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SPEECH BY DR ALINE WONG, SENIOR MINISTER OF STATE FOR EDUCATION, AT EAST SPRING
PRIMARY SCHOOL'S ANNUAL SPEECH DAY & PRIZE GIVING CEREMONY ON THURSDAY 18 NOVEMBER
1999 AT 2.00 PM, AT 31, TAMPINES ST 33

Mr Teo Kun Fung, Principal of East Spring Primary School

Teachers, Pupils,

Parents and Friends of the school

Good Afternoon

1 I am delighted to be here again, this afternoon, to officiate at
your school's first Speech & Prize-Giving Ceremony. I was with you a month ago
during your first Open House, and it is good to be able to join you again for
today's event.

2 The Singapore schools of today face exciting developments in
education. We place a high premium on preparing the next generation for the
challenges ahead. As we chart paths for our pupils to help them navigate the world
of tomorrow, we aim to provide them a holistic education that will enable them to
meet a knowledge-based economy. We need to instil sound moral values in our young,

while teaching them to source and select from the unlimited wealth of information which IT enables them to access with the click of a mouse.

3 The Ministry of Education is moving toward ability-driven education to help each individual realise and maximise his talents and abilities. With the introduction of the Schools Excellence Model, educators in schools will be provided with vast opportunities, incentives and performance indicators for them to deliver quality education that will make a difference to each pupil. Principals and teachers are given the flexibility to innovate and develop strategies and programmes to create their own school niches, while catering to the education goals stipulated in the Desired Outcomes of Education.

4 Since moving into your new premises on 22 March this year, East Spring Primary has embarked on a variety of programmes both in instructional and non-instructional areas.

5 Much emphasis has been placed on the promotion of creativity in pupils through the conduct of project work in various subjects like Science, Social Studies and English Language. There are also moves to enhance the IT skills of pupils. Primary Four pupils have been taught Desktop Publishing, and all ten primary one classrooms have four computers each for IT-based group activities** Lessons conducted for group work through interactive CD ROMs or on-line lessons.

With the provision of free access areas with computers, there is now a growing IT culture in the school. Pupils have also been encouraged to make use of CD ROMs and books in the Media Resource Library to cultivate self-directed and self-motivated learning. Pupils' works have been published and kept in the school's Media Resource Library for their fellow schoolmates to read. May I encourage both teachers and pupils of East Spring Primary to keep up with this spirit of teamwork and shared learning.

6 Your pupils have been provided with opportunities for enrichment in other areas. Within a short span of eight months, East Spring Primary has already conducted a Leadership course for the Primary Three and Four prefects and monitors. Through enrichment programmes like the Speech and Drama Course, pupils were able to put up a credible drama performance on Teachers' Day. This kind of exposure to programmes in non-academic areas helps pupils to learn more about themselves and enables the teachers to spot talents and identify areas of pupil development to focus on. In your first year, you have already won a number of awards in art competitions and in physical fitness.

7 I also notice that you have added more facilities in the new school compound, to enhance interactive activities among students and encourage parental involvement, e.g., the Eco Gardens, Science Discovery Corner, Art Gallery, Pupils' Study Area and Parents' Waiting Areas. Your principal, Mr Teo, has shared with me that there are plans to add even more facilities such as a Mathematics Discovery Area, a National Education/Heritage Corner, an Honours' Corner, a Rock Wall Station, and a Music Appreciation Corner.

8 The school has started off well and the future augurs well for East Spring Primary. May I urge all members of the East Spring Primary family, pupils,

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principal, teachers and parents to continue to work hand in hand, to become a model of school excellence. Let me also congratulate the young East Spring Primary prize winners who have done your school and your parents proud. I wish you many more good years in your journey of educational achievement and fulfillment.

Thank you.

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