

Draft

立法會

Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(2) /04-05
(These minutes have been
seen by the Administration)

Ref : CB2/PL/ED

Panel on Education

**Extract from the minutes of meeting
held on Monday, 14 March 2005 at 3:30 pm
in the Chamber of the Legislative Council Building**

- Members present** : Dr Hon YEUNG Sum (Chairman)
Hon Audrey EU Yuet-mee, SC, JP (Deputy Chairman)
Hon Mrs Selina CHOW LIANG Shuk-ye, GBS, JP
Hon CHEUNG Man-kwong
Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung
Hon Jasper TSANG Yok-sing, GBS, JP
Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP
Hon Andrew LEUNG Kwan-yuen, SBS, JP
Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung
Hon Patrick LAU Sau-shing, SBS, JP
- Member in attendance** : Mr LEE Cheuk-yan
- Members absent** : Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, JP
Hon MA Lik, JP
- Public Officers attending** : Item V
Mr Michael TIEN
Chairman of Working Group on Review of Secondary
School Places Allocation and Medium of
Instruction for Secondary Schools

Dr Anissa CHAN
Member of Working Group on Review of Secondary
School Places Allocation and Medium of
Instruction for Secondary Schools

Mr LIN Man-sheung
Member of Working Group on Review of Secondary
School Places Allocation and Medium of
Instruction for Secondary Schools

Professor LEE Wing-on
Member of Working Group on Review of Secondary
School Places Allocation and Medium of
Instruction for Secondary Schools

Mrs Cherry TSE
Member of Working Group on Review of Secondary
School Places Allocation and Medium of
Instruction for Secondary Schools

Mrs Fanny LAM
Member of Working Group on Review of Secondary
School Places Allocation and Medium of
Instruction for Secondary Schools

**Attendance by
invitation** : Item V

Hong Kong Professional Teachers' Union

Mr TONG Chung-fan
Secretary

Miss SY On-na
Deputy Director of Publication Department

Hong Kong Federation of Education Workers

Mr WU Siu-wai
Vice-chairman

Hong Kong Teachers' Association

Mr KO Gra-yee
President

Mr IP Kin-yuen
Co-ordinator, Professional & Academic Activities

The Association of Hong Kong Chinese Middle School

Mr YIP Chi-tim
Executive Committee Member

Hong Kong Association of English Medium Secondary
Schools

Mr Lawrence LOUR Tsang-tsay
Chairperson

Ms Rosalind CHEN
External Secretary

Federation of Parent Teacher Association, Tai Po District

Ms TUNG Yuk-wah
Secretary

Ms YUEN Kit-ching
Secretary

Federation of Parent-Teacher Associations of the
Central and Western District

Mrs Annie FUNG KI Mui-kuen
President

Mrs Rita CHEUNG CHENG Shuk-man
Vice-President

The Conference of Sheng Kung Hui Secondary School Heads

Mr Anthony TONG Kai-hong
Chairman

Mr Thomas TAI Tak-ching
Member

Pun U Association Wah Yan Primary School Parents
Teachers Association

Mr Andrew TAM
Executive Committee Member

Mrs Maria LEE CHENG
Education Policies Sub-Committee Member

The Alliance for Small-class Learning and Teaching to
Promote Quality Education

Mr CHOI Wing-tim
Chairman

Mr SHE Ki-poon
Member

Centre for Advancement of Chinese Language
Education and Research, and Support Centre for
Teachers using Chinese as the Medium of Instruction

Dr TSE Shek-kam
Associate Dean, Faculty of Education, The University
of Hong Kong

Mr KI Wing-wah
Associate Professor, Faculty of Education, The
University of Hong Kong

Federation of Parent-Teacher Associations Wong Tai
Sin District Ltd

Mr Scipio WU
Consultant

Mr C Y SHUM
Committee

Federation of Parent Teacher Associations in Kwun
Tong District

Ms LI Mei-mei
Vice-Chairman

Mr TSUI Kar-keung
Committee Member

Tseung Kwan O Parents Association

Mr CHIEH Shiu-kau
President

Ms KAM Mi-hing
Vice-President (Internal)

Chinese University of Hong Kong School Heads
Alumni Association

Mr LIU Ah-chuen
Vice-Chairman

Ms YEUNG Ching-han
Academic Secretary

Hong Kong Parents Association

Ms CHAN Siu-wan
Secretary

Mr TAM Lai-sum
Treasurer

Committee on Home-School Co-operation

Mr Chris YU Wing-fai
Vice-Chairperson

Hong Kong Private Schools Association

Professor TAM Man-kwan
President

Dr LEUNG Ping-wa
Executive Member

The Chinese Language Society of Hong Kong Ltd.

