

**Action for the Future –  
Career-oriented Studies and  
the New Senior Secondary Academic  
Structure for Special Schools**

Education and Manpower Bureau

August 2006



## Message from Secretary for Education and Manpower

A 3-month consultation on Career-oriented Studies (COS) and new senior secondary (NSS) academic structure for special schools was launched in January 2006 to gather views and feedback from stakeholders. The response was encouraging and we would like to express our gratitude to all those who have sent in their feedback or expressed their views during the consultation.

There is support from the school sector for the purpose and position of COS in providing a diversified pathway for students under NSS. For better positioning of COS under NSS and understanding of parents and the community, a new name "Applied Learning" will be used as a general term for all COS courses. We have received wide support for the proposed quality assurance framework. Steps will be taken to ensure the quality and promote the recognition of COS. In addition, we are committed to providing professional development programmes to support the implementation of COS.

In the area of special education, the proposed academic structure of special schools is in general well received. There is strong support for one curriculum framework for all with adaptations. To provide insights on curriculum contents, resources and manpower requirements, research and development projects will be conducted in the coming years. Our aim is to enable students with special educational needs to stretch their potential to the full and to achieve as much independence as possible so that they can lead fulfilling lives and contribute to the community.

This report summarises the concerns and feedback received and charts the way forward for the implementation of COS and the NSS academic structure of special schools. It is only a beginning. We will continue our dialogue with stakeholders and take forward the recommendations set out in this report.

Successful implementation of COS and NSS academic structure for special schools hinges on the concerted effort and collaboration of all members of the community. With joint effort and commitment, we can create a better future for our younger generation.



Professor Arthur K.C. Li  
Secretary for Education and Manpower



## *Acronyms*

BCA	Basic Competence Assessment
BECG	Basic Education Curriculum Guide
C&A	Curriculum and Assessment
CDC	Curriculum Development Council
CDI	Curriculum Development Institute
CEG	Capacity Enhancement Grant
COC	Career-oriented Curriculum (pilot of the Career-oriented Studies)
COS	Career-oriented Studies
CSSA	Comprehensive Social Security Assistance
DLG	Diversity Learning Grant
EMB	Education and Manpower Bureau
EYE	Extension of Years of Education
HI	Hearing Impaired
HKALE	Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination
HKCAA	Hong Kong Council for Academic Accreditation
HKCEE	Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination
HKDSE	Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education
HKEAA	Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority
ID	Intellectual Disabilities
IEP	Individualised Education Programme
KLAs	Key Learning Areas
LOF	Learning Outcomes Framework
NGOs	Non-governmental Organisations
NSS	New Senior Secondary
OEBG	Operating Expenses Block Grant
OLE	Other Learning Experiences
PD	Physically Disabled

PDP	Professional Development Programmes
PYJ	Project Yi Jin
QA	Quality Assurance
QF	Qualifications Framework
R&D	Research and Development
S1/2/3/4/5/6/7	Secondary 1/2/3/4/5/6/7
SCS	Specification of Competency Standards
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SFAA	Student Financial Assistance Agency
SLP	Student Learning Profile
SRA	Standards-referenced Assessment
SS1/2/3	Senior Secondary 1/2/3
SSCG	Senior Secondary Curriculum Guide
STG	Substitute Teacher Grant
SWD	Social Welfare Department
TPPG	Teacher Professional Preparation Grant
TRG	Teacher Relief Grant
VI	Visually Impaired
VTC	Vocational Training Council

## *Executive Summary*

### **Career-oriented Studies (COS)**

#### *Purpose and Position of COS in the New Senior Secondary Curriculum*

- COS courses share the common aim of the school curriculum with other core and elective subjects, i.e. of laying a sound foundation for further learning. COS courses also provide a setting for students to develop the necessary values and attitudes for their adult life.
- COS courses are not intended to be a pre-vocational curriculum. Rather, COS courses are designed to achieve as many of the five essential learning experiences<sup>1</sup> as possible, and will include the generic skills<sup>2</sup> that underpin Hong Kong's curriculum framework.
- It is intended that a new name 'Applied Learning' (應用學習) will be introduced in the 2006-08 cohort of piloting to better position COS under "334" and signal more clearly its purpose.
- When "334" commences, it is expected that the school curriculum and the way it is taught and assessed will address the full range of student abilities and interests, and the need for Yi Jin / Secondary Schools Collaboration Project will be substantially reduced and they will possibly be made redundant. The programme designed for all students under "334" in fact incorporates some of the strengths which underpin the Collaboration Project.

#### *The Curriculum Design of Career-oriented Studies*

- COS is intended to diversify and enrich the curriculum offered in senior secondary schooling, and is not intended to compete with the NSS subjects.
- The proposed COS curriculum framework will emphasise foundation skills, thinking skills, people skills, values and attitudes, and career-related competencies in order to prepare students for further studies and/or for work as well as for life-long learning.

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<sup>1</sup> The five essential learning experiences include moral and civic education, intellectual development, community service, physical and aesthetic development and career-related experiences.

<sup>2</sup> The generic skills are communication skills, critical thinking skills, creativity, collaboration skills, information technology skills, numeracy skills, problem-solving skills, self-management skills and study skills.

### ***Course Provision and Guidance for Students***

- The initial year of the senior secondary schooling is a foundation year preparing students to make informed choices of elective subjects for SS2 and SS3.
- To enable students to benefit fully from the diverse learning opportunities, career guidance to students should be provided as an integral part of NSS curriculum to nurture students' personal growth.
- To ensure manageable implementation and quality, EMB will exercise control over the number of courses, providers and students.
- It is possible for schools to be specialist providers of COS, provided that they have the capacity to design, deliver and provide the venue and resources for COS courses within one or more of the six areas of studies, and are supported by the industry, the professions and relevant workplaces. Schools would need to be supported by their stakeholders, meet the quality assurance requirements and be approved by EMB.

### ***Recognition of and Quality Assurance for COS***

- In the longer term, the preparatory COS committee will be re-constituted as a Functional Committee of the Curriculum Development Council (CDC). A CDC-HKEAA Committee will be set up for each area of studies which will be jointly serviced by Curriculum Development Institute (CDI) and Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA). Members will be drawn from schools, the tertiary sector, Hong Kong Council for Academic Accreditation (HKCAA) and relevant industries and professions.
- Applied learning within COS courses will be assessed in authentic contexts that allow students to apply their knowledge and skills. The assessment will balance the continuous assessment conducted throughout the duration of the course with end-of-module or end-of-course assessments.
- The assessments will be carried out by the tertiary providers, and in some cases will be conducted within the schools. Tertiary providers will apply their existing professional assessment practices to COS to ensure that they are up to standard. HKEAA will moderate the assessments to ensure that the standards are consistent among different classes and across the years.

- The relationship between COS qualifications and Standards-referenced Assessment (SRA) levels of the NSS subjects, especially the SRA level which will match the ‘attainment’ or ‘competency level’ standards for COS, will be the subject of further investigation in the pilots that will continue for three further cohorts until “334” commences in 2009/10.
- Transcripts for all subjects, including COS, in the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) will clearly set out the attainment standards of students with appropriate descriptors and facilitate the articulation of COS to the Qualifications Framework.

### ***Professional Development of COS Teachers***

- Principal leadership is essential in establishing applied learning as a sustainable and valued pathway for students. Careers teachers also play an active role. By engaging with tertiary providers, they can gain insights to give sound advice and guidance to students.
- EMB is committed to supporting secondary teachers who are willing and able to teach COS courses in partnership or collaboration with tertiary providers. The focus of professional development is on teaching competence in practice, and teachers are responsible for acquiring the relevant subject knowledge and expertise.
- The Teacher Professional Preparation Grant (TPPG) is available from the 2005/06 school year for four years to schools that offer new senior secondary classes. The Grant is to help teachers, including Career Masters and Mistresses, prepare for the implementation of new curriculum.

### ***Funding for Career-oriented Studies***

- The shared funding model is confirmed, for parents, schools and the Government to share the costs.
- The guiding principle is that students should not, for financial reasons, be deterred from choosing any programme in senior secondary which matches their interests, aspirations and aptitude.
- The options for the funding model will be explored in the pilots.

## **New Senior Secondary Academic Structure for Special Schools**

### ***Academic Structure of Special Schools***

- With the implementation of New Senior Secondary (NSS), students with special educational needs (SEN), like their counterparts in ordinary schools, will receive six years of secondary education.
- The academic structure of the school for the visually impaired (VI) will be maintained up to junior secondary level.
- 10 years of basic education will be provided for the hearing impaired (HI) and the physically disabled (PD) students pursuing ordinary school curriculum to better prepare them for the 3-year senior secondary education leading to Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE).
- Students with intellectual disabilities (ID) will be provided with 3 years of junior secondary education and 3 years of senior secondary education.
- The academic structure of schools for social development will be extended by 3 years to cover senior secondary education. For those students who are ready for integrating back to ordinary schools, school placement service will be provided.
- The hospital education service in the senior secondary levels will be tried out from the 2006/07 school year onwards.

### ***Development of Curriculum and Assessment Framework***

- Students with SEN but not ID should aim at achieving the same curricular objective for NSS, and will be assessed on the same criteria but with special accommodations.
- For students with ID, the curriculum will be adapted to meet the specific needs of students.
- EMB will conduct Research and Development (R&D) projects from the 2006/07 to 2008/09 school years jointly with schools and local and overseas experts in ID to work out the NSS curriculum framework for students with ID (NSS(ID) curriculum) and the related learning outcomes.

- The R&D projects will inform schools and parents of the requirements and expectations of the students upon completing the 6-year secondary education, identify and specify learning goals and contents, develop practicable assessment procedures and also shed light on the resources and manpower requirements for the effective implementation of NSS(ID).

(A) The NSS(ID) Curriculum

- The R&D projects will be implemented in 3 phases.
  - (a) Phase 1 (the 2006/07 school year): to trial run the broad curriculum framework for core subjects.
  - (b) Phase 2 (2nd term of the 2006/07 school year): to trial run the broad curriculum framework for elective subjects.
  - (c) Phase 3 (the 2007/08 – 2008/09 school years): to refine the curriculum framework for the core, elective subjects and Other Learning Experiences (OLE) for the production of the C&A Guides of the NSS(ID) curriculum.
- The C&A Guides of core subjects and elective subjects of the NSS(ID) curriculum will be completed by 2008 and mid-2009 respectively. A learning needs continuum at different Key Stages will be drawn up to pave way for the possible development of systemic assessment for students with ID.
- The development of systemic assessment for students with ID in collaboration with HKEAA is expected to begin by 2012 the earliest. Extensive consultation with stakeholders in the special education sector will be conducted during the development process.
- A Senior Secondary Curriculum Guide (SSCG) will be available to all schools in December 2006 to provide guidance for schools to develop a whole-school curriculum relevant to the needs of students and to deliver effective learning and teaching. Supplements to the Basic Education Curriculum Guide (BECG) and SSCG will be prepared to help teachers make adaptation to suit the diverse learning needs of students with reference to the priority and emphasis of the school curriculum.

## (B) The Position of Adapted COS in the NSS(ID) Curriculum

- The adapted COC pilot for students with ID will commence in September/October 2006. The first cohort of piloting (2006-08) will only involve students with mild or higher-end moderate grade ID.
- EMB will work in collaboration with the service providers to explore the possibility of offering a wider range of adapted COC courses for students with SEN including students with ID.
- EMB will coordinate with service providers to ensure better articulation and consult schools on the mode of delivery and proper deployment of manpower and resources in piloting the adapted COC courses for students with SEN.

## (C) Assessment

- The development of the Learning Outcomes Framework (LOF) for students with ID will start in the 2007/08 school year capitalising on the experiences gained from the R&D projects. The initial LOF will pave way for the preparatory work for the development of systemic assessment to be commenced in 2012.
- Extensive consultation with stakeholders in the special education sector will be conducted during the developmental process.
- For the IEP to become an effective learning and assessment strategy, teachers, relevant professionals and parents should be involved to agree on students' learning priorities, methodologies and assessment criteria.

## ***Professional Development Opportunities***

- School Leaders Workshops for special schools – Tailor-made workshops for functional heads and school supervisors of special schools will be conducted in October 2006 for the development of school plan for NSS and management of change at the school level.
- Middle Managers Workshops for special schools – A series of workshops for middle managers focusing on collaboration in curriculum and assessment change, managing changes, coping with uncertainties and stress.
- Other PD programmes – Assessment for learning, IEP, curriculum management, professional knowledge for all teachers, strengthening professional capacity in basic education, and sharing of experiences and good practices in R&D projects.

- Initial teacher education – To ensure the most suitable programmes for pre-service teachers through close communication with teacher education providers.

### ***Quality Assurance and Exit Pathways for the Implementation of NSS Education in Special Schools***

- Students with SEN capable of pursuing advanced education at tertiary institutes will not be deprived of their chance because of their disabilities. There will also be suitable modifications to learning facilities and assessment where necessary to ensure equal opportunity in education.
- EMB will coordinate with relevant service providers, e.g. Vocational Training Council (VTC), non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in their future course/programme design to facilitate articulation with the learning objectives of the adapted COS courses.
- EMB will work in collaboration with relevant parties to arrange structured attachment programmes to better prepare students with ID for supported employment and/or open employment after NSS.
- EMB will explore further with relevant parties concerned on opportunities for school leavers in continuous learning/training, employment and independent adult life in the run up to NSS.

### ***Resource Considerations***

- Additional resources have been earmarked for NSS in special schools to cater for the potential demand for additional number of classes in special schools and the requirements of the NSS curriculum.
- EMB will evaluate the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of these supporting measures, and the management of existing resources allocated to special schools.
- More flexibility in supporting measures will be considered for various categories of special schools in order to meet the diversified needs of students in special schools.

#### **Special Schools Offering Ordinary Curriculum**

- Special schools offering ordinary curriculum under the NSS shall receive similar

resources like TPPG and tailored professional development programmes to be allocated to their counterparts in the ordinary sector.

- Taking into account the small number of senior secondary classes, special schools should explore the feasibility of collaboration and sharing resources with other special schools and/or ordinary schools in the vicinity to provide a wider range of NSS courses for their students.
- EMB will discuss with relevant school sponsoring bodies the viable class structure and elective subjects to offer for students in their special schools.

#### Special Schools Offering NSS(ID) Curriculum

- Experiences generated from the R&D projects on NSS(ID) curriculum commencing in the 2006/07 school year would help inform recommendations on resource support. Proposals on resource support will be worked out during Phase 3 of the R&D projects in the 2008/09 school year.

#### School Fees, Boarding Service and Boarding Fees

- Students in both ordinary and special schools at the same level of study will pay the same level of school fees for senior secondary classes. The current policy is to set fees at 18% of the unit cost of secondary education.
- Two new boarding sections, one in New Territory East and another in New Territory West, are proposed to be established to cater for the demand of students with PD for boarding service.
- EMB will continue discussing with stakeholders fee adjustment to recover a reasonable portion of the government expenditure with reference to the unit cost of a boarding place.
- Parents with financial difficulties may apply for fee remission.

#### **The Way Forward**

- We will continue our dialogue with stakeholders and take forward the recommendations set out in this report.

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# **Chapter 1 Background of the Further Consultation on Career-oriented Studies and the New Senior Secondary Academic Structure for Special Schools**

## **Purpose of this Report**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to chart the way forward for the implementation of Career-oriented Studies (COS) and the New Senior Secondary (NSS) academic structure of special schools. Each chapter sets out the original proposals, feedback received during the consultation and the way forward.

## **The Consultation**

1.2 As foreshadowed in the report *The New Academic Structure for Senior Secondary Education and Higher Education – Action Plan for Investing in the Future of Hong Kong (the Action Plan)* published in May 2005, the Education and Manpower Bureau (EMB) launched further consultation on COS and the NSS academic structure for special schools on 24 January 2006.

1.3 The Consultation Document *Action for the Future – Further Consultation on Career-oriented Studies and the New Senior Secondary Academic Structure for Special Schools* covered the purpose and position of COS in the senior secondary curriculum, how quality can be assured and recognition given to student achievement in COS, how the current piloting can benefit future developments, how COS will be funded in the long-term, and how schools and teachers can be better prepared to provide the COS courses. It also reiterated the Government's position on special education, and the proposed way forward for the implementation of NSS in special schools, including a NSS curriculum for students with Intellectual Disabilities (ID). The public was invited to submit their views by 24 April 2006.

## **Consultation Process and Feedback**

### Dissemination Activities

1.4 Over 2000 copies of the Consultation Document were issued during the three-month consultation period. Members of the public were also invited to visit the “334” Web Bulletin (<http://www.emb.gov.hk/334>) to view the Consultation Document. EMB officers appeared on several television and radio programmes during the period to introduce the proposals. A total of 54 written submissions (26 for COS and 28 for special education) were received.

### Interactive Activities

1.5 In addition, EMB organised a total of 58 forums and briefings (45 on COS and 13 on special education) to explain the proposals in detail and to collect feedback from various groups of stakeholders, including principals, teachers, school sponsoring bodies, advisory committees in the areas of education and manpower, school councils / educational bodies, Legislative Councillors, District Councillors, course providers of Career-oriented Curriculum (COC), tertiary institutions, non-government organisations (NGOs), professional bodies, students and their parents. There were about 2,800 participants.

1.6 EMB also conducted two questionnaire surveys on COS and special education respectively to collect the views of principals and teachers. A summary of the survey findings is provided in Appendices 1 and 2.

