

Panel on Education

List of outstanding items for discussion (position as at 5 June 2009)

- | | Proposed timing
for discussion |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Review of Pre-primary Education Voucher Scheme | |
| At the meeting on 20 March 2009, members agreed to revisit the subject matter in June 2009. | Late June 2009 |
| 2. Monitoring of Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS) schools | |
| Item proposed by Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong at the meeting on 25 May 2009. Members are concerned about the registration and monitoring of DSS schools. | July 2009 |
| 3. Role of the University Grants Committee in the higher education | |
| Item proposed by the Chairman to follow up on the motion debate on "Comprehensively reviewing the role and functions of the University Grants Committee" at the LegCo meeting on 18 March 2009. | July 2009 |
| 4. Inter-institutional redress mechanism for the higher education sector | |
| At the meeting on 9 February 2009, members agreed to follow up discussion of the subject matter. The Panel requested the Research and Library Services Division of the LegCo Secretariat to conduct a research on external complaints handling mechanisms in the higher education sector in selected overseas places; the Legal Service Division to provide legal advice on the response of the Heads of Universities Committee concerning the establishment of an elected independent inter-institutional complaints committee; and the Administration to provide a written response to address the issues raised at the meeting, including the proposal to extend the jurisdiction of the Ombudsman to cover the University Grants Committee sector. | July 2009 |
| 5. Fine-tuning the Medium of Instruction Policy | |
| At the meeting on 29 May 2009, members agreed to revisit the subject matter at a future meeting. | To be confirmed |

6. Reduction of textbook prices and review of School Textbook Assistance Scheme (the Scheme)

At the meeting on 11 May 2009, members urged the Administration to consider formulating measures to reduce textbook prices and expanding the scope of the Scheme to cover Internet access service fee. Members agreed to follow up the matter at a future meeting.

To be confirmed

7. Review of financial assistance schemes for post-secondary students

The Panel discussed the subject of non-means-tested loan schemes at the meeting on 9 February 2009 and agreed that the provision of means-tested grants and loans to post-secondary students should be discussed at a future meeting, and deputations including the Hong Kong Federation of Students should be invited to give views.

To be confirmed

The Administration would like to defer the discussion of this item to a later date as it need to observe for a longer period the impact of the following recent developments of the student financial assistance schemes applicable to post-secondary students on the loan application, repayment pattern, and default situation, before considering whether to make any changes to the schemes:

- (a) the Financial Secretary has announced a package of relief measures on 26 May 2009, which includes the extension of the total loan repayment period for a maximum of two years without charging interest during the deferment period, for student loan borrowers with proven repayment difficulties, on an application basis for a period of two years. The Administration is planning to seek the approval of the Finance Committee before the close of the current legislative year with a view to implementing the proposal the soonest possible in the 2009/10 academic year; and
- (b) on 1 June 2009, in accordance with the established adjustment mechanism, the interest rate of non-means-tested loan scheme has been adjusted downward from 4.132% to 3.599%.

The Administration will continue to closely monitor the situation. The exact timing for discussion of this item will be confirmed in

Proposed timing
for discussion

due course.

8. Sub-degree education and first-year-first-degree places

Item proposed by Miss Tanya CHAN at the meeting on 14 October 2008. Miss CHAN is concerned about the issues relating to sub-degree education. Members' concern about the number of publicly-funded first-year-first-degree places remaining at 14 500 for many years will be considered when the subject is discussed. To be confirmed

9. Developing Hong Kong into a regional education hub

Item proposed by Professor Patrick LAU at the meeting on 14 October 2008. Professor LAU suggested that the discussion should cover the provision of hostels for non-local students and the use of vacant school premises for such purpose. To be confirmed

10. Review of financial assistance schemes for primary and secondary school students

Item proposed by Mr LEE Cheuk-yan at the meeting on 14 October 2008. Mr LEE considered that the Government should comprehensively review the eligibility criteria for the financial assistance schemes for primary and secondary school students administered by the Student Financial Assistance Agency, including the School Textbook Assistance Scheme and the Student Travel Subsidy Scheme. To be confirmed

11. Education for students with special educational needs (SEN)

Item proposed by Mr Abraham SHEK at the meeting on 14 October 2008. Mr SHEK considered that the Panel should continue to discuss the provision of education for students with SEN. To be confirmed

12. Native-speaking English Teacher Scheme

The Benefits and Welfare Committee of the Native English-speaking Teachers' Association wrote to the Panel in July 2008 concerning the remuneration package and qualifications for native-speaking English teachers under the Scheme. Members agreed to include the item on the Panel's list To be confirmed

Proposed timing
for discussion

of outstanding items for discussion.

13. The arts and culture in the school curriculum

Item proposed by Mrs Selina CHOW at the meeting on 13 October 2005. Mrs CHOW considered that the Panel should discuss the curriculum for arts and cultural studies in schools in the light of the Government's policy commitment to enrich the quality of life in Hong Kong. The Chairman suggested that the subject be discussed in the context of the West Kowloon Cultural District Development (WKCD) at a joint meeting with the Panel on Home Affairs.

Proposed to be
deleted

[The subject has been discussed at the Panel on Home Affairs on 9 May 2008 via LC Paper No. CB(2)1805/07-08(03), and it would be further discussed at another Panel meeting scheduled on 12 June 2009.]

14. Progress of promotion of the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education qualification

At the meeting on 10 November 2008, members agreed to revisit the subject when the results of the study conducted with the Universities and Colleges Admission Services and other international agencies were available.

To be confirmed