

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(2)2359/05-06
(These minutes have been
seen by the Administration)

Ref : CB2/HS/2/04

**Subcommittee to Study Issues Relating to the Provision of
Boarding Places, Senior Secondary Education and Employment
Opportunities for Children with Special Educational Needs**

**Minutes of meeting
held on Friday, 19 May 2006 at 10:45 am
in the Chamber of the Legislative Council Building**

- Members present** : Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung (Chairman)
Hon LEE Cheuk-yan
Hon Mrs Selina CHOW LIANG Shuk-ye, GBS, JP
Hon CHEUNG Man-kwong
Hon CHAN Yuen-han, JP
Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung
Hon Jasper TSANG Yok-sing, GBS, JP
Hon Audrey EU Yuet-mee, SC, JP
- Public Officers attending** : Mrs Betty IP
Principal Assistant Secretary (School Administration
and Support), Education and Manpower Bureau
- Mrs Mary MA LO To-wan
Commissioner for Rehabilitation, Health, Welfare and
Food Bureau
- Mr SIT Tung
Assistant Director (Rehabilitation and Medical Social
Services), Social Welfare Department
- Mrs Agnes LI CHAN Chui-ngan
Chief Social Work Officer (Rehabilitation and Medical
Social Services)1, Social Welfare Department

Attendance by invitation : Item II

Parents' Alliance on Special Education System

Mrs Pansy LEUNG KONG Wai-ying
Convenor

Mr Ronald LAM
Executive Member

Mrs CHUNG LAU Ping
Parent from School for the moderately mentally
handicapped

Mrs CHOI TOU Tak-lam
Parent from School for the moderately mentally
handicapped

The Association of Parents of the Severely Mentally
Handicapped

Ms CHENG Yee-man
Deputy Chairman

Ms HO Wai-ngan
Secretary

Hong Kong Association for Parents of Persons with
Physical Disabilities

Ms TAM Yuk-fung
Member

Ms LING Ching-ha
Executive Member

The Hong Kong Joint Council of Parents of the Mentally
Handicapped

Ms Eva MOK
Vice-Chairman

Ms WONG Big-sai
Member of Executive Committee

Hong Kong Council of Social Service

Mr Philip YUEN
Rehabilitation Chief Officer

C.C.C. Kei Shun Special School Parents Staff
Association

Mrs CHENG KAN Fung-kuen
Representative

Mrs Angela HO KWAN
Representative

多重殘障人士家長關注小組

Ms Letty LAM
Representative

Ms Vivian LI Tuen-yi
Representative

肢體殘障人士關注小組

Mr LAU Hiu-fung
Representative

Miss CHENG Kin-wai
Representative

The Parents' Association of Pre-school Handicapped
Children

Ms LEE Mei-yee
Group Member of Main Stream Education Group

Ms LAU Shui-lin
Group Member of Main Stream Education Group

明愛達言學校家教會關注小組

Mrs LEUNG WONG Lai-ming
Chairperson

Clerk in attendance : Miss Odelia LEUNG
Chief Council Secretary (2)6

Staff in attendance : Mr Stanley MA
Senior Council Secretary (2)6

Miss Carmen HO
Legislative Assistant (2)6

I. Confirmation of minutes
[LC Paper No. CB(2)2015/05-06]

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 April 2006 were confirmed.

II. Provision of post-school rehabilitation services for students with special educational needs

Briefing by the Administration

2. Commissioner for Rehabilitation (C for R) briefed members on the main points of the Administration's paper on the subject [LC Paper No. CB(2)2013/05-06(01)].

Oral presentation by deputations

Parents' Alliance on Special Education System
[LC Paper No. CB(2)2070/05-06(01)]

3. Mrs Pansy LEUNG presented the views of the Parents' Alliance on Special Education System as detailed in its submission. She highlighted that the Alliance considered that the Administration should increase the supply and improve the assessment mechanism and the quality of residential services for people with disabilities (PWDs); review the distribution of and enrich the services in day activity centres; enhance the variety and quality of community-based social and development services; and provide continuing education and training for students with mild intellectual disabilities (ID) and students with physical disabilities (PD students) but with normal intellectual ability. In gist, the Administration should review the provision of rehabilitation services with a view to meeting the needs of PWDs at different age groups and persons with different types of disabilities.