## **Organisation of the Report**

1.7 There are four parts in this report. **Part I (Chapter 1)** is an introduction that sets out the background of the further consultation on COS and the NSS academic structure for special schools. **Part II (Chapters 2 - 7)** focuses on COS. It outlines and discusses various issues including purpose and position, curriculum, course provision and guidance for students, recognition and quality assurance, professional development and funding.

1.8 **Part III (Chapters 8 - 12)** focuses on special education. It covers the academic structure of special schools, curriculum and assessment framework, professional development, quality assurance and exit pathways, and resources. **Part IV (Chapter 13)** presents how the concerted effort of all stakeholders will contribute to the planning and development of COS and the curriculum for students with special educational needs (SEN), the critical milestones and communication between the Government and the public.

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## **Chapter 2 Purpose and Position of COS in the New Senior Secondary Curriculum**

2.1 COS has been introduced into the senior secondary schooling to diversify the learning opportunities available to students. It is intended that students of varying abilities, particularly those who will benefit from a strong practical orientation in their learning, should gain from COS to enrich their learning experiences. This orientation can be extended to the learning and assessment of core subjects of the languages, Mathematics and Liberal Studies.

### **Summary of the Proposals in the Consultation Document**

2.2 COS will be an integral part of the NSS curriculum, complementing the 24 NSS subjects by offering studies with stronger elements of applied learning linked to broad professional and vocational fields. COS courses will be designed to challenge students and provide progression options in both academic and career directions.

2.3 Exposure to and experience in the world of work will be embedded in the entire NSS school curriculum, supported by career advice and pastoral guidance, and will not be confined to the formal study of COS. However, COS courses offer specific applied contexts and content and they are designed to engage and motivate students who learn best by doing rather than conceptualising.

2.4 The Yi Jin / Secondary Schools Collaboration Project will be subsumed under the NSS academic structure when the latter is implemented. In other words, the last cohort of students to participate in the Collaboration Project will be in the 2009/10 school year. From the 2010/11 school year onwards, the successful elements of the Collaboration Project will be incorporated into the NSS curriculum whereby the vocational modules of the Collaboration Project will be replaced by COS courses.

2.5 As nomenclature is important in establishing the purpose and positioning, the public were also invited to consider the best name for courses to reflect their objectives.

### ***(A) Purpose and Position of COS***

#### **Support**

2.6 The respondents to the questionnaire for schools strongly support the purpose and position of COS in diversifying the curriculum and offering articulation pathways to students. About 40% of schools indicated that they would offer COS courses in NSS to meet students' diversified learning needs and a significant number of students expressed interests in taking applied learning courses.

2.7 Various stakeholders, including schools and NGOs, agree that COS courses are well positioned to attract students of different abilities. In addition, others agree that COS can offer choices to meet students' individual needs and interests, benefiting particularly those who learn better through applying their learning in practical contexts. Employers and professional bodies in particular applaud the preparation which the COC pilots have provided for the successful introduction of COS in "334".

#### **Concerns**

2.8 Some principals and teachers remain uncertain about the difference between vocational training and COS. They are concerned that COS may place too much emphasis on vocational training and practical skills. Some have advocated the retention of the Yi Jin / Secondary Schools Collaboration Project to provide an alternative qualification for some students. Moreover, given the variety of providers and courses, parents may find it difficult to understand fully the implications of COS.

## **The Way Forward**

2.9 The Curriculum and Assessment (C&A) Framework currently being developed for COS stresses that COS courses share the common aim of the school curriculum with other core and elective subjects, i.e. laying a sound foundation for further learning. COS courses also provide a setting for students to develop the necessary values and attitudes for their adult life.

2.10 Applied learning builds on the eight Key learning Areas (KLAs) of the school curriculum by providing students with contexts which have meaning in their daily lives. For example, students studying cosmetology acquire knowledge about Biology as it relates to human physiology, muscular systems, skin structure and related diseases and disorder; and knowledge about Chemistry when they understand the reactions and safe use of chemicals in beauty treatment.

2.11 Similarly, students learn values and attitudes in contexts, such as the importance of honesty and integrity when handling money from companies or investors in the area of study of business, management and law, or the importance of intellectual property rights in the area of study of creative studies.

2.12 Both the C&A Framework and the criteria used for selecting the courses emphasise that COS courses are not intended to be a pre-vocational curriculum. Rather, COS courses are designed to achieve as many of the five essential learning experiences<sup>1</sup> as possible, and will include the generic skills<sup>2</sup> that underpin Hong Kong's curriculum framework. Course selection looks for this balance of depth and breadth in the curriculum.

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<sup>1</sup> The five essential learning experiences include moral and civic education, intellectual development, community service, physical and aesthetic development and career-related experiences.

<sup>2</sup> The generic skills are communication skills, critical thinking skills, creativity, collaboration skills, information technology skills, numeracy skills, problem-solving skills, self-management skills and study skills.

2.13 COS courses aim to benefit students of all abilities and interests. For example, the area of Applied Science can be relevant to students who are interested in healthcare profession, and the area of Business, Management and Law can be valuable to students who want to go into the field of finance or banking.

2.14 While the courses emphasise applied skills, these skills are supported by knowledge. Evaluation of the pilots shows that students often under-estimated the extent of theory work that a typical COS course requires. They expected far less theory and classroom-based activities because of a wrong assumption that the course consisted only of practical activities.

2.15 A balanced learning programme which supports whole-person development comes from the entire school programme and its approach to schooling, and is not only a responsibility of COS. This understanding is part of the changed mindset that “334” aims to promote.

## ***(B) Nomenclature of COS***

### **Support**

2.16 The respondents to the questionnaire for schools generally support the current name for these studies, namely ‘Career-oriented Studies - COS’. However, a wide range of alternative names are suggested by different stakeholders to better reflect the purpose and position of COS in senior secondary education.

### **Concerns**

2.17 Many respondents feel that another name would signal more clearly the purpose of COS as an alternative approach to learning and avoid the connotation of pre-vocational training.

2.18 The range of names suggested includes Applied Learning (e.g. 應用學習, 應用學習教育, 應用課程, 應用科學課程, 應用導向教育, 應用為本教育, 實用導向教育, 實用學科, 實用學科教育, 實習應用科, 實境學習課程), Professional Studies (e.g. 專業教育課程, 專業認知課程, 專業學習, 專業技能教育, 專業拓展教育, 專業培訓, 專業發展教育, 專科教育課程入門, 專職課程), Career Studies (e.g. 事業體驗教育, 事業探究課程, 事業發展教育, 事業為本教育, 事業訓練課程, 職業探究課程, 職業體驗/探索, 職業體驗教育, 職業教育, 職業訓練課程, 職業相關課程, 職業浮標教育, 工作導向及體驗教育, 行業導向, 生涯導向教育, 生涯規劃教育, 生命藍圖描繪教育), and Diversified Studies (e.g. 多元化學習課程, 多元導向教育, 多元選修課程, 多元智能課程, 繽紛課程, 展能學習, 才藝為本學習).

### **The Way Forward**

2.19 COS is currently used as an umbrella term for the six ‘areas of studies’ and the variety of individual ‘courses’ within each area. While there was reasonably wide acceptance of the current name of ‘COS’, EMB concurs that there are significant advantages in changing the name to better position COS under “334” and signal its purpose to parents and the community. A new name ‘Applied Learning’ (應用學習) will distinguish these courses from the current pilots and from the curriculum offered by the previous pre-vocational secondary schools. It is intended that this new name will be introduced in the 2006-08 cohort of piloting.

### ***(C) Yi Jin / Secondary Schools Collaboration Project***

#### **Concerns**

2.20 Some schools, tertiary providers and educational bodies advocate retaining the Yi Jin / Secondary Schools Collaboration Project when “334” commences. Others are concerned about the difficulty in developing applied learning and

teaching packages for the core subjects (Chinese Language, English Language, Mathematics and Liberal Studies), particularly when only a small number of students will be involved in the Collaboration Project.

## **The Way Forward**

2.21 The Yi Jin / Secondary Schools Collaboration Project is based on the curriculum of the Project Yi Jin (PYJ), which was designed as a second chance programme for school leavers and mature students. The Collaboration Project migrated that curriculum into secondary schools to provide an alternate programme for students who were not succeeding in the mainstream schooling.

2.22 Evaluation shows that the safety net provided by the Collaboration Project has been valuable for a targeted group of students. However, when “334” commences, it is expected that the school curriculum and the way it is taught and assessed will address the full range of student abilities and interests, and the need for an alternate programme will be substantially reduced and the programme will possibly be redundant. The programme designed for all students under “334” in fact incorporates some of the strengths which underpin the Collaboration Project.

2.23 Over time the core subjects of Chinese Language, English Language, Mathematics and Liberal Studies will use the applied contexts offered by COS to support alternative learning and teaching. For example the ‘Learning English through Workplace Communication’ in English Language provides such a context. This development will not happen overnight, but it will evolve naturally as the implementation of “334” matures.

2.24 In the meantime, EMB will continue to monitor the implementation of “334”, and use the feedback and experiences of the Collaboration Project to inform the learning, teaching and assessment of the NSS curriculum. If a further safety net is needed under “334”, this will be addressed.

## ***(D) Negative Labelling of COS***

### **Concerns**

2.25 Most stakeholders, including schools, professional bodies and District Councillors, etc. agree that it is important to avoid labelling COS as an option only for inferior students.

### **The Way Forward**

2.26 The effect of negative labelling will be addressed by ensuring that COS courses can meet the full range of student abilities. All courses will recognise exceptional performance by the award of ‘attainment with distinction’. The majority of courses will have outcomes and learning demands that fit Level 3 of the Qualifications Framework (QF). Some will have learning outcomes and requirements set at Level 2.

2.27 “334” will offer a balanced programme of core subjects, electives, and OLE that lead to whole-person development of students. Applied learning will be an integral part of the curriculum of “334”, and will take on various forms and significance in different subjects or KLAs.

## **Chapter 3 The Curriculum Design of Career-oriented Studies**

3.1 COS is designed to widen the learning opportunities for students in the last two years of their senior secondary schooling (i.e. SS2 and SS3) in environments that complement the school.

### **Summary of the Proposals in the Consultation Document**

3.2 The areas of studies in COS will be designed according to the principles of balance, coherence, articulation and responsiveness to provide a sound learning platform for students.

3.3 COS courses will be offered in six areas of studies: (1) Applied Science; (2) Business, Management and Law; (3) Creative Studies; (4) Engineering and Production; (5) Media and Communication; and (6) Services. To ensure the quality and consistency of standards, the number of courses offered under each area will be kept within a manageable limit through rigorous screening.

3.4 The core subjects of Chinese Language, English Language, Mathematics and Liberal Studies will be taught and assessed in flexible ways to accommodate different styles of learning, but will employ the same curriculum framework and expected learning outcomes.

### **Support**

3.5 The respondents to the questionnaire for schools strongly support the design principles set down for COS. There is also substantial support for developing a C&A Framework as the basis for designing and quality assuring COS courses.

3.6 The six areas of studies and the idea of continuously updating COS courses according to the social, economic and technological needs of Hong Kong were widely supported. A number of employers and professional bodies indicated that they would assist in the implementation of COS by offering advice on course design and practical support for work experience.

### ***(A) Relationship with Other Electives***

#### **Concerns**

3.7 A few principals feel that learning experiences provided by COS courses should belong to the category of OLE and should not compete with traditional subjects. They also consider that the relatively short-lived nature of the courses meant that they are a drain on resources. By contrast, some parents involved in the current COC pilots feel that students should only be allowed to take COC courses in addition to the languages and Mathematics in the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (HKCEE).

#### **The Way Forward**

3.8 COS is intended to diversify and enrich the curriculum offered in senior secondary schooling, and is not intended to compete with the NSS subjects.

3.9 Under NSS, the four core subjects will remain the essential component of a balanced learning programme. The skills and knowledge acquired by students in these subjects will contribute to student learning in other subjects including COS courses. Students may choose up to 3 electives including COS courses.

3.10 While COS courses will change over time to match changes in the local and global environment, there will be a stable base of skills and knowledge within the six areas of studies. Courses will be quality assured for a minimum of three cohorts and over four years of schooling. While some schools may input into the

course development, the majority of training resources will come from tertiary providers who are more experienced, flexible and responsive to change.

### ***(B) Work Readiness***

#### **Concerns**

3.11 Some employers and professional bodies (who were under the impression that COS was a pre-vocational curriculum) were concerned that 180 contact hours were insufficient and that COS could not prepare students for employment. Schools and District Councillors feel that COS should do more to foster values and offer more direct work experience so that the courses are truly practical.

#### **The Way Forward**

3.12 While COS is not designed as pre-vocational training, its emphasis on applied learning does support value formation which prepares students to be life-long learners and constructive and productive citizens.

3.13 Surveys of employers show that the most valued skills in the modern workplace are the abilities to communicate, adapt to uncertainty and change, work in teams, solve problems, move across boundaries and cultures, and reflect on and manage oneself. COS courses provide a context for students to develop these skills, e.g. work experience encourages self-discipline, time management and respect for others. Courses are selected according to their abilities to provide authentic contexts and experiences which assist the personal growth of students by stimulating their interests and motivation. In addition, authentic contexts are required for performance-based ('competency-based') assessment.

3.14 The diversity of COS is extended to the methods of learning, teaching and assessment, as well as the environments in which the learning takes place. COS will augment the school environment with learning in tertiary institutions, and in

community organisations and workplaces.

3.15 The curriculum framework for COS is depicted as follows:

**Life-long learning for further studies and/or work**

<b>Foundation Skills</b>	<b>Thinking Skills</b>
<b>People Skills</b>	<b>Values &amp; Attitudes</b>
<b>Career-related Competencies</b>	

<b>Different Vocational Fields as Learning Contexts</b>				
<b>Foundation Skills</b>	<b>Thinking Skills</b>	<b>People Skills</b>	<b>Values &amp; Attitudes</b>	<b>Career-related Competencies</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Communication skills (including languages)</li> <li>● Numeracy</li> <li>● Information technology</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Problem-solving &amp; decision-making skills</li> <li>● Analytical skills</li> <li>● Creative thinking skills</li> <li>● Understanding interdependency &amp; relationships between different areas of studies, societies &amp; civilisations</li> <li>● Skills in forming regional/global perspectives on social, economic &amp; technological changes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Self-reflection &amp; self-management skills</li> <li>● Interpersonal, collaborative and team working skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Honesty &amp; integrity</li> <li>● Dependability &amp; responsibility</li> <li>● Enthusiasm &amp; motivation</li> <li>● Willingness to learn</li> <li>● Self-confidence &amp; self-esteem</li> <li>● Respect for others &amp; for law &amp; authority</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Skills and knowledge within a vocational field</li> <li>● Skills and knowledge specific to the course</li> <li>● Hardware and workplace requirements of a particular vocational field</li> </ul>

## **Chapter 4 Course Provision and Guidance for Students**

4.1 Collaborative partnership among schools, tertiary providers and workplaces will provide diverse learning environments for COS, and a range of appropriate teaching focused on authentic experiences and assessment. Schools will need to increase their capacity to support students with advice on and accessibility to available COS courses and the pathways they open to further learning or employment, and ensure students engage in balanced learning programmes.

### **Summary of the Proposals in the Consultation Document**

4.2 In the first year of senior secondary education (SS1), students will receive guidance and advice to explore and better understand their own strengths and interests, preferred learning styles and envisaged pathways for further studies and/or work. Students will be introduced to the range of curriculum choices available to them in SS2 and SS3 and can choose up to three electives including COS.

4.3 The consultation also sought advice on additional ways to give students an overview of COS and other elective choices, and to support them to identify their career aspirations and interests.

4.4 Schools, tertiary providers and workplaces are encouraged to adopt and combine three non-exclusive modes of delivery which involve different degrees of school engagement. In Mode 1<sup>3</sup>, schools arrange for students to attend courses according to timetables agreed with the tertiary providers. In Mode 2<sup>4</sup>, courses take place mainly in the schools. In Mode 3<sup>5</sup>, schools deliver courses entrusted to them and quality assured by the tertiary providers.

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<sup>3</sup> Mode 1: Courses take place at the venues of course providers and are taught by the staff of course providers. Schools should arrange for students to attend the courses according to the timetables agreed with the course providers.

<sup>4</sup> Mode 2: Courses take place mainly in schools and are mainly taught by the staff of course providers. Schools are expected to confirm the details of the timetable, venue, equipment, etc. with the course providers.

<sup>5</sup> Mode 3: Course providers make arrangements to entrust other institutions including schools to conduct the course on their behalf, but remain responsible for internal quality controls.

4.5 Off-site delivery, partnership with tertiary providers, networks of schools contributing to classes delivered at a single school, and schools operating as specialist centres or regional providers of COS are ways to maintain cost at a reasonable level.

### ***(A) Commencing COS in SS1***

#### **Support**

4.6 The respondents to the questionnaire for schools generally agree that COS courses should commence in SS2, with SS1 operating as a foundation year supporting the remaining years of senior secondary schooling.

#### **Concerns**

4.7 A minority of stakeholders consider that COS courses should commence in SS1, particularly for high ability students. Some also feel that COS should be mandatory in basic (primary) education, which might also help reduce the negative labelling effect.

#### **The Way Forward**

4.8 EMB confirms that the initial year of the senior secondary schooling is a foundation year. Studies in SS1 are not assessed directly for Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) and schools can structure SS1 learning programmes flexibly, offering choices and experimentation to support students' options for the last two years of secondary schooling. Career advice, 'tasters' of elective subjects, structured individual student learning plans, and orientation programmes in SS1 can help students make informed choices of elective subjects for SS2 and SS3.

