

Ora, o trabalho de cultivar pessoas é espiritual e o respeito pelos professores é uma condição essencial desde os tempos mais remotos. Durante o desenvolvimento económico de Macau nos anos mais recentes, a sociedade tem assistido a uma rápida mudança, sendo o trabalho dos professores cada vez mais complicado, enfrentando estes muitos desafios. Para os professores, além de terem conhecimentos e capacidades profissionais, o mais importante é ter um espírito de profissionalismo e entusiasmo para com a educação, tendo a motivação de acompanhar os tempos e uma auto-exigência e auto-elevação contínuas, visando a que a profissão educativa se torne estimada pela sociedade, para responder às solicitações dos encarregados de educação, sociedade e público, para o melhoramento das qualidades pedagógicas, bem como para corresponder às expectativas para a educação.

Epílogo

Mêncio disse: “quem só tem bons comportamentos não é capaz de administrar, as leis não podem fazer efeito por si mesmas.” A administração com boas leis é um ideal para o legislador, bem como a essência da legalidade;

mas a dificuldade da execução das leis é um inimigo da legalidade. Em Macau, as escolas particulares são sujeitas às regras das escolas na área do ensino não superior. Esta situação é formada pela história, constituindo um sistema educacional único raro no mundo. Assim, no processo legislativo e de aplicação do “quadro geral”, falta aprender as experiências essenciais de outros países ou regiões. Entretanto, a perspectiva final do “quadro geral” é melhorar as qualidades globais do pessoal docente de Macau, a fim de aperfeiçoar continuamente a eficácia de ensino de Macau e acabar por beneficiar todos os alunos. Somente se o governo, as escolas e os docentes puderem ter uma atitude aberta, ter uma comunicação franca e sincera dos problemas que possivelmente surjam na concretização do “quadro geral”, bem como uma confiança mútua e cooperação, acreditamos alcançar uma situação que seja levada em conta de “boa” e de acordo com a “lei”, de que todos beneficiem.

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03

«System Framework for Private School Teaching Staff of Non-Tertiary Education» Key Concerns of the Law An interview with Mr. Lou Pak Sang- Deputy Director of the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau

Introduction

The legislative process of a modern society needs to focus on the core values of democracy, openness, justice and order. Clause (4) of Article 25 of Law No.11/91M – the “Macao Education System” promulgated in the year 1991 stipulates the establishment of “rules and regulations, career regime and remuneration system” for private school teachers. After repeated consultations and discussions for about ten to twenty years, the Macao SAR Legislative Council passed Law No. 3/2012 - the “System Framework for Private School Teaching Staff of Non-tertiary Education” (hereinafter referred to as the “Private School Framework”) in the plenary vote on 28th February, 2012. The system provides clearer responsibilities and obligations for private school teaching staff and provides legal basis for the enhancement of quality and stability of teaching staff in the long term.

This issue of “Teacher’s Magazine” interviewed Mr. Lou Pak Sang – the Deputy Director and coordinator of legal reform in the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau. In addition to narrating the process of legislation in detail, he also frankly gave his opinion on the common issues that all front-line teaching staffs were concerned.

Is the formulation of the “Private School Framework” very difficult?

Deputy Director Lou: The formulation of the draft of the “Private School Framework” is a very complex work. Therefore, the formulating history and process are hard and long. During the period, the education sector and the Government had spent huge effort.

Can you tell us about the historical background of the formulation of the “Private School Framework”?

Deputy Director Lou: Decree-Law No.11/91/M – the “Macao Education System” promulgated in the year 1991 stipulates the formulation of the “Rules and Regulations” and “Career Regime” for teachers. Therefore, the Education Committee established three task forces at different times to follow up the related matters.

The first task force started operation in June 1992. In the plenary meeting of the year 1994, the Education Committee agreed to divide the “Rules and Regulations” and “Career Regime” of teachers into two parts: the former would include the rights and obligations of teachers; while the latter would include the rank and promotion issues. The enactment of the former relating to regulations in nature was completed in the year 1996 with the Decree-Law No.15/96/M – the “Rules and Regulations for Teaching Staff of Private Education Institutions” being promulgated in the same year. As for the part relating to “Career Regime”, the task force continued the discussion.

