

Speech by SED at opening ceremony of Learning and Teaching Expo 2019 (English only)

Following is the speech by the Secretary for Education, Mr Kevin Yeung, at the opening ceremony of the Learning and Teaching Expo 2019 today (December 11):

Mr Wilfred Wong (Chairman of the Board of Directors of Hong Kong Education City Limited), distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning. It gives me great pleasure to join you here at the opening ceremony of the Learning and Teaching Expo, which celebrates its 10th anniversary this year. First of all, I would like to extend my warmest welcome to all of you, especially the visitors from the Mainland and overseas.

Presented by the Hong Kong Education City and supported by the Education Bureau, the Learning and Teaching Expo is Asia's leading education exposition as well as Hong Kong's annual signature event for school leaders and teachers to keep abreast of the latest developments and trends in learning and teaching, educational resources and technologies. I am very pleased to know that this year's Expo has made a new record, offering over 350 exhibition booths and 250 programmes that cover a great variety of interesting and inspiring topics.

The theme of the Expo this year is "Tomorrow's Learning Today". The landscape for tomorrow's learning is particularly relevant as we are standing at the brink of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, and traditional education alone is no longer adequate to equip our students with the necessary knowledge and skills for blossoming in the technology-oriented world. Our education should harness the power of IT to enhance the younger generation's capabilities in embracing future challenges.

To prepare our students for the challenges of the 21st century, the Government has dedicated great efforts to creating a favourable environment for schools' implementation of e-learning. These include providing Wi-Fi infrastructure, professional training and other support for schools to enable the optimal application of technology in learning and teaching. We note that schools have made good progress in introducing a variety of e-learning resources and pedagogies to their teaching. Our recent survey, which has about 90 per cent response rate, reveals that all the schools have already adopted e-learning resources for classroom teaching. Furthermore, it is encouraging to note that most schools are positive about the effectiveness of e-learning and they generally agree that e-learning contributes in particular to better learning motivation and self-directed learning.

I am also excited to learn of the accomplishments made by schools that have pioneered the application of e-learning. A rich repertoire of strategies in learning and teaching are disseminated via channels such as training and sharing sessions as well as school-based support service provided by IT in Education Centres of Excellence. For instance, many schools are now adopting "flipped classroom" as a common practice to facilitate students' self-directed learning beyond the confines of time and space.

In another vein, some schools are at the start of applying artificial intelligence to learning and teaching in such areas as automatic feedback and scoring of essays, language learning and adaptive learning system for mathematics. We understand that e-learning measures are not necessarily more effective than conventional ones in every case. Yet, harnessing the power of IT in education continues to open up new learning and teaching possibilities that can enhance the effectiveness of learning and teaching for the benefit of students. To sustain the momentum and hence encourage more teachers to step out of their comfort zone for trying out new technologies in learning and teaching, we will keep up our efforts in strengthening relevant professional development programmes for teachers and disseminating successful experiences and effective pedagogical practices in e-learning through learning communities among schools.

Quality education promotes social development and enhances the competitiveness of our city. Hong Kong, ranked second globally, is once again recognised as one of the most competitive economies in the World Competitiveness Yearbook 2019 issued by the International Institute for Management Development. I am also delighted to know that Hong Kong ranks third among 141 economies in the 2019 Global Competitiveness Report published by the World Economic Forum. To reap the full benefits brought by a proliferation of advanced technologies in the world and the advantage of Hong Kong as a smart city, I would like to call upon all teachers to tap further into the power of IT for greater effectiveness in learning.

Last but not least, I would like to thank Hong Kong Education City for organising the Expo again to bring in expertise and innovations from different regions and countries and to promote professional exchange and collaboration. I wish you all a wonderful and unforgettable experience as you explore the latest educational developments and meet new friends in the coming few days. Thank you very much.