

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(2)681/01-02
(These minutes have been seen
by the Administration)

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LegCo Panel on Education

Minutes of meeting
held on Monday, 19 November 2001 at 4:30 pm
in Conference Room A of the Legislative Council Building

Members Present : Hon YEUNG Yiu-chung, BBS (Chairman)
Dr Hon YEUNG Sum (Deputy Chairman)
Dr Hon David CHU Yu-lin, JP
Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan
Hon Eric LI Ka-cheung, JP
Hon CHEUNG Man-kwong
Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung
Hon Jasper TSANG Yok-sing, JP
Hon LAU Kong-wah
Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP
Hon SZETO Wah
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, JP
Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, JP
Hon Michael MAK Kwok-fung
Dr Hon LO Wing-lok
Hon WONG Sing-chi
Hon Audrey EU Yuet-mee, SC, JP

Member Absent : Hon MA Fung-kwok

Public Officers Attending : Item IV
Mrs Fanny LAW, JP
Secretary for Education and Manpower

Mrs Cherry TSE
Deputy Secretary for Education and Manpower (2)

Mr CHENG Yan-chee
Deputy Secretary for Education and Manpower (3)

Mr Matthew K C CHEUNG, JP
Director of Education

Mr James WILLIS
Controller, Student Financial Assistance Agency

Item V

Mrs Fanny LAW, JP
Secretary for Education and Manpower

Mrs Cherry TSE
Deputy Secretary for Education and Manpower (2)

Mrs Avia LAI
Principal Assistant Secretary for Education and Manpower (3)

Mr Matthew K C CHEUNG, JP
Director of Education

Mr CHENG Man-yiu
Assistant Director of Education (Education Services)

Item VI

Mr CHENG Yan-chee
Deputy Secretary for Education and Manpower (3)

Mr John LEUNG
Principal Assistant Secretary for Education and
Manpower (9)

Mr James WILLIS
Controller, Student Financial Assistance Agency

Item VII

Mrs Fanny LAW, JP
Secretary for Education and Manpower

Mrs Cherry TSE
Deputy Secretary for Education and Manpower (2)

Mrs Avia LAI
Principal Assistant Secretary for Education and Manpower (3)

Clerk in Attendance : Miss Flora TAI
Chief Assistant Secretary (2)2

Staff in Attendance : Mr Stanley MA
Senior Assistant Secretary (2)6

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I. Confirmation of minutes
[LC Paper No. CB(2)302/01-02]

Members noted that Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong proposed to amend the last sentence of paragraph 24 of the minutes of meeting held on 22 October 2001 -

"Mr CHEUNG queried whether the management of the Hong Kong Institute of Education should be held responsible for misuse of public money and mistake in manpower planning."

The minutes as amended were confirmed.

II. Information paper issued since the last meeting
[LC Paper No. CB(2)398/01-02(01)]

2. Members noted the information paper entitled "Start-up loan for post-secondary education providers" which was issued on 15 November 2001. The Chairman advised the meeting that the Administration would submit the financial

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proposal to the Finance Committee for consideration at its meeting on 7 December 2001.

III. Items for discussion at the next meeting

[Appendices I and II to LC Paper No. CB(2)381/01-02]

3. Members agreed to discuss the following items as proposed by the Administration for the next meeting scheduled for Monday, 17 December 2001 -

- (a) Re-organisation of the Education Department;
- (b) Future model of the Hong Kong Education City;
- (c) Briefing on arrangements for implementing the "Through-train" Mode; and
- (d) Review of the Secondary School Places Allocation System.

4. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong proposed to discuss the operation of Quality Education Fund (QEF) at a future meeting. Members agreed to include the item on the agenda for the regular meeting in January 2002.

IV. Briefing by the Secretary for Education and Manpower on the Chief Executive's Policy Address 2001

[LC Paper No. CB(2)381/01-02(01)]

5. The Chairman invited questions from members on the Chief Executive's Policy Address 2001 in relation to the policy area of education.

Enhancing access to post-secondary education

6. Ms Audrey EU expressed concern about the resources implications for achieving the policy targets of enhancing the age participation rate in post-secondary education to 60% within 10 years and a four-year normative undergraduate structure. She asked whether the Administration would give priority to these two policy initiatives when considering allocation of resources.

