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SPEECH BY MR TANG GUAN SENG, PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY
(EDUCATION), AT THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF DUNEARN
SECONDARY SCHOOL ON SATURDAY, 23 AUGUST 1986 AT 9 AM

I am very pleased to be here this morning on the occasion of your 25th Anniversary Speech Day and Prize Presentation and to join you in your celebration.

Twenty-five years or a quarter of a century is a long time. During this period, the School has undergone many changes, so has our society as a whole.

In the early years of our nationhood, we were faced with many problems such as unemployment, inadequate housing, poor health services etc. The pressing educational need then was to provide enough places in schools for our children.

It was under such circumstances that Dunearn Secondary School started in 1962 as two different schools located in the same campus. These two schools, Dunearn Chinese Middle School and Dunearn Secondary School were amalgamated in 1969 and given the present name.

Because of the pressure for places in secondary schools, Dunearn in the early 70's constantly had an enrolment of some 3,000 pupils, double its present population. With the same number of rooms as it has now, one can well imagine the over-crowded situation that existed in the school in those early years. Every available space was used as a classroom to accommodate the pupils. Dunearn did not have many of the special

facilities which we find in the school today. The school library was just a one-room affair with a small collection of books. It could hardly seat 20 people at a time, a far cry from the present comfortable air-conditioned library which is stocked with a comprehensive range of books. The well-equipped special rooms such as AVA room, theatrette, computer room and language room which pupils of Dunearn enjoy using, were unheard of in the early years.

With enrolment down to a manageable size and the added new facilities, the principal and teachers are now concentrating their efforts on improving the school's instructional programme to provide quality education.

I understand that the various English Language programmes have improved the students' EL1 performance at the 'O' level examination.

The computer awareness course has attracted many pupils. Other programmes include monthly Writing Competition, compulsory use of a library and Wednesday afternoon lectures for Pre-U students.

Dunearn has progressed since its early years existence. The progress indeed is very much a part of Singapore's overall progress. Those who have been associated with the school from its very beginning will be able to appreciate better the improvement it has made.

The school can upgrade its facilities, provide staff development courses and work out good programmes but all these will come to nought if the pupils are not prepared to play their part. They can only take full advantage of what the school is offering by responding positively. By this, it means that they should continue to

be actively involved not only in the extra-curricular activities of the school but also in their pursuit of academic excellence.

I hope, the pupils will re-affirm their commitment on this auspicious occasion to work hard for themselves and for their school. It is only with the presence of the commitment from the pupils that attempts by the school to improve the quality of education can succeed.

I would like to end by congratulating the prize winners and the school for its achievements with the assistance of your dedicated School Advisory Committee under the chairmanship of Dr Loh Kum Fong.
