

Draft

LC Paper No. CB(2)891/04-05(01)

立法會

Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(2) /04-05

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seen by the Administration)

Ref : CB2/PL/ED+WS

Panel on Education and Panel on Welfare Services

**Minutes of joint meeting
held on Monday, 10 January 2005 at 5:30 pm
in the Chamber of the Legislative Council Building**

**Members
present**

: Members of Panel on Education

- * Dr Hon YEUNG Sum (Chairman)
- Hon Audrey EU Yuet-mee, SC, JP (Deputy Chairman)
- Hon Mrs Selina CHOW LIANG Shuk-ye, GBS, JP
- Hon CHEUNG Man-kwong
- Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung
- Hon Jasper TSANG Yok-sing, GBS, JP
- Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP
- Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, JP
- Hon Andrew LEUNG Kwan-yuen, SBS, JP
- Hon Patrick LAU Sau-shing, SBS, JP

Members of Panel on Welfare Services

- Hon CHAN Yuen-han, JP (Chairman)
- # Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung (Deputy Chairman)
- Hon James TIEN Pei-chun, GBS, JP
- Hon LEE Cheuk-yan
- Hon Fred LI Wah-ming, JP
- Hon Bernard CHAN, JP
- Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP
- Hon LI Fung-ying, BBS, JP
- Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip
- Hon Frederick FUNG Kin-kee, JP
- Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit, SC
- Hon Albert Jinghan CHENG

Also a member of Panel on Education

* Also a member of Panel on Welfare Services

- Members absent** : Members of Panel on Education
Hon MA Lik, JP
Members of Panel on Welfare Services
Hon Mrs Sophie LEUNG LAU Yau-fun, SBS, JP
Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung
- Public Officers attending** : Mrs Mary MA LO To-wan
Commissioner for Rehabilitation, Health, Welfare and Food Bureau
Miss Ophelia CHAN Chiu-ling
Assistant Director (Rehabilitation and Medical Social Services), Social Welfare Department
Mrs Betty IP TSANG Chui-hing
Principal Assistant Secretary (School Administration & Support), Education and Manpower Bureau
Mr Tony TANG
Principal Education Officer (Curriculum Development), Education and Manpower Bureau
- Attendance by invitation** : The Association of Parents of the Severely Handicapped
Mrs LEE LEE Siu-king
General Administration
Mrs AU YEUNG CHAN Cho-man
Member
Concern group on the provision of boarding/temporary accommodation service in schools for the physically disabled (「爭取肢體弱能學校開辦住宿/暫宿服務」關注組)
Ms HO Bo-ching
Parent Representative
Ms NAM Shuk-yee
Parent Representative

The Hong Kong Joint Council of Parents of the Mentally Handicapped

Ms Eva MOK
Vice-Chairperson

Miss LAW Lai-chun
Executive Member

Parents' Alliance on Special Education System

Ms Christina CHAN Yuk-kam
Member

Ms KONG Wai-ying
Secretary

Hong Kong Association for Parents of Persons with Physical Disabilities

Ms CHIU Yee-ling
Chairman

Ms HO Lai-yuen
Coordinator

Haven of Hope Sunnyside School

Mr LAW Kai-hong
Principal

Mrs CHEUNG CHAN Yuen-fan
Representative

Hong Kong Association of Rehabilitation Organisations

Mr Philip YUEN
Rehabilitation Chief Officer, Hong Kong Council of
Social Service

The Special Education Society of Hong Kong

Mr Andrew TSE
Chairperson

Ms Maria WONG
Vice-Chairperson

Hong Kong Special Schools Council

Dr Simon LEUNG
Chairman

Mrs Rita MANSUKHANI
Hon. Secretary

Hong Kong Association for Specific Learning
Disabilities

Mrs LAU LEE Man-ying
Executive Committee Member

Ms NG Wai-fong
Executive Committee Member

The Parents' Association of Pre-School Handicapped
Children

Mrs LEE LAU Chu-lai
Chairperson

Mrs CHUNG NG Sui-fong
Convenor, Main-Stream Education Sub-Group

Hong Chi Association

Ms Nora WONG, JP
General Secretary

Ms Evonne CHING
Principal, Hong Chi Morninghill School, Tsui Lam

**Clerk in
attendance** : Miss Flora TAI
Chief Council Secretary (2)2

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

Miss Sherman WOO
Legislative Assistant (2)2

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I. Election of Chairman

Dr YEUNG Sum was elected Chairman of the joint meeting.