7. Secretary for Education and Manpower (SEM) said that the provision of quality sub-degree education on a self-financing basis, including higher diploma and associate degree programmes, was the Government's current priority. To achieve the objective, the Administration had put in place a series of measures to promote the increase in post-secondary education opportunities. In this connection, University Grants Committee (UGC) was conducting a

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comprehensive review of the future development of tertiary education and the Education Commission (EC) was examining the feasibility of implementing a three-year senior secondary education system and its interface with higher education, including its implication on the normative duration of first-degree programmes. SEM added that extending the normative duration of undergraduate study from a three-year to a four-year system would incur significant additional resources, which should be shared by the community and the Government together.

8. Dr YEUNG Sum pointed out that the proposal of a four-year academic structure of UGC-funded tertiary institutions had been discussed for years. He asked whether increasing the number of post-secondary places to 60% of senior secondary school leavers would further delay the decision to implement four-year degree programmes in local universities.

9. SEM responded that extending the normative duration of university degree programmes to four years, with concomitant changes to senior secondary education, was a very important and complex issue which was still under careful consideration. A working group under EC was examining the various relevant issues such as the demand for qualified teachers, the requirement for additional school sites and the redesign of the new senior secondary school curriculum and first-year university programmes before making a recommendation.

10. Dr YEUNG Sum further asked whether the Administration had a timeframe to implement a four-year normative undergraduate structure. SEM responded that the implementation hinged on the provision of the required support measures and the community consensus. If it was decided to go ahead with the change in academic structure, the Administration aimed to implement the change in 10 years.

11. Miss Cyd HO expressed concern about the shortage of space in university campuses when a four-year programme for undergraduate studies was implemented. She suggested that the Administration should consider subsidising each undergraduate to attend at least a one-year programme in overseas institutions, preferably on courses which were not available in Hong Kong such as environmental engineering. SEM said that the Administration would consider the universities' requirement for additional space if their first-degree programmes were extended to four years. She stressed that the Administration welcomed any suggestions which might help address the problem.

12. Ms Audrey EU sought clarifications about the statement that every university should have a clear sense of mission and focus on developing its niche in order to forestall unnecessary duplication. SEM explained that each UGC-funded tertiary institution had a unique history of development and its own areas of excellence. In fact, the area of excellence scheme was launched and funded in the allocations for UGC-funded institutions for the last triennium. The Administration had encouraged UGC-funded institutions to differentiate among

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themselves in developing their own areas of excellence. The comprehensive review of the development of tertiary education conducted by UGC would also examine the roles and missions of tertiary institutions

Interface among basic, secondary and tertiary education

13. Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung pointed out that the senior secondary curriculum and university programme structure should be carefully designed to align with the new curriculum for basic education. He expressed concern about the quality of providing tertiary education for 60% of the young people in the appropriate age group, given that the quality of basic education was not satisfactory.

14. SEM responded that EC had established two working groups, namely, Working Group on the Review of the Academic Structure for Senior Secondary Education and Interface with Higher Education, and the Working Group on the Development of Post-secondary Education to examine the feasibility of implementing a 3-year structure for senior secondary education and the interface between senior secondary and higher education respectively. The two Working Groups would collaborate with the Curriculum Development Council (CDC) to ensure that the curricula of basic, senior and tertiary education were aligned with each other. The two Working Groups were well aware that although there was a strong demand for more university places, a progressive approach to increasing university enrolment was necessary. The Administration would aim to provide a good foundation before increasing university places. In this connection, the provision of quality sub-degree education was another policy priority. SEM added that the comprehensive review of the future of higher education in Hong Kong conducted by UGC would also cover the funding mechanism to enhance the quality of higher education in the long term.

15. Deputy Secretary for Education and Manpower (2) (DS(EM)2) supplemented that curriculum reform for primary and secondary schools would not be held in abeyance because of the discussions on the possible changes to the structure of first degree programmes and senior secondary education. The curriculum reform included changing the assessment mechanism which was in line with the main theme of the "Reform Proposals for the Education System in Hong Kong" put forward by EC. The reform proposals stressed that education should encourage every person to pursue life-long learning and attain all-round development. To enable students to learn how to learn, students should be taught to grasp the basic learning skills and to gain a thorough understanding of the concepts to be learnt. They did not just learn by rote, but should learn to apply what they had learnt to proactively and independently tackle new problems which they would come across in the future. DS(EM)2 also briefly described the work progress of the Working Group on the Review of the Academic Structure for Senior Secondary Education and Interface with Higher Education. In response to

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Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung's further enquiry, SEM added that the Working Group would submit its recommendation in 2002.

