

Washington State Superintendent of Public Instruction Visits Taiwan for Signing the Memorandum of Understanding on Education

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Photo by Shu-Ling Chang, Office of the Secretary)



To advance the educational collaboration, a five-year Memorandum of Understanding on Education (Education MOU) was signed at 2:30 pm on (Monday) April 14th, 2014 between Randy I. Dorn, Washington State Superintendent of Public Instruction, and Ching-Shan Wu, Director General of the K-12 Education Administration, Ministry of Education. This ceremony was observed by Feng-Yu Chen, Deputy Director in the Central Taiwan Office, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Sean Fogarty, Director of the State of Washington Trade Development Office in Taiwan. In the future, the educational interaction on high- and elementary-school level between Taiwan and the State of Washington will be enhanced. After the ceremony, the superintendent and his colleagues were invited to visit Ming Tai High School and Wufeng Lin Family Mansion and Garden. Afterwards, a casual talk with presidents and principals of teacher training universities, high schools and elementary schools in central Taiwan was organized by Director General Wu. The talk focused on how to facilitate collaboration over high- and elementary-school education for realizing the concept and content of the Education MOU.

The Education MOU is the first international educational collaboration project after the release of the White Paper on International Education and the establishment of the K-12 Education Administration. This MOU represents a successful result of the Ministry of

Education's and K-12 Education Administration's efforts in promoting international education. Moreover, it also signifies recognition from the USA on Taiwan's educational performance and their willingness to closely cooperate with us over educational affairs. Past educational collaborations were mainly between universities, while this MOU assists secondary and elementary schools establishing connections and concentrates on unions between teachers and students. This reveals that we have extended the boundary of international education. This also means that the educational administration units in our government will play a more active role in high- and elementary-school education interactions.

As a whole, the Education MOU is in-depth and comprehensive. It encompasses education, cultures, vocational education, arts and technologies and may further incorporate educational units and enterprises. Through designing and implementing collaboration plans, both Taiwan and the State of Washington will have closer interactions and collaboration in school education, teaching, educational administration, educational academics and professional training. What is worth highlighting are the internship opportunities provided by both sides. It is hoped that language teachers in both countries can do the internship in each other's secondary or elementary schools. With this, our Chinese teachers will be able to gain practical experiences by teaching foreign learners, and American English intern teachers can be introduced to Taiwan's high and vocational schools, offering local students opportunities to practice English. In addition, students will be able to experience foreign cultures and broaden their horizons through using information platforms or joining in real-life interactions. Finally, students in vocational schools can also stretch out for oversea internship opportunities.

According to Director General Ching-Shan Wu of K-12 Education Administration, Ministry of Education, signing this memorandum is to realize the collaboration between Taiwan and the State of Washington over education, culture and professional training. This will benefit students, teachers and administrative staff.