Preface

A few years ago, a book titled *A Place Called School* by the American author John Goodlad gave me much inspiration and I felt similar in-depth research was in dire need in China. As the 16th World Comparative Education Congress in Beijing will be held by the World Council of Comparative Education Society later this year, I was prompted to introduce Chinese schools to the world. So I applied for a research project, which was then approved. However, due to old age, poor health, and declining eyesight, I was unable to conduct the research by myself and had to ask for help from Jiansheng Ma and Jun Teng, who actually completed the research project.

Although the work schedule was tight, the research yielded expected result, a book revealing a true picture of China’s primary and middle schools. In this book, readers will find the tremendous achievements of education in the People’s Republic of China since its founding in 1949, particularly after the reform and opening up. Meanwhile, they will also get to know the problems in China’s basic education, such as unbalanced development, unsatisfactory education quality, and the need for teachers’ capacity building. Today, China is pursuing the ambitious target of rejuvenating the Chinese nation. In this context, China’s educators can play a crucial role. While summarizing their own experience, they should have a global vision and learn from the advanced experience of other countries.

I hope this book could serve as a tribute to the 16th World Comparative Education Congress and all the participants. Any suggestion or criticism is more than welcome.

Jiansheng Ma and Jun Teng, the editors of this book, insisted that I write a few words here because I am the nominal project leader. Here, I acknowledge their hard yet valuable work and thank them for their wholehearted dedication to this task.

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Mingyuan Gu
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