Mr YAO Te-hwai
Chairman

Mr LEUNG Shung-yu
Vice-Chairman

Grant Schools Council

Mr George TAM Siu-ping
Chairman

Mrs LAU LI Kin-kwok
Vice-Chairman

Joint Parent-Teacher Association of Kwai Tsing District

Mr CHEUNG Wing-yin
Chairman

Mr TANG Yuk-wah
Advisor

The Joint Council of Parent-Teacher Associations of The Shatin District

Ms WONG Lai-ching
Chairman

Mr LAM Tak-lam
Vice-Chairman

Hong Kong Direct Subsidy Scheme Schools Council

Mr CHAN Wai-kai
Chairman

Mr LAW Hing-chung
Vice-Chairman

Hong Kong Aided Primary School Heads Association

Mr LAM Seung-wan
Chairman

Federation of Parent-Teacher Association of Hong Kong Eastern District

Mrs CHU CHUNG Pui-chi
Treasurer

Federation of Parent Teacher Associations of the Northern District

Miss CHEUNG Shuk-kuen
Vice-Chairman

Miss Many CHAN
Treasurer

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

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

Miss Sherman WOO
Legislative Assistant (2)2

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V. Review of the medium of instruction for secondary schools and secondary school places allocation

[File Ref : EMB (EC)101/55/1/C and Annex A to File Ref : EMB (EC)101/55/1/C]

39. The Chairman welcomed representatives of the Administration and the 26 deputations to the meeting.

Opening Remark

40. At the Chairman's invitation, Mr Michael TIEN, the Chairman of the Working Group on Review of Secondary Places Allocation and Medium of Instruction for Secondary Schools (the Working Group), briefed members on the recommendations of the Working Group as detailed in his speaking note which was circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(2)1188/04-05(01) on 1 April 2005.

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Views and suggestions of deputations

41. The following 25 deputations presented their views and suggestions as summarised in the **Appendix**.

- (a) Hong Kong Professional Teachers' Union;
[LC Paper No. CB(2)1071/04-05(01)] (revised)
- (b) Hong Kong Federation of Education Workers;
[LC Paper No. CB(2)1100/04-05(01)]
- (c) Hong Kong Teachers' Association;
- (d) The Association of Hong Kong Chinese Middle School;
[LC Paper No. CB(2)1054/04-05(01)]
- (e) Hong Kong Association of English Medium Secondary Schools;
- (f) Federation of Parent Teacher Association, Tai Po District;
- (g) Federation of Parent-Teacher Associations of the Central and Western District;
[LC Paper No. CB(2)1030/04-05(03)]
- (h) The Conference of Sheng Kung Hui Secondary School Heads;
- (i) Pun U Association Wah Yan Primary School Parents Teachers Association;
[LC Paper No. CB(2)1054/04-05(02)] (revised)
- (j) The Alliance for Small-class Learning and Teaching to Promote Quality Education;
[LC Paper No. CB(2)1030/04-05(04)]
- (k) Centre for Advancement of Chinese Language Education and Research, and Support Centre for Teachers using Chinese as the Medium of Instruction;
- (l) Federation of Parent-Teacher Associations Wong Tai Sin District Ltd;
- (m) Federation of Parent Teacher Associations in Kwun Tong District;
- (n) Tseung Kwan O Parents Association;
[LC Paper No. CB(2)1030/04-05(05)]

