

## High School Libraries Double as Community Libraries with Support from the Ministry of Education

(Photo/Text: Li Ling, Division of Academic Senior High Education)



The Ministry of Education has implemented the Community Libraries in Schools program in various public senior high schools in line with the ministry's effort to better facilitate the allocation and resources of school libraries. Besides creating a conducive learning environment for students, the program also serves to encourage members of the community to become avid readers themselves. In this way, schools and communities can build stronger ties as both parties reap benefits from the program. At present, 118 schools have completed the preparation works and opened their libraries to the community. More schools will participate in this program in time to come as the ministry continues to provide support for them with the objective of promoting a culture of reading in the nation.

In 2020, Hsinchu Commercial and Vocational High School implemented its Community Library program and received the 2020 National Outstanding Library in Senior High School Award given out by the Ministry of Education. At the entrance to the library, one is greeted by the words "Reading – the Profusion of Life", which is the theme of the community library. As one steps into the library, one feels immersed in a jungle. The designers have infused elements of nature and greenery into the library to embody its theme and create a jungle in an urban

setting, which invites visitors to the library to stop and linger. In this jungle of books, one can spend an idyllic afternoon sitting in a corner with a book in hand, enjoying the profusion of life brought about by the magic of reading.

The community library of The Affiliated Taichung Senior Agricultural Vocational High School of National Chung Hsing University has been designed around the theme of "Joy of Reading". Thanks to the hard work of the school library committee and the assistance rendered them by volunteers, the renovation work was completed in merely two months. During this period, the school also shared the program with their neighboring communities and gained their approval. In the library, new books and themed book displays are located prominently near the library entrance, and there is also a small open area set aside for students and members of the public to carry out themed discussions or events.

The K-12 Education Administration (K12EA ) of the Ministry of Education pointed out that these community libraries provide students with conducive learning spaces. On top of that, they are also excellent venues of learning that support the development of Literacy in Reading and Self-Directed Learning, two skills highlighted in the 2019 Curriculum. The community libraries also provide a chance to break down the barriers between the community and schools, and create opportunities for members of the public to get in touch with the joy of reading. It is the ministry's hope that schools with revamped libraries can encourage their teachers and students to make good use of their community libraries. K12EA will continue to assist schools in building community libraries that highlight the respective strengths of various schools in order to create even more friendly and sustainable campuses.