The third task force submitted three proposals to the Education Committee in February 1998, March and May of 1999 respectively. However, it could not reach a consensus in the plenary discussion. The main problem at that time was the remuneration systems and conditions of private schools varied widely. It was very hard to set up a universal regulation fully accepted by the education sectors. Failing to reach a consensus, the Education Committee decided to include the formulation of the “Teaching Staff Career Regime” in the revision task of the “Macao Education System” in the July 2001 plenary meeting.

The Decree-Law No.9/2006 – the “Fundamental Law of Non-tertiary Education System” promulgated in the end of year 2006 prescribed to set up the system framework for private school teaching staff, so as to regulate the type of work, rank, evaluation, workload, retirement protection and the related rights and obligations. After the promulgation of the “Fundamental Law”, Secretary Chui at that time, now the Chief Executive, gave his clear instruction that priority should be given to processing the bill of career regime framework system of teaching staff.

Is there any public consultation during the formulation process?

Deputy Director Lou: Since the year 2007, the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau had carried out intensive studies and discussions on the related issues. After that, the Decree-law of “System Framework for Private School Teaching Staff of Non-tertiary Education” (preliminary proposal) launched in February 2008 and the Decree-law of “System Framework for Private School Teaching Staff of Non-tertiary Education” (Consultation Draft) launched in October 2008. Two phases of public consultation were carried out successively. In the first phase, 51 consultation sessions were conducted, of which 42 explanatory sessions were carried out in schools. A total of 1,346 views and questions were collected from all walks of life. In the second phase, by holding 9 consultation sessions and through such channels as telephone, e-mail and post, a total of 448 opinions from education workers, teachers, schools, associations and the public were collected.

How do the opinions collected through public consultation help in the formulation of the “Private School Framework”?

Deputy Director Lou: These opinions were collected and compiled by the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau, and then submitted together with the views collected from the members of the Education Committee to the task force of the Education Committee for discussion. After different rounds of discussion, the revised bill was submitted five times to be discussed in the plenary meetings of the Education Committee respectively. At the same time, the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau consulted different public sector departments in terms of the content of the bill, and

drafted and sent the text of the bill to the Executive Council for discussion. After different rounds of discussion and revision, the text of the bill was submitted to the Legislative Council in June 2011. Following the passing of the bill in general in the plenary session of the Legislative Council, the Second Standing Committee discussed closely with the representatives from the Government. During this period, representatives from the Government reported the views received from the Legislative Council to the Executive Council. After different rounds of communication, a consensus was reached and the final text was set in early spring this year. It could be said that it was the achievement through the concerted efforts of different parties and it fulfilled the longtime wishes of teachers.

Do you think the final text of the “Private School Framework” is perfect?

Deputy Director Lou: Two public consultations on the bill of the “Private School Framework” were held and extensively joined by all sectors of the society, especially the education sector. After a long time of research and exploration by the Education Committee and different rounds of discussion held by the Executive Council and the Legislative Council, it can be said that the bill is the result of collective efforts and cohesive consensus of all sectors of the society. It has responded to the demands of many teaching staff. Although it cannot satisfy all people’s desire which is not realistic, it tries to keep the overall balance as far as possible and sets the system for optimising the occupational conditions and enhancing the professional quality of teaching staff.

What is the principle of the legislation of the “Private School Framework”?

Deputy Director Lou: The Law of “System Framework for Private School Teaching Staff of Non-tertiary Education” takes the future development needs of Macao education as its directional goal and is based on reality. It also takes into account the development history of Macao education and takes care of the protection and improvement of the working conditions and enhancement of professional quality of teaching staff. Thus, it reflects the particularity of public interest of the education industry and takes into account the principle of coordination with related policies in other areas.

What is the relationship between the “Private School Framework” and the “Labour Relations Act”?

Deputy Director Lou: Education industry has its own specific characteristics. On one side, with its public interest nature, it needs special care and effective support from the Government in terms of fund protection and welfare policy; on the other side, education is an activity of educating people, the required working mode and time for teachers are different from other industries. The operation of schools is different from that of general enterprises. Special provisions for labour relationship between the school and teaching staff are essential for establishing a high level teaching team to ensure education quality.