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- (o) Chinese University of Hong Kong School Heads Alumni Association;
[LC Paper No. CB(2)1100/04-05(02)]
- (p) Hong Kong Parents Association;
[LC Paper No. CB(2)1100/04-05(03)]
- (q) Committee on Home-School Co-operation;
- (r) Hong Kong Private Schools Association;
[LC Paper Nos. CB(2)1054/04-05(03) and CB(2)1100/04-05(04)]
- (s) The Chinese Language Society of Hong Kong Ltd;
[LC Paper No. CB(2)1030/04-05(06)]
- (t) Grant Schools Council;
- (u) Joint Parent-Teacher Association of Kwai Tsing District;
[LC Paper No. CB(2)1030/04-05(07)]
- (v) The Joint Council of Parent-Teacher Associations of the Shatin District;
- (w) Hong Kong Direct Subsidy Scheme Schools Council;
- (x) Hong Kong Aided Primary School Heads; and
- (y) Federation of Parent Teacher Associations of Hong Kong Eastern District.

42. Members noted that the Federation of Parent Teacher Associations of the Northern District had not formulated their views at the present stage.

43. Members also noted that the Democratic Party had made a submission to the Panel [LC Paper No. CB(2)1100/04-05(05)].

The Working Group's response

44. At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr Michael TIEN, Chairman of the Working Group, said that he was glad that while deputations had different views as to how students' ability in English language could be improved, no deputations had expressed objection to using Chinese as the medium of instruction (MOI) in secondary schools. He thanked deputations for their views and suggestions on ways to improve students' ability in English language in secondary schools using Chinese as MOI (CMI schools), reduce

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the adverse labelling effect on CMI schools and their students as well as the mis-match of students in EMI or CMI schools in terms of their ability to learn through English, etc. He said that the Working Group had the following views/observations on these issues –

- (a) High proficiency in both Chinese and English would facilitate students' lifelong learning and maintain the competitiveness of Hong Kong as an international metropolis.
- (b) Enhancing English standards and teaching in English were two separate issues in school education, and using English as MOI was not the only or best means to enhance students' English proficiency. For the majority of students, the key to enhancing their English proficiency lay in the teaching and learning of the language, and not necessarily in using the language as MOI.
- (c) Full implementation of mother-tongue teaching was consistent with the Working Group's educational considerations. The Working Group, however, understood that public acceptance and possible impact on the community should be considered.
- (d) The Working Group understood the aspirations of some parents that children who were able to learn through English should be provided with the opportunity to do so. The Working Group therefore recommended that EMI teaching should be allowed when the three preconditions of student ability to learn through English, teacher capability to teach intelligibly through English and school support measures were met. As a corollary, any increase or decrease of the number of schools using English as their MOI (EMI schools) should depend on the number of schools which met the prescribed criteria. He also appreciated parents' concern about their children's English proficiency and drew attention to the fact that the core recommendation of the Working Group was that, while the policy of mother-tongue teaching should be continued, the importance of enhancing students' English proficiency, irrespective of the MOI schools would adopt, should also be emphasised.
- (e) The competence of language teachers was pivotal to enhancing language learning in schools. In this connection, the Standing Committee on Language Education and Research (SCOLAR) had conducted a comprehensive review of language education in Hong Kong in 2002 and recommended, among others, the establishment of the Professional Development Incentive Grant Scheme for Language Teachers (the Scheme) to encourage serving language teachers, particularly those who had neither a

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degree nor any teacher training in the relevant language subject, to upgrade their professional qualification to match that required of their counterparts entering the profession in or after the 2004-05 school year. The Scheme was then set up in 2004 with an initial allocation of \$225 million from the Language Fund. Under the Scheme, each successful applicant would, upon completion of an approved programme, be eligible for a 50% remission of tuition fee up to a maximum of \$30,000. In view of the favourable response from serving language teachers, the Administration had proposed and the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council had approved a further injection of \$300 million into the Scheme. In addition, there were now professional teams to assist primary and secondary schools and teachers in the development of their pedagogies and curriculum. As a result, the quality of the teaching workforce and school education would continue to improve in the years ahead.