II. Provision of boarding places, senior secondary education and employment opportunities for children with special educational needs

[LC Paper Nos. CB(2)486/04-05, CB(2)501/04-05(01) and CB(2)553/04-05(01)]

2. The Chairman welcomed representatives of the Administration and the 12 deputations to the meeting.

The Association of Parents of the Severely Handicapped

3. Mrs LEE LEE Siu-king of the Association of Parents of the Severely Handicapped said that due to a lack of sufficient frontline staff and occupational therapists and physiotherapists, the health conditions of children with severe physical disability or mental handicap would deteriorate after they were transferred from special schools to rehabilitation facilities including sheltered workshops and residential centres. She suggested that the Administration should increase the manpower provisions in rehabilitation facilities operated by non-government organisations (NGOs) and the Hospital Authority so as to provide adequate service and support to persons aged 15 or above with severe mental handicap or physical disability.

Concern group on the provision of boarding/temporary accommodation service in schools for the physically disabled (「爭取肢體弱能學校開辦住宿/暫宿服務」關注組)

[LC Paper No. CB(2)581/04-05(01)]

4. Ms HO Bo-ching and Ms NAM Shuk-ye presented the views of the Concern group on the provision of boarding/temporary accommodation service in schools for the physically disabled as detailed in its submission. They requested the Administration to review the mode, quality and cost-effectiveness of the provision of boarding places in special schools in the light of the needs of physically disabled (PD) children residing in different districts. They pointed out that at present, only two of the seven special schools for PD children had a boarding section. As the two schools were located in Hong Kong Island and East Kowloon, PD children residing in New Territories simply had to travel a long distance in their journeys to and from home.

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5. Ms HO and Ms NAM suggested that the Administration should provide boarding places in schools for PD children on a regional rather than a territory-wide basis. They urged the Administration to establish a small-scale boarding section with 8-10 places in the five existing special schools without a boarding section to address the needs of PD children residing in West Kowloon and New Territories with long-term boarding needs. They also suggested that each of these small-scale boarding sections should reserve two places to meet short term boarding needs.

*Parents' Alliance on Special Education System
[LC Paper No. CB(2)627/04-05(01)]*

6. Ms Christina CHAN and Ms KONG Wai-ying presented the views of Parents' Alliance on Special Education System as detailed in its submission which was tabled at the meeting. They stressed that like students in mainstream schools, students with special educational needs (SEN) had the equal right to education, and should receive senior secondary education with appropriate interfaces with the mainstream education including the higher education and continuing education systems.

7. Ms CHAN and Ms KONG suggested that the Administration should incorporate special education under the proposed academic structure for junior secondary, senior secondary and higher education (the proposed "3+3+4" structure). They urged the Administration to formulate the policies, and propose the senior secondary curriculum, financial arrangements, assessment mechanisms for implementation of special education under the "3+3+4" structure for public consultation as soon as practicable.

Hong Kong Association for Parents of Persons with Physical Disabilities

8. Ms CHIU Yee-ling of the Hong Kong Association for Parents of Persons with Physical Disabilities explained the need for the provision of small-scale boarding section for PD children in the existing five special schools which did not have a boarding section. They pointed out that the 170 boarding places in John Kennedy Centre and Princess Alexandra Residential School located in Sandy Bay and Kwun Tong could not meet the needs of some 400 PD children residing in West Kowloon and New Territories. They requested the Administration to review the current policies on special education and the provision of boarding places in special schools for PD children in the light of their family needs.

