

Views on Ethnic Minority Education
Submission to the Subcommittee on Rights of Ethnic Minorities
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*A group of concerned ethnic minority parents from **Kwai Tsing***

As ethnic minority parents, we concern about our children's education and hope they can learn more Chinese so that they will not face language barrier again as we do. However, we are facing a lot of problems when we are helping our children. These are the problems we face:

1. Most of the school open days are organized in Chinese.

Information and promotion are in Chinese too so we do not know about it.

2. School attitude is not good to ethnic minority parents and children.

One of our members had the experience that the school directly told her 'if your child's Chinese is not good, do not come to or school' and 'if you do not care about education, do not come to our school'. This scares away ethnic minority parents as the school already assume ethnic minority do not care about education.

3. Not enough information when choosing schools.

We need to know the following information but it is not written in the school profile:

- a. The language of school notices
- b. If schools already have non-Chinese students
- c. Chinese language support for our children (eg. Tutorial, extra class etc)
- d. Chinese class level (eg. what Chinese public exam the schools will offer to my child, what Chinese class will students have to take, what level is it compared to Chinese students)
- e. If there is teaching assistant and what they can help
- f. Is the school teaching Putonghua
- g. Other Resources for NCS students

4. Child's Chinese education rely more on private help then the school

Not every parent understands Chinese so they cannot help with homework and learning Chinese at home. But not every parent can afford private tutor. Now the schools are not teaching Chinese well and our children are learning very less.

5. Tutorial in school and NGOs are not useful

Many tutorials in NGOs and schools only focus on homework but not teaching children Chinese learning. The tutors are not Chinese teaching and mostly university students, and in one class there are many students, cannot focus on individual student's learning.

6. Teaching Assistant is not helpful

Teaching assistant is not useful for students' in learning since most of them do not know Chinese reading and writing too. Most of the teaching assistants only know how to communicate in minority languages and English, sometimes Chinese too, but their roles are unclear. Parents do not know if their message has been correctly transferred to the school through the assistant. They should have training and need qualification to make sure their quality.

7. Chinese classes is too easy in schools

Many schools only have mainstream Chinese class and "CSL class", which is either too difficult or too easy. Children are not learning much in Chinese not because they do not want to learn. Our children also use 15 years to take Chinese class so we want them to learn more Chinese as much as Chinese students. No children are dump so don't teach our children easy Chinese.

8. Not enough information about Chinese learning in school

We do not know much and we trust the teacher. So when teacher say my children will take GCSE exam we said yes. But we do not know GCSE is just P.2 level Chinese compared to mainstream Chinese level. This is too low and we do not accept this. We need to know more information.

9. Putting all non-Chinese students in one school is not a solution

If all non-Chinese children are in one school, they will not speak Chinese because they can use their own language or just English. There should not be only non-Chinese students in one school.