- (f) There were diverse views in the community on the adoption of the within-school approach which could imply adopting different MOIs for different classes/subjects with or without conditions at junior secondary levels.
- (g) For CMI schools, Government should continue the provision of additional resources for them to create an English-rich environment in the school campus for enhancing student learning. CMI schools would be allowed to allocate, on top of English Language lessons, no more than 15% of the lesson time in Secondary one to three (S1-S3) for extended learning activities such as drama and debate through English, on condition that the normal teaching and learning of the content subjects would not be adversely affected.
- (h) The current flexible MOI arrangement at senior secondary levels should be continued. CMI schools should be allowed to switch to EMI teaching for certain subjects in some classes at senior secondary levels if they met the prescribed criteria, namely student ability, teacher capacity and support measures, for using English as MOI.
- (i) The three prescribed criteria for EMI schools would not put throughtrain schools wishing to use English as MOI in a disadvantaged position because, through professional collaboration between the primary and secondary sections, such schools in fact could have longer time to ensure their own students meet the required standard of being able to learn through English.

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- (j) The concern that many students who could learn through English were allocated to CMI schools reflected the labelling effect on CMI schools which was likely a result of the community's prevailing preference for EMI teaching. Researches conducted by academics and feedback from students supported the theory that students could learn most effectively through mother-tongue teaching. In fact, since mother-tongue teaching was implemented in 1998, students in CMI schools had demonstrated an overall improved performance in acquisition of subject knowledge and higher-order thinking skills, and were now more confident and motivated in learning.
- (k) The Working Group was not aware of any objective and effective mechanism for assessing students' academic and non-academic performance comprehensively and which could be deployed as a scaling instrument for the purpose of the SSPA and MOI implementation. The Working Group thus recommended using the internal assessment conducted by primary schools at the second term of Primary five (P5) and the first and second terms of P6 as the basis of assessment, and the results of the Pre-Secondary 1 Hong Kong Attainment Test as the scaling instrument. The Working Group welcomed any suggestions from deputations on an objective, reliable and feasible way to assess the whole-person development of a student.
- (l) If students' academic result in English language at P5 and P6 was used as the only basis for assessing a student's ability to learn through English, primary schools might concentrate just on the teaching of English, resulting in a distortion of primary education. This would be in contradiction with the MOI policy building upon the results of research studies that students learnt best and develop their higher-order thinking skills in their mother tongue.
- (m) Adoption of the within-in school or school-based approach in determining the use of MOI in secondary schools might repeat the history prior to 1998, viz. that the majority of secondary schools continued to profess the adoption of English as MOI, while in practice mainly using Chinese in classroom teaching.
- (n) The prescribed criteria of student ability, teacher capability and support measures for adopting English as MOI was aimed to facilitate student learning effectiveness in EMI schools and to assure the quality of EMI teaching. While appreciating the concern of some schools about the switch from EMI to CMI, it

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was important to note that students who were able to learn through English but allocated to an EMI school that did not meet the other prescribed criteria would not be taught and could not learn as effectively as in an EMI school meeting the prescribed criteria.

- (o) The provision of a historical perspective to the development of the MOI policy might be useful backdrop to facilitate the consultation exercise.

45. In respect of point (o) above, Professor LEE Wing-on, member of the Working Group, briefed the meeting that many educational reports, dating back to 1935, repeatedly suggested the merits of mother-tongue teaching. More recent Education Commission Reports, such as Education Commission Report No. 1 in 1984 and Report No. 2 in 1986, also recommended the adoption of Chinese as MOI in secondary schools, as elaborated in Annexes 2 and 3 of the Consultation Document. He highlighted that there were many academic works from both the Chinese University of Hong Kong and the University of Hong Kong argued for the adoption of mother-tongue teaching in secondary education in past decades. Professor LEE pointed out that the Medium of Instruction Guidance for Secondary Schools was drawn up against this background. He stressed that the education policy documents in Hong Kong had all along been promoting the adoption of Chinese as the principal MOI in school education; he thus could not agree that the MOI Policy was inconsistent. He added that the Working Group anticipated that the allocation of 15% of the total lesson time in S1-3 for extended learning activities conducted through English in CMI schools would help reduce the disparity between CMI and EMI schools in respect of students' exposure to English.

