

**Responses to the questions raised to the LegCo Subcommittee Chairman
by Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung in his letter dated 27 April 2005**

1. Has the Government reviewed the Integrated Education Programme since its implementation? If it has, what are the details of the review? If not, what are the reasons?

The Education and Manpower Bureau (EMB) reviews the Integrated Education (IE) Programme every year. The major objective is to assess the progress of the students concerned in academic performance and social adjustment under the Programme. In the review ending the 2003/04 school year, an average of 90% or more of the students showed stable performance or improvement in the following areas-

- (a) overall academic result;
- (b) learning motivation and habits;
- (c) social adjustment; and
- (d) self esteem.

The annual review will continue.

2. Has the above review included any study on students with special educational needs who become depressed after participating in the Integrated Education Programme? If it has, the number of such cases involved and improvement measures?

EMB did not directly conduct any study on whether students with special educational needs would become depressed after participating in the IE Programme. The educational psychologists, audiologists, speech therapists, inspectors and school development officers of the EMB provide professional advice and support services for the participating schools. They discuss the support strategies for the students with the school personnel and review the progress of students regularly. However, there has not been any such known case so far. If a student becomes depressed after participating in the IE Programme, the EMB will assist in referring the student to a child psychiatrist for diagnosis and therapy and will provide appropriate support to the school and parents. The parents can also approach the clinic or hospital direct for diagnosis and treatment.

3. Can the Administration clearly explain the differences between its “6-year structure” and the “3+3 structure” as proposed by the special education concern groups? If the Administration is to implement the “3+3 structure”,

what are the difficulties? If not, what are the reasons?

EMB attaches no less importance to the educational needs of children requiring special educational services than the relevant concern groups. EMB is committed to the principle that all students, including children with special educational needs (SEN), should have 6 years of secondary education, with the curriculum contents suitably adapted to meet the specific needs of the students.

“3+3” is the short form for reform to the academic structure relative to the current “3+2+2” academic system. For students with special educational needs, the Government is committed to provide every student with 6 years of secondary education. As the concrete details of the curriculum contents have yet to be examined, it is premature to say at this juncture whether the years of education for the SEN needs to be divided into stages.

The views collected since last October have been consolidated in our report entitled “The New Academic Structure for Senior Secondary Education and Higher Education – Action Plan for Investing in the Future of Hong Kong”. There has been concern about whether the academic structure for mentally handicapped students should be on a par with that for other students with SEN. Chapter 6 of the report discusses the arrangements for stretching the potential of students with SEN, including the new academic structure of special schools. It provides a platform for the community to continue to exchange views. Following this further consultation, more detailed arrangements will be announced by the end of 2005.

4. How does the Administration assess the increase in resources and manpower for implementation of the “3+3 system” as proposed by the concern groups?

EMB has proposed the new academic structure for various categories of special schools in the foregoing report for further consultation. We shall set out various arrangements in greater detail and assess their resource and manpower implications by the end of 2005.