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Mrs CHUNG LAU Ping
[LC Paper No. CB(2)2070/05-06(02)]

4. Mrs CHUNG LAU Ping presented her views as detailed in her joint submission with Mrs CHOI TOU Tak-lam. She highlighted that people with moderate ID had residential care needs and should be provided with a place in appropriate residential homes. However, they were subject to stringent criteria for allocation of a residential place under the existing assessment mechanism. She pointed out that parents at the age of 60 or above could hardly be able to look after adult PWDs with moderate ID, and the provision of community-based social and development services could not substitute the need of PWDs for residential services.

Mrs CHOI TOU Tak-lam
[LC Paper No. CB(2)2070/05-06(02)]

5. Mrs CHOI TOU Tak-lam presented her views as detailed in her joint submission with Mrs CHUNG LAU Ping. She highlighted that parents above the age of 60 would have great difficulty in looking after their children with moderate ID. She suggested that people with moderate ID should be included in the waiting list for residential services after leaving school. She also suggested that the Administration should improve training programmes and provide continuing education opportunities for PWDs in sheltered workshops, skills training centres, day activities centres, etc. to facilitate development of PWDs' potentials to lead an independent and meaningful life.

The Association of Parents of the Severely Mentally Handicapped
[LC Paper No. CB(2)2083/05-06(02)]

6. Ms CHENG Yee-man presented the views of the Association of Parents of the Severely Mentally Handicapped as detailed in its submission. She highlighted that the Administration should increase the supply of residential places for people with severe ID and physical disability (PD) in order to reduce the long waiting time. The Administration should also improve the support and services to PWDs by increasing the number of day activity centres and providing sufficient staff, including physiotherapists and occupational therapists in various types of residential homes for people with severe ID or PD. Furthermore, the Administration should provide PWDs with continuing education and training opportunities.

Hong Kong Association for Parents of Persons with Physical Disabilities
[LC Paper No. CB(2)2083/05-06(03)]

7. Ms TAM Yuk-fung presented the views of the Hong Kong Association for Parents of Persons with Physical Disabilities as detailed in its submission. She highlighted that the Administration should coordinate departmental

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resources and efforts to improve the provision of post-school education and training as well as rehabilitation services and support for PWDs. Specifically, the Administration should reduce the waiting time for residential places and lower the minimum age of the primary carers in application for residential places from 60 to 50; enhance the scope and quality of services in day activity centres; and provide sufficient transport for PWDs to participate in programmes organized by day activity centres.

The Hong Kong Joint Council of Parents of the Mentally Handicapped
[LC Paper No. CB(2)2070/05-06(03)]

8. Ms Eva MOK presented the views of the Hong Kong Joint Council of Parents of the Mentally Handicapped as detailed in its submission. She highlighted that more coaching and employment-related skills training should be provided for students with mild or moderate ID to facilitate their transition from schools to sheltered workshops and supported employment. The Administration should increase the supply of residential places for students with special educational needs (SEN) after completing secondary education. The Council considered that the provision of various community-based programmes, such as home-based training and support service could not replace the provision of residential service. The quality of rehabilitation services was declining in recent years. The Administration should formulate long-term policies and strategies on the provision of post-school rehabilitation services for students with SEN.

Hong Kong Council of Social Service
[LC Paper No. CB(2)2063/05-06(01)]

9. Mr Philip YUEN highlighted the views of the Hong Kong Council of Social Service as detailed in its submission. He highlighted that the Administration should provide PWDs with a wider variety of skills training programmes and lifelong learning opportunities; provide more flexibility to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in their provision of integrated services for PWDs with different needs and interests; and plan the provision of day activity centres and residential services for PWDs through the town planning process in the long term.

C.C.C. Kei Shun Special School Parents Staff Association
[LC Paper No. CB(2)2083/05-06(04)]

10. Mrs CHENG KAN Fung-kuen and Mrs Angela HO presented the views of the C.C.C. Kei Shun Special School Parents Staff Association. They highlighted that students with mild ID would normally be arranged to engage in supported employment after completion of two-year training in skills training centres. However, they were always the targets for bullying in the workplaces. The Association considered that post-school rehabilitation services for students with mild ID should not be restricted to vocational training, and should include

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continuing education programmes in community college and universities. The Association requested the Administration to formulate long-term policies and strategies for the coordination of resources and efforts to support students with SEN to develop their potentials and lead an independent living.

多重殘障人士家長關注小組

[LC Paper No. CB(2)2083/05-06(05)]

11. Ms Letty LAM presented the views of the “多重殘障人士家長關注小組” as detailed in its submission. She highlighted that parents had great difficulties in looking after their children with multi-disabilities after secondary schooling. The Administration should provide these children with suitable care and support services and a residential place within a reasonable period of time. In addition, the Administration should improve day activities and community-based support services for students with multi-disabilities after leaving schools.

