

## New Immigrant Culture and Language Fun Learning Camp Launched at Da-Liao International Academy

(Courtesy of Hung Zi-Jie, Division of Division for Indigenous People and Special Education)



To help new immigrants' children learn Southeast Asian languages, the K-12 Education Administration, Ministry of Education, has subsidized Kaohsiung City's "General Initiative: Striding Southward and Ushering in a New Era" to establish the "Da-Liao International Academy" as a learning station for the children of new immigrants. A three-day language fun learning camp has been launched today (July 3, 2017), and co-moderated by Chiu Chien-Kuo, Director-General of the K-12 Education Administration, as well as Fan Sun-Lu, Director-General of Kaohsiung Education Bureau. There are a total of 100 primary school and middle school participants who share great interest in Southeast Asian cultures. Collectively, they will experience this Southeast Asian craze as a further step for the government's new southward policy.

Chiu noted that the K-12 Administration has been revising a five-year mid-term education program for the children of new immigrants. Attention has been placed on strengthening specific services and a support system to enhance their learning while establishing a friendly school environment, as well as refining courses and teaching; hopefully, a diverse learning environment can be developed and international mobility can be enhanced as a result. As the curriculum guidelines of the 12-year National Basic Education attempt to incorporate the languages of new immigrants in the field of “language and literature,” this program aims to foster the development of students from culturally diverse backgrounds and achieve the curricular goal of respecting cultural diversity, thereby paving the way for offering courses of new immigrants’ languages.

The K-12 Education Administration started to invest in compiling 126 volumes of teaching materials of the languages spoken by new immigrants from seven Southeast Asian countries in 2016. These materials will be taught in class on a trial basis in September, 2017. In addition, a total of 881 qualified support educators have been recruited and trained since 2016, and the same primary and advanced training workshops will continue to be held in the future to promote the teaching of new immigrants’ languages. Meanwhile, the K-12 Education Administration selected and subsidized 24 new immigrant students for a 7-day international workplace experience event in Vietnam, and implemented the new immigrants’ languages fun learning program. This year the number of selected students will increase to 36 because of the new southward policy; all of this aims to strengthen their knowledge and skills in international workplaces and enhance their competitiveness. Furthermore, teachers, students, and their parents will be subsidized on a trip to Southeast Asian countries to trace their roots as a way to motivate students to learn their mother tongue or other Southeast Asian languages and enhance teachers’ ability to design and conduct diverse cultural courses that will be further refined gradually in the future.

The subsidized programs this year include the “General Initiative: Striding Southward and Ushering in a New Era” introduced by Kaohsiung Education Bureau. There are 17 sub-programs under this initiative that covers a wide range of fields. Workshops for teachers who teach Vietnamese Quilling were launched this March, and a series of events and activities have been held, such as conveying love with carnations

on Mother's Day, an Indonesian Month of Culture, a Malaysian Month of Culture, and a Vietnamese lantern making event. On the other hand, the current activities, such as the language fun learning camp and a basic Vietnamese language course, are designed to let new immigrant mothers and their children feel warm and respected while broadening Taiwanese local students' perspectives by learning about different cultures and customs of Southeast Asian countries.

With the advent of the global village era, a greater portion of Taiwan's population has come from new immigrants in recent years. New immigrants who married Taiwanese males have become the fifth biggest population in Taiwan. In Kaohsiung, the number of new-immigrants accounts for 2.11% of the whole population of the city, which is the second highest percentage in Taiwan. With the new southward policy, the K-12 Education Administration hopes that children of new immigrants can understand their own cultural and linguistic advantages through the aforementioned educational programs and activities, and that they can become multi-lingual talents with global vision by building their confidence and developing a sense of achievement from learning new immigrants' languages. As such, an army of new southward soldiers will be created. It is believed that with the efforts of the Kaohsiung City Government, the Da-Liao International Academy will have its full potential unleashed and play a critical role in cultivating talents in the future for our southward endeavors.