*The Special Education Society of Hong Kong
[LC Paper No. CB(2)560/04-05(02)] (revised)*

9. Mr Andrew TSE presented the views of the Special Education Society of Hong Kong as detailed in its submission. He highlighted that all students with

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SEN had the right to senior secondary education. The Administration should review the curriculum, assessment, teacher development and other support services for the provision of special education under the proposed “3+3+4” structure. The Administration should also examine the provision of employment and further education opportunities for students with SEN who had completed a three-year senior secondary education. He added that in line with the concept of “one curriculum for all”, there should not be a mainstream curriculum for ordinary schools and an alternative curriculum for special schools upon the implementation of the proposed “3+3+4” structure.

Mr LAW Kai-hong
Principal, Haven of Hope Sunnyside School
[LC Paper No. CB(2)560/04-05(01)]

10. Mr LAW Kai-hong presented his views on the proposed “3+3+4” structure as detailed in his submission. He highlighted that apart from paragraph 3.26, the consultation document on the proposed “3+3+4” structure had not incorporated any information on implementation of special education under the proposed “3+3+4” structure. He considered that the new “3+3+4” structure should provide a curriculum framework which encompassed all students in mainstream and special schools, instead of specifying an alternative curriculum for students with SEN.

11. Mr LAW queried whether the current requirement for severe mentally handicapped (MH) children to leave schools at the age of 16 was in conformity with the Disability Discrimination Ordinance (DDO) and the Code of Practice on Education issued by the Equal Opportunities Commission in accordance with the DDO. He also queried whether such requirement would constitute “direct disability discrimination” or “indirect disability discrimination” against severe MH children. Mr LAW urged Education and Manpower Bureau (EMB) to extensively consult the stakeholders and professionals concerned in the special education sector on the provision of special education under the proposed “3+3+4” structure, including the total number of places and classes to be provided, the appropriate teacher-to-class ratios for students with SEN, the professional development programmes and support services for teachers, the curriculum design and structure, and the interface between senior secondary education and continuing education for students with SEN, etc.

Hong Kong Association for Specific Learning Disabilities
[LC Paper No. CB(2)608/04-05(01)]

12. Mrs LAU LEE Man-ying and Ms NG Wai-fong presented the views of the Hong Kong Association for Specific Learning Disabilities as detailed in its submission. They urged the Administration to stipulate the inclusion of students with specific learning disabilities as students with SEN and provide them with the necessary support to pursue senior secondary education. They pointed out that

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students with specific learning disabilities could learn as good as other students and should enjoy equal opportunities in selection of subject studies including career-oriented studies, in participation of public examinations and in performance assessment under fair and objective mechanisms.

*Hong Kong Special Schools Council
[LC Paper No. CB(2)627/04-05(02)]*

13. Dr Simon LEUNG and Mrs Rita Mansukhani presented the views of the Hong Kong Special Schools Council as detailed in its submission which was tabled at the meeting. Mrs Mansukhani highlighted that the Administration should review the provision of boarding places in special schools having regard to the increasing number of children abuse cases, severe MH children and multi-disabled children in recent years, and provide boarding services to PD or MH children in need on a year-round basis. She also suggested that EMB should increase the number of boarding places in special schools in the light of the provision of senior secondary education for children with SEN under the proposed “3+3+4” structure.

The Parents’ Association of Pre-School Handicapped Children

14. Mrs LEE LAU Chu-lai said that students with SEN should enjoy an equal right to senior secondary education and learn the necessary basic knowledge and skills to pursue lifelong learning. She anticipated that the second-round consultation on the proposed “3+3+4” structure would incorporate special education and provide the detailed curriculum and support measures for implementation of special education under the new academic structure.

15. Mrs CHUNG NG Sui-fong said that at present, there were not many students with SEN studying in mainstream secondary schools. She requested the Administration to specify an appropriate curriculum and the necessary supports for students with SEN to complete senior secondary education under the proposed “3+3+4” structure. She also suggested that EMB should provide appropriate development programmes for teachers and sufficient resources for mainstream schools to implement integrated education under the new senior secondary structure. She added that some students with SEN were often teased or harassed by their peers in senior secondary and vocational schools.

The Hong Kong Joint Council of Parents of the Mentally Handicapped

16. Ms Eva MOK said that the Hong Kong Joint Council of Parents of the mentally handicapped supported the incorporation of special education under the proposed “3+3+4” structure. She described the experience of her son with severe mental handicap to illustrate that children with different levels of mental handicaps would develop their potentials at a slower pace during their early ages, but could develop their potentials faster at certain ages if they were assisted and

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guided by professional staff in a suitable environment. She considered it too early to send MH children to work in sheltered workshops at the age of 15.