The Parents' Association of Pre-school Handicapped Children

12. Ms LEE Mei-ye described the experience of her son who had completed a three-year course on office practices in Kwun Tong Skills Training Centre to illustrate the difficulties for autistic students to find an employment. She suggested that the Administration should provide continuing education opportunities for students with SEN. Ms LAU Shu-lin said that the Administration should reinforce support services for students with SEN who had completed a course in skills training centres to engage in appropriate work and integrate into the mainstream community.

明愛達言學校家教會關注小組

[LC Paper No. CB(2)2070/05-06(04)]

13. Mrs LEUNG WONG Lai-ming presented the views of the “明愛達言學校家教會關注小組” as detailed in its submission. She highlighted that students with hearing impairment (HI students) were intellectually capable of learning as other students. The Administration should design appropriate curriculum and skills training programmes, including career-oriented studies and continuing training opportunities, for HI students. The Government and NGOs should take the lead to employ a fixed percentage of PWDs and provide them with on-the-job training opportunities.

肢體殘障人士關注小組

[LC Paper No. CB(2)2083/05-06(06)]

14. Mr LAU Hiu-fung and Miss CHENG Kin-wai presented the views of the “肢體殘障人士關注小組” as detailed in its submission. They highlighted

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that the Administration should provide sufficient and consistent support for PD students in learning and taking the public examinations; take the lead in encouraging private enterprises to employ PWDs; provide sufficient publicly-funded or subsidized residential places to reduce the waiting time for residential services to a year; and provide sufficient day care services and transport services for PWDs to participate in various rehabilitation activities.

Other submission received

[LC Paper No. CB(2)2070/05-06(05)]

15. Members noted the submission from “心光恩望學校家教聯會”.

The Administration’s response

16. The Chairman said that as a responsible government of an international city, the Administration should provide sufficient support and care services for PWDs in learning and living. He invited the Administration to respond to the concerns and views of the deputations attending the meeting.

17. In response, C for R said that the Administration would consider and follow up the views and suggestions of the deputations expressed at the meeting. The Health, Welfare and Food Bureau (HWFB) would strive for the allocation of land and recurrent resources for the provision of rehabilitation and residential services for PWDs. Specifically, HWFB would –

- (a) continue to search and identify suitable sites for the provision of various types of residential services for PWDs, in particular sites in new towns under planning and urban redevelopment projects. The provision of some 100 residential places in the Shek Kip Mei Estate redevelopment project had been planned;
- (b) consider the views of stakeholders in their submissions to the 2005 Hong Kong Rehabilitation Programme Plan Review. The 2005 Hong Kong Rehabilitation Programme Plan Review Working Group would consolidate the views and make recommendations on policies and strategies for provision of rehabilitation and residential services in the long term;
- (c) collaborate with the Skills Training Centres to provide appropriate supported and open employment for their graduates in the light of the manpower demand and changing circumstances in the market. About 70% to 80% of graduates of these Centres had been able to find a job. The Skills Training Centres would offer continuing education and training for the unemployed graduates to upgrade their job skills and knowledge. Around 10% of the students in these Centres had returned to sheltered workshops; and

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- (d) follow up with Kwun Tong Skills Training Centres on the provision of appropriate training programmes for HI students with the aim of enhancing their employability after graduation.

18. Principal Assistant Secretary (School Administration and Support) (PAS(SAS)) said that the Education and Manpower Bureau (EMB) was collaborating with providers and schools on the provision of pilot career-oriented courses for HI and PD students, having regard to their abilities and interests, the manpower demand in the market and the availability of qualified teachers and support professionals. To facilitate their transition from schools to post-school institutions, students with SEN at Secondary 6 under the new senior secondary structure would be arranged to observe the programmes and activities in post-school institutions, and staff in these institutions would also better understand the education programmes for students with SEN in ordinary and special schools. While C for R would coordinate with EMB and other departments to enhance the transitional arrangements and post-school learning, vocational rehabilitation training and community support services, EMB would continue to enrich the curriculum and education programmes for students with SEN in schools.

