



澳門大學
UNIVERSIDADE DE MACAU

October 10, 2012

To Whom It May Concern:

Re: The Sign Bilingualism and Co-enrolment in Deaf Education Program

I am writing in support of the continuation of the Sign Bilingualism and Co-enrolment in Deaf Education Program, organized by the Centre for Sign Linguistics and Deaf Studies, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, and supported by the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust.

I learned about this program from a seminar delivered by the Prof. Gladys Tang in 2011. I was impressed by the passion of her and other team members in promoting sign languages, and also fascinated by their mission to promote sign language education from a new perspective.

Based on my exchange with organizations for the Deaf communities, I learned that even though the Deaf can communicate through sign language among themselves, there is still a barrier between the Deaf and the Hearing populations if many members in the Hearing population know little about sign language, or worse, have misunderstandings about sign languages and the Deaf. Some organizations hold sign language classes not only to promote sign language, but also to narrow the gap between the Deaf and Hearing populations. These classes, with the involvement of the Deaf, can expand the social network of the Deaf, promote positive attitudes of the Hearing toward the Deaf, and also develop social groups that involve both the Deaf and the Hearing.

But the Sign Bilingualism and Co-enrolment in Deaf Education Program goes beyond this goal, and introduces sign language education in classroom settings. They aim not only to teach sign language to students, both deaf and hearing students, but also make sign language natural for them. Some believe that sign language may alienate the Deaf, but based on the sharing by Prof. Gladys Tang in the seminar I attended, as well as sharing by the students, parents, and teachers in the program, sign language can become an asset for the students, hearing or deaf.

I also appreciate the team's mission to not only provide services, but also conduct research to enrich our understanding of the process and how to best serve the Deaf. I am collaborating with the team on surveys related to the program, and I am impressed by their enthusiasm to conduct scientific research that have practical significance. The program is a valuable opportunity to enrich our understanding of the Deaf children, their families, and people around them.

The program is unique in its nature, and the human resources it developed, deaf and hearing teachers and researchers, are valuable assets to serve the deaf community and promote harmony between the deaf and the hearing. It is my pleasure and honour to give my highest recommendation to this program for continuous support from the Hong Kong SAR Government and other funding bodies. If you have any further questions, I will be glad to answer them (email: sfcheung@umac.mo).

Yours Sincerely,



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