

EDB and SCOLAR launch Biliteracy and Trilingualism Campaign (with photos)

The Education Bureau and the Standing Committee on Language Education and Research (SCOLAR) held the Opening Ceremony for the Biliteracy and Trilingualism Campaign today (December 19) to start off a series of activities bringing together people from all walks of life for the promotion of biliteracy and trilingualism in various fields in the coming five months.

The Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Chan Kwok-ki; the Secretary for Education, Dr Choi Yuk-lin; and the Chairman of SCOLAR, Dr Anissa Chan, officiated at the event. To echo the theme of "biliteracy and trilingualism", the three of them delivered speeches in Cantonese, Putonghua and English respectively.

Mr Chan said in his video speech that biliteracy and trilingualism signifies the unique advantages of the language environment in Hong Kong. Under "one country, two systems", Hong Kong has the distinctive advantages of enjoying strong support of the motherland and being closely connected to the world. Having direct access to the huge Mainland market and strong international connection at the same time, Hong Kong serves as a bridge between the Mainland and the rest of the world. He also pointed out that an effective biliteracy and trilingual environment is the key to the East-meets-West culture in Hong Kong, with around 600 000 people from different countries or regions, races and cultures residing in Hong Kong.

He looked forward to the concerted effort to be made by the Special Administrative Region Government and all sectors in the community to strengthen the promotion of biliteracy and trilingualism in various fields amid the context of globalisation. This will consolidate and enhance the competitiveness of Hong Kong in the international arena and enable Hong Kong to become a more caring and inclusive multicultural community.

Speaking at the ceremony, Dr Choi said that the Government strives to attract talent and funds from all over the world to Hong Kong for further study, employment and investment through multiple talent admission schemes to drive Hong Kong's development growth. As a city where international talent gathers, not only does the biliterate and trilingual community help enhance the competitiveness of Hong Kong's economy, but it also promotes integration and multiculturalism.

She also said that it is an education goal to cultivate students' biliteracy and trilingual abilities, and the EDB provides a series of resources, support measures and training for schools and teachers. She mentioned that SCOLAR organises and supports activities for the promotion of biliteracy and trilingualism with various stakeholders. She appealed to all sectors for their joint promotion of the Biliteracy and Trilingualism Campaign to develop Hong Kong's linguistic capital and demonstrate Hong Kong's status and appeal as a multicultural international metropolis.

At the opening ceremony, Dr Chan introduced the work of SCOLAR and the Biliteracy and Trilingualism Campaign. In addition to the One-minute Video Production Competition, which enables students to explore the importance of biliteracy and trilingualism in their daily lives, SCOLAR also invited community partners to organise a series of activities for people from all walks of life. The programme parade of the Biliteracy and Trilingualism Campaign also sets out the upcoming activities to be launched by SCOLAR in 2024.

The opening ceremony that was held at the Lecture Theatre of the Education Bureau Kowloon Tong Education Services Centre was rich in content. In addition to showcasing the newly filmed promotional video on biliteracy and trilingualism, the event also features representatives from the Hong Kong Hotels Association, the Hong Kong Retail Management Association, the Hong Kong Association of Registered Tour Co-ordinators and the MTR Corporation. They together shared the importance of biliteracy and trilingualism in different trades.

In addition, several ambassadors of the Biliteracy and Trilingualism Campaign, including Minnie Soo who won a bronze medal for Hong Kong in the Women's Table Tennis Team competition at the last Olympic Games; Vice-principal of Law Ting Pong Secondary School Dr Rizwan Ullah; and Christine Cappio, a French who published Chinese books. They participated in the chit-chat session and exchanged their experiences in learning and using biliteracy and trilingualism. Around 400 other guests from academia, business sector and community groups attended the opening ceremony.

The EDB will continue to work closely with SCOLAR to create and cultivate an environment conducive to language learning with an aim to enhance the Chinese and English proficiency of the public. For more information, please visit the SCOLAR webpage (scolarhk.edb.hkedcity.net/en/home).