4.9 While career-related experience is one of the five essential learning

experiences of the school curriculum, it should be embedded in the total learning experience of school education and designed in a way that is suited to the age of the students concerned.

## ***(B) Controlling Provision***

### **Support**

4.10 There is wide support for collaborative delivery arrangements. Some schools noted that allowing schools to operate COS courses would result in a coverage which would be too broad and unmanageable. They would like to make use of the better facilities and experienced teaching staff of the tertiary providers, instead of installing more facilities in their schools or further burdening their teachers.

### **Concerns**

4.11 School councils / educational bodies suggest capping the number of courses and students to ensure quality, while bringing in more course providers possibly including a few schools as the scale of COS expands in the future.

### **The Way Forward**

4.12 EMB has already been responsible for screening courses and ensuring competitive provision among quality assured providers. It exercises strict control over three critical variables: the numbers of courses, providers and students.

## ***(C) Career Advice and Learning Support***

### **Support**

4.13 The importance of career guidance is confirmed by schools and educational

bodies. The professions and employers indicate their interests in providing authentic workplace experiences for students.

## **Concerns**

4.14 Different stakeholders, including principals, teachers, careers teachers, educational bodies, parents and students, are concerned about the need for support services for students to make informed choices for their studies. Some parents think that schools should offer counselling services for course selection or provide career advice to students; others suggest that school should offer advice on academic pathways. It is further suggested that schools should organise seminars on certain courses, invite course tutors to seminars, or invite practitioners to share their experiences.

4.15 Students are equally eager to receive advice on the COS courses and progressive pathways. Many of them think that schools should offer course selection services, but they express a stronger need for advice on the prospect that COS courses could offer. Some also ask for employment counselling services.

## **The Way Forward**

4.16 Career guidance is not simply a service but is an integral part of the NSS curriculum. Students experience personal growth by acquiring knowledge about themselves, and by developing skills that help them identify and manage their careers. Observation to date suggests that only a few schools have vigorously promoted COS as a programme suitable for all students. Instead, many schools have viewed COS as an alternative for lower-ability students. In some cases, the poor selection and recruitment arrangements have led to mismatch of students and COS courses, resulting in low rates of attainment.

4.17 To enable students to benefit fully from the diverse learning opportunities, guidance and advice can be offered through career talks, structured visits,

workplace-related experiences and ‘taster’ programmes, which can be offered as part of OLE and include short courses selected from the range of courses within the six COS areas of studies.

#### ***(D) COS Centres***

##### **Concerns**

4.18 A number of schools have enquired about how they could become specialised centres offering COS.

##### **The Way Forward**

4.19 There are three main components of COS provision: the course design, the course delivery, and the course venue and resources. Tertiary providers and schools can offer one or more of these components alone or in partnership. For reasons mentioned in para. 4.22 below, tertiary providers are likely to be the main COS providers in the initial years of implementation of the NSS Academic Structure.

4.20 A cluster of schools cooperating to form a viable COS class for Mode 2 delivery cannot be described as a centre for the three components of provision. Rather, it is a network to ensure viable student numbers for courses which are designed and mostly delivered by tertiary providers. In principle, schools could cooperate to set up a regional centre for COS provision by supporting a school selected as a central venue with students and resources. This could occur, for instance, where a sponsoring body has multiple schools under its jurisdiction. In practice, this will require significant cooperation and the resolution of timetabling and resource issues amongst schools and course providers.

4.21 A more likely scenario is that tertiary providers will offer the three main components of COS in one or more of the six areas of studies. If demand for COS

grows, the market may stimulate the establishment of outreach centres to provide regional access to schools, and cut down on student travel time/costs. There are many models for how this may occur in partnership with schools.

4.22 It is possible for individual schools or a network of schools to be specialist providers of COS, if they have the capacity to design, deliver and provide the venue and resources for COS courses within one or more of the six areas of studies, supported by the industry, the professions and relevant workplaces. This will require the school concerned to source non-recurrent funds to hire or purchase the human and physical resources. At present, it seems unlikely that any school has such resources or this range of experience.

4.23 A more realistic approach is for schools to establish networks for Mode 1, or look to Mode 2 where full classes are sustainable. Mode 2 in turn offers a longer term progression to Mode 3 with the guidance and support of tertiary providers. Under such development, schools can gradually become outreach centres of tertiary provider for providing COS courses. More importantly, a school with this pursuit in mind would need to be supported by its stakeholders, meet the quality assurance (QA) requirements and be approved by EMB.

4.24 A small number of schools have developed their own alternative curriculum in response to the gaps they see in the current Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (HKCEE) / Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination (HKALE) environment. In some ways they are forerunners of COS. However, these programmes lack a systematic QA mechanism which provides the recognition necessary for further learning or employment, despite some examples of successful progression for individual students. A characteristic of these courses developed by individual schools is that they are similar to courses in COC pilots in various respects. This provides an opportunity for the schools concerned to utilise the expertise and experience gained to transform their courses into the most relevant quality assured COS through collaboration with a tertiary provider.

## **Chapter 5 Recognition of and Quality Assurance for COS**

5.1 The quality of COS courses and student attainment will only be recognised if they match the quality and attainment standards of the existing and newly developed NSS subjects. This requires the COS courses to produce learning outcomes that are recognised by employers and further education providers, and verified by the system of assessment they are confident in. The external QA arrangements for COS that are put in place are intended to support these objectives.

### **Summary of the Proposals in the Consultation Document**

5.2 Under the NSS, there will be three levels of performance in the COS courses: ‘unattained’, ‘attainment’, and ‘attainment with distinction’. Students who meet the requirements of the threshold exit level in a COS course will have attained the competency standard and will receive the QF credit points for that achievement.

5.3 The ‘attainment’ (or competence) level set for a COS course will be referenced to Level 2 or 3 of the QF depending on the nature and content of the course, and in accordance with the specifications developed by the respective industries where these are relevant to the course.

5.4 The HKDSE transcript will record the learning outcomes of the COS courses, in terms of the levels and credit units awarded under the QF, and also will give recognition to the student’s level of performance. Achievement of ‘attainment with distinction’ will be deemed to be comparable to Standards-referenced Assessment (SRA) Level 3 or above.

5.5 Qualifications gained in COS will also contribute to the student learning profile (SLP).

5.6 A COS Committee will be established to oversee the development of C&A Frameworks for the six areas of studies by individual working groups. The Committee will also assess COS proposals from potential providers, oversee the QA of COS, and advise EMB on the implementation of COS as an integrated component of the NSS.

5.7 The Hong Kong Council for Academic Accreditation (HKCAA) will monitor course delivery, and the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA) will be responsible for the moderation of assessments made by individual course providers to assure comparability of assessment results within individual courses, and across the six COS areas of studies.

## **Support**

5.8 Schools regard quality as a key factor for the successful implementation of COS. They strongly support the QA framework. Similarly, a single COS committee to oversee the entire suite of COS courses was strongly supported.

5.9 Recognition arrangements are also supported in principle. School councils / educational bodies are satisfied that the link between HKDSE and QF can provide dual recognition for student progression for further studies and work. Principals agree that the recognition for the three levels of performance in COS is sufficient to facilitate students' academic and career progression. NGOs express confidence in COS recognition because the COC pilots have been recognised to date by the Civil Service Bureau, Federation for Continuing Education in Tertiary Institutions and HKEAA for the purpose of employment and further studies.

### ***(A) COS Committee***

#### **Concerns**

5.10 School sponsoring bodies feel that the COS committee should include

experienced school heads and teachers.

### **The Way Forward**

5.11 The current COS Committee, with school heads, teachers and representatives from various trades/industries as members, is a preparatory committee established to test the role of the committee and its composition before “334” commences. Both the role and composition of the committee will be reviewed and revised periodically to develop an effective model before 2009.

5.12 In the longer term, this committee will be re-constituted as a Functional Committee of the Curriculum Development Council (CDC). CDC-HKEAA Committee will be set up for each area of studies which is jointly serviced by Curriculum Development Institute (CDI) and HKEAA. Members will be drawn from schools, the tertiary sector, HKCAA and relevant industries and professions.

### ***(B) Roles and Capacities of Agencies***

#### **Concerns**

5.13 There is concern about the capacity of the current QA system as well as the agencies to handle the QA of a wide spectrum of COS courses. Questions are also asked about the different roles of CDI, HKCAA and HKEAA which are not clearly distinguished in people’s minds.

5.14 Others suggest that an independent QA institution should set objective standards of assessment to ensure the quality of courses, and prevent monopolisation by certain course providers.

### **The Way Forward**

5.15 The ultimate goals of the QA mechanism are to ensure that the COS

courses are developed according to the design principles; the curriculum is delivered as planned; the learning outcomes of students can meet the standards which are set. These learning outcomes should be comparable within and across areas of studies of COS, and comparable with the learning outcomes of other NSS subjects.

5.16 These three aspects are being developed during the COC pilots by CDI, HKCAA and HKEAA respectively, under the overview of the COS Committee.

5.17 A fully mature QA mechanism will have additional aspects such as:

- well-defined C&A frameworks for COS generally and for each of the six areas of studies;
- course designs closely scrutinised by well represented committees;
- providers adopting an agreed process for self-review of course delivery and assessment standards; and
- articulation to workplace requirements through the QF or via professional qualifications recognised by professional bodies.

5.18 The COC piloting will serve to develop a model of QA which will clearly define the role of each of the agencies involved, and nurture its capacities to perform that role. Establishing a new agency may lead to duplication of work and unclear specification of responsibility.

### ***(C) Assessment***

#### **Concerns**

5.19 There are concerns that 100% assessment by the course provider will lead to unfair assessment and affect the recognition of COS courses. Public examination for the theory elements was proposed.

## **The Way Forward**

5.20 The applied learning within COS courses will be assessed in authentic contexts that allow students to apply their knowledge and skills. The assessment will balance the continuous assessment conducted throughout the duration of the course with end-of-module or end-of-course assessments.

5.21 The assessments will be carried out by the tertiary providers, and in some cases will be conducted within the schools. Tertiary providers will apply their existing professional assessment practices to COS to ensure that they are up to standard. HKEAA will moderate the assessments to ensure that the standards are consistent among different classes and across the years.

5.22 Splitting COS courses into theory and practice elements would be counterproductive for integrated applied learning. Testing the theory element in isolation through a public examination will also create too great a burden for the examination system because there will be a range of courses within the six areas, each with a comparatively small number of students. However, HKEAA is expected to coordinate the development of some common assessments that can apply within the areas of learning to assist in carrying out its moderation responsibilities.

### ***(D) QF and HKDSE***

#### **Concerns**

5.23 Almost all stakeholders want to know more about the relationship between COS qualifications and SRA levels of the NSS subjects, especially the SRA level which will match the COS ‘attainment’ or competency level. Course providers also seek to clarify the relationship between COS courses and the Specification of Competency Standards (SCS) which are being developed by the industries and professions. There are also concerns about the articulation pathways available for

students completing COS courses. Professional bodies think that recognition should be given to the different levels of COC/COS students, particularly where the courses can articulate with the studies leading to professional qualifications.

### **The Way Forward**

5.24 The relationship between COS qualifications and SRA levels of the NSS subjects, especially the SRA level which will match the ‘attainment’ or ‘competency level’ standards for COS, will be the subject of further investigation in the pilots that will continue for three further cohorts until “334” commences in the 2009/10 school year.

5.25 The 2006-08 pilots will begin to test the details of the levels and moderation of assessment. Course providers have been asked to define the learning outcomes of their courses and the assessable components of those outcomes, along with the assessment criteria. The providers are also asked to define the criteria of the award of ‘attainment’. This is a new discipline for course providers, but its refinement over the pilots will lead to the development of very clear standards for COS courses.

5.26 These clear standards will, in turn, provide the information to substantively link COS to the standards of the other subjects within HKDSE, which are under similar processes of development. Transcripts for all subjects, including COS, in the HKDSE will clearly set out the attainment standards met by students with appropriate descriptors to facilitate the articulation of COS to the QF. COS is currently in a piloting phase and in the process of seeking recognition of its qualifications. Universities will keep an open mind on the development and recognition of COS. Further recognition may be given in the admission requirements of certain faculties/departments in universities when COS is in full implementation under the NSS.

## Chapter 6 Professional Development of COS Teachers

6.1 Qualified teachers and teaching resources are necessary to meet demands of COS courses and ensure that COS is a real option of the NSS curriculum. Schools need to provide career and pastoral support for students so that their learning programmes are integrated and balanced, and provide the coherence necessary for future learning.

### Summary of the Proposals in the Consultation Document

6.2 The proposed framework for professional development of COS teachers focuses on five dimensions for the successful delivery of COS courses.

<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Required Professional Development/ Work Experience</b>
A. Understanding of Students and their Needs	Pedagogical knowledge and skills applied to teenage children and young adults
B. Command of Teaching and Facilitating Skills	
C. Command of Subject Knowledge and Skills	Training in a subject discipline (which may relate to one or more of the six areas of studies)
D. Positive Attitude	Not reflected by paper qualifications, but by the inclinations of teachers and the cultivation of positive attitude
E. Authentic Experience	Work/Trade experience

6.3 Qualified COS teachers may include teachers from the secondary and tertiary education sectors, and practitioners active in the industry, the professions or commercial endeavours.

6.4 The course providers are responsible for ensuring that teachers of COS are competent in Dimensions A to D, and can bring in expertise, either from their own background or from outside, for Dimension E.

6.5 The teachers are expected to undertake ongoing professional development programmes to improve their mastery or to collaborate with others to ensure that the five dimensions of the COS framework are part of the course delivery.

6.6 Professional development may take the form of structured courses, job attachment, school-based training and mentoring. The mechanism for assessing and certifying the teachers' practical skills and suitability for teaching COS will be further explored.

### **Support**

6.7 The respondents to the questionnaire for schools generally support the framework for professional development, and schools have projected the professional development needs of teachers intending to be active in COS (see Question 14 of Appendix 1).

6.8 Tertiary institutions have offered to work with EMB to provide teacher training courses in response to the increasing demand from teachers to be trained to take up COS.

### **Concerns**

6.9 Some stakeholders are concerned that there may be insufficient qualified teachers for COS. School councils/educational bodies and teacher education providers are also concerned about the readiness and qualifications of teachers teaching COS. Others feel that the framework and funding for professional development is inadequate to enable secondary teachers to engage in COS. Teachers with responsibilities for career guidance particularly need support to help students make their choices.

## **The Way Forward**

6.10 Like most other educational changes, the successful implementation of COS requires an active and committed principal, who has a positive and modern view of applied learning. Sound leadership will lead to a new conceptualisation of curriculum that resists the domination of a generalised and abstract knowledge-based curriculum, and establish applied learning as a sustainable and valued pathway for students.

6.11 Careers teachers also play an important role in the implementation of COS as they guide and advise students to better understand their strengths, interests and aptitudes (see Chapter 4). EMB is also committed to supporting secondary teachers who are willing and able to teach COS courses in partnership or collaboration with tertiary providers.

6.12 Current projection of student numbers and courses does not indicate a problem of teacher supply, and the tertiary sector has a flexible capacity to employ contract teachers and practitioners to meet market needs. However, it is important to ensure not only the quantity but also the quality of teaching. The focus is on ensuring that all five dimensions (A to E) are met, rather than insisting on the competence of individual teachers in all five dimensions.

6.13 A team of personnel with complementary skills, knowledge and experience can fulfil the requirements of these dimensions. Adopting a collaborative approach to fulfilling the teaching requirements can encourage active partnerships between schools and providers.

6.14 The survey also reflects that there is an urgent need to put in place a framework for professional development and training programmes for teachers to better understand their students and their needs, and to enable them to effectively teach and guide students (see Question 14 of Appendix 1).

6.15 Professional development programmes targeted at principals, careers teachers, teachers, and tertiary institution teachers and practitioners are being planned.

*(a) Principals*

An enthusiastic and supportive principal is essential to manage the changes demanded by the introduction of NSS, including COS. It is expected that principals will need to master three related areas of COS:

- **Professional leadership** – Principals will need to understand the educational principles and practices to support applied learning; performance-based (competency-based) assessment; and non-statistical inter-school and inter-subject moderation.
- **Management** – Principals will need to manage the impact of innovation including a diversified curriculum, out-of-school learning, flexible timetabling, school-based assessment, and the Diversity Learning Grant (DLG).
- **Relationships and Positioning** – Principals will need to work with employers and further education providers. They have to add diversity to the curriculum, and provide multiple pathways for students, with reference to the QF, the specifications of the industry and professional standards.

*(b) Careers Teachers*

Teachers who engage actively with their tertiary partners and accompany their students to the provider or training venue are best placed to give sound advice and guidance, particularly about the balance of practical and theory work in the courses. These teachers also gain valuable insights into the range and nature of education available in institutions of further education. They can assist those students who would like more information and guidance on their post-school choices. In particular,

students who wish to pursue a work-based route have a particular need for guidance on options and prospects.

Teachers who work closely with course providers are also able to discuss with them issues related to the students' learning experiences and can identify areas where shared information can enhance the quality of the learner's experience, such as teaching methods, management of learning activities, prior knowledge gained at school, common approaches to curriculum topics and use of information and communication technology.

Workshops will be held for teachers who are responsible for giving advice on career matters. The workshops will be constructed to provide an in-depth analysis of the impact of COS on secondary schools and to identify the specific needs of career advisors. A module for professional development will be designed to meet those needs.

