

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

Response to the motion passed at the meeting on 28.5.2007

1. The Administration should review whether the assessments adopted in Hong Kong on children with special educational needs (SEN) are too stringent, and whether such assessments conform with the recognized international standards.

*The Education Bureau (EDB) and the Department of Health (DH) have jointly set up a working group, comprising local and overseas experts, as well as psychologists and relevant professionals, to review the assessment criteria on Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) and related matters. The review is expected to be completed by late 2008.**

2. The Administration should unify the standards of assessment on children with SEN, which include the results of their intellectual assessment, performance of their competencies and the psychologists' recommendations on their learning.

*The above-mentioned working group jointly set up by EDB and DH will take this suggestion into consideration in the review.**

3. Assessment reports should be made available to the parents of a child, whereas the relevant assessments should be completed by the Department of Health (DH) and the Education Bureau (EDB) respectively before the child is admitted to Primary One and Secondary One, and with the parents' consent, the reports can be submitted to the schools concerned.

EDB has made it a practice for its educational psychologists (EPs) to give parents a copy of the assessment summary. Upon request, parents will also be provided with an additional copy of the assessment report for school. The Child Assessment Service of DH will continue the practice of providing

* This response is on the understanding that 'children with SEN' mentioned in this motion refers specifically to the category of children with SpLD.

assessment reports to both parents and schools.

EDB has agreed with DH that EDB will take up the assessment of all suspected SpLD cases in public sector primary and secondary schools. DH will continue to accept referral for suspected SpLD with co-morbid developmental problems in pre-school children and perform assessment on these children.

4. School must follow the psychologists' recommendations on learning when teaching the students, EDB's subvention shall follow the students, and the schools must deliver the implementation report on the standardized teaching measures to parents on the annual Parent's Day.

To support students with special educational needs (SEN), including SpLD, public sector primary schools are provided with add-on provision under the New Funding Mode which adopts the concept of 'funding follows the student'. We are reviewing the support for secondary schools.

Once a student is assessed to have SpLD, the student support team of the school concerned would arrange a case conference to be usually attended by relevant school personnel, the parents, EP and other EDB officer as appropriate. Based on the psychologist's recommendations, support measures for implementation at school and at home will be agreed by all parties concerned. The student's progress will be reviewed regularly. We will request schools to report the student's progress to parents in a standardised manner on Parents' Day or on other suitable occasions.

5. The Administration should promptly increase the number of educational psychologists (EP) through training and overseas recruitment to cope with the needs of students.

We agree that we should increase the supply of EPs and consider that the more effective way is to increase the training places of local tertiary institution. Recruitment of EPs from overseas has not been successful as few overseas EPs can speak Cantonese and know the local context well.

6. The Administration should ensure that the relevant services be extended to Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS) schools

The government subsidy to DSS schools already includes, inter alia, elements of funding for the relevant services. DSS schools may utilize the funding to provide support for students through procurement of services or employment of the relevant personnel.

7. The Administration should convene advisory group meetings with parents and the social services organizations concerned on a regular basis to solve the problems in partnership.

EDB has invited NGOs and parents organizations to sit on task groups such as the Task Force on Provision of Education in Special Schools and the Task Force on Integrated Education and meets with them from time to time to seek their views on matters related to education for students with SEN.

Recently, EDB had a meeting with over ten major NGOs providing services for children with SpLD to exchange views and to explore ways for collaboration. Subsequent to the meeting, NGOs agreed to upload information about their services onto some suitable platforms, such as the HKEdCity, so as to facilitate information sharing amongst NGOs, parents and schools.

EDB also collaborate with NGOs in projects/activities such as teacher training, conferences/seminars, and the Read & Write: A Jockey Club Learning Support Network Project.