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Dear Kindergarten Principals and Teachers,

**Care and Love for Children's Growth and Development
through Home-school Collaboration**

As September is drawing on, I would like to thank you all for the efforts you dedicated to the development of young children in the past school year and wish you a successful and rewarding year ahead. I also hope that kindergartens will continue working hand-in-hand with parents to foster children's balanced development in the domains of ethics, intellect, physique, social skills and aesthetics, and help them build a healthy lifestyle.

Creating Harmony with Care and Respect

In the coming school year, "Let's build a harmonious society together through care and respect" will be the theme of "My Pledge to Act". We hope to see redoubled efforts in kindergartens and families to help children cultivate positive values and attitudes including caring for, respecting and appreciating others. Kindergartens may, having regard to the school context and children's needs, consider, for example, adopting Chinese culture and moral values as themes in designing creative and interesting parent-child reading activities to promote moral education.

Kindergartens may also arrange reading, physical and aesthetic activities. These activities promote the health of young children and help them learn to communicate and collaborate with others. These fun-filled activities also facilitate interaction among children of different cultural backgrounds, thus help bring about a harmonious learning environment. In addition, kindergartens may seek funding from the Dedicated Funding Programme for Publicly-funded Schools under the Quality Education Fund to enrich their learning resources and attract greater participation in school life from young children.

Love-filled Campus with Appreciation and Acceptance

To young children, admission to kindergarten brings the first experience of school life and the world beyond their family as well as an abundance of new things for them to discover. At this early stage of their lives, we need to provide them with an environment filled with care and trust where they feel loved, accepted and encouraged. This will help them grow up with confidence, self-love and empathy, and will prepare them for changes and challenges in the future.

Each child is unique. I am sure you will agree that at the kindergarten stage, more care and attention need to be paid to children's physical and psychological development, to arouse their curiosity about the world, and to recognise their individuality so that they can learn to appreciate themselves and accept others. Children will find pleasure in learning and enjoy a happy childhood in a loving and caring setting.

Promoting Care through Home-school Co-operation

To parents, children are their treasure. To us all, they are the future pillars of the society. Parents and the community both have an important part to play in ensuring the well-being of children. The Government will strengthen communication with the kindergarten sector, provide resources to create a caring and inviting environment for children's growth and development, and step up parent and public education.

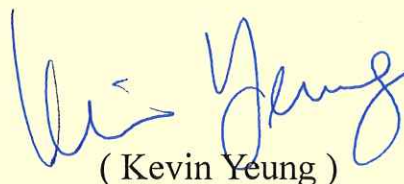
It is imperative that kindergartens and parents maintain good communication. Building on the good foundation laid, they can communicate and work more closely to ascertain children's developmental needs, set realistic targets for them, promote children's healthy development and avoid pressing them to make achievements not commensurate with their age and abilities.

To help parents better understand the physical and psychological development of their children, the website "Smart Parent Net" (www.parent.edu.hk) was launched early this year. Kindergartens may encourage parents to visit the website and learn more about the growth and developmental needs of children. With deeper understanding, parents will be in a better position to facilitate children's happy and healthy development.

I look forward to continuous and concerted efforts in creating a conducive environment for children's healthy development and a learning setting with love and harmony from the kindergarten sector and other stakeholders such as the Committee on Home-School Co-operation and Federations of Parent-Teacher Associations of different districts. This will allow children an enjoyable and fulfilling life in kindergarten.

While you are fully engaged for the new school year, I hope you can stay vigilant and maintain a clean and hygienic school environment to prevent the spread of communicable diseases (in particular dengue fever) in school premises so as to protect children's physical and psychological well-being.

Yours sincerely,



(Kevin Yeung)

Secretary for Education