

1. I wish to thank the Chair and members of the Panel on Education of the Legislative Council for the opportunity to express my views regarding the establishment of the Academy for Gifted Education.
2. My comments are based on the information based in the information in the Policy Address 2006-07 and the LC Paper No. CB(2)28/06-07(01) and my 10 years experience in teacher education and research in gifted education, including over four years in Hong Kong at the Hong Kong Institute of Education.
3. The policy initiative is to be applauded. The formation of an Academy for Gifted Education in the Hong Kong SAR is in line with similar initiatives in other parts of the world. Such initiatives recognize learner diversity in all of its forms and of the need to be proactive in meeting the unique needs of students who are capable of exceptional performance.
4. The government, universities and schools of the Hong Kong SAR currently enjoy an enviable reputation in the Asian region for its attitudes toward and support for the needs of gifted students, and for the quality of its research and teacher education in gifted education. This reputation will only be enhanced through the formation of the Academy.
5. The broad mission of the Academy- to *expand the pool of talents in terms of numbers of numbers and diversity*- through, in part, the networking of overseas and local institutions represents a timely opportunity to galvanize and focus the various research efforts of the research and teaching universities in Hong Kong. To facilitate this focus and further raise the profile of gifted education in Hong Kong, I suggest that scholarship opportunities be made available for local and overseas students to undertake advanced postgraduate studies in our universities to investigate areas of specific interest to the Academy.
6. The formation of the Academy represents a timely opportunity to develop the philosophical basis for gifted education in Hong Kong. The development of this philosophy should be result of extensive consultation between government, parents, schools (including teachers and students) and universities.
7. The formation of the Academy represents an opportunity to re-examine our understanding of the term “exceptionally gifted students”. Such a definition should reflect better the current research that emphasizes both the inclusive and developmental nature of giftedness.
8. Although the ongoing role of the *Fung Hon Chu Gifted Education Centre* has not been specifically mentioned, I suggest that the respective roles of the Academy

and the Centre be clearly defined and complementary to each other. Clearly, the good work of the Centre needs to be maintained but should not be in competition with the Academy.

9. The Academy should be proactive in its search for students with high intellectual potential, rather than rely solely on school nominations. This would reduce the potential for misconceptions amongst the general public and allow for a more equitable basis for access to the Academy's services.

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