In relation to the “Labour Relations Act”, on one side, the “Private School Framework” needs to follow the principles of the “Labour Relations Act”, that is, the working conditions and protection should not be less than the provisions. At the same time, the “Private School Framework” also needs to analyse the particularity of the education industry seriously and strives to solve those special issues that are not stipulated or cannot be addressed in the “Labour Relations Act”, providing an institutional guarantee for the development of education.

On this basis, Clause (6) of Article 40 of Decree-Law No.9/2006 – the “System Framework for Private School Teaching Staff of Non-tertiary Education” stipulates: the system framework governing the types of work, rank, evaluation, workload, retirement security and related rights and obligation of private school teaching staff will be specified by special regulations. On one hand, it further deepens the rules and regulations in Decree-Law No. 15/96/M according to the particularity of teaching staff; on the other hand, it formulates the rank system with the nature of career regime to create good working conditions for teaching staff to stabilise the teaching team, so as to lay the foundation for establishing a sustainable and developable teaching staff system.

Which parts of the “Private School Framework” are better than the “Labour Relations Act”?

Deputy Director Lou: The “Private School Framework” is better than the “Labor Relations Act” in the following aspects:

- The normal working hours are 36 hours per week;
- Entitled to a paid annual leave of no less than 22 days;
- Entitled to the professional development subsidy;
- Entitled to free access to health care;
- To have systematic rank and promotion mechanism;
- Entitled to the protection of mandatory provident fund.

At the same time, teaching staff will continue to be entitled to seniority bonus provided by the SAR Government, even though it is not stipulated in the “Private School Framework”.

What are the purposes of teaching staff evaluation system?

Deputy Director Lou: The “Private School Framework” established the mechanism for evaluation of teaching staffs’ work performance. Its purposes are to positively promote the continual professional development of teaching staff, hence enabling the constant enhancement of education quality. Promotion is one of the effects of the evaluation but it is not the main purpose, and definitely neither is for punishment.

Continuing on P.19



**«System Framework for Private School Teaching Staff of Non-Tertiary Education»
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with Mr. Lou Pak Sang- Deputy Director of
the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau**

Are principals included in the evaluation?

Deputy Director Lou: In the process of legislative discussion, we added the provision to include principals in the evaluation. They are evaluated by the school running entities according to rules and regulations, making the evaluation scope more comprehensive. There is a need to clarify that the school running entities are not part of the organisation of schools. They are the founders of schools and they must establish the school councils, which have the functions of guiding and supervising schools.

Is there any appeal system for teacher who does not agree with the evaluation results?

Deputy Director Lou: When a teacher does not agree with the evaluation result of the Evaluation Committee in that school, aside from raising an objection to the evaluation organisation in the school, he/she can also file an appeal to the Teaching Staff Professional Committee outside the school. The school running entity has the rights of final decision. It is a transcendent entity not relating to the school and plays the role of supervising the school and school principal.

As for the opinion that: Why not assign this decision authority simply to the Teaching Professional Committee, which is not directly related to the school?

It is because private schools are run by private institutions. Law No.9/2006 – the “Fundamental Law of Non-tertiary Education System” stipulates that private schools, in the prerequisite of not interfering with the public sectors’ exercise of monitoring right and being in compliance with applicable law, have administrative autonomy. Personnel management is an important element of administrative management. Therefore, the Law adopts the principle of “moderate intervention” on the work performance evaluation of teaching staff in private schools.

What protection does the evaluation system provided for teaching staff?

Deputy Director Lou: In order to achieve a beneficial result of the evaluation and to provide a safeguard mechanism for teaching staff, several principles are reflected in the following:

- 1.The evaluation work is carried out by the “Collegial System” Teaching Staff Evaluation Committee to avoid the teacher being evaluated by only one superior and no less than one-third of this committee must be composed of front-line teachers;
- 2.Schools should establish evaluation rules and regulation with objective criteria and submit them to the Education and Youth and Affairs Bureau for record and inform their teaching staff of the rules. Before that, the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau will provide schools with reference documents relating to the evaluation work, which include the evaluation items and specific indicators, related trainings may be provided, if necessary;
- 3.A mechanism is required to be established to allow for dissent. If the teacher is not satisfied with the outcome of the dissent, he/she can appeal to the Teaching Staff Professional Committee, which is not directly related to the school. Even though the opinion of the Committee has no binding effect on the final decision of the school running entity, the school running entity is requested to inform the related contents to the Teaching Staff Professional Committee immediately after the final decision is made. This allows the school running entity to take deeper consideration of their final decision.