Discussion

46. The Chairman asked whether the Working Group would consider extending the consultation period as suggested by some deputations and in view of the diverse views in the community on MOI in secondary schools and Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA)

47. Mrs Cherry TSE, member of the Working Group, responded that the Working Group would consider the suggestion of extending the consultation period. She, however, pointed out that the primary school sector anticipated that there was a general expectation that the new SSPA mechanism would be announced in mid-2005 and implemented in the 2007-08 school year, since the students who would be enrolled in Primary 5 in September 2005 would be the first cohort affected. Any extension would need to take into account the possible implications for the implementation schedule.

48. The Chairman of the Working Group said that the Working Group could

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consider extending the consultation period in respect of MOI. The Administration, however, would have to decide the adoption of a new mechanism for determining students' allocation band based on their school assessment results for the SSPA in the 2007-08 school year. He pointed out that the validity of using Academic Ability Test for such purpose had been challenged for long and the problem of within-school student diversity had created problems for teaching at schools.

49. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong agreed that the decision on an appropriate scaling mechanism for SSPA should not be deferred and the issue of MOI and SSPA should be dealt with separately if possible. He, however, cautioned that MOI and SSPA might have implications on each other. The Administration should consider carefully whether the two issues could be dealt with separately. Mr WU Siu-wai of the Hong Kong Federation of Education Workers and Ms Rosalind CHEN of the Hong Kong Association of English Medium School expressed support for Mr CHEUNG's view.

50. Mr IP Kin-yuen of the Hong Kong Teachers' Association said that he had the impression that the Chairman of the Working Group had already formulated his own views on MOI and SSPA allocation, and might perceive any other views and suggestions of deputations predominately from his own standpoint. Mr IP clarified that when he queried the rationale for using the overall academic result of a student to assess his ability to learn through English, instead of his academic results in English Language, he was concerned that it would consolidate the superior position of EMI schools. The Chairman of the Working Group, however, tried to address his query by referring to the results of research studies about the benefits of learning in mother tongue. Mr IP suggested that the Working Group should adopt an open mind and examine the views and suggestions of deputation from different perspectives. The Chairman of the Working Group responded that apart from his initial response made at the meeting, the Working Group would extensively consider the views and suggestions of deputations.

51. Mrs Maria CHENG of the Pun U Association Wah Yan Primary School Parents Teachers Association said that parents were the major stakeholder group in the education sector, but had been confused with the various education initiatives implemented in recent years. She considered that parents needed more time to study and more space to express their views on the proposals in the Consultation Document. She urged the Working Group to consider the feelings of parents who wished to send their children to EMI schools but were unsuccessful, and the provision of sufficient places in EMI schools to meet parents' demand. Mrs CHENG suggested that the Government should review the Medium of Instruction Guidance for Secondary Schools published in September 1997 in a prudent, comprehensive and fair manner, and cautioned that an education policy with good intention such as the policy on mother-tongue teaching did not necessarily bring about the anticipated benefits.

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52. Ms Rosalind CHEN of the Hong Kong Association of English Medium School echoed that parents were the end-users of education services and their views should be respected. She considered that the Government should provide the 40% S1 students who were able to learn through English with sufficient places in EMI schools. Mr TONG Kai-hong of the Conference of Sheng Kung Hui Secondary School Heads said that the projected population of S1 students and KG pupils in September 2004 were 86 000 and 38 000 respectively. He expressed concern that there would be less EMI schools in many districts if schools intending to adopt English as MOI must have at least 85% of students being able to learn through English.

53. The Chairman of the Working Group said that the Working Group would continue to consult stakeholders and in particular listen to the views of parents on the proposals in the Consultation Document. Mrs Cherry TSE said that the Working Group looked forward to discussing with interested deputations separately. She invited deputations to contact the Working Group for arrangement of meetings.

Follow-up

54. At the Chairman's suggestion, members agreed that the Panel should discuss the issue with the Working Group at another meeting. Ms Emily LAU requested the Clerk to prepare a summary of views of the deputations for members' reference.

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Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
4 April 2005