

# The Student Standard



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The school choir entertains guests and students with the enchanting song, *Somewhere over the Rainbow*



Young performers delight the audience with traditional folk dancing

## Dedicated teaching reaps results

Staff at a Tuen Mun school who devote their time to becoming their students' friends see their efforts rewarded, writes **Jennifer Smith**

**A**SCHOOL'S ordinary graduation ceremony has revealed an extraordinary secret — teachers' willingness to be students' mentors and friends.

Po Leung Kuk Tang Yuk Tien College, a Band One school, sits on the outskirts of the territory, in the spacious and uncharacteristically green area of Tuen Mun.

It does not boast amazing facilities, flashy programmes or a wealth of resources within its reach.

Instead, its most invaluable asset is the unflinchingly dedicated staff and the healthy approach it takes to education.

The guest-of-honour, University of Hong Kong mathematics department head Siu Man-keung, said the key to a successful education system is to appeal to students' interests.

Creating an atmosphere of active participation and open discussion made material covered in classroom come alive, allowing true learning to take place.

This year's long list of student awards and achievements is no aberration. They are representative of the school's commitment to academic excellence, as it continues to groom a steady stream of high performers ready to serve the community.

"Every year is more or less the same," English panel chairperson Lam Cheuk-ki said.

Principal Cheung Ka-pong added: "Our teachers are very hardworking, although this is just a school in the New Territories, an ordinary school subsidised by the government, with little family support."

Because the school uses English as the medium of instruction, many parents are unable to assist students with their studies.



Nip Hiu-ching says activities like dance have rounded her out



Unicef Young Leader Wong Kai-kwong has changed his outlook



Form Three's Fung Tze-wing was chosen as an Outstanding Teen



Wah Kai-ye has been granted early admission to university

"The teachers are dedicated and most of them take the time to hold supplementary lessons, to help students with any questions or problems they might have... the teachers' efforts have really paid off," Mr Cheung said.

Due to his outstanding performance in the HKCEE, Form Six student Wah Kai-ye has the chance to skip Form Seven and the A-level examinations, and attend Hong Kong University of Science and Technology this autumn. "It's

easy to find teachers who are good at teaching, but it's very difficult to find people who really care about their students and who are really friends with them. They are our mentors and our buddies," Kai-ye said.

Form Three student Fung Tze-wing, chosen as an Outstanding Teen in the Fifth Hong Kong Outstanding Teens Election, is a prime example of the effort made to nurture all aspects of student life. "Besides having good aca-



Principal Cheung Ka-pong, right, thanks Professor Siu Man-keung for speaking at the ceremony. Below, Professor Siu said keeping youngsters interested was crucial to effective teaching



ademic results, I also took part in volunteer work. I visited an elderly home and an institution for the mentally ill," Tze-wing, 15, said.

Several students gave their time to the community, as part of the Social Welfare Department's annual "Action with love" scheme, winning 82 individual and six group awards.

Among those honoured at the ceremony was Form Seven student Nip Hiu-ching, who won the Highly Commended Award and Choreography Award for Western dance in the 40th Hong Kong Schools Dance Festival.

"I've been dancing for 15 years — since I was four years old," Hiu-ching, 19, said. "If I am not able to go to university, I want to teach dance to young people. It's important to do other things besides study. I spend time with my family and do other activities, because to me, it is very important to be a well-rounded person."

A leader in this year's Unicef Young Leaders programme, Form

Six student Wong Kai-kwong, agrees that gaining outside experience is important.

"I went to Laos for seven days during the Easter holiday. Before leaving, we attended camps to develop our leadership skills and learn about the problems facing developing countries," Kai-kwong said.

Kai-kwong gave an example of primary students who showed immense appreciation when given simple gifts, such as pens from Hong Kong. "They were very happy to have the chance to study and were willing to make use of simple supplies in order to learn."

The attitude of the college's students is the same — making the best of every chance and appreciating the time and energy teachers devote to their well-being and happiness.