

Welcoming Speech from Chairman of IAIE(HK) In Inauguration of IAIE(HK) cum Seminar on Invitational Education 15, June, 04

It is my great honor to welcome you all to the Inauguration Ceremony of the Hong Kong Chapter of the International Alliance for Invitational Education.

Based on the five basic assumptions of Respect, Trust, Care, Optimism, and Intentionality, Invitational Education (IE in short) aims to offer a perspective for addressing, evaluating, and modifying the total school environment. It is the process by which everyone in the school is cordially, creatively, and consistently summoned to realize their potential.

In fact, the schools that have practiced IE in Hong Kong appreciate how it has helped unlock the potential of not only students, but also everyone involved in the school, and ultimately the potential of the school itself. Such appreciation has brought a number of early practitioners of IE in Hong Kong together to work on setting up the IAIE (HK).

IE believes that education should be a cooperative and collaborative activity in which process is as important as product. Today's ceremony marks an important step in even greater cooperation and collaboration not only among Hong Kong educators but also among educators worldwide, with the setting up of a permanent establishment for IE in Hong Kong.

Today's Guest of Honor, Mrs Sue Bowen, has played a pivotal role in bringing Hong Kong educators in contact with the many practitioners of IE in the US, thus opening us to a world of possibilities in how we can help students realize their true potentials. Not only has Sue visited Hong Kong in person to help train up our teachers, but in the many visits that we have made to the US, Sue has tirelessly made arrangements for us to meet with educators in the world and to pay numerous visits to the local schools.

These are important seeds out of which flowers of IE is beginning to bloom in many schools in Hong Kong. One of the flowers that have blossomed out of the many contacts we have with the IAIE is the establishment of the IAIE(HK). We are thus extremely glad to have Sue with us today as our Guest of Honor at its inauguration.

We are also very honored today to have Dr Jim Mahoney, Dr Dallas Blankenship, and Mr Peter Wong as our keynote speakers. Some of you might have already met Jim and Dallas before and will remember the inspiring seminars that they conducted in Hong Kong during their visit last October. We are so glad to have them with us again this time.

Dr Mahoney is one of the Trustees of IAIE. He had been a renowned Superintendent before his retirement. After his retirement, he still continues to contribute to education both as the Executive Director of **Battelle for kids** as well as a frequent speaker and seminar leader for IE. With his rich experience in education, I'm sure his speech today will continue to inspire and delight all of us.

Dr Blankenship, a Superintendent of Scott County Schools, has done a great deal in bringing IE not only to the schools that he supervises, but also to Hong Kong and the world. In fact, it is due to his great initiative, support and encouragement that the very fruitful exchange programs between schools in Hong Kong and those of the Scott County were made possible. True to the ideal of IE, such exchange programs have greatly deepened cooperation and collaboration among educators worldwide and played a key role in the development of IE in Hong Kong.

I think our colleagues in Hong Kong are already very familiar with Mr Peter Wong, Senior School Development Officer of EMB, our Honorary Advisor of IAIE(HK). If Sue is the mother of IAIE(HK), then Peter would definitely be its father! One could say that he has single-handedly ignited the fire of IE in Hong Kong with his great enthusiasm. Back in 1991 which is 13 years ago, Peter already recognized the great potential value of IE and began introducing it to Hong Kong.

Through the years, he has incessantly worked on getting more schools to see the value of this approach in bringing out the potential in our students through organizing numerous sharing, seminars, trainings and international functions.

Finally, let me say how glad I am to have all of you, colleagues from different schools and educational bodies in HK here, with us today. The fact that you are here testifies to how much you care about your students and your schools. Ultimately it is your initiatives and hard work, day in and day out at the "front line" of education that the benefits of IE can be brought to our next generation and I salute you all. Thank you!



Clio, Chan So- ming
Chairlady, IAIE (HK)