

2015 National Youth Summit and the Closing Ceremony with Director-General Wu

Ching-shan

(Photo and article by Wang Ling-yi, Director-General's Office of
K-12 Education Administration)



The fifth National Youth Summit was held at Chien-tan Youth Activity Center of China Youth Corps from February 8th to 10th this year, with 198 young student attendants from 47 public and private senior high schools nationwide. The summit was hosted by a student club, Taipei First Girls' High School Youth Council, with an aim to provide a communication platform for young students to express their ideas about domestic and foreign issues, as well as providing a showcase window for them to monitor diplomatic courtesies and interaction in the globe stage. It was meant for young students to further their understanding of their own responsibilities and rights through this three-day summit.

This summit was composed of two major activities: "the Youth Council," where the language in use was Chinese, and "Model United Nations," which was proceeded in English. The former explored issues such as "Diverse Family Formation" and "the K-12 Education," while the latter focused on "Illegal Drug Trade" and "Territorial Disputes in South China Sea." Through intense debate and negotiation for three days, the participants had a heated discussions, and finally the four committees released five resolutions based on students consensus, which were approved by majority votes in the convention.

Wu Ching-shan, the director-general of the K-12 Education Administration of MOE, was invited to attend the closing ceremony on February 10th and to confer certificates of merits to the

best-representatives in every committee. The certificates went to eight students with extraordinary performances, including Liao Wan-yin from National Tainan Girls' Senior High School, Bai Chong-you from National Taichung First Senior High School, and Xu Lian-yi from National Wu-Ling Senior High School. In his remarks, Wu Ching-shan first indicated that it is evident, basing on students' remarkable performances, that Taiwan will have a promising future. The resolutions on every issue released by the student body have been supported by powerful arguments and insightful perspectives.

Wu especially mentioned that he would carefully read through the six-page resolution on "K-12 Education," review the controversies stemming from implementation last year, and seek further improvements. "I feel much relieved when I read Article One, 'the well-intentioned K-12 Education System: lending due support and recognition,'" said Wu as he bowed deeply to the students, "and I appreciate your support for the rationale of K-12 Education, and I personally will take that as my lucky beginning for the incoming Chinese sheep year." Thunderous applause broke out immediately the moment he said that.

Wu made some good uses of information age analogies to encourage students. He pointed out that "3C" products, in face of information technology age, have become indispensable in our daily lives. Based on that observation, students are encouraged to cultivate the ability of their inner "3Cs," i.e. Communication, Creativity, and Critical Thinking. He believed that participants in this summit must have acquired all three abilities effectively. Additionally, Wu said that people wished for success and a sense of achievement, but both will hinge on IP—Interest and Passion. Just as connecting to the Internet will always require IP, people should have interest in extending their touches through participating in various activities and eventually discover their passion for further persistence. "Grasp IP in your hand, and you will achieve success," Wu said to the students.

Upon remarks on one of the participants, who came from the farthest Penghu, Wu invited Yang Yu-lun from National Magong High School to address a 30-second speech on his reflection. With a natural and composed attitude, Yang said coherently, "Even though the system of excess quota comparison does not really apply to Penghu,, as a citizen in Taiwan, I still wish to know more about K-12 Education, the policy that has a huge impact on the future of Taiwan." Then he thanked his companions in the committee because he learned a lot through interacting with them. "I am surely going to pursue my further study because when I go to college, it will also be time for my return to the main island, Taiwan." During the closing ceremony, Wu interacted with the students in a leisurely, humorous manner, which won him widespread

acclaims with laughter here and there. This was indeed a friendly and refreshing model of “official address.” The ceremony ended with Wu taking photos with all of the participating teachers and students. The students were reluctant to leave, and it was heard that some even said they started to expect the summit next year.

The key product of this convention is the resolution on “K-12 Education,” which was composed of six parts and has been approved by student convention. The resolution includes: Article one: the well-intentioned K-12 Education System: lending due support and recognition; Article two: the senior high school entrance system: its achievements and further suggestions; Article three: K-12 Education, the elimination of rich-poor gap and urban-rural divide; Article four: Enhancing the public understanding of the K-12 Education: how to facilitate the spread of information and avoid ungrounded criticism based on incomplete information; Article five: Adjusting and implementing the curriculum guidelines in K-12 Education to reflect diversity; Article six: Ascertaining the goals of K-12 Education and incorporating the views of student convention. The opinions endorsed by student committee have great merits, and should be incorporated into future design of K-12 education.