

MY educational journey has been shaped by diverse environments, each leaving an imprint on who I would later become as an educator.

It began in a Chinese primary school, where discipline, diligence and respect for learning formed the foundation of my early years.

Immersed in a multilingual environment from the start, I learnt not only subjects from textbooks but also the value of cultural diversity – a lesson that has continued to guide me throughout my life.

My lower secondary years took place in a government English school, opening yet another window into a different learning atmosphere. Here, I strengthened my command of the English language and adapted to a broader social setting. This experience proved invaluable, for it nurtured

the confidence needed to navigate a world increasingly connected by communication and understanding.

Transitioning again, I completed my upper secondary education in a mission school. The emphasis on character building, service and community engagement enriched my perspective, shaping my sense of purpose and responsibility.

Higher education became the next chapter, and I was privileged to be among the pioneer students of what was then Malaysia's newest university in Penang. The excitement of helping to carve out traditions, values and academic culture brought a sense of pride and adventure.

Later, I secured a Diploma in

Education from the country's oldest university, Universiti Malaya. This marked a turning point, for it solidified my calling as a teacher and prepared me for the professional path ahead.

My career began as a Science and Mathematics teacher in a Malay residential school. Working with bright, motivated students was both challenging and rewarding. It deepened my appreciation for the power of education to transform lives.

As the years passed, I took on administrative responsibilities and eventually became a state education officer. This shift allowed me to contribute at a broader level, shaping policies, guiding school leaders, and sup-

porting the improvement of education standards.

One of the most fulfilling phases of my career was serving consecutively as principal of two secondary schools. Leading a school is never merely an administrative task; it is a commitment to nurturing students, supporting teachers, and fostering a culture where everyone can flourish.

These years were demanding yet immensely meaningful, and they prepared me for the transition into retirement at the age of 56.

Along the way, I was fortunate to attend short professional courses in Manila, Philippines, and Toronto, Canada. These opportunities broadened my outlook and

reaffirmed the universal value of education across cultures. I was also honoured to receive a service merit award, as well as state and federal awards – milestones that acknowledged my dedication to the field.

Now in retirement, my greatest joy comes from unexpected encounters with former students and colleagues. Their smiles, greetings and shared memories remind me that education is not just about lessons taught, but lives touched.

Those moments affirm that my journey – shaped by classrooms, schools, and countless individuals – has been truly worthwhile.

LIONG KAM CHONG
Seremban

Journeying through our edu system