***(c) Teachers***

Teachers who wish to teach COS courses are responsible for acquiring the relevant subject knowledge and expertise. Professional development will focus primarily on strengthening teaching skills. The focus for COS is on teaching competence in practice, rather than licensing teachers based on their attendance at professional development courses.

Schools, in particular those operating in Mode 2 delivery of COS, can engage tertiary providers for 'on-the-job' teacher training during a COS course, combining subject and pedagogic training. Such mentored training should aim to expand the coverage of a course that a secondary teacher can reach.

***(d) Tertiary institution teachers and practitioners***

Experience suggests that some tertiary institution teachers and practitioners may not fully understand the demands and capacities of school-aged students. For instance, teachers may overestimate the ability of students

in this age group to work and concentrate effectively for long periods of time. As a tool for continuous improvement, it is proposed that the tertiary providers conduct a review to survey and collate the opinions of the teacher, their students, other teachers who know their work, and the teachers' superiors (e.g. the course supervisor or Head of Department). A comprehensive view of the teacher's capabilities will lead to an individually tailored professional development programme.

6.16 Professional development programmes should not be limited to structured courses but can cover a whole range of activities, including job attachment and shadowing, school-based training and mentoring. Perhaps the most important thing is the development of networks within the areas of studies to facilitate the sharing of experiences and expertise. Persons with relevant expertise will be invited to give advice to the preparatory COS committee on the staged introduction of professional development programmes.

6.17 The Teacher Professional Preparation Grant (TPPG) is available to schools that offer NSS classes starting from the 2005/06 school year for four years to support teachers including Careers Masters and Mistresses, to prepare for the implementation of the new curriculum.

## **Chapter 7 Funding for Career-oriented Studies**

7.1 Funding is a critical issue. The ability to offer COS courses alongside the 24 NSS subjects is vital for the success of applied learning.

### **Summary of the Proposals in the Consultation Document**

7.2 Funding for COS will address two distinct phases of implementation: the transition period and intermediate steps which will occur as COC pilots evolve; and the longer-term steady state which applies when the NSS academic structure is implemented from 2009 onwards.

7.3 Recurrent provision for the COS will be disbursed through a DLG. Tripartite contribution from parents/students, the Government and schools in funding the COS is proposed. This requires students to pay for 18% of the cost and the Government and schools to share the remaining 82%. Three possible options are set out in para. 5.19 of the Consultation Document: annual application by schools, schools' share calculated on the basis of encashed teaching load in offering a school subject of the same duration on a per capita basis, and subsuming COS costs under the annual subvention.

7.4 In the steady state, it is intended that students' contribution to the course fee will be reflected in the school fees. The unit cost of COS will become part of the unit cost of senior secondary education. Cases of hardship will be addressed through the Senior Secondary Fee Remission Scheme administered by the Student Financial Assistance Agency (SFAA), and also through the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) Scheme.

## **Support**

7.5 Feedback from schools on the preferred model for funding is mixed:

- 47% of respondents prefer to embed the funding in the annual subvention to the school. This is a non-starter as the number of students who would opt for COS varies among schools.
- 33% prefer to make applications to EMB for additional funding. This is a feasible option but will induce substantial administrative work.
- 5% prefer to encash teaching loads, substituting current classes with COS classes, with top-ups.

### ***(A) Shared Funding Model***

#### **Concerns**

7.6 Schools complain that the funding model for the COC pilot for the 2005-07 cohort places a great financial burden on them and enquire if they are required to contribute to the COS courses out of their existing funding in 2010. Many schools ask for options which give them greater flexibility (such as a one-off grant).

7.7 The Hong Kong Subsidised Secondary Schools Council asked for Mode 1 funding to be met exclusively by parents and EMB, and it accepts a three-way sharing among parents, schools and the Government for Mode 2 during the transition period. In general, schools feel that the number of students to be enrolled in COS courses is the critical factor in determining the funding model.

#### **The Way Forward**

7.8 The Government remains committed to the shared funding model.

Parents, schools and the Government should contribute to meeting the costs.

7.9 We are exploring funding options through the pilots. For the early pilots, we used an application-based grant, whereas for the 2006-08 pilots schools can use a number of fixed subsidies, which makes the administration of subsidies more efficient<sup>6</sup>. Course fees shared by schools for the 2006-08 cohort range from 32% to 41%, which is on average less than that for the 2005-07 cohort.

7.10 The ‘shared funding model’, as far as schools are concerned, is largely a mechanism for distributing allocated Government funding to meet the learning needs of different students. Aided schools receive a recurrent grant and a range of supporting grants. Students who are more suited to COS are entitled to draw on these grants, just as students who may require remedial teaching in language or other subjects, or are interested in a particular co-curricular activity, e.g. orchestra. If schools were to be funded totally by extra Government funding for COS they would be ‘double-dipping’ into public funds.

7.11 EMB has earmarked additional funds to support diversification of the NSS curriculum. As outlined in the report *The New Academic Structure for Senior Secondary Education and Higher Education - Action Plan for Investing in the Future of Hong Kong*, this additional funding will be met by savings from the reduction in the number of classes when student population declines progressively and by ensuring viable class structures in the coming years. Schools should allocate their resources in such a way that the additional funding can maximise the access of students to their desired programmes.

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<sup>6</sup> Aided schools can deploy resources from the Capacity Enhancement Grant (CEG), Operating Expenses Block Grant (OEBG) General Domain Surplus / Expanded OEBG, and Substitute Teacher Grant (STG) / Teacher Relief Grant (TRG) to support COS. STG allows schools to convert a proportion of their staffing into a cash grant. Government schools may deploy resources from the CEG, the Subject and Curriculum Block Grant General Domain Surplus / Expanded Subject and Curriculum Block Grant and STG/TRG. Caput schools and schools under the Direct Subsidy Scheme can support COS by applying their recurrent subsidies. Under special circumstances, schools can apply to EMB for additional subvention by setting out their difficulties, proposing the solution in the long run and stating the amount applied.

## ***(B) Funding Students Needs***

### **Concerns**

7.12 Some school councils / educational bodies think it is not fair to include the cost of COS in the calculation of unit cost for schools because this will not accurately reflect the cost of other electives. The councils argue that there will be little room for traditional grammar schools to offer COS. A number of schools feel that using the Capacity Enhancement Grant (CEG) to subsidise COS is not fair to students who do not enrol in COS courses.

### **The Way Forward**

7.13 The subsidies provided by the Government for secondary schooling are not applied equally to every student. In practice, schools discern different needs and attempt to meet them by targeting their funds. An analysis of funding allocation in schools would illustrate different funding per student according to the variety of programmes students might undertake throughout schooling. New grants such as the CEG are intended to support the different needs of students within the framework that the school adopts in pursuit of its mission and vision.

## ***(C) Diversity Learning Grant***

### **Concerns**

7.14 Uncertainty remains over the utilisation of DLG. Principals and teachers are keen to know how the DLG will work and ask for more details of the funding models.

### **The Way Forward**

7.15 The funding models developed for the COC pilots, and school-based collaboration project will inform the future use of the DLG envisaged under “334”.

The options include:

- embedding the DLG in the annual subventions to schools while requiring schools to report annually on their diversity initiatives;
- top-slicing the annual subvention to set up a fund which will be distributed evenly to those schools which demonstrate diversity;
- top-slicing the annual subvention to produce a fund which will be distributed, on a discretionary and competitive basis, to schools which offer more subject choices; and
- top-slicing the annual subvention to fund students who will benefit from COS, so that funding moves with the student according to consumer choice.

7.16 EMB is not in favour of embedding the DLG in annual subventions at this stage of implementation. The DLG is to support diversification which usually does not appear in a 'typical school'. Merging it with the annual subventions will make it difficult to trace the use of funds.

### ***(D) Reasonable Fees***

#### **Concerns**

7.17 Stakeholders, including parents and employers, think that costs and course fees should be maintained at a reasonable level.

#### **The Way Forward**

7.18 Fees paid by students will not exceed 18% of the cost in the pilots. EMB intends to include the student fee for COS in the calculation of unit cost of senior secondary education and therefore the school fee applicable for senior secondary education. This is in line with the guiding principle that students should not, for

financial reasons, be deterred from choosing any programme in senior secondary which matches their interests, aspirations and aptitude. To help needy students:

- The Government will meet the full cost of the student contribution to a COC course (18%) if the student is a recipient of the CSSA Scheme.
- The Government will contribute to the full enrolment cost for senior secondary or half of it if the student is a recipient of subsidies under the Senior Secondary Fee Remission Scheme of the SFAA.

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## **Chapter 8 Academic Structure of Special Schools**

8.1 Special education is provided for children to overcome their barrier in learning arising from disability or learning difficulties. The overarching objective is to enable students with special educational needs (SEN) to maximise their potential to the fullest possible extent, achieve as much independence as they are capable of, and become well-adjusted individual and contributing members of the community.

8.2 To help students apply their strengths and address their weaknesses, it is the Government's policy to place students with SEN in ordinary schools insofar as they can benefit from integrated education. For students who cannot benefit from ordinary school settings, they will be placed in special schools where their disabilities, impairments and learning difficulties will be properly managed. With the implementation of NSS, students with SEN, like their counterparts in ordinary schools, will receive six years of secondary education.

### **Summary of the Proposal in the Consultation Document**

8.3 Under NSS, we propose to provide students with intellectual disabilities (ID), including those attending schools for the visually impaired (VI), hearing impaired (HI) and physically disabled (PD), 3 years of junior secondary education and 3 years of senior secondary education.

8.4 Since students with visual impairment have integrated successfully into ordinary schools at various class levels, we propose that the school for the VI continues to offer ordinary curriculum up to junior secondary. School placement services at senior secondary level in ordinary schools will be provided for these students.

8.5 For schools for social development, the academic structure will be extended by 3 years to cover senior secondary education. School placement will be provided for those who are ready for integration back to ordinary schools.

8.6 For students in schools for the HI and PD pursuing the ordinary curriculum, the 10 years of basic education will be maintained taking into account the learning requirements at senior secondary levels leading to HKDSE.

8.7 We will provide hospital education service to students staying in hospital for three days or more. Such a service will be extended to cover students at the senior secondary level in future.

### **Support**

8.8 The proposed academic structure which puts students in special schools on par with students in ordinary schools is generally well received. Many parents also have high expectations of the Comprehensive Review on Special Education, hoping that it will bring about improvement measures for students with SEN under NSS.

### **Concerns**

8.9 Some parents demand that students with ID should also be provided with 10 years of basic education, on par with students with HI and PD.

8.10 Parents demand that the school leaving age of 18 should be removed under NSS as there is no similar requirement for students in ordinary schools.

8.11 Parents of VI students are worried that their children will be deprived of NSS education if they have difficulties in adapting to an integrated setting in ordinary schools. They also express concern about whether ordinary schools could provide the necessary support to VI students.

8.12 As for the educational services provided by the hospital school, there is a concern about setting a minimum period of stay in the hospital before students are eligible for the service.

8.13 Respondents also ask why the Consultation Document concerns only students with SEN in special schools but not integrators with physical disability, hearing impairment and students with specific learning difficulties in ordinary schools.

### **The Way Forward**

8.14 The academic structure for special schools under NSS aims to support students with SEN to progress beyond their current level of attainment through basic education and to realise the goal of all students developing their potential to the full.

8.15 Under NSS, the existing academic structure will be maintained in the school for the VI up to junior secondary. In view of the successful history of integration, its students will be placed at appropriate class levels in ordinary schools, as and when they are ready for integration. EMB will render school placement service and support to facilitate the integration of VI students into ordinary schools.

8.16 For students with normal intellectual ability pursuing the ordinary curriculum in schools for PD/HI, the existing 10 years of basic education will be provided to better prepare them for the 3-year senior secondary education leading to the HKDSE.

8.17 For students with ID, 3 years of junior secondary education and 3 years of senior secondary education will provide them with extended years of education for whole-person development. For those students who are absent from school for a long period due to health or other justifiable reasons, they can apply for repeating class just as the current practice.

8.18 Since the emotional and behavioural difficulties of students in schools for social development are transient in nature, they should be able to integrate back to ordinary schools. However, some students may still encounter difficulties in emotion and behaviour during their senior secondary schooling. The academic structure of schools for social development will therefore be extended by 3 years to cover senior secondary education as originally proposed to cater for students' needs. For those students who are ready for integrating back to ordinary schools, school placement service will be provided.

8.19 The hospital school will generally provide service to students who stay at the hospital for three days or more, taking into account students' physical condition and the learning outcomes achievable during a short period of hospitalisation. Moreover, with effect from the 2006/07 school year, the hospital education service will be tried out at the senior secondary levels.

## **Chapter 9 Development of Curriculum and Assessment Framework**

9.1 The common curriculum framework developed by CDC should govern student learning through the 12-year primary and secondary education, with emphasis on the concept of whole-person development through a balanced and manageable curriculum relevant to the needs of students. Students with SEN but not ID should aim at achieving the same curricular objective for NSS, and will be assessed on the same criteria but with special accommodation. EMB and HKEAA will put in place appropriate arrangements to help them.

9.2 For students with ID, the NSS C&A framework will only be successful if it can cater for students with different needs, abilities and interests and develop their potential to the full. Therefore, the curriculum design for students with ID will be adapted to meet the specific needs of students.

9.3 Assessment modes to reflect the performance of students with ID based on their capacity, needs and interests under the “334” structure will also be proposed.

### **Summary of the Proposal in the Consultation Document**

#### Curriculum

9.4 The design principles are:

##### ***Learning Goals***

- The seven learning goals of the common curriculum framework will be adapted to suit the characteristics and practical needs of individual students, in terms of content, pace of learning, and expected learning outcome.

### ***Prior Knowledge in Basic Education***

- The NSS curriculum for students with ID (NSS(ID) curriculum) should help students progress beyond the basic education that they have attained. Evidence-based assessment of students' prior knowledge and experience already acquired will inform the design of school-based curriculum and Individualised Education Programme (IEP) under the senior secondary curriculum.

### ***The Structure and Learning Outcomes of NSS(ID) Curriculum***

- Language, mathematics and independent living will form the core of learning to meet the practical needs of work and the life beyond schooling. Where appropriate, the core is complemented by electives or other school-based programmes, including OLE to reinforce the development of positive values and attitudes, and the capability to explore and learn in an authentic environment.
- The curriculum framework would be supported by the development of learning outcomes which will indicate what students are expected to achieve. With clear learning outcomes, feedback to learning of students with ID could be given to improve learning, and their achievements could also be recognised.

### ***Lateral Coherence***

- Each school needs to establish an effective mechanism for developing a school-based curriculum framework, stating the expected learning outcomes with due regard for the characteristics of its students, and monitoring the progress of learning. In this connection, the common curriculum framework provides the building blocks for constructing the school curriculum to prepare students for opportunities and experiences for quality adult life. The curriculum intentions and expected learning outcomes should be aligned to avoid

inconsistencies expectations amongst different components of a student programme.

### ***Interface with Further Education and the World of Work***

- The NSS(ID) curriculum in general and the IEP in particular should prepare students for independent living and post-school learning opportunities at skills centres, integrated vocational training centres or other forms of training and employment.

9.5 The NSS(ID) curriculum framework comprises the three components of Core, Elective and OLE. The learning targets and broad learning outcomes will be expressed in terms of a continuum to facilitate the planning, development, implementation and evaluation of the school-based curriculum geared to the learning needs of students with ID. Some students with ID could aspire to attain threshold Level 1 in HKDSE for all or some of the subjects. Other students with ID would have educational programmes which cater for their needs and are based on high expectations of progress.

9.6 The broad learning outcomes would initially be developed with reference to overseas experiences and be validated in the local context through a pilot. In the course of development, HKEAA will explore and develop an assessment mechanism that helps recognise the achievements of students with ID.

9.7 COS courses with appropriate adaptation would be developed for students with SEN as electives to provide choice and to help improve the employability of the students. To better cater for the needs of students with SEN, consideration will be given to inviting NGOs which have a proven record of serving these students to be course providers. Students with SEN who follow the ordinary school curriculum, in principle, should take the same COS courses as other students. Where necessary, special arrangements or support will be provided, e.g. reading aid for students with visual impairment.

## Assessment

9.8 Students with SEN studying the ordinary curriculum are expected to take part in school assessment and public assessment leading to the HKDSE like other students. EMB and HKEAA will provide special accommodations such as seating arrangements, time allowance, tools and assistive technology, format and layout of examination papers, exemptions, etc. to support access to the assessment processes.

9.9 For students with ID, the flexibility provided by the curriculum framework will support schools in customising learning programmes to meet the requirements of a broad and balanced curriculum for all children. It is desirable for these students to have a strengthened IEP at different stages of learning. Each student should have a SLP that recognised his/her full range of achievement.

9.10 As a mechanism for monitoring the learning outcome of teaching, IEP will provide impetus and stimulus for teachers to experiment with new approaches. The Basic Competency Assessment (BCA) could also be appropriately adapted for students with ID as a means to gauge students' progress in learning and to identify areas for improvement.

9.11 As a long-term goal, systemic assessment will be developed to give recognition to the achievements and efforts of students with ID. The involvement of HKEAA early in the development of curriculum-related learning outcomes framework (LOF) for students with ID will ensure continuity of experiences in providing public assessment and certification of students with SEN in the long run.

### ***(A) The NSS(ID) Curriculum***

#### **Support**

9.12 The principle of “one curriculum framework for all” with adaptations to suit the different learning needs and capabilities of students with SEN is strongly

supported.