The above regulations can be said on one hand providing the greatest protection to the rights of teaching staff in this evaluation mechanism and on the other hand achieving the purposes of evaluation and promoting the professional development of teaching staff.

Will there be a pressure on human resources, if the normal teaching hours of teaching staff are reduced?

Deputy Director Lou: The number of teaching hours of Macao teachers is generally more than that in other regions. Their working burden and pressure are rather great. In order to reduce the workload and burden of teachers, the education authority has been planning a system to reduce teachers’ pressure and burden, so as to enhance education quality. Therefore, the “Private School Framework” will widely reduce the weekly teaching hours of teaching staff and further improve the working conditions of teaching staff through law and system, allowing them to have sufficient time and energy to enhance the quality of teaching activities. Although teaching hours are reduced in the “Private School Framework” and the burden of human resources is increased to some extent, at the same time, the SAR Government will launch the “Formal Education Curriculum Framework”, which proposes the “Scientific planning of educational activity hours, the appropriate extension of school days in each school year and the suggestion of appropriately reducing the weekly class hours”. It provides a certain degree of relief for the pressure on increased human resources demand for teachers.

Are there enough teachers in Macao?

Deputy Director Lou: According to our data in the teacher registration system, there is a total number of 3,600 registered teachers under 65-year-old and have left the education system. Amongst them, there are more than 800 persons having taught for over ten years and are exempted from the job entry qualification requirements of Article 10 for the first five years after the Law becomes effective; these people can resume the teaching work at any time. The remaining more than 2,800 persons with seniority less than ten years may join the education sector if they comply with the job entry qualification requirements in Article 10 of the Law. In addition there are new graduates every year, who can join the education sector (we estimate that there are no less than 300 persons per year). This reveals that there is a considerable number of human resources having the qualification to be teaching staff in the society. The problem is how to attract them to join or resume their work in the education sector.

Are you optimistic about the possibility of the above-mentioned people joining or resuming their work in the education sector?

Deputy Director Lou: The promulgation of The “Private School Framework” reflects the fact that both the Government and the whole society attach importance to the teaching profession and teams. The Government protects the working conditions, remuneration and welfare of teaching staff through the enactment of law. In addition, scholarship for encouraging outstanding students to take teacher education programme will be set up in the new academic year. The above policy measures will attract more new force to join the teaching profession and may even make those who have left the teachers team to be back to this meaningful industry. The situation is optimistic.

What kinds of measures are taken to enhance the remuneration and welfare of teaching staff after the implementation of the “Private School Framework”?

Deputy Director Lou: The Government has been striving to enhance teachers’ remuneration and welfare. To this end, we have taken a series of measures, e.g. continue to increase the investment in education, continue to increase free education subsidy, tuition allowance and to optimise the class-teacher ratio or teacher-student ratio...etc. In addition, it is the only private industry in Macao with mandatory provident fund system, free health care and professional development subsidy etc. The professional development subsidy (formerly known as direct subsidy) exclusively for teaching staff in private schools increase the overall income of teaching staff in private schools. After the promulgation of the “Private School Framework”, the professional development subsidy will be increased to a certain extent. Moreover, there is a rank increment of up to 1.8 times; we believe that the overall remuneration and welfare of teaching staff will reach a satisfactory level. We hope that the implementation of various measures

through the “Private School Framework” can enhance and improve the remuneration packages of teaching staff in private schools. In the future, we shall continue to enhance the remuneration levels of teaching staff in schools through investment of resources so as to build up a team of professional, high-level and stable teachers’ team. This is the target we have been working for.

Is there an institutional guarantee for the remuneration and welfare of teaching staff?

Deputy Director Lou: Private school teachers are hired by private entities and the salaries are set and paid by the school running entities. The Government plays the role of financial support and monitors the rational use of public funds. The “Private School Framework” stipulated that no less than 70% of the fixed and long term revenue of a school should be used for teaching staff’s remuneration and provident fund contribution expenditures. This is to assure that teaching staff’s remuneration and welfare can be maintained at a reasonable level by the system.

