

6 July 2012

To Whom It May Concern

Re: Support the continuation of the Sign Bilingualism and Co-enrolment in Deaf Education Programme (SLCO)

It is my great pleasure to write this letter of support for the JS-SLCO Programme developed by the Centre for Sign Linguistics and Deaf Studies, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, directed by Prof Gladys Tang and her team. As the course manager of the “Thematic Course on Education of Students with Hearing Impairment and Speech and Language Impairment” commissioned by the Education Bureau for the training of in-service teachers to support students with special educational needs in mainstream schools, my students and I were generously give opportunities to visit The Kowloon Bay St. John the Baptist Catholic Primary School for six times in the past two years. The school is in the 6<sup>th</sup> year in implementing the SLCO Programme.

Our visits were comprised of discussions with the Programme team members including Prof Tang’s team members, Principal So, and Vice-Principal Ng of the school and the teachers involved in the Programme; class observations, interviews with the deaf and hard-of-hearing (DHH) students and their hearing peers and their parents. As a speech-language pathologist and also an audiologist, I was very impressed with the Programme’s enormous success in including deaf and hard-of-hearing (DHH) students in a barrier-free learning environment. Not only the DHH benefited from the oral and sign bilingual learning environments. I was amazed to see that the hearing peers were also benefited from the additional visual information provided in the sign-oral teaching environment.

From the interviews with the students, the DHH students and the hearing peers were able to communicate effectively usual oral and sign language in a complementary way. I deeply believe that this is a very strong piece of evidence for our education system in Hong Kong to consider offering the sign bilingual co-enrolment inclusive environment, as evidenced by the success of the SLCO Programme, as an option for the DHH students especially those who fail to develop competent oral language abilities for various developmental and medical reasons albeit after fitted with the latest hearing technologies and received intensive oral language training.

Prof Tang is an internationally renowned expert in sign linguistics and deaf studies. I am sure with her leadership the SLCO Programme will have a profound influence on the service delivery model in the education of DHH students in Hong Kong. I believe the Programme will bring in many new perspectives in developing effective teaching programs for DHH students in the Chinese communities in Hong Kong, and in the Chinese-speaking communities globally.

I sincerely hope that the SLCO Programme will continue to thrive with ongoing and continuous support from the Government and other funding bodies. I have no reservations in recommending this Programme to you and I wish Prof Tang and her team every success for running the Programme and extending it to the secondary curriculum.

Please do not hesitate to contact me for any further information.

Yours faithfully



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