

Town Hall Meeting with Sarawak ICSS
Chairman's Remarks
Temenggong Dato Vincent Lau Lee Ming
Chairman of The Sarawak United Association of
Private Chinese Secondary School Management Board

Date: 22 April 2025 (Tuesday)
Time: 9.00am - 12.00pm
Venue: Wong Nai Siong Secondary School, Sibuluan
Organised by: Ministry of Education, Innovation & Talent Development, Sarawak (MEITD)

Speakers:

1. YB Dato Sri Roland Sagah Wee Inn (Minister of MEITD)
2. YB Datuk Dr. Annuar Rapae (Deputy of Minister of MEITD)
3. YB Datuk Francis Harden Hollis (Deputy of Minister of MEITD)
4. YBrs. Dr. Les Anak Met (Deputy Director, School Management Sector of Sarawak State Education Department / Timbalan Pengarah Sektor Pengurusan Sekolah, Jabatan Pendidikan Negeri Sarawak)

Moderators:

1. Tuan Haji Adana bin Haji Jed (Permanent Secretary of MEITD)
2. YBhg. Dato Richard Wee Liang Chiat (Chairman of The Federation of Chinese Associations of Sarawak)

YB Speakers & Moderators,
School Directors,
Principals, Teachers and Students,
Distinguished Guests,

Good morning, everyone.

1. Today, we gather at Wong Nai Siong Secondary School for the “Town Hall Meeting with Sarawak’s Independent Chinese Secondary Schools”, organised by the Ministry of Education, Innovation, and Talent Development of Sarawak (MEITD).

This event serves not only as a valuable platform for open dialogue but also as a crucial opportunity to advance the continuous development of Sarawak’s independent Chinese secondary schools.

2. As a key part of Malaysia’s diverse education system, Independent Chinese Secondary Schools (ICSS) have long played a vital role in in cultivating outstanding talents and making significant contributions to the nation’s economic, cultural, and social development.

It is truly encouraging to see that independent Chinese Secondary Schools have gained widespread recognition for their academic excellence, unique cultural values, and commitment to continuous innovation in education.

3. In today's rapidly evolving educational climate, independent Chinese secondary schools are confronted with pressing challenges, including teacher development, curriculum enhancement, resource allocation, and long-term growth strategies.

This town hall meeting provides an invaluable opportunity for meaningful discussions, knowledge-sharing, and collaborative problem-solving. Together, we can explore forward-looking solutions that will further enhance the quality and sustainability of Sarawak's independent Chinese secondary schools.

4. In recent years, the Sarawak government has shown a strong commitment to regaining educational autonomy from the federal government. However, due to the lack of a clear implementation framework, the public remains uncertain about how this vision will be realised.

Federal education policies often change due to politics, disrupting long-term talent development and raising public concern. To move forward, Sarawak government could perhaps look to the Dong Zong model, which offers a valuable reference for building a more flexible and locally driven education system.

5. One of the key strengths of independent Chinese secondary schools is their curriculum independence. Free from federal restrictions, these schools can adapt their programs to meet current social and industry needs. They also have the freedom to design school-based courses that reflect local culture and support regional development.
6. Since the Sarawak government values strong English and technology skills, schools are encouraged to include globally recognised English and STEM programs within the national curriculum. Working with top local and international education partners can better prepare students for global challenges and help grow the talent needed for Sarawak's future.
7. With greater autonomy, the Sarawak government can create its own education blueprint—one that brings in quality resources, designs locally relevant curricula, and builds a highly skilled teaching workforce. These efforts are crucial to shaping an education system that aligns with Sarawak's economic, technological, and social aspirations.
8. We extend our sincere gratitude to the Sarawak government for its unwavering support of Chinese education. We also look forward to MEITD's continued support in providing essential resources to help independent Chinese secondary schools achieve new milestones in academics, culture, and innovation.
9. At the same time, I encourage school representatives to actively share your needs and suggestions so that, with government support, we can improve education policies and create a better learning environment for our students.

10. Lastly, I hope today's discussion inspires new ideas, encourages greater collaboration, and helps us work together to support the long-term growth of education in Sarawak, especially in the independent Chinese secondary school system. Thank you.