The remuneration systems and school conditions are different among private schools; why are school remunerations required to be reflected in the differential in rank instead of the “Two-track system”, which is suggested by the education sector?

Deputy Director Lou: In the process of discussion on the career regime of teaching staff, some groups from the education sector suggested the concept of “Two-track system”. They believed that there was a great variety of differences in the circumstances, sizes and remuneration systems of private schools. There was no way to find a universal regulation system that was appropriate for all. Therefore, they proposed to use the two-track system for operational convenience. The “two-track system” refers to the two parts of teachers’ remuneration: one part is the respective remuneration system used by private schools, payment by schools being called the “Post salary” which does not reflect the differential in rank and salary scale; the other part is the direct subsidy for teachers issued by the Government directly and known as “rank payment”, which reflects the professional ranks of teachers. The reason that the Government does not completely accept the “Two-track system” is that it believes the professional rank of teaching staff must be reflected in the remuneration issued by school.

The direct subsidy for teachers of private schools issued by the Government in fact originated in the late 1980s. At that time, teachers gave many lessons, but their remunerations were lower than many other industries. The issue of subsidy was actually a support given to teachers’ in the form of a living subsidy. Now the change of direct subsidy to professional subsidy is still a kind of subsidy in nature. It should not be regarded as part of the remuneration.

On the other hand, although the activities of private schools are sort of public interest activities, according to the stipulations in the “Fundamental Law of Non-tertiary Education System”, private schools are private institutions and the runners and owners are private entities. The Government and private schools are in such a legal relationship that the law allows the Government to provide financial support to private schools, which includes free education subsidy and financial assistance through the Education Development Fund. However, it is impossible for the Government to issue remuneration directly to staff of private institutions. Otherwise the Government will become one of the employers of the teaching staff in private schools and it will cause a series of issues. Firstly, should this kind of labour relationship be governed by the “Labour Relationship Act” or the “Public Service Law”? There is no solution under the current law system. Secondly, the nature of private schools is bound to become blurred unless we modify the “Fundamental Law of Non-tertiary Education System”. In short, the “Two-track system” demanding the Government to pay part of the remuneration for teachers meets serious obstacle in law.

When the Government launches any policy, it has to consider the balances of the policy coordination and the society as a whole. There are other public interest industries in Macao including the social welfare sector and health care sector ...etc. Teachers of private schools have been entitled to “direct subsidy” for years. If the government further changes the “direct subsidy” into part of the remuneration, it may not be widely recognised by the society.

How was the 1.3 times of differential in rank set?

Deputy Director Lou: In the discussion about differential in rank in the first public consultation for the “Private School Framework”, we suggested a more aggressive difference between the lowest and highest levels. Nevertheless, eventually it was adjusted to 1.3 times in the final text; this was set after reaching a comprehensive consensus of all the parties in the development process. The implementation of the rank system for teaching staff needs the complementary actions and adjustments of school financial arrangement. Due to the fact that the implementation conditions of schools are different, if the starting point is set too high and requires the immediate complementary actions of schools, many schools revealed that they had difficulties in implementation. Since all of us were looking forward to the promulgation of the “Private School Framework” as soon as possible, the legislative process should not be delayed. Therefore, it is an urgent task to pass the “Private School Framework” as soon as possible. Hence, in discussion, it was agreed that the implementation would be divided in two steps. The subsidy issued by the Government could go a little faster to optimise the differences between various ranks, whilst the starting point for school remuneration would be set at 1.3 times. This way of implementation is more feasible. Besides the factor of 1.3 times is not the end. In the future, if the conditions are satisfied, we shall enlarge the related differences gradually. According to the stipulation in the “Private School Framework”, the 1.3 times of differential in rank remuneration will be implemented from the school year 2013/2014.

How will the Government ensure and supervise that 70% or above of the fixed and long-term revenues of school will be used for the remuneration and provident fund of teaching staff?

