

Singapore education system must evolve quickly

Boosting lifelong learning and closing learning gaps early in life are among the five key areas of focus needed to ensure Singapore's education system stays relevant in an increasingly uncertain and challenging world.

The urgency for Singapore's education system to evolve quickly is clear and more must be done, said Education Minister Chan Chun Sing (right).

The areas of focus he highlighted include ensuring the individual needs of students are met and relooking industry and institutional practices.

He was speaking on Thursday at the first session of Singapore Perspectives 2023, a conference organised by the Institute of Policy Studies on the theme of work.

Stronger investments will be needed in the early years, especially for less privileged children of families with higher needs, said Mr Chan.

Much has been done in the last 15 years, and more will be done.



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He said this is important as there is increasing evidence that the learning and development gap must not be allowed to widen from a young age.

"Once the development gap sets in, the amount of remediation required is inordinately high and it becomes difficult to rectify," said the minister.

"We will examine afresh new ways to reach out to these children and families, structure the support for them holistically – including both education and social (aspects) together, so that no one is left behind at the start."

Mr Chan welcomed partnerships with a wider range of people and private organisations to pilot new models to meet differing needs.

Technologies in artificial intelligence and deep analytics must also enable the system to better customise learning approaches for every child, he said. Students must continue to have diversity in pathways and subject choices through greater flexibility in subject levels and customising of degree programmes.

With that, aptitude-based admissions that take students' potential and interest into account will become a greater part of Singapore's selection and placement system, he added.

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