Improving the competitiveness of people with low education attainment

16. Ms Emily LAU expressed concern that Hong Kong had lagged behind developed countries in term of the education attainment of its population. Given that only 18% of the population had post-secondary education and 48% had an education level of secondary three or below, she considered that the Government's policy target of enhancing the age participation rate in post-secondary education to 60% within 10 years was impractical. She asked how the Administration would help workers with low level of education and skills to seek employment opportunities during a period of economic restructuring.

17. SEM responded that in the face of economic restructuring, the Administration had to face up to the challenge of the new age by ensuring that the education system could support the change from a manufacture-based to a knowledge-based economy. The Administration had implemented a variety of measures to assist workers with low level of educational attainment, including the provision of focussed and appropriate employment services to cater for the needs of job-seekers of different educational attainments and backgrounds and the implementation of the "Re-employment Pilot Programme for the Middle-aged". According to the 2000 manpower study on the future manpower needs of the community for the next five years, a surplus working population of more than a hundred thousands was projected. The Administration would adopt a multi-faceted approach to create additional employment opportunities to address the problem of surplus manpower.

18. Mr Michael MAK asked whether the Administration would review the policy of providing nine-year compulsory education in view of the need to promote the general educational attainment of Hong Kong people. SEM responded that the Government had put in substantial resources in recent years to increase education opportunities with the aim of improving the overall educational attainment of Hong Kong people. In particular, to offer more learning opportunities for youngsters, the Administration would, starting from the 2002-03 school year, provide adequate subsidised secondary four and training places for all secondary three students in publicly-funded schools who had the ability and wish to continue study. SEM pointed out that the various policy initiatives outlined in the Administration's paper were intended to help Hong Kong people meet the challenges of the new age. In the face of economic restructuring, the Government was committed to investing in education to prepare Hong Kong people for the development of the knowledge-based economy.

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Encouraging continuing education

19. Mr Michael MAK considered the budget of \$5 billion insufficient for promoting life-long learning in the community. SEM clarified that the fund was aimed to be a catalyst to encourage life-long learning. The Administration was consulting relevant bodies on how the provision could be most gainfully used to bring about the greatest impact. The major issues on the agenda included the target recipients, the mode and ceiling of subsidy, quality assurance, monitoring framework and interface with existing training programmes. It was envisaged that the initiative would help enhance continuing education opportunities.

Native-speaking English Teacher Scheme

20. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong enquired about the timetable for introducing the Native-speaking English Teacher (NET) and the English Language Teaching Assistant (ELTA) schemes to the primary schools. He queried how a budget of 400 NETs or ELTAs could satisfy the needs of all the primary schools in 2002-03 and how the Administration would set the criteria and priorities for allocating NETs and ELTAs to individual primary schools.

21. SEM responded that the Education Department (ED) would consult the stakeholders and allocate NETs and ELTAs based on the needs and circumstances of individual primary schools. She pointed out that many NETs working in secondary schools had experienced difficulties in working with their colleagues. After three years of operation and with enhanced support from ED and better deployment of duties for NETs, the scheme was gradually taking root in secondary schools. SEM also pointed out that while teams of NETs and local teachers to serve schools on a district basis was found effective, a permanent NET or ELTA for individual schools which had developed the necessary leadership and culture would also work. As regards the provision of NETs or ELTAs to individual primary schools, SEM said that there would be difficulty in recruiting sufficient NETs or ELTAs for all primary schools. Nevertheless, the Administration would proceed with the recruitment of NETs and ELTAs and subsequent allocation would depend on a number of factors including the number recruited.

22. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong asked whether a primary school would be given the choice to opt for a permanent NET or ELTA. SEM reiterated that ED would consult the stakeholders and co-ordinate the allocation of NETs and ELTAs to primary schools in due course. She pointed out that some NETs posted to work in individual secondary schools had encountered interpersonal problems and their effectiveness was undermined as a result. The Administration's objective was to make cost-effective use of NETs in primary schools, in the light of the experience gained from implementing NET scheme in secondary schools.

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23. Mr Tommy CHEUNG expressed support for the provision of NETs in all primary schools. He considered that improving students' English ability should start at early childhood education. He also pointed out that NETs might not necessarily be superior to non-native-speaking English teachers (NNETs) in terms of teaching non-native-speaking English children to learn English. He suggested that given the recruitment difficulty, the Administration should consider employing teachers of other nationalities to teach English in schools. He also asked whether schools under the Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS) were included in the NET scheme.