9.13 Schools strongly agree that the time allocation of 45-55% for core, 20-30% for electives and 15-35% for OLE allows sufficient flexibility for the design of the school-based curriculum. A summary of survey findings is provided in Appendix 2.

9.14 Respondents generally support the core, elective and OLE as components of NSS(ID) curriculum and its educational goal of going beyond rehabilitation to whole-person development and independent living. Schools and parents strongly agree that the proposed elements of literacy, numeracy and independent living included in the core component are essential for every student with ID.

9.15 Schools for students with ID generally support the development of NSS(ID) curriculum to be tried out through the Research and Development (R&D) projects from 2006 onwards.

## **Concerns**

9.16 Parents are concerned about how the curriculum of special schools, particularly the NSS(ID) curriculum, will interface with the ordinary school curriculum and its impact on integration.

9.17 Schools are concerned about the learning time and learning contents of the core and elective subjects, the number of electives to be offered and the enrolment threshold for an elective subject to be offered.

9.18 Some teachers are concerned about the interface between the basic education curriculum and the NSS curriculum in the absence of standardised/recognised learning outcomes across schools. They are also interested in how learning outcomes after 12 years of education will be recognised.

9.19 Schools see the constraints in offering electives to students in special schools with one class at a level.

9.20 Though the functional curriculum is considered essential for students with ID, EMB should be mindful of the limited breadth of such a curriculum and its over-emphasis on independent living.

9.21 The NSS(ID) curriculum should also cover students with ID studying in non-ID special schools for HI and PD and in ordinary schools as well.

### **The Way Forward**

9.22 The NSS(ID) curriculum aims to provide a reference for access to the common curriculum framework and for the development, implementation and evaluation of school-based curriculum. It also provides support for teachers to set targets to meet the diverse needs of students and to structure teaching. The continuum of curriculum targets and learning outcomes facilitates teachers in setting appropriate challenge for the students and enables teachers and parents to assess their performance.

9.23 Since schools for ID students currently do not offer senior secondary curriculum, EMB will conduct R&D projects from the 2006/07 to 2008/09 school years jointly with schools, local and overseas experts in ID to provide the professional and practical knowledge and experiences necessary for finalising the NSS(ID) curriculum framework and learning outcomes. The future NSS(ID) curriculum is not a prolonged programme of the current basic education of students with ID. It will have learning contents and outcomes which are different from those of the previous stage of learning, making them age-appropriate and attainable having regard to the students' abilities and needs.

9.24 The R&D projects should be able to inform schools and parents of the requirements and expectations of the students upon completing the 6-year

secondary education. The project will undertake to identify and specify learning goals and contents, and to develop practicable assessment procedures which indicate progress towards the specified learning outcomes. It will also shed light on the resources and manpower requirements for the effective implementation of NSS(ID).

9.25 The R&D projects will be launched in overlapping phases commencing in September 2006 to support the NSS(ID) curriculum development:

***Phase 1 (the 2006/07 school year)***

A trial run of the broad curriculum framework for core subjects. A draft curriculum framework on core subjects with expected learning outcomes will be proposed for schools' reference. Based on the framework, seed schools of the R&D projects will try out the learning activities and fine-tune the framework having regard to the learning objectives and expected learning outcomes. On-site expert support would be provided to facilitate project development. It is expected that the try-out will also inform the implementation arrangements for schools' reference.

***Phase 2 (2<sup>nd</sup> term of the 2006/07 school year)***

Development of the broad curriculum framework on elective subjects of NSS(ID). The broad framework will be fine-tuned and tried out in the 2007/08 school year.

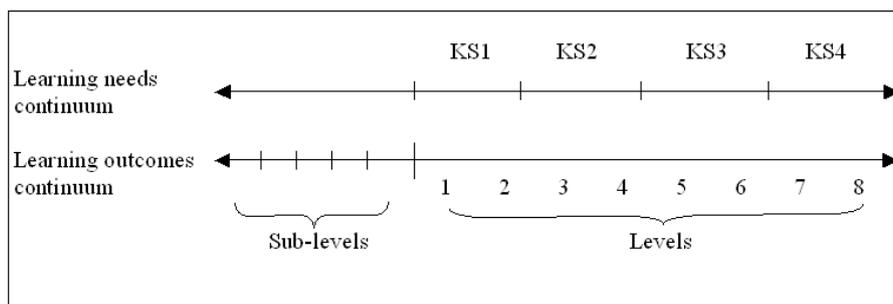
***Phase 3 (the 2007/08-2008/09 school years)***

Refinement of the curriculum framework for core, elective subjects and OLE for the production of the C&A Guides of the NSS(ID) curriculum.

9.26 The C&A Guides of core subjects of the NSS(ID) curriculum will be completed by 2008 for schools' reference, whereas the draft C&A Guides on elective subjects will be developed by mid-2009. Curriculum resource materials such as packages, and exemplars will be collected and disseminated in phases to

schools to support school-based curriculum development.

9.27 The C&A Guides of the NSS(ID) curriculum aim to support schools by providing a reference, inter alia, for measuring the progress of students. The whole set of C&A Guides will be available by the 2009/10 school year (see Chapter 13 for the critical milestones). The continuum of learning needs and outcomes suggested should not be taken as a full description of all that students might and will achieve. The development of the continuum is a necessary step towards the possible development of a systemic assessment for students with ID in future. The diagram below shows the learning needs continuum and its relation to different Key Stages of the curriculum and the learning outcomes continuum. The sub-level outcomes would be supported by descriptors and exemplars.



9.28 Given that such measurable learning outcomes need to be widely adopted and agreed through extensive consultation with the stakeholders in the special education sector, the development of systemic assessment for students with ID in collaboration with HKEAA is expected to begin by 2012 the earliest.

9.29 The R&D projects will also shed light on the curriculum orientation and contents for Liberal Studies for students with ID. Depending on its relevance to students, schools can broaden the “independent living” to include general studies that embrace skills and values.

9.30 In the transition to 2009, to reap the benefit of the Extension of Years of Education (EYE) programme, it is essential for schools as a first step to identify

and review what their current students have learned and achieved. This will help them determine areas of work, prioritise and set targets for the EYE programme in the transition to NSS. Professional judgments would be needed on whether the current school-based curriculum is setting appropriate levels of learning outcomes and having reasonable expectation for students. In the quest for continuous improvement, special schools of similar characteristics are encouraged to work together to agree on the use of common learning outcomes. EMB will assist in networking schools to prepare for the implementation of the NSS(ID) curriculum.

9.31 A Senior Secondary Curriculum Guide (SSCG) will be available to all schools in December 2006 to provide guidance for schools to develop a whole-school curriculum relevant to the needs of students and to deliver effective learning and teaching. Supplements to the Basic Education Curriculum Guide (BECG) and SSCG will be prepared to help teachers make adaptation to suit the diverse learning needs of students with reference to the priority and emphasis of the school curriculum.

9.32 As schools are at different starting points in NSS in terms of experience gained in EYE programme, professional capacity and facilities, they should also make decision on strategic implementation of the NSS curriculum.

### ***(B) The Position of Adapted COS in the NSS(ID) Curriculum***

#### **Support**

9.33 Schools and school sponsoring bodies consider that the goals and directions of adapted COS courses would better prepare students with SEN for vocational training and continuous learning after NSS.

9.34 There is support for the piloting of adapted COC for students with ID to explore the feasibility of the courses for students with ID. Some principals and teachers request the development of a sub-level outcomes framework for COS.

However, there is also a general agreement that qualifications or accreditations of adapted COS courses for students with ID should be a long-term goal.

9.35 It is generally agreed that adapted COS is not for vocational training. It is to promote students' vocational awareness and provide some related experiences of work. It is also generally agreed that students with profound ID can be provided with such experiences under OLE rather than through formal involvement in adapted COS.

### **Concerns**

9.36 Both parents and schools express concern about the course fee and accreditation of adapted COS for students with SEN.

9.37 Another concern is the types and choice available for students with SEN. To ensure that adapted COS can maximise the benefits to students with SEN, including students with ID, schools consider that the class size, mode of service delivery, course fees, recognition, articulation with vocational training after the NSS, etc. are issues to be addressed.

9.38 Principals opine that networking with other schools to allow students to access an adapted COS would be difficult in view of accommodation and transportation problems.

9.39 Schools want more implementation details including minimum enrolment for participation in an elective/COS course, assessment of ID students' performance in COS courses and connection to the QF, the timing for Junior Secondary Education Assessment results and application for adapted COS courses, as problems may arise in the case of transfers from special schools to ordinary schools.

## **The Way Forward**

9.40 EMB will liaise with course providers and coordinate existing resources to ensure students taking the adapted COS(ID) courses will benefit. In the piloting of COC(ID) courses to pave the way for COS(ID) courses, EMB will coordinate with service providers to review course content, to ensure better articulation and consult schools on the mode of delivery for proper deployment of manpower and resources. In the phase 1 piloting starting from 2006-08, only students with mild grade and higher-end moderate grade ID will be involved.

9.41 The adapted COC pilot for ID students will commence in 2006. It is not intended to provide pre-employment training but to achieve the objectives of whole person development, enhancement of vocational awareness and generic skills through vocational education. For those with higher capabilities in the mild grade, it also aims to provide an initial experience of the requirements of a professional or vocational field and enhance the preparedness of students to proceed to post-secondary pathways. Two course providers, namely Hong Chi Association and Vocational Training Council (VTC) will offer four courses, Hotel Housekeeping, Food Preparation, General Duties, and Western Bakery and Pastry to mild grade and higher-end moderate grade ID students in 2006-08.

9.42 EMB will work in collaboration with service providers to explore the possibility of offering a wider range of adapted COS courses for students with SEN including students with ID. It will ensure effective deployment of resources that no student is deprived of the opportunity for education in NSS.

### ***(C) Assessment***

#### **Support**

9.43 Stakeholders support the rationale and direction of building up a systemic assessment for students with ID as a long-term goal.

9.44 Schools generally support the development of sub-levels of LOF for students with lower abilities. They also support using SLP to indicate the achievement of students with SEN.

9.45 Respondents agree that IEP should be formulated in collaboration with parents for better monitoring of students' learning progress.

### **Concerns**

9.46 There are concerns about the assessment accommodations required for students with SEN at NSS level.

9.47 Schools are concerned about using BCA to measure the learning progress of students with ID as they consider that BCA is too demanding for these students.

9.48 There is a suggestion that EMB should work in collaboration with HKEAA, special schools and other local or overseas experts for the development of a systemic assessment.

### **The Way Forward**

9.49 Assessment is an integral part of the teaching process to provide information for the improvement of learning and teaching. In this regard, one of the challenges for schools is to assess the students' performance against the objectives set for the learning programmes. It is also important for schools to consider how the assessment criteria, the data collection arrangements and record keeping can be improved.

9.50 The development of a common set of learning outcomes that will provide reference for comparison to be made among students with similar learning characteristics will enable schools to learn from one another on how to improve students' performance.

9.51 The development of LOF for students with ID will start in the 2007/08 school year, capitalising on the experiences gained from the R&D projects to be launched in September 2006. The initial LOF will pave way for commencing the preparatory work in 2012 for the development of a systemic assessment. In view of the diverse learning needs and characteristics of students with ID, the first level of the LOF could be further developed or fine-tuned to describe performance at sub-levels of Level 1 in collaboration with HKEAA. The levels and the contents of LOF should be measurable and reflect both students' generic skills and knowledge required for further training and transition to adult life. Extensive consultation with stakeholders in the special education sector will be conducted during the developmental process.

9.52 Schools should make the best use of the flexibility provided by the curriculum framework to construct a purposeful and challenging school-based curriculum that will take care of the needs for whole-person development. It is essential that the curriculum should provide an appropriate starting point from which students can build on the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes they have already developed, and provide relevant and appropriate contents that match students' need, and purposeful activities to provide learning in an authentic environment.

9.53 Setting targets for individual students in special schools for the ID is as important as providing age-related and group programmes. IEP is intended to address the specific and individual educational needs of students. They are set to help meet individual priorities and may address basic skills and aspects of behaviour, rather than strategic whole-school target. Each IEP should be tailor-made to cater for the unique needs of a particular student. It should cover specific, measurable and attainable targets and include achievement criteria, strategies, parties involved and the date of interim review. Tracking the progress and performance of students through IEP enables teachers to identify specific areas in which students need to be given appropriate support for improvement.

9.54 The implementation of IEP which involves teachers, relevant professionals and parents will be further strengthened through professional development programmes as stated in the Consultation Document.

## **Chapter 10 Professional Development Opportunities**

10.1 This chapter sets out the framework to prepare school leaders and teachers of special schools properly for the implementation of the NSS curriculum.

### **Summary of the Proposal in the Consultation Document**

10.2 Professional development opportunities for teachers would focus on what is required for implementing the recommendations on the NSS curriculum for students with SEN. Professional development programmes on ‘Understanding C&A Frameworks’ and ‘Learning and Teaching Strategies’ will commence in the 2006/07 school year, to be supplemented and complemented by structured courses on curriculum planning. Development of a network of schools which form a learning community for schools admitting students with ID will commence in mid-2007 when more experiences have been gained from the R&D projects.

### **Support**

10.3 Respondents strongly support the provision of professional development programmes on assessment for learning, IEP and enrichment of subject knowledge under NSS.

### **The Way Forward**

10.4 The following sections outline the planning and arrangements of professional development programmes for teachers and principals.

(a) *School leadership and management*

A 2/3-day leadership workshop will be organised for the school leadership team, which include all principals, functional heads and school supervisors, starting in October 2006. It will focus on the

development of school plan for NSS and management of change at the school level. This tailored course will cover qualities of leading change, managing the migration and vertical continuity of school-based curriculum development, flexibility in time-tabling, choice of subjects, human resource planning including the preparation of all professional staff including the paramedical staff.

(b) *Professional capacity of middle managers*

The implementation of NSS is a complex task requiring the support and professional input of middle managers of schools. A series of middle manager workshops will be offered to special schools after they have developed a school development plan for migration to NSS. It will focus on collaboration in curriculum and assessment change, managing change and coping with uncertainties and stress.

(c) *Teaching students with ID*

Based on the feedback from questionnaires, the following programmes will be provided in two academic years commencing from 2007 as below:

- assessment for learning - 800 places
- IEP - 700 places
- curriculum management - 600 places

(d) *Professional knowledge for all teachers*

Professional development courses on enriching subject knowledge, interpreting and understanding NSS curricula for ordinary schools are relevant for enriching the professional capacity of teachers teaching students with ID. All special school teachers are encouraged to apply for these courses available to teachers from ordinary schools. In fact, this will also help promote cross-fertilisation of expertise amongst teachers from different school background.

(e) *Strengthening professional capacity in basic education*

Programmes to strengthen professional capacity in basic education and on specific competence to manage students with SEN will be continuously offered to support teachers so that their students are better prepared for NSS.

(f) *Sharing of experiences in R&D projects and good practices*

Sharing of experiences generated by the R&D projects would be regularly organised for schools which like to benefit early from the development process. Networks would be set up to facilitate the continuous sharing of good practices to enhance the overall professional capacity of schools in Hong Kong.

(g) *Initial teacher education*

There will be close communication with teacher education providers on the latest needs of teachers and schools in order to provide the most suitable programmes for pre-service teachers.

## **Chapter 11 Quality Assurance and Exit Pathways for the Implementation of NSS Education in Special Schools**

11.1 This chapter sets out the direction of the interface between senior secondary education and post-school arrangements for students with SEN, in particular the articulation arrangements for students with ID.

### **Summary of the Proposal in the Consultation Document**

11.2 More effective monitoring procedures have to be introduced to collect evidence of achievement of the targets set by the schools. Sponsoring bodies need to be closely involved in the monitoring process to ensure timely and effective intervention as and when required.

11.3 To support the implementation of NSS education, each special school needs to set clearer directions for enhancing student learning and fostering student autonomy based on their capabilities. Principals and middle managers need to play a proactive role in helping their staff members adopt new teaching strategies and assessment methods conducive to enhancing learning outcomes, and in deploying resources to support the staff. Effective procedures have to be established to ensure that the progress of students is assessed and monitored regularly. Where appropriate, parents should be involved in these procedures.

11.4 With the introduction of the NSS(ID) curriculum including adapted COS for students with SEN, there is a need to review the contents of existing training courses of the post-school institutions to ensure smooth articulation with the NSS curriculum. In the future, a longitudinal study of employment opportunities will be necessary to evaluate the effectiveness of NSS for students of special schools.

11.5 Collaboration among the education, welfare, rehabilitation, business and vocational training sectors is crucial in reaping the maximum benefits of the NSS curriculum for students with SEN in order to strengthen their employability and increase their employment opportunities, and to facilitate their smooth transition from school to sustained employment, life-long training and a quality adult life.

### **Concerns**

11.6 Schools suggest that EMB take a leading role in coordinating the efforts of parties concerned to ensure diversification of exit pathways and to work out more comprehensive arrangements for students with ID on transition from schools to continuous learning, vocational training, employment and adult life.

11.7 Schools and parents are concerned about the articulation between the adapted COS courses for students with SEN and vocational training/continuous learning afterwards.

### **The Way Forward**

11.8 Students capable of pursuing advanced education at tertiary institutes will not be deprived of their chance because of their disability. There will also be suitable modifications to learning facilities and assessment where necessary to ensure equal opportunity in education.

11.9 EMB will coordinate relevant service providers, e.g. VTC, NGOs in their future course/programme design to facilitate articulation with the learning objectives of the adapted COS courses. This will support continuity in learning to pave the way for continuous learning of people with SEN.

