

For discussion on  
12 November 2007

## **Panel on Education**

### **Retention of two supernumerary posts of Principal Education Officer for a period of two years and six months up to 30 June 2010**

#### **Purpose**

This paper seeks Members' support on the Education Bureau (EDB)'s proposal to retain two supernumerary Principal Education Officer (PEO) posts, which will lapse on 1 January 2008, for a period of two years and six months up to 30 June 2010. These two posts were created to provide dedicated professional support for the implementation of the New Senior Secondary (NSS) curriculum, as well as to provide school-based support to individual schools to assist their smooth transition to the new academic structure.

#### **Background**

2. The Chief Executive set out in his 2004 Policy Address the direction of the new academic structure for senior secondary education and higher education (the 334 reform) that will effectively prepare our next generation to cope with the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and the demands of our rapidly developing knowledge-based society. The Administration launched a three-month consultation in October 2004 to seek community feedback on the design blueprint, timetable for implementation and financial arrangement for the reform, and eventually decided to implement the new academic structure with effect from the 2009/10 school year.

3. To implement various supporting measures for the 334 reform as well as to provide on-site school-based professional support to individual

schools to facilitate their smooth transition to the new academic structure, we proposed in June 2005 to create two supernumerary directorate posts pitched at PEO (D1) rank for five years up to 30 June 2010. The Legislative Council Panel on Education considered the proposal on 3 June 2005. While agreeing to the functional needs of the two posts in question, Members advised the Administration to adopt a prudent approach and shorten the proposed tenure of the posts concerned. Taking Members' advice, the Administration put forward a proposal to the Establishment Sub-committee on 9 June 2005 vide EC(2005-06)5 for the creation of the two supernumerary posts, initially for two years and six months from 1 July 2005 to 31 December 2007, subject to a review on their continued need in mid 2007. On 24 June 2005, the Finance Committee approved the creation of the two supernumerary posts as proposed.

### **Progress of the Preparatory Work**

4. Since creation of the posts in July 2005, the two incumbents, namely PEO(NSS) and PEO(School-based Support Services) [PEO(SBSS)<sup>1</sup>], have been actively undertaking various preparatory work for the implementation of NSS curriculum as well as providing intensive on-site school-based support to individual schools to assist their smooth transition to the new curriculum.

5. PEO(NSS) is responsible for the overall planning and provision of professional support to implement the NSS curriculum and assessment framework under the new academic structure, and for conducting regular review and evaluation of the implementation processes. Specifically, PEO(NSS) has coordinated three rounds of consultation on the curriculum and assessment (C&A) frameworks of the 24 NSS subjects, followed up the concerns of various stakeholders, undertook international benchmarking to refine the frameworks and implementation details, completed the 24 sets of C&A Guides, and finalized the assessment

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<sup>1</sup> The post titles of the two PEO posts, namely PEO(NSS)1 and PEO(NSS)2 were changed to PEO(NSS) and PEO(SBSS) respectively when created in July 2005 to better reflect the nature of their jobs.

design of the NSS subjects in collaboration with the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA).

6. In addition, PEO(NSS) has been overseeing the development of the curriculum frameworks for Applied Learning (ApL) and for students with intellectual disability (ID). He has also liaised with the tertiary institutions on their admission requirement under the new academic structure and coordinated cross-divisional implementation strategies on various issues relating to the 334 reform, such as professional development programmes for school leaders and teachers, and the development of learning and teaching materials.

7. PEO(SBSS) is responsible for providing intensive school-based professional support to the senior secondary education sector to ensure a smooth transition to the new academic structure. To ensure that more focused, intensive and targeted school-based support services are provided to schools for the implementation of the NSS curriculum, the former Education & Manpower Bureau pooled together the resources and manpower of various sections which provided school-based support services to schools, and set up the SBSS Office headed by PEO(SBSS) in September 2005. Since then, dedicated efforts have been made to review the school-based professional support programmes, formulate implementation strategies and supporting measures and provide schools with a broad range of support services and capacity building options to strengthen their capacity to transit smoothly to the new academic structure.

8. Specifically, PEO(SBSS) has overseen and monitored the Education Development Fund (EDF) programmes which provide a wide range of support services and capacity building options to schools to transit to the new academic structure. The programmes include the “Principal Support Network”, “School Support Partners Scheme”, “Professional Development Schools”, “University-School Support Programmes” and “Collegial Participation in External School Review”. He has also made arrangements for seconding experienced teachers from the Mainland to provide on-site support to local schools on the teaching of Chinese Language and Mathematics and to foster collaborative school

culture.

## **Proposal**

9. Having reviewed the major tasks ahead as set out in paragraphs 10 – 18 below, we consider that there is a need to retain the two posts concerned for another two years and six months up to 30 June 2010.