24. SEM clarified that successful applicants under NET scheme were experienced English teachers of different nationalities regardless of their place of permanent residence. Recruits included, for example, Chinese who had stayed overseas for a considerable period of time and became conversant with the use of English. She stressed that the prime objective of NET scheme was to enhance professional development of local teachers in teaching English through an on-going exchange of experience between local teachers and NETs. She added that schools under DSS were not included under NET scheme.

25. Miss Cyd HO questioned why public sector schools could not have the same degree of freedom in school curriculum and recruitment of teachers as enjoyed by DSS schools. SEM responded that the implementation of school-based management was intended to enhance schools' autonomy in various areas of school management. Public sector schools were progressively taking up a higher level of responsibility and enjoying more flexibility in various areas of school management such as curriculum design and staff administration.

26. Ms Audrey EU suggested that given the difficulty in recruitment of sufficient NETs, the Administration should consider using the service of retired teachers or interested persons who were qualified to teach English in primary schools on a part-time basis. She pointed out that students attending whole-day primary schools should now be provided be more opportunities to practise spoken English. SEM agreed and said that while NET scheme was designed for employment of full-time teachers, schools could make use of the Capacity Enhancement Grant (CEG) to hire additional teachers to teach English according to their own circumstances and priorities. She added that immersion camps were arranged by Standing Committee on Language Education and Research for students to learn conversational English in practical situations.

Use of Information Technology in education

27. The Chairman noted that the Administration aimed to achieve 25% of school curriculum to be delivered with the assistance of Information Technology (IT) by the 2002-03 school year. He asked about the latest development progress. Director of Education responded that there should not be much difficulty in

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achieving the 25% target. He pointed out that after the establishment of the basic infrastructure for the use of IT in school education, the Administration aimed at developing useful software to facilitate the teaching and learning process, and reduction of replacement costs of hardware in the long term. The Administration had appointed the University of Hong Kong to review the implementation of the 5-year IT Strategy and make recommendations on the way forward. The Administration would revert to the Panel when the final report was ready for discussion in early 2002.

Graduate posts in primary schools

28. The Chairman asked whether the Administration would review the percentage of graduate posts in primary schools. SEM responded that the Administration would evaluate the impact of the policy on the quality of primary education before deciding whether to increase the proportion of graduate posts further. She pointed out that the School Management Committee had the discretion to decide, having regard to the overall interests of the school, when and how to fill a vacancy of graduate post. However, such discretion might lead to problems in personnel management. In the light of the concerns of teachers and schools, the Administration would have to consult further as to whether additional resources should be used for increasing the number of teachers or graduate posts in primary schools.

V. Enhancement of Capacity Enhancement Grant for secondary schools
[LC Paper No. CB(2)381/01-02(02)]

29. The Chairman advised the meeting that the Administration proposed to enhance the annual rates of CEG for government and subvented secondary schools by 50% from the 2001-02 school year onwards, i.e., from the existing \$247,250 and \$296,700 to \$370,875 (+\$123,625) and \$445,050 (+\$148,350) for secondary schools with 1 to 18 classes and 19 or more classes respectively. The financial proposal would be considered by the Finance Committee at its meeting on 7 December 2001.

30. Mr SZETO Wah asked about the qualifications and experience of the 2 225 full-time and 2 806 part-time staff employed through CEG in the last school year. Dr LO Wing-lok also enquired how these full-time and part-time staff had helped relieve teachers' workload and enhanced their capacity for improving the effectiveness of teaching and learning in schools.

31. Assistant Director of Education (Education Services) (ADE(ES)) said that the additional full-time and part-time teachers employed under CEG should follow the standard requirements for individual work. The role of teaching assistants was to assist teachers in teaching and learning activities, as well as other non-teaching

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duties and activities such as school administrative work. These staff were employed to offer a wide variety of teaching and supporting services for schools, teachers and students, including language training, student counseling, IT applications and other non-teaching work. At members' request, he undertook to provide further information on the qualifications of staff appointed under CEG.

32. Ms Emily LAU asked whether CEG could meet the needs of schools in providing quality education to students, in particular relieving teachers from their heavy workload. SEM responded that CEG enable schools to hire additional staff or outside service to relieve teachers' workload so that they could focus more on improving students' language proficiency, curriculum development and catering for students' diverse needs, including devoting more time to interacting with students and parents. The Administration considered that enhancing CEG rates for secondary schools should be the best approach to strengthening support for schools as it gave them the flexibility to make effective use of the resources according to their needs and circumstances. In parallel, principals should also explore whether there was any room for streamlining procedures and making more effective distribution of duties to reduce teachers' workload.