Deputy Director Lou: According to the current system, all schools (including other continuing education institutions) which are financially subsidised by the administrative authority, whether or not they are joining the free education school system, must submit their annual accounts to the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau. In order to abide by the stipulation that the provident fund and remuneration of teaching staff should account for a certain percentage of the fixed and long-term revenues of school in the “Private School Framework”, the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau requires schools to include the newly added “Annual Details of Remuneration of Management Personnel and Teaching Staff” in the submission of annual accounts. Schools need to fill in details of expenditure on the provident fund and remuneration for management personnel and teaching staff in the account table. In the annual audit of accounts of private schools, the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau will monitor whether 70% or above of the fixed and long-term revenues of schools have been used for the remuneration of teaching staff.

The Education and Youth Affairs Bureau is working on the amendment of the law regarding rules & regulations on private school accounts. One of the important considerations is to complement the implementation of the “Private School Framework”. We believe that this will help strengthen the supervision over the use of public fund by education institutions and enhance the reasonableness of school expenditure.

How to make the number of school personnel and its composition, as well as the proportion of expenditure to be reasonable and specific?

Deputy Director Lou: As for the number and composition of school personnel, it is more appropriate and feasible to stipulate in the “School Rules” which governs the operation of a school. Currently, the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau is studying the amendment to Decree-Law No.38/93M “Rules and Regulations for Private Education Institutions”. We shall consider stipulating the setting of reasonable range of the different types of personnel for different types and sizes of schools, which includes the management levels, teaching staff and other personnel. On this basis, we believe that the expenditure ratio for different categories of personnel will tend to be reasonable and standardised.

It was heard that teachers in the higher rank were worrying that the school would lay them off and hire teachers with low seniority in order to save cost. This makes them feeling “the highest but not the safest”. Is there any measure to ease their worry?

Deputy Director Lou: The senior teachers are having ample experiences. They are important human resources for Macao education and are also the important assets for the development of schools; this is the common perception of the education sector, including schools and even the whole society. We believe that schools will consider a reasonable seniority structure in establishing a teacher team.

According to the information we have, there are already a certain differentials in remuneration between the new teachers and experienced teachers in most of the schools. There is no indication that these schools will lay off the experienced teachers. The impact on schools is modest after the implementation of the provision of 1.3 times. Since the policy will not be implemented immediately after the “Private School Framework” comes in force, schools have enough time for adequate preparation. The effect on experienced teachers seems to be more psychological than substantial.

Schools are non-profit institutions. They shoulder the important mission of educating people, promoting the spirit of respecting teacher and cultivating student’s correct moral values. Therefore, in regards to teachers with sound teaching experiences, pursuance for further studies and good working performances, there is no reason for dismissal. In contrast, these groups of high level teachers should be treasured as valuable human resources by schools.

The provision of 1.3 times will be implemented in the academic year 2013/2014. In the future, the Government will take appropriate measures to develop the policy smoothly. Schools have their own resignation and retirement mechanism and every year there is normal staff turnover in schools. It is not necessary to link this situation with the implementation of the “Private School Framework”.

The financial positions of private schools are different and the remunerations for different ranks of teachers are also different. It may happen that the remuneration of teachers of level 5 in School A is higher than that of level 4 or above in School B, is it fair?

Deputy Director Lou: Actually there is a great difference between private schools, which could have a lot of different systems. Some schools have abundant resources and some schools are relatively weak in resources; this situation has existed for a long time. Therefore, it could appear that the remuneration of teachers in lower rank in one school may be higher than the remuneration of teachers of higher rank in another school, given that private schools have financial autonomy and are allowed to formulate their own remuneration guidelines. The private labour market is a free market, it is inappropriate for the Government to specify a unified remuneration for teachers of schools by law. In fact, it is impossible to unify the remuneration systems of all schools. Of course, we have special additional financial supporting plans for schools under unfavorable conditions but with viable educational planning.

However, as we know that the differential in remuneration of the six levels actually reflects the professional development and promotion of ranks of teachers. The differences between schools in remunerations for different ranks are part of the autonomy of schools. When teachers choose the school to teach, besides considering remuneration and welfare, they have many other important considerations. People who engage in education industry will not consider only the remuneration. They may concur with the background, mission or education philosophy, team atmosphere and cooperation of the school etc., as their basis for selecting the school.

In any case, the administrative authority will conceive the relevant financial investment plans to safeguard the stability of the teacher team.

How can the professional qualification of teaching staff be guaranteed by system after the implementation of the “Private School Framework”?

