, in which quasi-public kindergartens' heads, teachers, educarers, and parents are talking about what they know about the quasi-public policy. In addition, to enable the public to be more aware of the countermeasures for low birth rate, two animation clips for dummies are also produced to briefly explain the two-pronged promotional strategies, that is "expanding the affordable educare services" and "reducing parents' burden." Both the clips have been uploaded to the Youtube channel of the Ministry of Education "The Quasi-Public Policy That I Know" (link: <https://youtu.be/az8QDTxrPRg>) and National Low Birth Rate Countermeasures for Dummies– Education and Childcare of the Two-

to-Five-Year-Old [For Parents] (link: <https://youtu.be/SK7qIcSmcHs>; another window will be opened). In addition, the quasi-public kindergarten banners and propaganda leaflets provided by the Ministry of Education have been sent out to the kindergartens; the banners will be hung at the kindergartens. If there are any relevant questions, please call the consulting hotline at (02) 2256-5366 or (02) 2256-5379 from eight a.m. to five p.m. from Monday through Friday.