17. Miss LAW Lai-chun cited the experience of her sister with mild mental handicap in joining the “Enhancing employment of people with disabilities through small enterprise” projects as an example to illustrate that MH persons could perform general cleansing duties as good as other persons. She considered that NGOs were not provided with sufficient resources to assist the mentally disabled in pursuit of employment opportunities. As a result, development of MH persons had been adversely affected. She suggested that the Administration should review its policy on vocational rehabilitation services including sheltered workshops and support employment services for MH persons in the light of actual case experiences.

Hong Kong Council of Social Service
[LC Paper No. CB(2)601/04-05(01)]

18. Mr Philip YUEN presented the views of the Hong Kong Council of Social Service and the Joint Council for the Physically and Mentally Disabled as detailed in the submission. He highlighted that the two Councils supported the incorporation of special education under the proposed “3+3+4” structure and requested the Administration to provide sufficient support facilities and resources for implementation of the new curriculum in special schools and ordinary schools providing integrated education to students with SEN. On provision of employment opportunities for handicapped persons, the two Councils requested the Administration to reinforce education and publicity on the right of the disabled to enjoy equal employment opportunities, and the social responsibilities of organisations to provide equal employment opportunities to the disabled.

Hong Chi Association
[LC Paper No. CB(2)601/04-05(02)]

19. Ms Evonne CHING presented the views of the Hong Chi Association as detailed in its submission. She highlighted that the Association considered that the Administration should provide the same curriculum and levels of support and resources to both special schools and mainstream schools in the implementation of the proposed “3+3+4” structure. In addition, the Administration should reduce the class size for children with mild mental handicap from 20 to 15 students, and provide sufficient resources for the provision of lifelong learning opportunities for the mentally handicapped. Ms Nora WONG cited examples to illustrate that instead of reducing funding for special education, the Administration should allocate more resources on the provision of vocational rehabilitation services for special school students to receive appropriate training and find employment in open market.

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Other submissions received
[LC Paper No. CB(2)627/04-05(03)]

20. Members noted the submission from Hong Kong Special School Boarding Care Staff Association which was tabled at the meeting.

Administration's response to the views and suggestions of deputations

21. The Chairman invited the Administration to respond to the views and suggestions of deputations in the provision of boarding places, senior secondary education and employment opportunities for children with SEN.

22. In response, Principal Education Officer (Curriculum Development) (PEO(CD)) stressed that the Administration attached great importance to the needs of students with SEN and had consulted special schools and relevant councils on the academic structure for special education under the proposed "3+3+4" structure. He said that the Administration would provide more details on special education in its report on the outcome of the consultation on the "3+3+4" structure .

23. Principal Assistant Secretary (School Administration & Support) (PAS(SAS)) said that EMB would review the provision of boarding places in special schools for students with SEN in the light of the proposed "3+3+4" structure. She added that EMB would actively assist the school sponsoring body concerned to implement the pilot scheme on a self-financed small-scale boarding section in a school for children with physical disabilities in Sha Tin.

24. Assistant Director (Rehabilitation and Medical Social Services) said that the Social Welfare Department (SWD), in collaboration with NGOs, provided a wide range of vocational rehabilitation services for secondary 3 school leavers with different types of disabilities. Generally, students with SEN referred from special schools would be put on a central register and provided with appropriate vocational rehabilitation services on the basis of an assessment of their abilities and special needs. As regards the provision of occupational therapists and physiotherapists, NGOs were now provided with a subvention under lump sum grant and were encouraged to determine the appropriate number of support and professional staff for the provision of vocational rehabilitation services in their sheltered workshops and residential centres. Nevertheless, NGOs were advised to follow the notional staff establishment as proposed by SWD or make appropriate changes to suit operational needs. Currently, NGOs should have no difficulty in recruitment of occupational therapists in the market.

