

Views of the Hong Kong Schools Sports Federation on the Report of the Sports Policy Review Team

The review is quite comprehensive as it covers a wide range of topics in its 10 chapters, from the current sporting scene to investing in our sporting future, as well as providing alternatives to some areas of concern in a hope to solve the problems encountered at present. Among the 10 chapters, Chapter IV “More Sport for Every Student” has the greatest concern to the work of the Hong Kong Schools Sports Federation and we would summarize our views in below :-

1. While the Report confirms the role of the Hong Kong Schools Sports Federation as one of the student sport providers outside the Education System (Para. 4.9 and 4.11) and offers inter-school competitions in various sports, it has placed enormous emphasis on student sport by expanding the School Sports Promotion (SSP) Scheme, a scheme transplanted mainly from the previous Go! Sports programme initiated by the Hong Kong Sports Development Board, with emphasis on one of the four sub-programmes – Outreach Coaching Programme where SSP provides training, coaches and venues, in sports for schools.
2. The Report realizes **the misconception and prejudices on the relation between sports participation and academic achievement** as stated in paragraphs 4.2 & 4.3, it however does not seem to provide any viable solutions to ease the mind of parents and schools (including principals and teachers) that sports participation could never be a threat to academic achievement.

Admitting talented sportsboys/girls to post-secondary institutions seems to be the only support that can be offered at present (Para. 4.22 (5)). However, we would like to see more support to the talented students in primary schools and in junior forms of secondary schools in our education system. Otherwise, parents and schools will still be hesitant to let their sport-talented children fully engage in sports, at an early age as some sports require.

In fact, the gap that exists for a long time between the grass-root participation, mainly school sports, and those of elite level of the respective national sports associations (NSAs) has not been explicitly and sufficiently addressed in the Report. **The role this Federation has been playing as a feeder**, to feed talented sportsboys/girls to the respective NSAs by ways of joint effort in selection – training etc. is not mentioned at all. We consider this being extremely important in bridging up the gap between school participation and that of the elite training provided by NSAs, and that is one of the areas considered to be lacking in the existing sports hierarchy in Hong Kong.

3. The need of **policy co-ordination among different parties** (para. 4.14) for the development of student sport (i.e. HKSSF, ED, LCSD, Hong Kong Post Secondary College Athletic Association and the Associations for Physically Disabled and Mentally-Handicapped) is emphasized, and this is quite sensible. Yet we need more details and/or directional suggestions in the Report as to how to improve the co-ordination by the proposed Student Sport Co-ordinating Committee.

4. With the emphasis of **matching available venues and facilities to programmes** aimed at developing student sport which inevitably helps to improve the utilization rate of venues at school hours, the need for more competition venues and facilities has not been adequately addressed. In fact, the more SSP does for training schools, the more schools will need training venues and enter teams for inter-school competition. As a result it gives tremendous pressure to this Federation in securing sufficient competition venues. The expansion of SSP will also mean a reduction of the existing competition venues to the Federation, as some out-reaching training programmes will use the same venues and worst of all, at the same time (after schools and/or in weekends) when competitions are to be scheduled.

Furthermore, we understand that no swimming pools are at present included in proposed school villages and this is also a great concern to schools.

5. To have **only one resource of funding** is a good suggestion as it reduces the unnecessary procedures of applications, evaluations and repeated account auditings. However, we need to maintain at least the existing funding support and moreover, some improvement in funding to the organization of international student sport events in Hong Kong will definitely need to be addressed.

Hong Kong Schools Sports Federation
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