11.10 To address the need of students with ID for continuous learning, EMB will explore with relevant parties the provision of post-school placement/training for these students with elements such as vocational training, rehabilitation service, as well as social and personal development for a quality adult life.

11.11 EMB will work in collaboration with parties concerned to explore structured attachment programmes to better prepare students with ID for the workplace requirement.

11.12 EMB will explore further with parties concerned opportunities for school leavers in continuous learning/training, employment and independent adult life. This will involve professional dialogues and decisions on what students will achieve after NSS and how the training programmes can help students achieve that.

## **Chapter 12 Resource Considerations**

12.1 This chapter outlines the proposed resource arrangements for special schools under the NSS. The new academic structure will incur substantial resources and have immense impact on the development of special education in Hong Kong.

### **Summary of the Proposal in the Consultation Document**

12.2 The appropriate level of resources for special schools for students with ID will be determined when details of the NSS(ID) curriculum, the learning outcomes and assessment standards have been worked out and agreed with the key stakeholders. Experiences from the existing EYE Programme for students with ID will provide valuable input to developing the NSS(ID) curriculum and is an indication of the resource requirement.

12.3 Depending on students' curriculum needs and learning activities, different categories of special schools may have different resource requirements in aspects such as teacher-to-class ratio, supporting staff (e.g. teaching assistants), subject grants/grants for specific learning programmes, etc.

12.4 For effective use of manpower, encashment of a small number of certain established posts will provide flexibility in staff deployment to meet students' needs.

12.5 For the moderately/severely ID/PD students whose learning may regress after long holidays, a flexible arrangement of school days during the school year will help students sustain their learning.

12.6 Existing government policy on tuition fee requires students to pay 18% of the cost of senior secondary education. The same policy will apply to senior secondary students in both ordinary and special schools and they will pay the same level of school fee.

## **Support**

12.7 Schools generally agree that students with SEN should be required to pay school fees at the senior secondary level under NSS.

12.8 Respondents also support a different rate of boarding fee for 7-day boarders and a reasonable adjustment of the boarding fees in special schools.

12.9 Majority of the schools support the differentiation of resource allocation across the types of special schools to reflect students' learning needs. They also agree that encashment of certain posts on the establishment may provide greater flexibility in resource deployment to better meet students' needs.

## **Concerns**

12.10 Stakeholders express their concerns about whether additional resources will be allocated for the implementation of NSS.

12.11 As there is only a single class at a level in many special schools, special schools ask whether a basic grant would be allocated to allow a smooth migration to NSS.

## **The Way Forward**

12.12 Additional resources have been earmarked for NSS in special schools to cater for the potential demand for additional number of classes in special schools and the requirements of the NSS curriculum.

12.13 In providing the supporting measures, EMB will consider the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of these measures, and the management of existing resources allocated to special schools. More flexibility in supporting measures will be considered for various categories of special schools in order to meet the diversified needs of students in special schools.

12.14 Special schools which require conversion works and/or additional facilities in connection with the implementation of NSS have submitted their proposals to EMB. The proposals will be examined and prioritised with due regard to the nominal class structure, the feasibility of conversion as well as the requirements of individual schools.

#### Special Schools Offering Ordinary Curriculum

12.15 To prepare for the transition, special schools offering ordinary curriculum under NSS shall receive resources like TPPG and have access to tailored professional development programmes, similar to their counterparts in the ordinary school sector.

12.16 They will also enjoy the same teacher-to-class ratio; adopt the practice of rounding for the calculation of staff provision, apply the revised arrangements for the Substitute Teacher Grant (STG); have a 5-year transitional period for absorption of surplus teachers; and more funding flexibility through the use of cash grants. In general, special schools welcome more funding flexibility for hire of personnel and services to meet school's own needs.

12.17 These special schools will offer four core subjects, with suitable adaptation, and will also provide students with choices in electives. Taking into account the small number of senior secondary classes, special schools should explore the feasibility of collaboration and sharing resources with other special schools and/or ordinary schools in the vicinity to provide a wider range of NSS courses for their students.

12.18 The preferable class structure would be at least one class at each senior secondary level in special schools. However, some schools may not have adequate demand to operate this structure. EMB will discuss with relevant school sponsoring bodies the viable class structure and elective subjects to offer for students in their special schools.

12.19 Some special schools offering the ordinary curriculum but with no experience in operating senior secondary classes will try out senior secondary classes from the 2006/07 school year onwards.

#### Special Schools Offering NSS(ID) Curriculum

12.20 At present, special schools for ID do not operate senior secondary classes. Starting from the 2006/07 school year, R&D projects on NSS(ID) curriculum in collaboration with relevant expertise will be piloted in some schools to facilitate the design of the NSS(ID) curriculum contents and full implementation in 2009.

12.21 The R&D projects will help formulate expected learning outcomes and derive assessment standards. Experiences generated from the R&D projects would help inform recommendations on resources support. Proposals on resource support will be worked out during phase 3 of the R&D projects in the 2008/09 school year.

#### School Fees

12.22 The current policy is that senior secondary students in both ordinary and special schools pay the same level of school fees at 18% of the unit cost of secondary education as a whole. In computing the average unit cost, the cost of both ordinary and special schools will be aggregated. Students in both ordinary and special schools at the same level of study will pay the same level of school fees for senior secondary classes. Parents with financial difficulties may apply for fee remission through SFAA.

## Boarding Service and Boarding Fees

12.23 Two new boarding sections, one in New Territory East and another in New Territory West, are proposed to be established to cater for the demand of students with PD for boarding service. Before the completion of the two new boarding sections and as a transitional measure, students studying in PD schools and residing in the New Territories (NT) with long-term boarding needs may be provided with boarding service in two special schools, one in NT East and another in NT West.

12.24 A review on boarding fees shows that there is room for fee adjustment. Stakeholders opine that it is acceptable to increase boarding fees in phases taking into account their affordability. It is also reasonable to charge 5-day and 7-day boarders at different rates. EMB will continue discussing with stakeholders fee adjustment to recover a reasonable portion of the government expenditure with reference to the unit cost of a boarding place. Parents with financial difficulties may apply for fee remission.

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## **Chapter 13 Participation, Communication, Critical Milestones and Coherence Making**

### **Participation and Communication**

13.1 Successful implementation of COS as a learning option in the forthcoming NSS and the NSS academic structure for special schools require the participation and concerted effort of all stakeholders. In the 3-month consultation launched in January 2006, a multiple-strategy and multiple-stakeholder approach was adopted. This involves both dissemination activities such as publications and the provision of web-based information, as well as interactive activities such as consultation sessions/forums and meetings.

13.2 It is our firm belief that participation and communication go together. Therefore, EMB will continue with formal and informal exchanges of views with various stakeholders, including school sponsoring bodies, professional associations, principals, teachers, parents, academics, tertiary sector and course providers, employers, and various government agencies and NGOs.

13.3 The communication means will include:

- The “334” Web Bulletin
- Formal advisory bodies such as Education Commission, COS Committee, CDC and CDC Committee on SEN and statutory bodies including HKCAA and HKEAA
- Submission and explanation at the relevant panels and sub-committees of the Legislative Council
- Regular liaison meeting/forum with different parties
- Visits to schools

- Visits to post-secondary institutions and COS course providers
- Other forms of submission
- Feedback from seed projects

The views we gather will be channelled into regular evaluation exercises which aim at informing the implementation of COS in the NSS and the new academic structure for special schools.

13.4 EMB will take the lead and facilitate all actions designed to take both COS and NSS education for students with SEN forward as set out in this report. EMB will also promote and coordinate the contribution of relevant government departments, tertiary institutions, the business sector and NGOs to provide professional development opportunities to teachers and to provide appropriate learning experiences for students.

### **Critical Milestones**

13.5 The critical milestones of major actions for COS and NSS curriculum for students with ID are as follows:

#### COS

School Year Key Areas	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
<b>COS Committee</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparatory COS Committee established</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Migrating from the preparatory COS Committee to COS Committee</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trying out the various functions of the preparatory COS Committee through COC piloting</li> </ul>			

School Year	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
<b>Key Areas</b>				
<b>Development of C&amp;A Framework</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Depicting the areas of studies for COS</li> <li>• Prioritising the areas of studies for piloting</li> <li>• Developing a generic C&amp;A Framework</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reviewing and refining the areas of studies for COS</li> <li>• Establishing a mechanism for reviewing and revising the C&amp;A frameworks for COS in 2010-12</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of NSS courses by course providers based on the C&amp;A frameworks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication and taster programmes and OLE for SS1 students</li> </ul>
<b>Quality Assurance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Piloting the QA mechanism focusing on curriculum and course delivery</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Piloting the QA mechanism focusing on assessment and moderation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reviewing and revising the QA mechanism for COS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementing the QA mechanism for NSS COS</li> </ul>
<b>Professional Development Programmes (PDP)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshops for principals and career masters/mistresses</li> <li>• Small scale piloting of PDP</li> <li>• Initial framework of PDP module</li> <li>• Engagement of interested teachers in shadowing, mentoring and relevant teaching in COC pilots</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Systematic planning of PDP</li> <li>• Introducing PDP progressively</li> <li>• Reviewing, revising and prioritising PDP as appropriate</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focusing PDP to match the COS courses for the 2010-12 cohort</li> </ul>
<b>Funding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soliciting views of stakeholders on the funding models under consideration and piloting</li> <li>• Reviewing, revising and adopting the funding model for piloting in cohorts leading into “334”</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Migrating the funding model to NSS in consultation with stakeholders</li> </ul>

NSS(ID) curriculum

School Year	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
<b>Key Areas</b>				
<b>Curriculum Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Producing broad framework on core and elective subjects for R&amp;D projects</li> <li>Launching R&amp;D projects on NSS(ID) curriculum</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing 1st draft of C&amp;A Guides on core subjects for the NSS(ID) curriculum</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revising and consolidating the C&amp;A Guides on core subjects for the NSS(ID) curriculum</li> <li>Developing 1st draft of C&amp;A Guides on elective subjects for the NSS(ID) curriculum</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revising and consolidating the C&amp;A Guides on elective subjects for the NSS(ID) curriculum</li> </ul>
<b>Learning/ Teaching resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disseminating curriculum materials for launching the R&amp;D projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disseminating exemplars for the NSS(ID) curriculum</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disseminating by phases resources, packages &amp; exemplars for the NSS(ID) curriculum</li> </ul>	
<b>Professional Development Programmes (PDP)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workshops for heads and teachers of special schools</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focusing PDP for heads and teachers for students with ID to enrich knowledge on assessment, pedagogy and to match the development of R&amp;D projects such as:-                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Curriculum management</li> <li>Implementation of IEP</li> <li>Networking and learning community</li> <li>Student Learning Profile</li> <li>Enriching subject knowledge on specific KLAs</li> <li>Sub-levels learning outcomes</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<b>Assessment and HKEAA Recognition</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborating with HKEAA in developing LOF for students with ID</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reviewing and revising the LOF for students with ID</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consolidating the LOF framework for students with ID</li> <li>Studying and developing systemic assessment for students with mild ID in collaboration with HKEAA by 2012</li> </ul>

## **Coherence-making**

13.6 There will be on-going and regular review of the processes leading up to each critical milestone of COS and NSS(ID) curriculum. Inputs from various parties including principals, teachers, local and international consultants will be sought. Focus group meetings will be organised and school visits will be made. Regular review/evaluation will provide formative feedback so that timely and responsive adjustment and coherence-making could be arranged to ensure each critical milestone is reached.

13.7 There will be collaboration across the Government, post-secondary institutions, COS course providers, professional experts, teachers and schools to generate informed practice and experiences for building up the capacity of different parties to carry out the proposals on COS and NSS academic structure for special schools.

13.8 COS is an integral part of the NSS curriculum and the provision of senior secondary education for students with SEN is the Government's policy. To ensure coherence of measures and actions, special attention has to be paid to the following aspects:

- (a) The Government will continue to explore with the tertiary institutions the possibility of recognising the attainments of students in COS courses and to provide advanced continuous learning for students with SEN including ID. HKEAA will continue to provide appropriate accommodation to help student with SEN take the HKDSE. EMB will continue to help schools develop SLP to reflect the achievements of students with ID in all aspects. EMB will work in collaboration with both NGOs and other parties concerned to arrange structured attachment programmes for students with ID.

- (b) EMB needs to align policies and their impact on schools including:
- the Education Ordinance/Regulations/Code of Aid to determine whether any amendments are necessary;
  - the learning environment of students with SEN and the structure of secondary schooling in different types of special schools;
  - the teacher education, principal training and continuing professional development measures to help schools and teachers prepare for COS and help students with SEN;
  - the school-based management policy to provide schools with greater flexibility and autonomy in the use of funds for helping students study COS courses and prepare special schools for implementing NSS.

## Summary of Survey Findings on Career-oriented Studies

### Background

EMB conducted a questionnaire survey among 497 secondary schools in February 2006. Its purpose was to aid the planning and implementation of Career-oriented Studies (COS) within the “334” reforms.

### Return rates

389 out of 497 (78.3%) secondary schools completed and returned the questionnaires.

*[Note: Two questionnaires from non-secondary schools are not counted. For schools with more than one submission, only one is counted. For consistency purpose, the return of the principals is included in the findings.]*

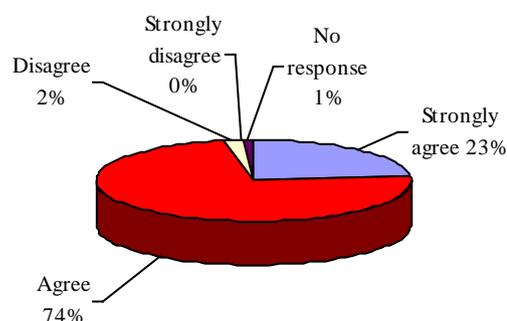
### Survey findings

#### Proposed COS Framework

##### Question

1. Do you agree that the **purpose and position** of Career-oriented Studies (COS), as an integral part of the new senior secondary (NSS) curriculum, is to provide a diversified pathway for students (Chapter 2 is relevant)?

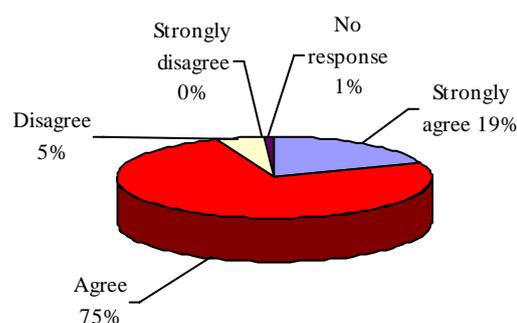
##### Responses



##### Question

2. Do you agree with the **design principles** of COS in offering a range of courses that complement the NSS electives, reflecting the social and economic needs, extending the learning environment and providing articulation to further studies and/or work (Chapter 4, para. 4.2 is relevant)?

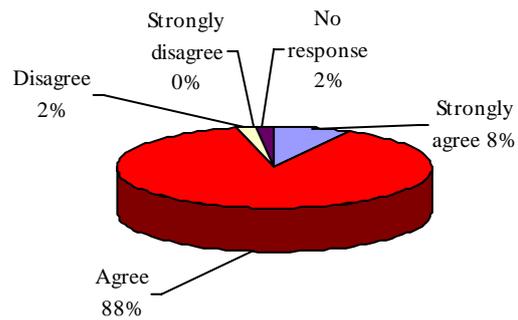
##### Responses



### Question

3. a) Do you agree with the proposed **areas of studies** in COS (Chapter 4, para. 4.3 is relevant)?

### Responses



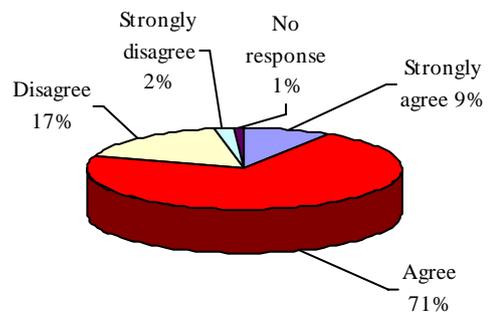
- b) Do you have other suggestions? (Please specify)

- In addition to the six areas of studies, respondents also suggest areas such as languages (e.g. Japanese & French), professional qualifications (e.g. LCCI accounting qualifications) and youth entrepreneurship.
- Over-emphasising the articulation of COS courses with vocational qualifications and pathways would result in a narrowed curriculum and COS would skew towards 'pre-vocational' education. Other respondents however consider that pre-vocational schools and vocational schools could operate in parallel with academically-oriented schools.
- Many respondents acknowledged that there are rooms in the school curriculum for diversity, but duplicating the content of other NSS electives should be avoided. The number of COS courses should be restricted to 15-20.

### Question

4. a) Do you agree that COS courses **commence** in SS2, with SS1 as a foundation year (Chapter 4, paras. 4.5-4.8 are relevant)?

### Responses



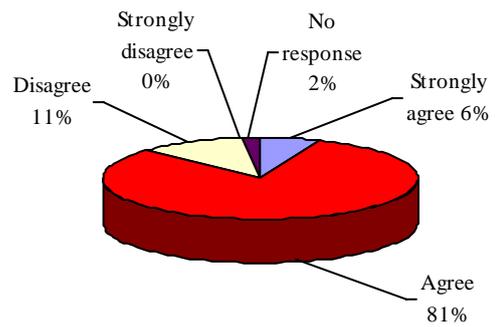
- b) Do you have other suggestions? (Please specify)

- There are various suggestions on the best time for commencing COS. For instance, a minority of schools prefer to start in SS1, or possibly by collaborating with industries to try out the courses during vacations.
- Schools express concerns about travel expenses, arrangements for time-tabling, how to manage students with different learning abilities, and how to structure SS1 as a foundation year to prepare students for informed choices of electives, including COS courses, in SS2-SS3.