Discussion

Provision of residential services

19. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong considered that students with severe ID should be provided with reasonable and sufficient post-school education, rehabilitation and residential services. He agreed with the view of many deputations that parents were most concerned with the provision of an appropriate residential place for their children before they became too old to look after their children with disability. He found it totally unacceptable that it took 10 years for PWDs to be allocated a residential place. Even for PWDs with justified reasons for priority placement, they had to wait two to four years. He also considered that students with mild and moderate ID with justified needs should also be provided with residential places within a reasonable period of time after lodging their applications.

20. Assistant Director (Rehabilitation and Medical Social Services) (AD(R&MSS)) responded that the Social Welfare Department (SWD) would continue its endeavours to increase the supply of residential places and improve the quality of residential services. On parents' concern that the application of residential services for their disabled children would be blocked by the criteria of the assessment tool, he pointed out that all applicants would be informed of their right to appeal in case they disagreed with the assessment results and the circumstances under which they could approach their social workers for arranging a reassessment. So far no complaints about assessment had been

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lodged to the Appeal Board. He also clarified that the age of the primary carer was only one of the criteria for consideration in allocation of residential places, and there was no prerequisite that the primary carer had to be 60 or above.

21. The Chairman remarked that it was no use to appeal against the assessment result as the applicant would only be reassessed when a place was available for allocation some seven to ten years later.

22. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong requested the Administration to provide information on the number of PWDs and PWDs qualified for priority placement on the waiting list and the average waiting time for them to be allocated a place. He considered that the Administration should set reasonable performance pledges on allocation of residential places to PWDs, in particular to PWDs who were justified for priority placement.

23. The Chairman pointed out that as at end of October 2005, the number of residential places for persons with severe and moderate ID were 2 697 and 1 898 respectively, and the number of persons with severe and moderate ID on the waiting list were 1 939 and 1 498 respectively. He also considered it unacceptable that PWDs had to wait 10 years for the allocation of a residential place. In this connection, Mr LEE Cheuk-yan requested the Administration to provide statistics on the turnover rate in different types of residential homes.

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24. C for R responded that the provision of residential places would largely depend on the availability of suitable sites and additional resources in the long term. In the meantime, SWD would try its best to arrange priority placement for PWDs in need. As discussed at the Rehabilitation Programme Plan Review, the Administration would continue to provide subvented residential services to PWDs. In parallel, the Administration was promoting the development of self-financing hostels run by NGOs and Government would also introduce legislation to regulate the operation of private hostels.

25. The Chairman said that parents and their children with SEN would not accept the Administration's simple response that HWFB and SWD would endeavour to increase the supply of residential places. He expressed great disappointment at the failure of the Administration to provide performance pledges in this respect. He requested the Administration to provide information on the increase of places in different types of residential homes in the next few years.

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26. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong suggested that the Administration should formulate long-term policies on the provision of residential services for PWDs in the light of members' views and concerns before the Policy Address of the Chief Executive in October 2006. He also requested EMB to provide HWFB with a list of the vacated school premises for possible conversion into residential homes for PWDs. PAS(SAS) responded that there was a mechanism on how vacated

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school premises should be used. She agreed to forward the list of the vacated school premises to HWFB. C for R agreed to consider the feasibility of converting the vacated school premises into residential homes.

27. Miss CHAN Yuen-han said that a responsible Government of a caring community should allocate sufficient land sites for the provision of residential services for PWDs in need. She cited her past endeavours to explain her disappointment with the Administration's policy on allocation of lands for construction of residential homes.

28. Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung expressed sympathy for the difficulties experienced by parents and their children with SEN in pursuing continuing learning opportunities and securing residential services. He called on the Administration to work out a blueprint for the provision of residential services in the long term. Specifically, the Administration should map out a plan to increase the supply of residential places in the years ahead.

29. C for R reiterated that the provision of residential places in the next few years would depend on availability of land sites and recurrent resources for the operation of new residential services. She assured members that HWFB would endeavour to obtain financial resources for such purposes in the 2007-08 resources allocation exercise.

30. Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung remarked that the Administration should first set its targets in the provision of residential places, otherwise it would be aimless in its efforts to procure the necessary resources.

Post-school education and employment for PWDs

31. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong considered that students with ID (ID students) should be provided with supported or open employment after school education wherever feasible. The Government should take the lead in creating jobs for those who were capable of taking up an open employment. For ID students who were unable to take up an open or supported employment, the Government should provide them with post-school support and services through different types of institutions, preferably in the form of community colleges than sheltered workshops. He held a strong view that ID students should be provided with an environment to work, learn and live with dignity. He considered it impractical to expect all ID students to lead an independent living. He expressed sympathy for students with mild or moderate ID who had been bullied or teased by colleagues in the workplaces and ultimately had to return to sheltered workshops. The Administration should look after these students and provide sufficient support to enable them to learn and work and lead a meaningful life.