VI. Improvements to student financial assistance schemes

[LC Paper No. CB(2)381/01-02(03)]

33. Members noted that the financial proposal would be submitted to the Finance Committee for consideration on 7 December 2001.

34. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong noted with concern that according to the proposed Adjusted Family Income (AFI) Ready Reckoner for primary and secondary school students, a four-member family earning \$8,500 a month would be eligible for 100% assistance whereas a family of the same size earning \$9,000 a month would only eligible for 50% assistance. He asked why financial assistance for secondary and primary students were not provided at three levels as proposed for kindergarten students or the sliding scale for tertiary students under the Local Student Finance Scheme (LSFS). He considered a progressive decrease in percentage of remission in correspondence with increases in monthly family income of the applicant should be adopted for secondary, primary and kindergarten students.

35. Deputy Secretary for Education and Manpower (3) (DS(EM)3) explained that financial assistance schemes for secondary, primary and kindergarten students used a Points Scoring System (PSS) to means test the family income of applicants. The various schemes provided eligible students passing a PSS with assistance at 100% or 50% rate. The switch from PSS to AFI was proposed to ensure consistency in providing financial assistance as well as to cater for the need of large families. To ensure families of the same size with comparable income and

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large families were fairly treated, it had been proposed to extend the AFI per capita income formula and the AFI Ready Reckoner to secondary, and primary and kindergarten students. DS(EM)3 said that Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong's proposal would result in some existing beneficiaries losing out if the Administration followed the sliding scale for tertiary students under LSFS where there would be a progressive decrease in percentage of remission. He stressed that no existing beneficiaries would suffer any loss due to the proposed change from PSS to AFI and the proposed improvements would benefit not only the existing beneficiaries but also more students who would become newly eligible.

36. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong considered that the financial assistance schemes for secondary and primary students should at least set a new 75% level of assistance, in line with the proposed new level for Kindergarten Fee Remission Scheme. He considered it unfair for applicants with a monthly income slightly exceeding the prescribed maximum to receive 50% of assistance only. Mr SZETO Wah and Dr YEUNG Sum expressed a same view. They urged the Administration to review the financial assistance scheme for needy secondary and primary students.

37. DS(EM)3 explained that the 75% level of fee remission was proposed in line with EC's recommendation that Government should relax eligibility criteria of the means-tested assistance schemes for pre-school students and increase the level of assistance to benefit more families. He undertook to consider members' suggestion in the future, adding that review of improvements to Student Financial Assistance Schemes was conducted on an on-going basis.

38. The Chairman sought clarifications about the need for an additional recurrent expenditure of about \$8 million for Student Financial Assistance Agency (SFAA) given that the proposals would simplify and streamline application procedures and thereby reduce relevant administrative work. Controller, Student Financial Assistance Agency explained that the additional \$8 million was required for SFAA to hire temporary staff to take over from schools the vetting of applications and meet the additional operating costs.

VII. Strengthening the support for the education reform

[LC Paper No. CB(2)381/01-02(04)]

39. Members noted that the Administration would put forward financial proposal to enhance the staffing support to EC and Education Reform within the Education and Manpower Bureau (EMB) as well as the research capacity in EMB. Responding to Ms Audrey EU, SEM explained that the objectives and direction of the Education Reform were generally supported by the community. However, the Administration would need to review and adjust various measures in the course of

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implementation. Ms EU stressed that the Administration should review and adjust as appropriate its policies in respect of education reforms on an on-going basis.

40. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong suggested that the Administration should consult the stakeholders and the community as a whole on the topics for the researches in support of the education reform, and publish the results of these researches for public access. He considered that for policy formulation to be effective, it was important to gauge and evaluate the perception and reaction of different stakeholders. Ms Emily LAU expressed support for Mr CHEUNG's view, saying that the public should be well informed of the researches which would be supported by public resources.

41. SEM responded that the Administration would consider Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong's suggestion of consulting the public on specific topics for researches on a case-by-case basis. She agreed that the results of these researches should be made available to the public. SEM also pointed out that consultation was an essential component in the formulation of policies, and the results of the supporting researches and studies would normally be provided to relevant bodies and the public during the consultation process.

