

NOTE FOR FINANCE COMMITTEE

Latest development for an approved school project 259ES – Second secondary school in Area 104, Tin Shui Wai, Yuen Long

PURPOSE

This note informs Members of the latest development for an approved secondary school project **259ES** in Area 104, Tin Shui Wai, Yuen Long.

BACKGROUND

2. On 30 April 2004, this Committee approved the upgrading of 259ES in Area 104, Tin Shui Wai, Yuen Long to Category A for the construction of a 30-classroom secondary school. 259ES is currently under construction and is scheduled for completion in July 2006 and for school operation in September 2006. At the time we sought this Committee's funding approval for the project, our planning was that, subject to the school allocation process, the new school premises would be used to reprovise an existing secondary school housed in sub-standard premises.

LATEST DEVELOPMENT

3. In the subsequent School Allocation Exercise (SAE), only three applications for reprovise secondary schools were received and out of these only one applicant seeking to reprovise an existing school outside Yuen Long met the criteria for reprovise and redevelopment¹ (but even this applicant had not regarded the new premises as its first choice). In view of the response and

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¹ The reprovise and redevelopment criteria include –

- (a) Schools which have been classified as non-feasible for physical upgrades under the School Improvement Programme (SIP) or have benefited marginally from the SIP;
- (b) Schools with site area less than 3 000 square metres; and
- (c) Premises over 30 years old.

to ensure that the school premises is allocated to the most suitable candidate for the sake of promoting quality education, the School Allocation Committee² (SAC) decided to conduct another round of SAE so as to cast a wider net to cover not only applications for reprovisioning purpose but also applications for replacement of school projects allocated in previous SAEs but which could not materialize due to reasons beyond the control of the school sponsoring bodies (SSB). Having conducted the second exercise, the SAC eventually recommended the allocation of **259ES** to an established SSB for the operation of a direct subsidy scheme (DSS) secondary school. The SSB was originally allocated a site in the Eastern district for the purpose but the project could not materialize due to the long-dragged unresolved traffic issue at the original site. We accepted the SAC's recommendation.

4. At the meeting of the Legislative Council Panel on Education on 24 October 2005, we reported to Members our recommendations under the School Building Programme review. Members generally saw no objection to our recommendation to proceed with two new DSS school projects, including the proposed school in Tin Shui Wai, which offer a diversified curriculum or other unique education attributes that would represent significant contribution to enhancing diversity in our school sector.

5. The SSB for this new DSS secondary school has rich experience in providing social services which are much needed by the community in Tin Shui Wai, Yuen Long. The new school will form a through-train with a primary school in the vicinity and will serve as an exemplar for effective collaboration between non-governmental organisations and schools. The school will emphasise not only academic standards but also the holistic development of young people, making use of resources³ available through the SSB. Indeed, the SSB has been working and will work through the new school with other schools in the neighbourhood, providing counselling and guidance services to students on developmental adjustment, family problems, emotional health, schooling and career; as well as programmes that complement the academic curriculum and enhance the character development of students. School-based after-school care tutorials and social development activities for schools and other thematic counselling programmes will also be arranged.

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² The SAC makes recommendations to the Permanent Secretary for Education and Manpower on the allocation of school premises/sites to suitable school sponsoring bodies. The Committee comprises an equal number of official and non-official members familiar with the Hong Kong education system.

³ The SSB is operating a few Integrated Children and Youth Centres which offer diversified and professional services to young people and one of them is in Tin Shui Wai.

6. Separately, the SSB intends to establish a Leadership Training Centre with a view to providing secondary school and university students, young executives and community leaders with basic training on leadership skills and to widening their horizons through internship and a mentor scheme. The longer term plan is to establish an outpost programme of that Centre in the new DSS secondary school, so that the teaching staff of the proposed Centre and the secondary school will collaborate to formulate a comprehensive and systematic curriculum on leadership training for students of the school and for the Tin Shui Wai community.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7. The allocation of 259ES to a DSS secondary school will lead to a reduction in the approved project estimate (\$124.4 million) by \$7.8 million (which is the furniture and equipment cost) to \$116.6 million. This is because under the prevailing policy, the furniture and equipment cost should be borne by the SSB of a DSS project.

Education and Manpower Bureau
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