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To:

cc: (bcc: NHB NASReg/NHB/SINGOV)

Subject: MOE DE Note (16 Nov 99) and (EMBARGOED) Speech by Dr Aline Wong, 17 Nov 99, 2 pm and Press Release on Performance by Ethnic Group, 17 Nov 1999

Dear Editor:

Media Division, Ministry of Information and the Arts, #36-00 PSA Building, 460 Alexandra Road, Singapore 119963. Tel: 3757794/5

EDUN N25-02-004

16 Nov 99

The Editor

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Dear Sir

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PRESS RELEASE ON PERFORMANCE BY ETHINIC GROUPS AND SPEECH BY SENIOR MINISTER OF STATE (EDUCATION), DR ALINE WONG, AT GRIFFITH PRIMARY SCHOOL ON 17 NOV 99 @ 3.00PM

Please find attached the speech by Senior Minister of State (Education), Dr Aline Wong, at Griffith Primary School and press release on performance by ethnic groups.

2 Please note that the speech is embargoed until delivery and the press release is embargoed until 17 Nov 99 at 5.00pm.

3 You are invited to send your representatives to cover the event at Griffith Primary School. Please let me know of the attendance of your representatives by 17 Nov 99 at 11.00am.

Yours sincerely

EVELYN HO (MISS)

PUBLIC AFFAIRS DIVISION

for PERMANENT SECRETARY (EDUCATION)

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Singapore Government

PRESS RELEASE

Media Division, Ministry of Information and the Arts, #36-00 PSA Building, 460 Alexandra Road, Singapore 119963. Tel: 3757794/5

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EMBARGO INSTRUCTIONS

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The attached press release/speech is EMBARGOED UNTIL AFTER DELIVERY.

Please check against delivery.

For assistance call 3757795

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http://www.gov.sg/sprinter/

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Primary School Commendation Day 1999 ON WEDNESDAY, 17 NOV 99, 2.00 PM AT 3 TAMPINES ST 22

Ms Choy Poh Chun, Principal, Griffiths Primary School,

Distinguished guests, parents, teachers and pupils,

1. I am pleased to be with you this afternoon on your annual Commendation Day. This is an occasion when recognition is given to top pupils for their outstanding performance in both the academic studies and Extra-curricular activities. Let me congratulate all the recipients, their parents and teachers for the successes celebrated today.

2. Griffiths Primary School has been progressive in her outlook and has made good progress. The overall PSLE results have been above the national average for the last two years. Beyond academic excellence, the school has undertaken various community projects to imbue in our young a sense of community service. It has also done well in competitive sports and games and won awards at the Singapore Youth Festival.

3. Griffiths has a long history dating back to the 1950s. It was originally located at Towner Road. It was closed in 1982 and re-opened its gates at the present premises in 1988. Griffiths has re-established itself to be a well-regarded school through sheer hard work and determination. This is made possible with the help and support from teachers, parents and the community.

4 One of the achievements of Griffiths could be evidenced by the consistent improvement of pupils' results in the PSLE over the years. The percentage of pupils who passed PSLE has improved from 86% in 1990 to 98% in 1998. The improvement is a tribute to the people who have worked hard to make our education system and Griffiths School excel.

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5 At the national level, I am happy to note that there is continued progress in terms of academic achievement. I would like to share with you the latest updates on the academic achievements at the key levels at the national level and for the different ethnic groups. Since 1988, MOE has been releasing these data to provide information and to encourage children of the various communities to reach for greater heights in academic performance.

6 First, at the national level, the proportion of pupils who pass the PSLE has continued to increase, from 88% in 1990 to 95% in 1998. The percentages of pupils who passed English Language and Mathematics at PSLE have also improved over the years. It is also encouraging to see that at least 98% of our pupils have passed Mother Tongue Language at PSLE in the last ten years.

7 Pupils from all ethnic groups have performed well consistently over the years. Since 1990, the percentages of pupils qualifying for secondary school

have gone up from 74% to 90% for the Malays, from 80% to 92% for the Indians and from 91% to 97% for the Chinese. Our Malay pupils have also achieved passing rates of well over 99% for their Mother Tongue Language throughout the last ten years, which surpasses the pass rates of the other ethnic groups in their respective mother tongues.

8 In the GCE O-level, there is a steady increase in the proportion of pupils obtaining at least 5 O-Level passes. In 1990, it was 69%; in 1998, it rose to 74%. This upward trend is also evident for English Language. The increase in proportion of pupils obtaining at least 2A and 2AO level passes including GP is also impressive, from 77% to 86% between 1990 and 1998. With the improvement in O-level results and the great expansion in opportunities for post-secondary education, the number of students who went on to the Institute of Education (ITE), Polytechnics, Junior Colleges and Centralised Institutes has increased from 26,964 in 1990 to 37,752 in 1998. This is a 40% increase. Among the Malay students, the number admitted to ITE, Polytechnics, Junior Colleges and Centralised Institutes has doubled from 2,286 in 1990 to 4,960 in 1998. It is particularly encouraging to note that the number of Malay students attending polytechnics has tripled from 524 to 1558 between 1990 and 1998.

9 To sum up, there has been steady and encouraging developments in the academic performance of all our pupils. This speaks well of the pupils' hard work, the teachers' guidance and encouragement, as well as the parents' and the communities' aspirations for their children. However, we should remember that academic excellence, though important, is not the sole objective of education. We should continue to nurture our pupils in other areas and imbue the right values in them. Parents would certainly have a critical role to play in this aspect. Attitudes of parents towards their child's studies, and the values that they seek to inculcate in the children from young can make a vital difference to children's performance and behaviour in school. Schools need the support of the home to develop the child to his full potential. If parents are able to fulfil their responsibilities in developing good habits in their children and act as good role models, encouraging their children to work hard, more than half the battle will be won. Schools can only succeed in developing good character and instilling sound values if parents reinforce the same values imparted in school.

10 To the recipients who are here today, I would like to say that the awards should spur you on to greater success. I once again congratulate you on your fine achievements, and call upon the others to work hard so that they too will be future award recipients.

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Attached is the press release on Performance by Ethnic Group

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