

Minister of Education visits Nantou to Care for Education Development in Remote Areas

(Courtesy of Li, Jia-Xin at the Division of Junior High, Elementary School and Preschool Education)



Wen-Chung Pan, Minister of Education, Peng, Fu-Yuan, Director-General of K-12

Education Administration of the Ministry of Education, and relevant personnel visited the Nantou Shuang Wen Junior High School and Hu-Shan Primary School in Caotun Township of Nantou County on March 19, 2019, to care for the education development at remote areas schools.

At the first stop of the visit, the visiting group came to the Nantou Shuang Wen Junior High School. Through various effective and creative strategies, particularly artistic and cultural courses, such as "ceramics, fine arts, and traditional Chinese music," the school provided children with a stage that motivated them to learn, thereby successfully transforming the typical way schools in remote areas operate. In particular, the school's traditional Chinese orchestra won the first place in Nantou County at the National Student Competition of Music in 2016.

During the visit, in addition to visiting the school environment, Pan observed classes in the classroom. Mr. Wang, Zheng-Zhong used his own MAPS teaching method, namely "three-level question design," along with "image organization", "cooperative learning," and "oral presentation," to guide his students to experience the beauty of reading and assist students in learning from in groups to by themselves, so as to enhance their learning ability. Since 2015, Mr. Wang has called on Taiwan's elementary and junior high school teachers to join the professional development initiative, named "I have a dream." With the full support of the Ministry of Education, it has attracted more than 20,000 teachers to participate and learn, fully demonstrating the spirit of "spontaneity, interaction, and common good" set out in the 2019 curriculum guidelines.

Peng and his entourage came to Hu-Shan Elementary School for the second stop of the visit. The school is an innovative, warm, and organized school. At present, there are 13 classes at the elementary level and one class at the kindergarten level with a total of roughly 300 students. The school boasts a rich and diverse ecological environment and a team of professional and enthusiastic teachers, and has designed many courses to develop children's "forces of character, learning ability, and future potential," including incorporation of foreign teachers in class, national education day, patent invention, program design courses, character exercise, water sports day, building block courses, future leadership development, technology courses, and integrative activities.

The weekly "Principal's Daily Life Class" at the Hu-Shan Elementary School is the principal Ye, Zhao-Qi's open class, in which all school teachers are invited to observe the class. As the topic of a series of classes was "creative invention," the principal inspired students to think in class through the teaching method of "talking, thinking, remembering, and fulfilling" and committed to enabling each student to come up with one patent invention before graduation. Last year, 47 students obtained six national patents, and this year, 76 students filed nine patent applications; each student would obtain one patent certificate upon graduation. This has helped the talents to develop core competencies and competitiveness for the future.

Through this visit, Pan saw that teachers make good use of professional resources spontaneously to improve the quality of teaching and adopt diverse and innovative teaching methods in the classroom, which would in turn motivate students to learn and grow. In addition, he listened to the teachers' suggestions on education policies and managed to understand the current situation of education at the schools, while exchanging views on students' learning status as a reference for policy making in the future to promote the development of education in remote areas.