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32. AD(R&MSS) said that he shared the concern of Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong that some students with mild or moderate ID had been bullied or teased by colleagues in the workplaces and had finally returned to sheltered workshops. He, however, pointed out that under the three-year Sunnyway project piloted in October 2005, many young people aged between 15 and 24 with disabilities or early signs of mental illness had been trained and assisted to find an employment. PWDs in sheltered workshops and integrated vocational rehabilitation service centres were provided with work training and social activities which helped develop their work skills and social skills and relationship with others. In particular, an NGO had pioneered to incorporate both working and learning elements in the provision of vocational rehabilitation services for PWDs. SWD would consult parents on the future development of rehabilitation services on the basis of the results of these new services, having regard to parental preference. He added that in collaboration with NGOs, SWD was providing funding support on a wide range of rehabilitation services and community-based social support and development services for PWDs, such as gateway clubs and recreational centres.

33. Miss CHAN Yuen-han shared the view of Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong that ID students should be provided with support and opportunities to learn, work and live with dignity. She considered it difficult for the private sector to provide sufficient job opportunities for PWDs and agreed that the Administration should take the lead in employing PWDs. She suggested that the Administration should allocate resources and venues to NGOs for the operation of social enterprises in order to create more jobs for PWDs.

34. Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung expressed support for the development of social enterprises to create direct training and employment opportunities for PWDs. He suggested that apart from providing funding support through the “Enhancing Employment of People with Disabilities through Small Enterprises” project, the Administration should set a quota for employment of PWDs in the civil service and establish a fund to support NGOs in the development of social enterprises.

35. AD(R&MSS) responded that the Administration had allocated \$50 million to support the development of social enterprises in 2002. So far some \$20 million had been allocated to NGOs in support of the operation of 36 social enterprises with start-up capital investment ranging from a few hundred thousand dollars to \$2 million.

36. Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung expressed concern that only some \$20 million of the initial provision of \$50 million had been approved for the development of social enterprises. He asked how SWD would encourage NGOs to make use of the remaining allocation to operate more social enterprises.

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Admin 37. AD(R&MSS) explained that NGOs would need time to learn and plan the operation and development of a social enterprise in a special trade. The Administration would organise seminars and workshops for social workers to share their experience with a view to encouraging more NGOs to apply for funds to operate social enterprises. At the Chairman's request, he agreed to provide information on the 36 social enterprises, including the types of trades and the number of people employed.

38. Mr LEE Cheuk-yan considered that the Administration should formulate a policy in support of NGOs to operate private enterprises in government premises and facilities such as the operation of kiosks in schools. He also considered that the Administration should provide tax reductions to encourage the commercial sector to employ PWDs. AD(R&MSS) responded that some of the existing 36 social enterprises were operating on government premises. The Hospital Authority and the Leisure and Cultural Services Department also provided premises for NGOs to operate social enterprises by way of restricted tenders.

Curriculum design and career-orient studies for students with SEN

39. Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung considered that EMB should consult parents and students with SEN in the design and development of appropriate curriculum for the provision of career-oriented studies to students with different types of SEN.

40. PAS(SAS) responded that EMB had collaborated with course providers and the schools concerned in designing the content and making arrangements for the pilot career-oriented courses to be implemented for HI and PD students in the 2006-07 school year. In addition, a few career-oriented courses for ID students would be piloted in the 2006-07 school year in consultation with the special education sector and service providers. As regards the curriculum for post-school skills training, C for R would coordinate with EMB, SWD and relevant parties to work out the appropriate programmes for PWDs with different needs and interests.

Follow-up

41. Mr LEE Cheuk-yan considered that given the fiscal surplus in the current financial year, HWFB should formulate policy objectives on the provision of residential services. He requested HWFB to work out a blueprint and performance pledges in the provision of residential services for follow-up discussion at the next meeting on 16 June 2006.

42. The Chairman suggested and members agreed that the Subcommittee should continue discussion on the subject, including provision of residential services and the development of social enterprises for PWDs, at the next

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meeting. Miss CHAN Yuen-han suggested that representatives from the Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau and the Labour Department should be invited to attend the next meeting. The Administration noted members' requests.

III. Any other business

43. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 12:52 pm.

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
14 June 2006