Members' views and concerns

25. Mr LEE Cheuk-yan asked why paragraph 11 of the Administration's paper only stated that EMB would consider provision of senior secondary

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education for students with SEN under the new academic structure, given the statement of the Secretary for Education and Manpower (SEM) as reported in the press that students with SEN would be provided with three-year junior and three-year senior secondary education as their mainstream counterparts. PEO(CD) confirmed that students with SEN would be provided with a six-year secondary education under the new academic structure.

26. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong asked whether the Administration had inadvertently neglected or intentionally discriminated against the needs of students with mental handicaps or specific learning disabilities in the proposed “3+3+4” structure. He pointed out that parents were concerned about the provision of sufficient support measures and resources for the implementation of the new senior secondary curriculum for students with SEN in special and mainstream schools. Mr CHEUNG said that during the recent visit of the Panel on Education and the Panel on Welfare Services to special schools, sheltered workshops and vocational rehabilitation centres on 6 January 2005, he found that disabled persons were required to perform repetitive and monotonous work for long hours and paid at a few hundred dollars a month. He expressed sympathy for the disabled and urged the Administration to improve the situation.

27. Dr Fernando CHEUNG requested the Administration to set out the curriculum, support measures, financial arrangements and timetable for the implementation of special education under the new structure for senior secondary education in its second-round consultation on the proposed “3+3+4” structure. Mr Albert CHENG considered that the Administration should allocate more resources in special education and reduce the class sizes for students with SEN to below 15 students.

28. Mr Albert CHAN and Mr Albert CHENG expressed regret that SEM, the Permanent Secretary for Education and Manpower (PSEM), and the deputy secretaries concerned had not attended the meeting. They considered that the Administration did not consider it important to listen to the views of parents and other stakeholders in the special education sector. Mr CHAN and Mr CHENG strongly requested the Administration to explain the reasons of their absence in writing. PAS(SAS) clarified that owing to other official duties, SEM, PSEM and the deputy secretaries concerned were unable to attend the meeting. The Chairman remarked that the Administration should explain to members in its written response.

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29. Mr Albert CHAN requested the Clerk to prepare a summary of the views and suggestions of deputations expressed at the meeting, and the Administration to provide corresponding responses for future discussion. Ms Emily LAU added that the Administration should provide the estimated costs for implementing the proposed support measures for the implementation of the new senior secondary education for students with SEN.

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[*Post-meeting note* : A summary of the views and suggestions of deputations was forward to the Administration on 3 February 2005.]

Establishment of a subcommittee to study issues relating to the provision of boarding places, senior secondary education and employment opportunities for students with SEN

30. Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung considered it impossible to discuss the issues relating to the provision of special education in sufficient details at the meeting. He suggested that a subcommittee should be formed to follow up the issues raised by deputations on special education and integrated education in a comprehensive and structured manner. Members in general expressed support for Mr LEUNG's suggestion.

31. The Chairman invited members' views as to whether the subcommittee should be established under the Panel on Education or the House Committee to follow up the issues relating to special education. Ms Emily LAU and Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong considered it more appropriate for the subcommittee to be formed under the House Committee so that all Legislative Council Members could join and participate in the work of the subcommittee.

32. Mr TAM Yiu-chung considered that it was preferable to set up the subcommittee under the Panel on Education. However, the Democratic Alliance for Betterment of Hong Kong would discuss the matter. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong pointed out that the subcommittee to be formed should follow up issues which straddled the policy areas of the Panel on Education and the Panel on Welfare Services. Mr James TIEN said that the Liberal Party did not have a strong view on the matter.

33. Members agreed that the proposal for a subcommittee to be formed under the House Committee to study issues relating to the provision of boarding places, senior secondary education and employment opportunities for children with SEN should be put forward to the House Committee. Members also agreed that the Chairman should present the proposal at the House Committee meeting on 14 January 2005.

[*Post-meeting note* : The House Committee decided at its meeting on 14 January 2005 that a subcommittee should be formed under the House Committee to study issues relating to the provision of boarding places, senior secondary education and employment opportunities for children with special educational needs.]

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III. Any other business

34. There being on other business, the meeting ended at 7:20 pm.

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
19 February 2005