

**The List Just Came Out! The Schools that Surged Out in the Program of Campus Aesthetics with Unique Features in Junior High and Elementary School Have Been Announced by K-12 Education Administration of MOE**

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To effectively utilize the campus and incorporate local cultures and features, K-12 Education Administration of MOE promoted the Program of Campus Aesthetics with Unique Features in Junior High and Elementary School since 2007, which was aimed to encourage schools to design their distinct curricula that reflect the unique features of their campus. Ultimately, some schools will be selected based on their good performances in order to motivate school children and enhance their learning outcomes. This year, among the 280 Junior high and elementary schools that participated in the selection, 157 schools were elected by K-12 Education Administration of MOE; 13 of which were labeled as AAA+, 23 of which were labeled as AAA, 27 of which were labeled as AA, 32 of which were labeled as grade A, and 62 of which were labeled as A-. The total number of schools that were elected this year reached a historic high watermark.

Taoyuan City Song-Wu Elementary school, one of the AAA+ schools, is the only school in Taiwan that features plum blossom-themed school-based curricula. The school built many landscape objects on campus such as the poetic forest path called Path of Plum Blossom—the Songs' clan shrine in the local village of Song-Wu called Plum Blossom House was the source of inspiration. The plant ecology of plum blossom and the literature on plum blossom were incorporated into the curricula of all levels, thereby enriching children's learning experiences through the variety of contents. The Bei-Wher (Tropic of Cancer) Elementary School of Chiayi County, one of the AAA schools, is situated on the Tropic of Cancer. Because of this, the school incorporated a series of Tropic of Cancer topic in its geography, history, and astronomy courses. The Tropic of Cancer curricula were later developed into the curriculum of Sun Magic. Sun Magic aimed for students to learn about the green energy of solar power, thereby instilling the knowledge and attitude of sustainable development and care for the environment into the minds of students. The Wun De Elementary School of Changhua County, which earned the label of AA, is located next to Baguashan and a Help-Save-A-Pet Fund. Butterflies, hawks, and dogs were listed the three kernels of its school-based curricula to reflect

the special features of their proximity. The idea of caring for stray dogs was first proposed by school children. Later, teachers and students together developed this idea into one of this school's distinct curricula—Life Education of Stray Dogs. In this curriculum, students learned to respect life, not to dump dogs, and adopt instead of buying a pet. Besides, they learn how to interact with a stray dog.

Since the launch of the Program of Campus Aesthetics with Unique Features in Junior High and Elementary School, many rural schools once facing the problems of being cut down or merged started to re-examine their resources and plan to better utilize their idle campus through the development of distinct curricula. They thus created a new face of campus landscape, innovated teaching methods and materials, and developed a new learning horizon for children. Through the exchange visits with other schools, the persistent research, exploration and innovation of curricula, teachers and students have learned to grow and transform together, thereby boosting energy and vitality on campus as well as attracting the return of local students.

Low fertility creates much challenges for junior high and elementary schools. However, every cloud has a silver lining. The re-allocation of school resources to develop distinct curricula that reflect local features helps to enrich students' learning experiences and attains the goal of sustainable operation.