

For information
on 30 December 2008

Panel on Education
Information Note on Provision of Teachers
Under the New Senior Secondary Academic Structure

Purpose

At the meeting on 12 June 2008, Members requested the Administration to provide information on schools with increased and reduced provision of teachers due to the implementation of the NSS curriculum and the reasons for any reduction. This paper provides information on the provision of teachers under the new senior secondary (NSS) academic structure as requested by Members.

Background

2. To facilitate the implementation of the NSS academic structure, the Education Bureau (EDB) announced a package of supporting measures, including the adoption of revised teacher-to-class ratios and the provision of additional grants to schools for implementing the NSS curriculum and offering a diversified curriculum, in *The New Academic Structure for Senior Secondary Education and Higher Education – Action Plan for Investing in the Future of Hong Kong* published in May 2005

Detailed Information

3. The existing basic teacher-to-class ratios are 1.3 teachers per S1 to S5 class and 2 teachers per S6 and S7 class. Top-up provision, including

“additional teachers for all schools”¹ and “additional teachers for specific schools/programmes”², is also available to schools.

4. In the consultation paper on the NSS academic structure published in October 2004, EDB proposed that “additional teachers for all schools” should be subsumed into the revised teacher-to-class ratios to make it easier for schools to calculate their staff establishment while “additional teachers for specific schools/programmes” should continue to be provided and the staff entitlement of individual schools should be calculated according to the existing arrangement, i.e. such additional teachers would not be subsumed into the teacher-to-class ratios. After extensive consultation, the proposal was accepted and endorsed by the school sector. From 2012/13 (i.e. after the double cohort year), the revised teacher-to-class ratios will be 1.7 teachers per junior secondary class and 2.0 teachers per senior secondary class.

5. We will also provide additional resources for schools, including the Senior Secondary Curriculum Support Grant (SSCSG)³ for all schools. The SSCSG is a recurrent cash provision equivalent to 0.1 teacher per senior secondary class calculated on the basis of the mid-point salary of GM teachers. Schools may use the grant for recruiting teaching staff to facilitate the implementation of the NSS curriculum. We will also provide schools with a Diversity Learning Grant to encourage them to offer a diversified curriculum under the NSS academic structure to cater for students’ diverse interests.

¹ “Additional teachers for all schools” include teachers provided for split-class teaching, additional Chinese language teachers, school librarians, additional teachers for remedial teaching, counselling and extra-curricular activities and additional non-graduate teachers proposed under *Education Commission Report No.5*.

² “Additional teachers for specific schools/programmes” include additional teachers for schools which adopt more Chinese as the medium of instruction, support Academic Low Achievers at S1 to S3 levels, implement integrated education and Native-speaking English Teachers Scheme, etc.

³ According to the original plan, the SSCSG is to be disbursed starting from 2009/10. To enable schools to better prepare for the implementation of the NSS academic structure, we have advanced the disbursement of the SSCSG by one year and increased the rate of the grant for the first four years of disbursement (i.e. from 2008/09 to 2011/12) from a cash provision equivalent to 0.1 GM to 0.15 GM per NSS class calculated on the basis of the mid-point salary of GM teachers. We will also ensure that the SSCSG received by each secondary school offering the NSS curriculum will at least be equivalent to the mid-point salary of a GM teacher in 2008/09 and 2009/10. The original rate of the grant will apply from 2012/13 onwards.

6. The staff establishment of a school will be increased or reduced as a result of class restructuring. For example, in the transition to the NSS academic structure, some secondary schools have to adjust the number of classes because the total number of existing S6 and S7 classes is larger than the anticipated number of SS3 classes under the NSS academic structure. Also, some schools have to reduce the number of classes due to changes in the enrolment of students. Under such circumstances, the number of teachers in these schools will be reduced accordingly. To review the changes in the provision of teachers after the adoption of the revised teacher-to-class ratios, we must single out the effect of class restructuring on the establishment. After the adoption of the revised teacher-to-class ratios and the provision of the SSCSG⁴, the projected changes in the provision of teachers in 2012/13 as compared with that of 2008/09 are summarised as follows:

Provision of Teachers	Number of Schools* (Percentage)
Increased (> 0.5 teacher)	About 280 (about 80%)
No significant change (= 0.5 teacher)	About 50 (about 14%)
Reduced (> 0.5 teacher)	About 20 (about 6%)

* The above projections are calculated on the basis of aided secondary schools operating three classes or more at each level.

7. According to the above information, there will be an increase in the number of teachers in most schools. A small number of schools will have their teaching staff reduced mainly because they are now provided with more teachers for split-class teaching than average while the average number of such teachers in all local schools was used when calculating the revised teacher-to-student ratios.

⁴ Since the enhanced SSCSG is a transitional measure to provide additional support to schools, it is not included in the calculation of manpower resources for 2008/09 in this analysis.

5-year transitional period and other measures

8. Since it was anticipated that a small number of schools would have surplus teachers for the above reasons, during the consultation on the NSS academic structure, we reached a consensus with schools on a 5-year transitional period to allow them to absorb, through natural turnover, any surplus teachers. This arrangement is also applicable to schools with surplus teachers as a result of the adjustment of the number of existing S6 and S7 classes for migration to the NSS academic structure. This transitional arrangement will provide a steady staff force for schools and a stable working environment for teachers through natural turnover. If some schools still have surplus teachers after the transitional period, the EDB will consider their situations on a case-by-case basis.

Education Bureau
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