## **Major Tasks Ahead**

10. The change to the new academic structure is a colossal task which needs careful planning, coordination and monitoring of the implementation blueprint. Members were briefed on the progress of the 334 reform at the meetings on 10 July 2006, 25 May 2007 and 9 July 2007 respectively. While progress made so far was satisfactory, the preparatory work is multifarious and on-going.

### *Development of curriculum and assessment guides*

11. The C&A Guides for the 24 NSS subjects have been finalized and published. We will build on this basis to promote schools' and teachers' understanding of the Guides to ensure that they are effectively rolled out. Moreover, over the coming two years, we will oversee and collaborate with the HKEAA to ensure that proper assessment criteria, exemplars and guidelines will be devised to implement the NSS assessment framework and prepare students for the public examination. We will also support HKEAA in the international benchmarking of the new examination, liaising with overseas universities and updating the general public, particularly schools, parents and students, with special reference to the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE).

### *NSS curriculum for students with intellectual disability*

12. Separately, the C&A frameworks for students with ID and the related Learning Outcomes Frameworks (LOF) for the core subjects (i.e. Chinese, Mathematics and Liberal Studies/Independent Living) and the two elective subjects (Physical Education and Visual Arts) are being

developed. Research and development projects are also underway. We expect to complete the C&A Guides for the core subjects by the end of 2008 and those for the two elective subjects in 2009.

### *Applied learning*

13. On the implementation of ApL as an integral part of the NSS curriculum, C&A frameworks with generic guidelines on learning outcomes, teaching and assessment need to be finalized well before September 2009. We will also continue to adapt ApL courses for students with ID to suit their specific needs.

### *Interface with tertiary institutions*

14. On the interface with the tertiary sector, we will continue to liaise with tertiary institutions, including University Grants Committee (UGC)-funded institutions, to ensure that various programmes including the 4-year undergraduate programmes being developed by them meet the goals and objectives of the new academic reform.

### *Professional development of teachers*

15. To better equip the middle managers and the frontline teachers of secondary schools for the implementation of the NSS academic structure, we will continue to organise Middle Managers Workshops on Migration to the 334 Reform and relevant professional development programmes in the 24 NSS subjects in the lead-up to 2009. These programmes are under close scrutiny to ensure that quality programmes are provided to meet the needs of the school leaders and teachers in a timely manner in the coming two years.

### *Learning and teaching materials*

16. We will step up our efforts in working with publishers and other professional organizations to ensure a variety of quality learning and teaching materials, including textbooks, are available before September 2009.

### *More intensive school-based professional support*

17. Along the above tasks, as 2009 is approaching, we anticipate a greater demand for on-site support to help schools prepare for the new academic structure and curriculum according to their specific contexts and needs of the first cohort of students, in order to achieve the intended learning goals of the NSS education. We will continue to collaborate with various institutions, including the HKEAA, tertiary institutions, and appropriate providers to deliver comprehensive support programmes to schools on whole-school planning, curriculum management, interpreting the curricula, learning and teaching and assessment, for teachers and principals.

18. The successful implementation of the NSS academic structure hinges very much on the close cooperation of the stakeholders and full understanding and support of our community. Both PEO(NSS) and PEO(SBSS) will continue to maintain a close dialogue with all major stakeholders and the general public, particularly parents of the first few cohorts of students.

### **Proposed Retention of the Two Supernumerary PEO Posts**

19. In the run-up to the implementation of the new academic structure in 2009, there is a strong operational need to retain the two PEO posts. The incumbents are to continue to steer, plan and support all necessary preparatory and co-ordination work to ensure timely completion of various tasks. We also consider it necessary to keep the two posts up to end June 2010 so that any problems identified during the initial stage of this unprecedented reform are fixed properly and without delay.

20. PEO(NSS) will continue to be placed under the Principal Assistant Secretary (Curriculum Development) and be responsible for the overall planning and provision of professional support to implement the NSS curriculum and the related assessment framework and stepping up communications with various stakeholders. Specifically, he is to –

- (a) coordinate and oversee the development of a Senior Secondary Curriculum Guide to assist schools in planning their NSS programme;
- (b) work in collaboration with HKEAA on the implementation of Standards-referenced Reporting of results for the NSS subjects and the development of assessment criteria, exemplars and guidelines, and to organize professional development programmes to enable teachers to prepare students for the broadened assessment leading to the HKDSE;
- (c) coordinate the development of C&A frameworks of piloted ApL courses for the migration of ApL to the NSS curriculum, and the development of C&A frameworks and related LOFs for selected core and elective subjects for students with ID as well as adapting ApL courses for the 334 academic reform for these students;
- (d) continue to liaise with the tertiary institutions, including UGC-funded institutions, on the specific requirements of programmes offered; and
- (e) coordinate implementation strategies on various related issues such as professional development programmes for school leaders and teachers; learning and teaching materials including textbooks; funding measures that would help schools diversify their curriculum to meeting different needs of students.