42. Ms Emily LAU considered that conducting relevant researches and drawing references from overseas experiences were important components of the formulation and review of education policy. Since very few longitudinal studies were conducted to assess the impact of changes in the education system in the past, she asked how the Administration would plan and implement the researches in support of education reform. Specifically, she asked whether external consultants would be appointed to carry out the research studies.

43. SEM said that so far, few longitudinal studies had been conducted to assess the impact of changes in the education system over time. SEM pointed out that a single educational institution might not possess the wide variety of expertise necessary for the conducting of a research. She considered that, instead of appointing an educational institution by way of tendering, a preferred approach would be to appoint a renowned professor as the leader of the research. He could then solicit the assistance of other academics and professionals as appropriate. As regards funding support, she anticipated that a capital allocation would be required for the organisation and conducting of these researches over the next five years. If approved, she undertook to report progress of developments and use of funds to the Legislative Council (LegCo) at appropriate intervals. Ms Emily LAU remarked that the decision to commission a consultant to conduct a research should be made in a transparent manner.

44. Dr YEUNG Sum expressed support for strengthening support for the education reform. He, however, stressed that education issues should be tackled and researches should be led by experienced academics specialised in the relevant

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fields. He also urged the Administration to improve transparency in determination of research topics, selection of consultancy and disclosure of the research results.

45. Mr SZETO Wah urged the Administration to define and publicise the outline of the researches in support of education reform, consult the frontline educators in the course of the research, and publish interim and final reports of the researches for public information.

46. SEM responded that examples of researches that might need to be conducted in support of the education reform were listed in Annex 2 to the Administration's paper. The several Working Groups and Task Forces established under EC would maintain close communication with the relevant parties and frontline educators on the implementation of the various reform or support measures. SEM added that the reform initiatives were proposed after thorough consultation. The relevant working groups would exercise judgment as to whether further consultation on certain measures should be conducted. She undertook to consider members' views and concerns expressed at the meeting.

47. Miss Cyd HO considered that the researchers could more or less take up the role of adviser to SEM in the formulation of policies. She therefore asked whether these researchers would be held politically accountable if the proposed System of Accountability for Principal Officers was implemented.

48. SEM responded that the formulation and review of education policies should be conducted on the basis of sound education theories and concepts as well as evidence. Researchers could inform policy makers by providing updated information on education theories, impact of reform measures and the feedback of various stakeholders. The information would be forwarded to EMB, EC and relevant working groups to facilitate policy consideration. She stressed that appointment of these researchers was totally unrelated to the issue of political accountability.

49. Miss Cyd HO was of the view that the relevance to the issue of political accountability depended very much on the nature of work of these researchers. She stressed that their future work should be made very transparent.

50. Ms Emily LAU noted that the Administration had completed the curriculum review and published a 10-year implementation strategy in July 2001. She asked about the studies which had been conducted before finalising the implementation strategy.

51. SEM responded that the 10-year strategy was proposed after a series of studies in schools, having regard to relevant overseas experiences. Under the proposed action plan for the first phase from 2001-02 to 2005-06, seed projects and various professional development programmes had been launched to foster the

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professionalism of frontline educators in curriculum development. Successful experiences would be disseminated to all schools. In addition, CDC would conduct research and development studies in the course of implementation as and when appropriate.

52. At Ms Emily LAU's suggestion, members agreed that the Panel would discuss the implementation strategy for the curriculum review at its meeting in January 2002.

53. Dr LO Wing-lok sought clarifications about the need for additional staffing support for servicing EC and for implementing the education reform. DS(EM)2 responded that the EC division of EMB was responsible for implementing the education reform and servicing EC and its working groups and task forces. The division comprised one directorate officer at AOSGC level, one Senior Administrative Officer and three Executive Grade Officers. With the existing level of manpower support, the division faced considerable difficulty in overseeing and co-ordinating the timely implementation of the education reform.

54. The Chairman suggested that members should further discuss the manpower requirement of EC division within EMB when a detailed staffing proposal was presented to the Establishment Subcommittee.

VIII. Any other business

Visits to the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST)
[LC Paper No. CB(2)418/01-02(01)]

55. The Chairman informed members that the Council Chairman and President of HKUST had invited all LegCo Members to visit their campus. Members agreed that the Panel on Education would schedule a visit to HKUST on Thursday, 17 January 2002 and all other LegCo Members should be invited to join the visit. Members also noted the visit programme proposed by HKUST and considered that more discussion time should be provided for. The Chairman instructed the Clerk to liaise with HKUST accordingly.

Clerk

56. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 6:30 pm.