

Address by Dr Darwin Chen, Honorary Fellow

Council Chairman – Mr Pang, Mr President – Professor Cheung,
Members of the Council, Deans and Faculty Members, Distinguished
Guests and Fellow Students,

I am most honoured to be making this address, on behalf of all the Honorary Fellows who are receiving this award from The Hong Kong Institute of Education today. I am particularly excited to be returning to my alma mater 55 years after my graduation, and to be able to share my experiences with some of the most committed individuals, dedicated to the development of our future generations. The opportunity for such exchanges is invaluable.

Over the past 50 years, Hong Kong has achieved significant advancement, not only on the political and economic fronts, but also with regard to the life of its people. Despite the many controversies on education, there has been tremendous progress in teacher education and development. The establishment of The Hong Kong Institute of Education, in particular, has greatly enhanced the quality and quantity of teacher education. We alumni of the five colleges of education, are extremely proud of this achievement. And the six of us who are receiving the honorary fellowship today will, I am sure, also be following the future of the Institute very closely. On their behalf I would like to express our heartfelt gratitude for the honour conferred upon us and we will make every effort to contribute towards the continual development of the Institute.

Many of the Honorary Fellows in the past few years, as well as several of us this year, come from the arts and culture sector. As one of them, I would like to take this opportunity to discuss the importance of cultural education in Hong Kong's future.

In an age where global competition is becoming ever more intense, and overall resources increasingly sparse, cities can no longer rely purely on natural resources to remain competitive. Instead, the development of human capital and creativity are crucial to their survival and prosperity.

This is why so many economists have put forward the theory that the 21st century will be a century of creativity. They believe that it heralds an age when the economy will be hinged on knowledge, and that the building of a creative city is a natural and inevitable development. This trend will be followed by many cities in the future.

A creative city is vital to the development of a culture-and knowledge-driven economy. Forging such a city will attract outstanding talent from the cultural and creative industries, which will in turn provide a new source of vitality and competitive advantage for the city, as well as providing possibilities for creative solutions to the city's ongoing developmental problems.

To lead the public to appreciate creativity, and to nurture creative talents, creative activities must be rooted in the community. Catapulting this process, creative education must begin in schools. The Hong Kong Institute of Education has been actively involved in the development of creative arts and cultural education. Its responsibilities in supporting this new

development in Hong Kong can only become increasingly more important.

In the transformation from a service industry to a knowledge-based economy, we need to, first and foremost, develop Hong Kong into a thriving cultural metropolis. I believe that The Hong Kong Institute of Education, particularly when its nomenclature becomes that of a university, will be able to make even more crucial contribution to this cause and create a greater impact.

May all of us who are involved in culture and education persevere in our task and gain recognition and participation from the public. Let us join hands to build Hong Kong into a creative city of the 21st century!