21. PEO(SBSS) will continue to work directly to the Deputy Secretary for Education (4) and to coordinate cross-divisional responsibilities and on-site support services offered by EDB as well as the support programmes financed by the EDF in order to deliver more coherent support services to schools, in particular the coherence between policy intention and perception and implementation of the NSS curriculum. Specifically, he is to –

- (a) oversee, monitor and evaluate the implementation of on-site professional support services to schools and identify, through reviews and discussions with key stakeholders, specific needs of

schools in adapting to the NSS curriculum;

- (b) enhance support to school leaders through expanding the scope and contents of the “Principal Support Network” to cover more principals with a view to strengthening their capacity in managing the change in curriculum planning according to the needs of the NSS curriculum;
- (c) expand the “University-School Support Programmes” to provide a broader range of support programmes and an effective professional platform for teachers to develop their competencies in taking forward the NSS curriculum;
- (d) enhance school-based support services at the junior secondary and primary levels in order to build up a firm foundation in preparation for the smooth implementation of the NSS curriculum; and
- (e) foster a collaborative culture through expansion in the scope and scale of the “Professional Development Schools” and the “School Support Partners Scheme”.

22. The job descriptions of the proposed PEO(NSS) and PEO(SBSS) are at Enclosures 1 and 2 respectively. The organisation chart of the Bureau as at 1 November 2007 is at Enclosure 3.

Encls. 1, 2  
Encl. 3

### **Alternatives Considered**

23. We have critically examined the feasibility of redeploying existing directorate staff in EDB to take on the work of the PEO(NSS) and PEO(SBSS) posts during the proposed retention period. However, as all the directorate staff are fully engaged in their own schedules of duties, including those related to the 334 reform and other new education initiatives, it is operationally not possible for them to take up the tasks of the two PEOs without adversely affecting the discharge of their current duties, in particular when the workload of the two supernumerary posts concerned are expected to remain heavy in the run-up to and during the early stage of the implementation of the 334 reform. As such, the continued dedicated attention and support of the two PEOs is considered



essential at this critical moment.

### **Financial Implications**

24. The additional notional annual mid-point salary cost of the proposal is \$2,402,400. The full annual average staff cost, including salaries and staff on-costs, is \$3,466,000.

### **Advice Sought**

25. Members are invited to advise whether the proposed retention of the two supernumerary PEO posts is supported. Subject to Members' views, we plan to make a submission to the Establishment Sub-Committee of the Finance Committee on 28 November 2007.

Education Bureau  
November 2007

**Job Description**  
**Principal Education Officer (New Senior Secondary)**

**Rank** : Principal Education Officer (D1)

**Responsible to** : Principal Assistant Secretary (Curriculum Development) [PAS(CD)]

**Main Duties and Responsibilities:**

1. To assist PAS(CD) in planning and providing support to the new senior secondary (NSS) curriculum under the new academic structure, including developing a framework for Other Learning Experiences, providing professional input to the development and rolling out of the Student Learning Profile for the use of students, schools and the wider community, developing a Senior Secondary Curriculum Guide to help schools plan their NSS programmes, reviewing the roles, qualifications and training needs of laboratory technicians and workshop teachers, as well as to ensure the professional development of teachers and principals are well-planned, targeted and timely.
2. To establish on-going dialogue with various stakeholders such as school councils, principals, teachers, education and professional bodies, and tertiary institutions in refining implementation details for the NSS curriculum.
3. To facilitate collaboration between the Curriculum Development Council and the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority on the development of subject descriptors for the Standards-referenced Reporting, assessment criteria for the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education, and related exemplars and guidelines.
4. To advise on the design of the curriculum and assessment framework

and delivery modes of Applied Learning.

5. To establish on-going consultation and dialogue with the sector of special education and parents on the final design of the NSS curriculum for students with intellectual disability.
6. To collaborate and communicate with relevant divisions within the Education Bureau to identify and propose resolution to issues to support the implementation of the NSS curriculum, including monitoring and reporting progress against major milestones set out in the implementation road map for the 334 reform.

