

From: Wolfgang Ehmann
To: panel_e@legco.gov.hk
cc:

Date: Thursday, November 17, 2011 03:26PM
Subject: Legco Education Panel meeting 11 July 2011

Dear members of the Legco Education Panel,

I refer to the captioned meeting and ESF parents representative Alex Chiu's letter dated 15th November to the panel and various stakeholders. I fully support Alex' letter and being in the business of trade promotion (I work for the German Chamber in Hong Kong), I would in particular like to stress the importance for Hong Kong, as a major gateway in Asia for international corporations to do business, that being able to attract international talent is crucial to the continued success of the Hong Kong business model. It is not necessarily only the top salary executives which make a place like Hong Kong tick, but perhaps a highly trained specialised mechanic who keeps SCMPs printing machines humming or expat engineers who develop products for Johnson Electric. Despite their skills, such employees are not necessarily being paid salaries of such dimensions, that international school fees for their children, on top of expensive housing, could be covered.

In my opinion the ESF debate is not simply about money or whether the Hong Kong administration feels it necessary to dispose of colonial baggage, but whether or not Hong Kong is to preserve its diversity as a cosmopolitan metropolis and its appeal to the international business community.

I am writing here in my capacity as a Hong Kong citizen of 25 years. I have a child attending SJS, but I am fortunate that my employer covers schooling. Nevertheless, for the reasons mentioned above, I cannot emphasize enough, that for the sake of maintaining Hong Kong 's competitive edge (in Singapore public schools teach in English) affordable English medium of instruction schooling is and will be instrumental.

Yours faithfully,

Wolfgang Ehmann