### Question

5. a) Do you agree that the **recognition** for the three levels of performance in the COS courses is adequate in facilitating students' academic and career progression (Chapter 4, paras. 4.9-4.13 are relevant)?

### Responses



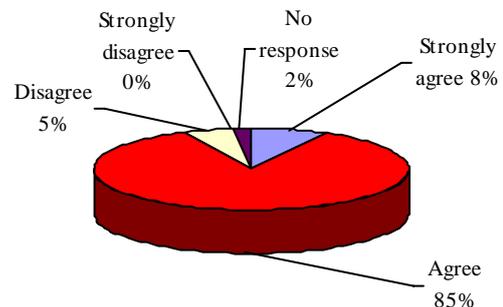
- b) Do you have other suggestions? (Please specify)

- Some schools look for further levels of performance in COS to acknowledge high performing students. Some schools argue that COS should have 5 levels of performance to match the performance levels in the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE), and ensure parity between the two types of electives.
- Many respondents express concern about the articulation paths for further studies offered by tertiary institutes, and the relationship between COS and the Qualifications Framework (QF).

### Question

6. Do you agree with the 3-stage **quality assurance framework** focusing on curriculum, course delivery and moderation of assessment for achieving consistent standards? (Chapter 4, paras. 4.14-4.26 are relevant)?

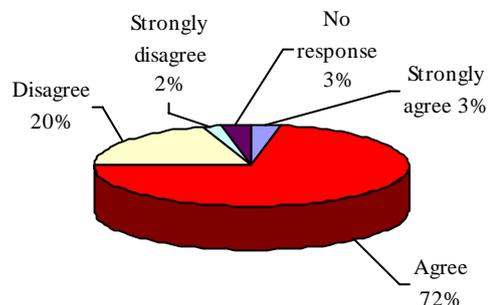
### Responses



### Question

7. a) Do you agree that the **nomenclature** 'COS' can reflect the objectives of COS (Chapter 6, para. 6.2 is relevant)?

### Responses



- b) Do you have other suggestions? (Please specify)

Most of the nomenclatures suggested are in Chinese and are grouped under four headings: Applied Learning, Professional Studies, Career Studies and Diversified Studies.

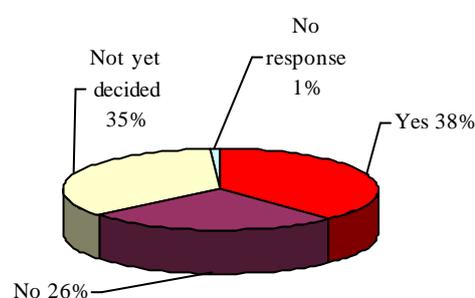
- **Applied Learning** (e.g. 應用學習, 應用課程, 應用科目, 應用科學課程, 應用導向教育, 應用為本教育, 實用導向教育, 實用學科, 實境學習課程)
- **Professional Studies** (e.g. Area of Professional Studies, Fundamental Professional Studies, 基礎專業課程, 專業教育課程, 專業認知課程, 專業學習, 專業發展教育, 專業技能教育, 專業拓展教育, 專業培訓, 專職課程)
- **Career Studies** (e.g. 事業體驗教育, 事業探究課程, 事業發展教育, 職業探究課程, 職業體驗/探索, 職業體驗教育, 職業教育, 職業訓練課程, 職業相關課程, 工作導向及體驗教育, 行業導向, 生涯規劃教育, 生命藍圖描繪教育)
- **Diversified Studies** (e.g. 多元化學習課程, 多元導向教育, 才藝為本學習, Skill-based Learning, 展能學習)

## Implementation

### Question

8. Will your school offer COS courses in NSS to meet students' diversified learning needs?

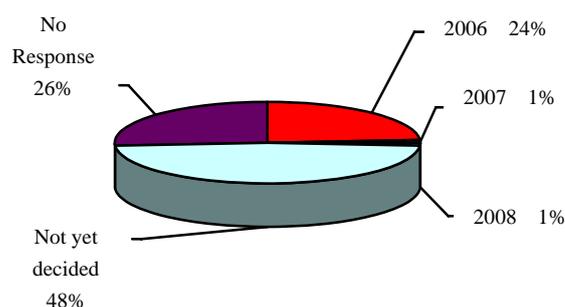
### Responses



### Question

9. Your school is likely to participate in Career-oriented Curriculum piloting commencing in     (year)    .

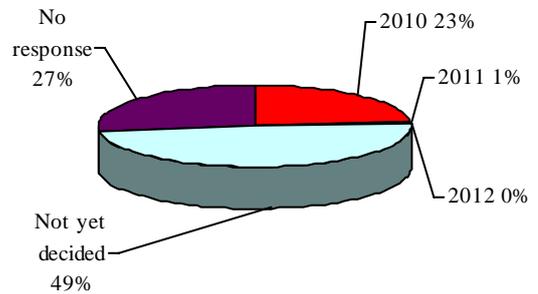
### Responses



**Question**

10. Your school is likely to participate in NSS COS commencing in     (year)    .

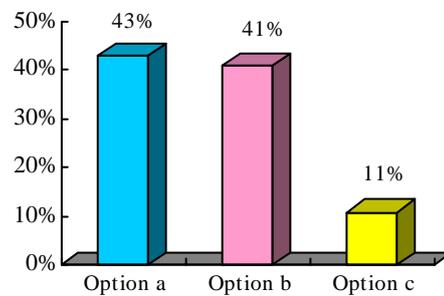
**Responses**



**Question**

11. Will your school consider offering COS courses to students by\_\_\_\_ (Chapter 3, paras. 3.3-3.5 are relevant)?

**Responses**



[Note: Respondents may choose more than one option.]

Note:

Option a - Allowing students to enrol in a wide spectrum of COS courses according to their own interests and learning needs

Option b - Working collaboratively with course providers to offer selected COS courses to students at school

Option c - Implementing other modes

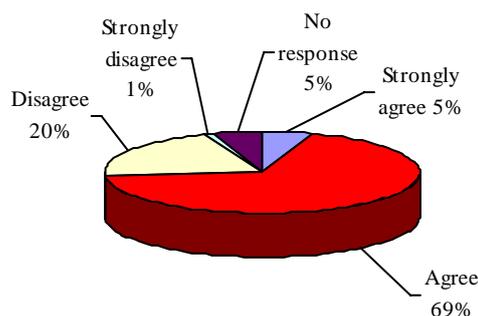
Other options of implementation are suggested:

- Some schools suggest that district-based learning centres should be established for the delivery of COS. Others suggest that schools should develop and deliver COS courses exclusively, without necessarily involving tertiary providers, or should seek a greater involvement in school-based or partly school-based COS provision in Mode 3.
- Intensive courses could be offered during the summer vacation.

**Question**

12. In considering the proposed framework for professional development (Chapter 5, paras. 5.2-5.9 are relevant) for COS teachers, do you agree that the framework can help teachers prepare themselves for the teaching of COS courses?

**Responses**



13. In planning for the implementation of COS,

	<b>Total number of teachers from responding schools</b>
a) how many of your teachers are likely to be involved in COS teaching?	634
b) how many of your teachers are likely to be involved in providing careers guidance and support to students?	843

[Note: Some respondents have given a range of teachers (e.g. 2-4). In such cases, the maximum number is taken. An estimated number of teachers is also given for responses such as 'teachers of the careers team, senior secondary classes/subject teachers and all teachers at school'.]

14. Please indicate the preference of your school's professional development plan by inserting the number of **teachers** intending to take part in the programmes in the appropriate boxes:

<u>Dimensions/Programmes</u>	<b>Training places required (Total number as required by responding schools)</b>			
	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009 onwards
Understanding of students and their needs	546	291	268	179
Command of teaching and facilitating skills	451	292	232	154
Command of subject knowledge and skills				
<i>Applied Science</i>	85	73	52	20
<i>Business, Management and Law</i>	92	86	64	44
<i>Creative Studies</i>	113	91	64	39
<i>Engineering and Production</i>	51	41	41	23
<i>Media and Communication</i>	115	107	88	44
<i>Services</i>	104	78	73	43
Authentic work/trade experience	125	124	115	69
Careers and pastoral guidance related to COS courses	288	262	211	117

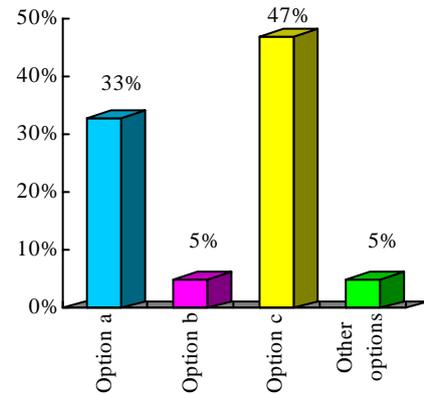
[Note: Some respondents have given a range of teachers (e.g. 2-4). In such cases, the maximum number is taken. An estimated number of teachers is also given for responses such as 'teachers of the careers team, senior secondary classes/subject teachers and all teachers at school'.]

### Question

15. Which of the following **funding models** in the long-term steady state (Chapter 5, paras. 5.10-5.21 are relevant) will better facilitate your school in implementing COS?

[Note: Respondents may choose more than one option.]

### Responses



Note:

Option a - Application to EMB for additional funding

Option b - Encashed teaching load on a per capita basis with EMB topping up the difference

Option c - Funding embedded in the annual subvention

Other options on funding models are suggested:

- There is no consensus among the options. Some respondents suggest that course fees should be paid by students and EMB, or by EMB only. Others argue that students should pay the course fee upfront and be reimbursed upon completing the course.
- Different modes are suggested, including a mix of options (a) and (c). Some respondents feel that option (b) may not be feasible, partly because the frequent changes in courses would deter long-term planning and undermine Professional Development Programmes (PDP).

16. Please suggest the essential factors to be considered in your preferred funding model (e.g. number of students enrolled in COS courses, school's development plan in institutionalising COS in senior secondary curriculum, etc.):

- The factors selected by schools (in order of importance): students' enrolment; finance and resources; planning; student-related/parent-related factors; implementation; types and number of courses offered; teacher-related factors; recognition and articulation of COS courses.
- Others include: fairness; course providers and schools' reputation.

## Other Comments/Suggestions

### **Purpose and Position**

- Some schools note that students would choose and commence the study of NSS electives in SS1, thereby reducing their likelihood of taking COS courses in SS2. If they choose COS in SS2 because of weak performance in other electives, COS may then be labelled as a second-class choice. Bridging courses may be required in SS1.
- University places are offered to about 18% of the age cohort, which means that university is not the only pathway to many students. As a result, some respondents consider that EMB should encourage at least 50% of senior secondary students to take COS courses.
- There is agreement that the terms ‘Career-oriented Studies’ and ‘Career-oriented Curriculum’ needed further definition. Several respondents are of the view that the implementation of COS is too rushed, and the rationale and target students are not clearly defined.
- A small number of schools feel that NSS electives should be students’ main choices. Vocational studies should only be offered to those who are unwilling to take, or cannot manage the NSS subjects. They consider that it is dangerous and a waste of resources to put students of different abilities under one roof.

### **Curriculum**

- Several respondents suggest that parents’ confidence would be enhanced if COS courses are directly articulated to further education or employment. The QF could help achieve this purpose.
- The curriculum’s flexibility and responsiveness is widely considered as a key success factor for COS. Some schools feel that more emphasis could be given to practicum (work experience).
- Other respondents are concerned that the pace of current implementation is too fast and suggest that the areas of studies should be reduced. COS should be developed step by step to build a solid foundation.

### **Course Provision**

- A number of schools note that if COS courses are developed by schools, the coverage would become too broad and unmanageable. Instead they would look to leverage the better facilities and experienced teaching staff of the tertiary providers, without installing more facilities in their schools. The partnership model with tertiary providers is more flexible, and could minimise the burden of professional development programmes on secondary teachers.
- One school argues that the QA procedures conducted through COS Committee is a waste of resources. Instead, the recognition of workplace qualifications such as that of Hong Kong Institute of Accredited Accounting Technicians and Microsoft would make room for schools to offer relevant preparatory courses for professional qualifications.
- Several respondents believe that courses should be offered on district basis, or by cluster schools in their district. Centres could be established in each district to congregate resources for better development.

- Schools also argue that the application time frame of COC piloting courses should be in line with schools' time frame of S3 students' subject choice for their S4 studies. It is difficult for schools to decide whether to join COC before June as their list of S4 students is not yet available.
- Others observe difficulties with timetabling, and suggest COC courses be offered on Saturdays or after school during weekdays to minimise the clash with school timetable and facilitate students to take.
- Schools also suggest early announcement of upcoming COS courses, preferably a year in advance, to give them adequate time to reconfigure their timetables.

### **Quality Assurance and Recognition**

- There is widespread agreement that EMB should confirm the recognition of COS in the HKDSE, and its relation to QF. A respondent comments that the qualification and courses are not yet stable, schools need to be selective in introducing the courses to their students so as to minimise the impact of instability.
- Several respondents opine that the administrative and QA procedures should be simplified. The current proposal involves a number of agencies and institutions, including EMB, Federation of Continuing Education in Tertiary Institutions, Hong Kong Council for Academic Accreditation, which differs from the single track of Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination/HKDSE subjects. They suggest that external verification of COS courses be conducted every two or three years.

### **Funding**

- Some respondents argue for adopting a unique funding model, while others suggest that different models should be used. Many note that one-off grants give schools more flexibility.
- There are varying opinions on the use of the Capacity Enhancement Grant (CEG). Some schools consider that it is unfair to other students if CEG is used for COS. Others feel that it contradicts the rationale of CEG, which aims to reduce the workload of teachers.
- Many suggest that the funding models should be the same for all subjects, and COS students should not pay extra course fees, apart from special circumstances like practical work or visits. Others, however, suggest that students could pay more than 18%, and apply for subsidies if needed.
- As schools are of the view that their resources are limited, the administration, counselling and monitoring COS students as well as the expenses in transporting students to venues, should be recognised. While resources can be secured through encashing teaching load, schools with smaller number of COS students cannot be benefited, and schools cannot reduce the salaries of teachers.
- COC courses could be organised on a regional basis so as to reduce schools' burden.
- Private schools anticipate that subsidisation could also benefit their students.

### **Professional Development Programmes**

- Some respondents suggest that EMB should offer professional development programmes to enable secondary school teachers to teach COS. If most of the COS courses are

provided by external providers, the morale of secondary teachers will be affected. The Teacher Professional Preparation Grant should be used to facilitate the professional development for teachers aspiring to teach COS courses.

- However, others note that subject knowledge will not be the key. It is the practical experience in fields such as logistics, law, and cosmetology, etc. that are essential. Opportunities should be made available for 'on-job practice'.
- Teachers should be consulted before deciding the curriculum of any professional development programmes courses to be offered.

### **Promotion**

- Many respondents observe that the successful implementation of COS would depend on whether the community is adequately informed and schools are being motivated to diversify their curriculum. Promotion should be strengthened to build up a positive image of COS, and change the mindset that COS is a second class curriculum.

### **Others**

- One respondent feels that a number of questions in the questionnaires are leading questions which could not reflect the true responses from principals.

## Summary of Survey Findings on the New Senior Secondary Academic Structure for Special Schools

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### **Background**

To facilitate the planning and smooth implementation of the new senior secondary (NSS) academic structure for special schools, EMB conducted a survey among 60 special schools in April 2006. A questionnaire was sent to each Principal to collect their views towards the following four aspects: Development of Curriculum Framework, Student Assessment and Professional Development Opportunities, Exit Pathways and Resource Considerations.

### **Return rates**

58 out of 60 (96.7%) schools completed and returned the questionnaires.

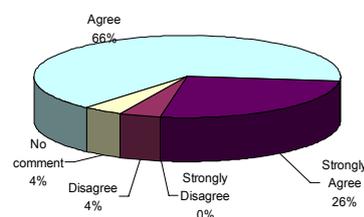
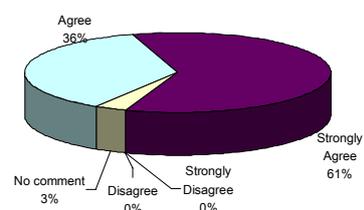
### **Survey findings**

#### I. Development of Curriculum Framework

##### Question

1. Under the principle of same curriculum framework for all, the school-based curriculum should be designed to prepare students for whole-person development, transition to adult life with appropriate tasks to enhance preparation for independent living and vocational awareness as appropriate.
  
2. The proposed elements of literacy, numeracy and independent living included in the core component are essential for every student with intellectual disabilities (ID).

##### Responses



3. Please state your suggestion(s) if you disagree to question 2:

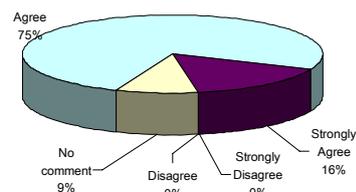
Commonly raised suggestions:

- A functional curriculum is more important than subject-based learning.
- ‘Independent living’ should not be over-stressed as it may undermine the spirit of the revised curriculum in secondary classes at large.

