

The Most Respected Profession

China has a tradition of respecting teachers as reflected in this old saying: “He who teaches you for one day is your father for life.” Since the 1980s, the central government has been making great efforts to attaching special importance to education. Former leader Deng Xiaoping saw to it that the development of education was given priority and teachers were treated with the respect they deserved.

In 1985, the proposal to set a Teachers’ Day was passed by the National People’s Congress, the top legislature, and since then September 10 has been observed as Teachers’ Day with students and parents sending flowers and gifts to the teachers.

The Compulsory Education Law enforced in 1986 says that the social stature of teachers should be further raised and their incomes gradually increased.

In his address on the eve of Teachers’ Day, 2020, President Xi Jinping called

upon governments at different levels to take good care of teachers, and asked teachers to put in efforts to make teaching the most respectable and enviable profession. His call, while reflecting the central government's determination to improve the education sector, indicated more needs to be done to ensure teachers get the treatment they have long deserved.

Today, teaching has become one of the most favored professions among college graduates. Each year, many surveys are conducted in China to identify the top 10 most favored professions. Results differ from year to year, but teaching has always been ranked among the top 10. The highest rank teaching received was second, next only to civil service, but more favored than the legal and medical professions.

