

## Lightening up Remote Areas with Expertise and Passion

Courtesy of Shi, Yi-Wen, Division of Junior High, Elementary School and Preschool Education)



A total of 19 visiting teachers and 19 schools where these teachers served were invited by K-12 Education Administration, Ministry of Education today (February, 13th, 2017), to gather together at the grand hall of the Ministry of Education. During this event, these educators shared their feedback and thoughts about the “Pilot Program of Visiting Teachers” in the academic year of 2016 with each other and launched a ceremony, titled “Disseminating Professional Knowledge; Realizing Educational Aspirations” with Pan, Wen-Chung, Minister of Education.

This event started with a documentary on the highlights of the “Pilot Program of Visiting Teachers” in the academic year of 2016, which was followed by the sharing of the thoughts by Weng, Yong-Jie, a visiting teacher, Chen, Jia-Qing, a director, and Chen, Su-Ping, principal, at Anding Elementary School in the Waipu District, Taichung City, regarding the executive program of “Reading in the Countryside; Happiness and Stability Prevail.” This press conference was concluded through the ceremony, “Disseminating Professional Knowledge; Realizing Educational Aspirations,” which was joined by the visiting teachers and the school representatives under the leadership of Minister Pan. During the ceremony, the teachers and representatives

marked a Taiwan's map as a symbol of power, i.e. the power has been passed through visiting educators to everywhere across the island, and then Minister Pan put a "key" on the center of the map to symbolize the continuation of the program through the academic year of 2017.

The program of visiting teachers introduced by K-12 Education Administration, Ministry of Education, aims to encourage outstanding primary and junior high school teachers in urban areas to visit schools in remote or extremely remote areas for one year, and they need to develop different curricular focuses based on their own specialties during the visit. Minister Pan stressed that, offering high-quality resources to the teachers in remote areas has been the goal that the Ministry of Education strived to reach. This program, on one hand, manages to establish a national system for education services in the countryside and remote areas to help local teachers enhancing their expertise and innovative teaching strategies; on the other hand, it nudges excellent teachers to contribute their expertise to curriculum design and teaching in remote areas.

This pilot program in the academic year of 2016 was well-received by all the participating schools. For example, Tai-An Primary School in the Houli District, Taichung City, invited Lin, Yan-You, teacher at Lin-Yuan Elementary School, Kaohsiung County, to teach at Tai-An Primary School for one year for the purpose of strengthening its Chinese education and teachers' teaching approaches. During the visit, he not only demonstrated how to guide students regarding Chinese vocabulary, verbal expression, and writing, but also motivated students to think creatively in terms of language. As for reinforcing the teachers' teaching strategies, Lin emphasized that language teaching should not be restricted to "reading and writing;" instead, it needed to be extended to encompass "listening, speaking, and writing." During a seminar, titled "Language in All Dimensions," he led the teachers through the implementation of this idea, and encouraged them to design, revise, and share. Wang, Fan-Shan, Principal of Tai-An Primary School, was much impressed by contributions made by the visiting educators. He witnessed how the teachers have become more confident of their own teaching since the visiting teachers started to teach at this school.

Since this program has been well received by many teachers, K-12 Education

Administration, Ministry of Education, decided to extend it in the academic year of 2017. It is open for applications from today and will close on March 10th, 2017 for schools and March 17th, 2017 for visiting teachers. The team behind the program will arrange a meeting for the both sides (i.e. schools and teachers) to have in-depth discussions as well as field trips so as to identify the model for later cooperation. For further information, please contact the team at National Kaohsiung University of Hospitality and Tourism via 07-806-0505 ext. 1202; detailed explanations will be offered upon request.

The Ministry of Education sincerely welcomes any experienced teachers who love to share and pass on their strategies for teaching to join this program so as to lighten up remote areas with their expertise and fulfill their educational aspirations with their passion.