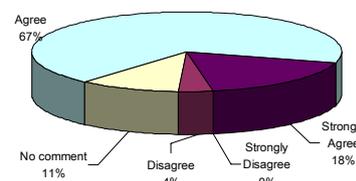
### Question

4. The Electives and Other Learning Experiences (OLE) could cater for the interest and specific areas of development for students with ID.

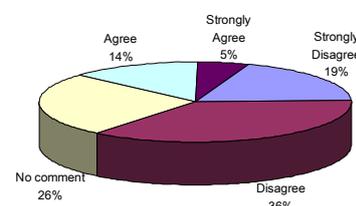
### Responses



5. Other than Electives from Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) subjects, the interest and special learning needs of students with ID can be appropriately and effectively catered for by other school-based programmes.



6. Based on past performance, some students of my school can aspire to attain Level 1 in the future HKDSE.



7. Please specify the HKDSE subject(s) if your answer to question 6 is “Agree” or “Strongly Agree”. If your answer to question 6 is “Disagree” or “Strongly disagree”, please proceed to question 8.

Commonly attainable subjects:

- Chinese Language
- Mathematics
- Liberal Studies
- Visual Arts

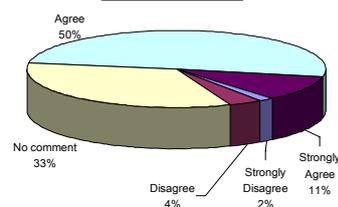
8. Please rank the Electives/school-based programmes other than adapted Career-oriented Studies (COS) that your school will plan to offer according to preference, the highest starting from 1.

Electives	Schools' ranking in descending order
Information and Communication Technology	1
Home Economics (renamed as Technology and Living)	2
Visual Arts	3
Design and Applied Technology	4
Music	5
Physical Education	6
English	7
Others (please specify) Independent Living Skills, Perceptual motor training Organic planting, Woodwork, Cleaning Service	

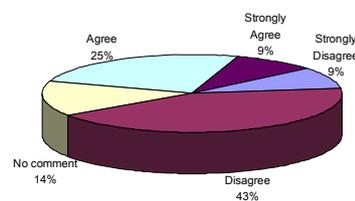
**Question**

9. Developing COS as an Elective for students with ID to suit the competency requirements of potential employers will be a more targeted approach to meet the learning needs and characteristics of the students of my school.

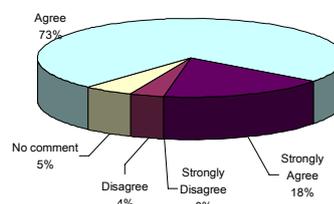
**Responses**



10. COS is not appropriate to the students of my school and relevant experiences can be provided through OLE and other school-based programmes.



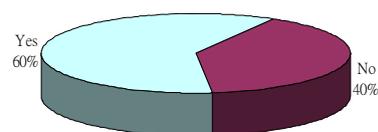
11. Schools should be given the discretion to decide on developing a school-based curriculum using subject, modules, unit or integration/combination flexibly so long as a broad and balanced curriculum is provided.



### Question

12. Will your school plan to offer Elective(s) in 2009 which currently is not being offered in your junior secondary classes?

### Responses

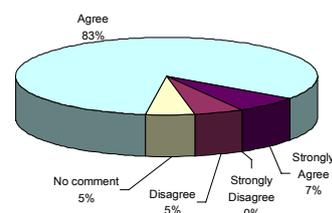


13. If your answer to question 12 is “Yes”, please state what the Elective(s) are.

Commonly suggested electives:

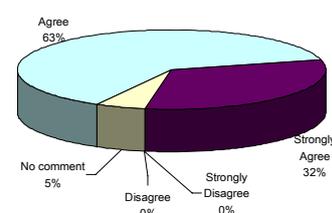
- Business, Accounting and Financial Studies
- Life management skills, Health Education
- Dance, Performing Arts
- Fashion and Image Design

14. The time allocation of 45-55% for Core, 20-30% for Electives and 15-35% for OLE allows sufficient flexibility for the design of the school-based curriculum.



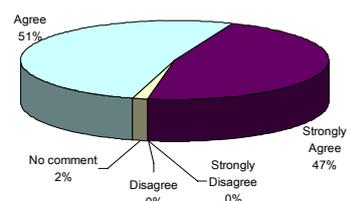
*If your reply to question 14 is “Disagree” or “Strongly disagree”, please answer question 15.*

15. Schools should be given more flexibility with justification in time allocation to customise the curriculum, to support their values and aims to meet the needs of students under a broad and balanced curriculum framework.



16. The following experiences under OLE are relevant to students of my school:

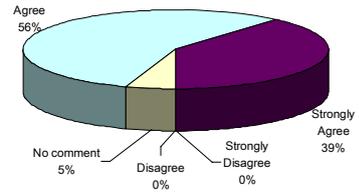
(i) *Moral and Civic Education*



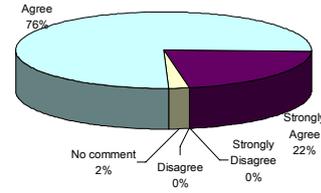
**Question**

(ii) *Community Service*

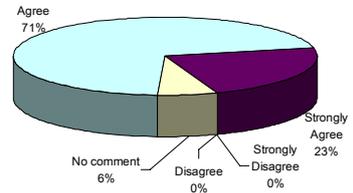
**Responses**



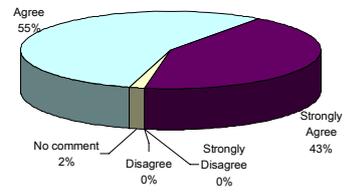
(iii) *Aesthetic Activities*



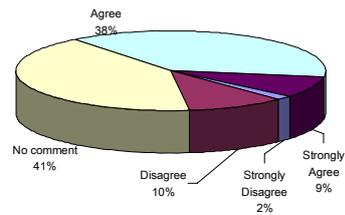
(iv) *Physical Activities*



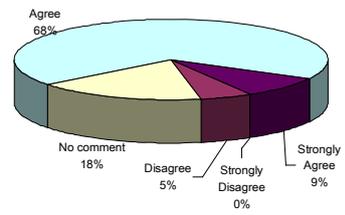
(v) *Career-related Experience*



17. To allow a wide choice of elective subjects to be offered by special schools, resources can be shared amongst schools to offer electives and COS that would not be feasibly provided by a school alone.



18. Vocational awareness and preparations for students with ID of low ability can be incorporated in OLE.



19. Following with question 18, please state your view on how we could bring forth this synergy in the run up to NSS and maximise its effect.

Commonly raised suggestions:

- Provide sufficient resources to schools under NSS and to pull together schools' resources and efforts in order to offer a wider choice of OLE & COS courses.
- Give schools flexibility in designing and running the curriculum to cater for students' learning needs.
- Better planning of COS courses and more practical vocational training for students.
- Make references to overseas practices and conduct surveys to gather opinions.

20. Other suggestion(s) to facilitate more COS courses or COS-related student programmes for students with ID:

Commonly raised suggestions on COS courses:

- EMB should take into consideration the different manning ratio of COS courses for students with ID and allocate sufficient resources to special schools accordingly.
- EMB should work in collaboration with schools and course providers to plan appropriate programme for students.
- EMB should encourage more commercial organisations in providing practical working opportunities/working environment for students with ID.

21. What are your views/comments on vocational education for students with ID?

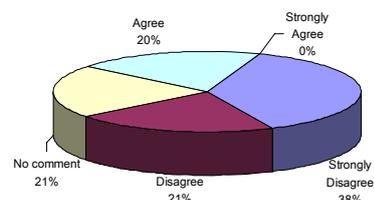
Commonly raised comments:

- Vocational education is very important for students with ID and like other students, they should be given more free choices.
- The training should be practical and be able to offer students a widened range of job practices.
- It's important to cater for students' abilities/needs when designing such courses.
- The vocational education needed to be in line with the change of the job market, thus to enhance students' employability.
- Training on moral concepts, vocational preparation and working attitudes for students are important.
- EMB should be the coordinator of the programme and schools should be given time for trying-out.
- Definitions between COS courses and vocational training courses should be clearly spelt out.
- The articulation between junior secondary and NSS curriculum should be considered.

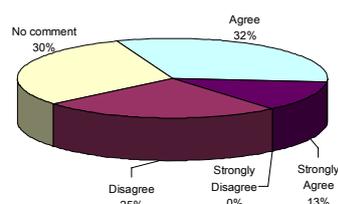
## II. Student Assessment and Professional Development Opportunities

### Student Assessment

1. The Basic Competency Assessment (BCA) is relevant to measure the learning progress of students with ID in my school.



2. Sub-levels of the Learning Outcomes Framework (LOF) based on academic ability, which is to be available in Chinese, English and Mathematics, should be developed to facilitate schools to set target for student improvement and recognise the progress and achievements of students with ID.



3. Which of the following could be included in Student Learning Profile (SLP) to record students' attainment? (Multiple responses are acceptable)

Elements of Student Learning Profile (SLP)	Percentages of Schools
Students' non-academic achievements, e.g. sports, arts	98.3%
Information about OLE, e.g. participation and achievements in OLE, reflection and attributes developed by students	91.4%
Attainment of attachments with NGOs, VTC, work place, etc.	89.7%
Progress of IEP	89.7%
Students' academic achievements, e.g. attainment at BCA, LOF	77.6%
Students' self account	70.7%
Other suggestion(s) (Please specify)	
Individualised Training Programme (ITP)	12.1%

### Professional Development Programmes (PDP) for teachers in Special Schools

4. What are the training needs for teachers? (Please indicate priority with the highest starting from 1)

PDP	Ranking in descending order
Curriculum organisation/management	1
Assessment for Learning	2
Enrichment of subject knowledge	3
IEP	4

5. Further to question 4, how many teachers in your school would require training in each of the following? (Please indicate number)

<b>Aspects</b>	<b>Total no. of teachers</b>
Assessment for Learning	719
Enrichment of subject knowledge	686
IEP	652
Curriculum organisation/management	517
Knowledge & skills in research studies	20
Teacher's leadership in changes	20

6. How many teachers of your school will need to attend professional development programmes in each of the following subjects? (Please indicate number)

<b>Subjects</b>	<b>Total no. of teachers</b>
Career-oriented Studies	318
Visual Arts	191
Information and Communication Technology	179
Physical Education	169
Music	167
Home Economics (renamed as Technology and Living)	121
English Language	115
Design and Applied Technology	68
Chinese Language	19
Mathematics	19
OLE related training	19
Liberal Studies	11
Health Education	10
Leisure & Recreation Activities	10
History	1

7. When will most of your teachers be engaged in professional development programmes for the new academic structure? (Multiple responses are acceptable)

<b>Preference of time</b>	<b>School</b>
April 06-Aug 06	9.1%
Sept 06-Feb 07	45.5%
Mar 07-Aug 07	60.0%
Sept 07-Feb 08	61.8%
Mar 08-Aug 08	67.3%
Sept 08-Feb 09	30.9%
Mar 09-Aug 09	18.2%

8. Teacher training on delivery of IEP is conducive to the learning effects of students with ID. When will your teachers be engaged in professional development programmes on IEP? (You may tick more than one box)

<b>Preference of time</b>	<b>School</b>
April 06-Aug 06	19.2%
Sept 06-Feb 07	61.5%
Mar 07-Aug 07	63.5%
Sept 07-Feb 08	34.6%
Mar 08-Aug 08	32.7%
Sept 08-Feb 09	15.4%
Mar 09-Aug 09	13.5%

9. What do you think are the essential elements for IEP training?

Commonly raised suggestions:

- Clear and appropriate objectives, function of IEP in the whole school curriculum, IEP as an assessment tool.
- Identification of students' learning needs to facilitate/motivate them for better learning.
- Partnership with parents in order to obtain their feedback and community participation.

10. What are the other useful professional development opportunities to you/your school? (Multiple responses are acceptable)

<b>Other PDP</b>	<b>Percentages of Schools</b>
Network/Learning community amongst schools	82.8%
Networking for subject teachers for NSS subject planning, development and implementation	74.1%
School-based support	74.1%
Mentoring scheme	69.0%
Inclusion of NSS themes in refreshers training course for teachers dealing with SEN	63.8%
Award-bearing/qualifications training courses	60.3%
More inclusion of SEN related themes in initial teacher education	58.6%

11. Leadership and management are the driving force for school improvement. What are your suggestions on ways to strengthen professional development opportunities for management staff in special schools?

Commonly raised suggestions on ways to strengthen professional development programmes:

- To conduct more training on school management and knowledge management (e.g. issues of human resources and time-tabling; training courses on Team Building, Capacity Building, Talent Management, Knowledge Management, etc).
- To foster a learning community on knowledge and experience sharing among special schools.
- To recognise schools' contribution and to release more teachers for attending professional development training courses.
- To provide overseas training and training provided by scholars from the tertiary institutions.

12. Other comments/suggestions on professional development in connection with NSS:

Commonly raised suggestions:

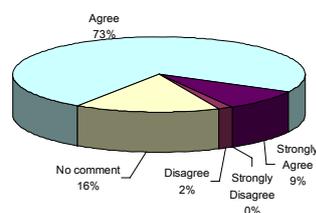
- Training on how to teach students with ID should not be separated. Special schools are ideal places in providing practical learning experience to trained teachers. Issue on how to adapt the mainstream related curriculum to students with ID is able to widen their scope of experience.
- All teachers of special schools should be provided with necessary training on areas, such as subject-trained courses, student-centred teaching approach.
- Building up the capacity of schools and teachers. Every teacher should have a general picture of NSS.

### III. Exit Pathways

#### Question

1. Under the NSS academic structure, the existing arrangements for attachment programmes should be rationalised in terms of quota, duration and articulation with the NSS curriculum.

#### Responses



2. What are your suggestions on enrichment of the post-school training programmes offered by VTC/SWD/NGOs in terms of content, duration and mode of delivery?

Commonly raised suggestions on enrichment of the post-school training programmes:

- The government should subsidise NGOs to set up community college for graduates with ID for continuing education.
- The mode and content of post-school training programme should be more flexible and meet the social needs (e.g. centre-based or home-based mode). Facilities should be adjusted to suit training needs.

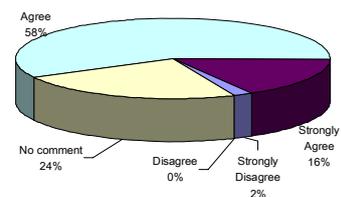
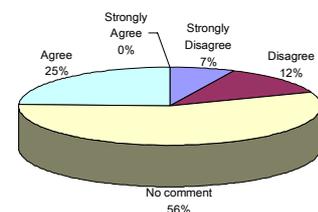
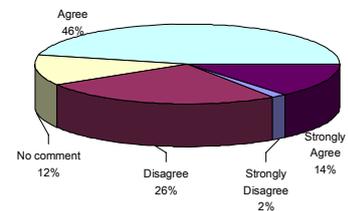
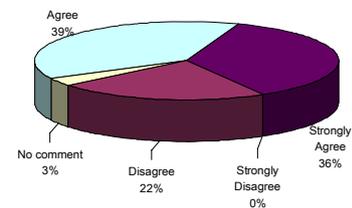
- The content should be tailor-made in relation to NSS and be able to lead to continuous education or better job opportunities.
- Lengthening the duration of post-school training programmes (e.g. by extending the duration to 7-14 days, one day per week for the whole semester, 240 hours, 'Block Release' mode).
- Different mode of delivery and support such as sandwich courses by VTC/ SWD/ NGOs, attachment programmes (e.g. to be arranged in Day Activity Centres, one week attachment with 6 weeks training.), wider range of full-time training programmes, more out-reach programmes, computer-assisted training for students with poor motor functioning.
- The post-school training programmes offered by VTC/SWD/NGOs should align with the NSS curriculum.

#### IV. Resource Considerations

##### Question

1. Based on students' curriculum needs and learning activities, different categories of special schools may have different resource requirements such as teacher to class ratio, therapists to student ratio, supporting staff (e.g., workman, teaching assistants), subject grants/grants for specific learning programmes etc.
  
2. For effective use of manpower, encashment of a small number of the established posts will provide flexibility in staff deployment to meet students' needs.
  
3. For the moderately/severely ID/PD students whose learning may regress after long holidays, a more flexible arrangement of school days during the school year will help students sustain their learning.
  
4. The future boarding fee should differentiate a 7-day boarder from a 5-day boarder.

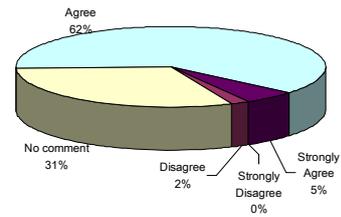
##### Responses



### Question

5. There is room for adjustment of the current boarding fee by phases to a higher level affordable by the parents.

### Responses



6. What do you suggest as the basis for adjustment of boarding fee in the future? To what level can the boarding fee be increased and by how many years?

Commonly raised suggestions:

- A gradual bi-yearly increase of not more than 10%.
- Increase 40% within 2 years.
- Increase up to 18% of cost within 2 years.
- Increase 30% each year.
- Increase to a maximum of 70% of SWD's rate in 10 years.
- Increase to about \$1800 in 5 years time.
- May adjust with some considerations (e.g. the cost of living index, the existing rate, not exceeding the SWD rate, parents' views.)

### V. Other Comments/Suggestions

- More discussion with schools and parents on schools fees for NSS and more financial support to schools.
- The design of curriculum framework should take into consideration students' needs and abilities.

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