Deputy Director Lou: The government department will establish the Teaching Staff Professional Committee to set professional standards for teaching staff and to fully guarantee the professionalism of the teaching team.

Besides, professional qualification is sustainable and developable, as reflected in the professional development and working performance appraisal of teaching staff. The working performance appraisal can optimise education quality and human resources management, as well as promote the professional growth and work efficiency of teaching staff. At the same time, the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau will support the professional development of teaching staff synchronously. On one side, financially, the professional development subsidy with differential in rank is issued to teaching staff of non-profit local private schools and the seniority bonus is issued in accordance with the actual accumulated service time of teaching staff in schools in Macao to encourage teaching staff to constantly enhance their professional capability.

How will the “Private School Framework” enhance the quality of teaching staff to respond to the expectation of the society on them in terms of institutionalisation?

Deputy Director Lou: The enhancement of the professional quality of teaching staff is the basis to guarantee the development of quality education and is also the basic purpose of the “Private School Framework”. Learning from

the experiences in other countries and regions, the “Private School Framework” provides institutional protection for the quality of teaching staff in the following aspects:

Firstly, it elevates the entry requirements for teachers of various education levels, principals and other middle and senior management personnel in schools. In the future, it will strictly safeguard the pre-service training requirements.

The provisions of qualification requirements and teacher training for teachers of various education levels are helpful to enhance the pre-service professional standard of teaching staff and will help to build up the mechanism for professional recognition and verification.

The “Private School Framework” stipulates the qualification of principal and requests the principal and other middle and senior management personnel to complete the related professional courses required and recognised by the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau prior to taking up the post, thus ensuring that the respective personnel have the professional abilities to lead and develop the school. The above-mentioned provisions help to enhance the professional quality of principals, as well as the entire leadership and management teams of private schools in Macao.

Secondly, it strengthens the in-service training of teaching staff by rules and regulations, which helps to promote their post-entry professional development. The main mechanism includes: the “Private School Framework” clearly specifies the post-entry professional development as one of the three important conditions for rank promotion and regulates in detail the requirements of professional development hours (an average of 30 hours per year) for promotion of each rank.

On the other hand, we shall create conditions for the professional development of teaching staff. For example: aggressively promoting school-based training, the sabbatical leave for further studies and off-the-job training which allow teachers to leave the teaching post temporarily to focus exclusively on further study; developing training programmes for principals and other middle and senior management personnel in schools; subsidising teaching staff to take the recognised education degree and certificate courses...etc. Moreover, the “Private School Framework” even sets conditions for application for early promotion and the honour of “Outstanding Performance Teacher”. All these policy measures complement each other so as to comprehensively care about the five connotations of development of teaching staff: the professional spirit, professional philosophy, professional knowledge, self-awareness of professional development.

Indeed, educating people is a noble work. Respect for teachers has been the fine tradition of our country since ancient times. Following the economic development of Macao in recent years, the society changes rapidly and the work of teachers becomes more and more complex, they also face many challenges. Besides professional knowledge and competence, it is more important for teachers to have a spirit of professionalism and the enthusiasm for education. They need to keep pace with time and have the motive power of continuous self-requirement and self-improvement, allowing the education industry to become a profession with social respect, so as to respond to the demand from parents, the society and the public for the enhancement of education quality and their expectation on education.

Postscript

Mencius once said: “Only good intention is not enough to govern, good law alone cannot be implemented without a firm determination.” Rule of good law is the ideal of legislators and the essence of rule of law. However, if it is difficult to carry out the law, it shall be the enemy of the rule of law. The schools of non-tertiary education in Macao are mainly private schools. It is a historical situation formed through the years; it is also a rare and unique education system in the world. Therefore, in the process of legislation and implementation of the “Private School Framework”, there is lack of practical experience to be borrowed from other countries or regions. Nevertheless, the final vision of the “Private School Framework” is to enhance the teaching efficiency of Macao through the enhancement of the overall quality of teaching staff, and in ultimate, benefit all students. If the Government, schools, teachers and all the stakeholders hold an open-minded attitude to frankly engage in communication with mutual trust and cooperation with each other on the problems which may appear in the process of implementation of the “Private School Framework”, we believe that eventually it will come to the win-win situation of attaining both “Goodness” and “Law”.

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