**Job Description**  
**Principal Education Officer (School-based Support Services)**

**Rank** : Principal Education Officer (D1)

**Responsible to** : Deputy Secretary (Education)4 [DS(Ed)4]

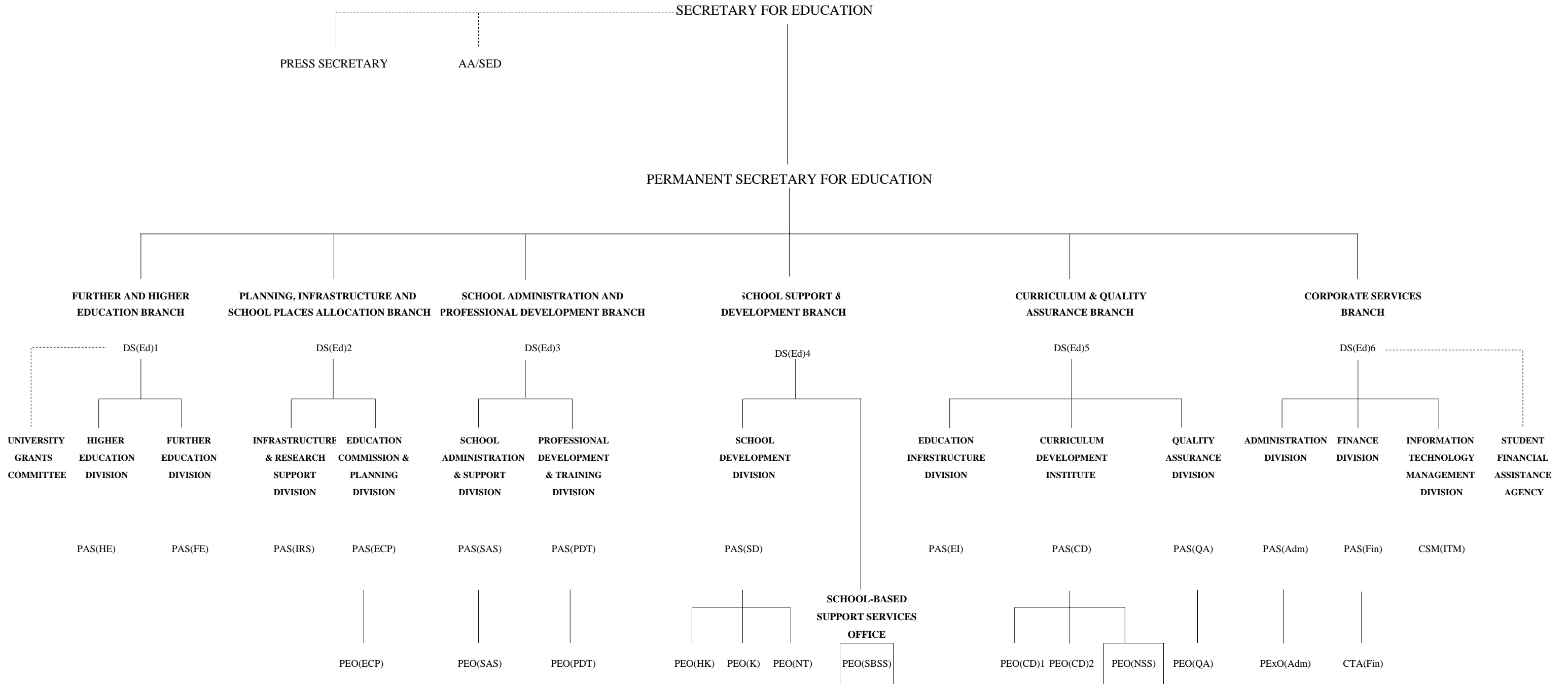
**Main Duties and Responsibilities:**

1. To analyse and identify specific needs of schools with regard to the implementation of the new senior secondary (NSS) curriculum and to map out comprehensive plans and strategies for providing on-site professional support on a school, district and regional basis.
2. To set direction, design and strengthen the professional development of school personnel through diversified modes (e.g. site-based consultancy, networking activities, school-based support and seminars, workshops, coaching, supporting teams) on the core themes underpinning the NSS curriculum.
3. To oversee, monitor and evaluate the implementation of the on-site professional support services to schools in alignment with the principles and strategies of the new academic structure and the NSS curriculum to ensure coherence between policy intention and perception and implementation of the new curriculum.
4. To forge school partnership through a range of professional support programmes and various networking activities to entail better cooperation and collaboration among schools and facilitate experience sharing in planning for the NSS curriculum.
5. To devise a support mechanism, including the development of resource banks, database, websites and help desks, for analysing and identifying specific needs of schools, and to map out comprehensive

plans and strategies for schools to migrate to the new academic structure and NSS curriculum smoothly.

6. To coordinate and collaborate with relevant divisions within the Education Bureau to deliver coherent support services to schools and provide tailor-made support to schools in the implementation of the NSS curriculum.

**ORGANISATION OF THE EDUCATION BUREAU  
(as at 1.11.2007)**



- DS : Deputy Secretary
- PAS : Principal Assistant Secretary
- PEO : Principal Education Officer
- PExO : Principal Executive Officer
- CSM : Chief Systems Manager
- CTA : Chief Treasury Accountant
- AA/SED : Administrative Assistant/Secretary for Education

Supernumerary PEO posts proposed to be retained up to 30 June 2010