
INFORMATION NOTE

Supplementary Information on Special Education in Selected Places

1. Background

1.1 The Subcommittee to Study Issues Relating to the Provision of Boarding Places, Senior Secondary Education and Employment Opportunities for Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN), during the deliberation of the research report entitled "Special Education in Selected Places" at its meeting on 17 February 2006, requested the Research and Library Services Division to provide supplementary information on the following topics:

- (a) the staff-to-student ratio in special education schools;
- (b) the funding model and formula for calculating the share of special education in the total education budget; and
- (c) the breakdown of funding for special education.

2. Staff-to-student ratio

California

2.1 The teacher-to-student ratios in special education for different age groups in the 2002-03 school year are listed as follows:

Table 1 – Teacher-to-student ratio in special education in the 2002-03 school year

Age	Teacher-to-student ratio
0 to 2	1:12
3 to 5	1:28
6 to 22	1:19

Source: California Department of Education.

2.2 Information on the non-teaching specialist-to-student ratio is not available.

Other places

2.3 According to the Ontario Ministry of Education, the Ministry does not keep statistics on the staff-to-student ratio. Such information is maintained separately by each individual school. Meanwhile, information on the staff-to-student ratio in both England and Taiwan is not available.

Hong Kong

2.4 In the 2004-05 school year, the teacher-to-student ratio in special education schools was 1:5.3, while the non-teaching specialist-to-student ratio in special education schools was 1:16.4.

3. Funding models and formulae for calculating the share of special education in the total education budget

Overseas places

3.1 Despite successive attempts to solicit information on the funding models and formulae for calculating the share of special education in the total education budget via both Internet and the government agencies concerned in the selected places studied, there has not been any response. Accordingly, as at the publication of this information note, the information on the funding models and formulae for calculating the share of special education in the total education budget in California, Ontario, England and Taiwan is not available.

Hong Kong

3.2 In Hong Kong, there is no pre-set percentage or formula to calculate the share of special education funding in the whole budget for education. For special schools, recurrent provisions are made in accordance with the Code of Aid for Special Schools.¹

3.3 For integrated education in ordinary schools, resources are provided in the form of basic provisions to schools, such as the Capacity Enhancement Grant, the student guidance personnel/school social workers, the ordinary remedial teachers, primary school master and specialized teaching posts.²

¹ Information provided by the Education and Manpower Bureau.

² Ibid.

3.4 Subvention is also made on a programme basis in terms of either a per capita grant or extra manpower for support programmes/units of an agreed number of target students. In addition, there are provisions for supporting integrated education in the form of education psychology services, expenditure on teacher and professional development, and the Quality Education Fund.³

4. Breakdown of funding for special education

England

4.1 In 2005-06, about £4.1 billion (HK\$58.51 billion)⁴ was budgeted for spending on SEN in England. Of the £4.1 billion (HK\$58.51 billion) budget, about £1.4 billion (HK\$19.98 billion) was allotted for maintained special education schools, £2 billion (HK\$28.54 billion) for maintained mainstream schools, £481 million (HK\$6.86 billion) for independent and non-maintained special education schools, and £264 million (HK\$3.77 billion) for SEN-related duties of the local authorities, such as educational psychologist services, administration and monitoring, parent partnership and child protection. In addition to education spending, about £500 million (HK\$7.14 billion) was budgeted for the local authorities to spend on transport for SEN students.

Other places

4.2 Information on the breakdown of funding for special education in California, Ontario and Taiwan is not available.

Hong Kong

4.3 The estimated expenditure for special schools under Head 156 Government Secretariat: Education and Manpower Bureau for the 2005-06 financial year was HK\$1.29 billion, which included subventions on salaries for teaching and non-teaching staff, school administration and operation-related grants, learning/teaching-related grants, and other non-recurrent subventions for special schools. The breakdown was as follows:

³ Information provided by the Education and Manpower Bureau.

⁴ The average exchange rate of £ to HK\$ for 2004 was £1 = HK\$14.27.

**Breakdown of the estimated expenditure for special education under Head 156
Government Secretariat: Education and Manpower Bureau for 2005-06**

Description	Expenditure (HK\$ million)
Recurrent grants	
Salary-related grants for teaching and non-teaching staff	1,166.8
School administration/operation-related grants	67.9
Learning/teaching-related grants	36.1
Sub-total of recurrent grants	1,270.8
Sub-total of non-recurrent grants (such as repairs and furniture & equipment):	21.3
Grand total	1,292.1

Source: Education and Manpower Bureau

4.4 Other expenditure for support and services provided for special schools, not included in the estimated expenditure of HK\$1.29 billion, includes subventions for educational psychology services, professional development schools, textbook and traffic allowance for students, grant and subsidy for teachers employed under the enhanced native-speaking English teacher scheme, expenditure on teacher and professional development, the Quality Education Fund and provision of resource materials. The above provision covers all schools including special schools. According to the Education and Manpower Bureau, it is not possible to apportion the amount between ordinary and special schools.

Prepared by Diana WONG
17 July 2006
Tel: 2869 9372

Information notes are compiled for Members and Committees of the Legislative Council. They are not legal or other professional advice and shall not be relied on as such. Information notes are subject to copyright owned by the Legislative Council Commission (the Commission). The Commission permits accurate reproduction of the information notes for non-commercial use in a manner not adversely affecting the Legislative Council, provided that acknowledgement is made stating the Research and Library Services Division of the Legislative Council Secretariat as the source and one copy of the reproduction is sent to the Legislative Council Library.