

To: Chairman, Legislative Council Educational Panel

17 March 2010

Dear Chairman,

**Complaint Regarding the Government's Long-Standing Neglect
of the Urgent Local Educational Needs of Residents of South Lantau
– also its Violation of Democratic, Accountable and Transparent Due Process**

Summary of our complaints are as follows:

1. We are a population of 17,700 with an estimate of over 3,500 full-time students and an area about half the size of Hong Kong Island, **we do not have a secondary school in the vicinity (see Appendix 1a & 1b).**

S. Lantau TPU*	Population at 2008	Population at 2010	Population at 2012	Population at 2014	TPU* codes
Mui Wo	5,600	6,100	6,300	6,700	9.6.2
Pui O & Cheung Sha	4,200	4,300	4,700	5,200	9.3.1
Tong Fuk & Shui Hau	1,600	1,800	2,000	2,100	9.3.2
Peng Chau	6,300	6,500	6,700	7,000	9.7.6
Total	17,700	18,700	19,700	21,000	

*Tertiary Planning Unit. Source: Planning Department (2009) "Projection of Population Distribution" based on 2006 By-Census and all planning information on housing development proposals up to the second quarter of 2009 (p. vii, p.83 & p.93 Map 3)

2. **100% of our secondary school children have to travel long distance to school (Appendix 1a).**

	Bui O Public School(Pui O)	Mui Wo School (Mui Wo)	Holy Family(Peng Chau)	Lantau International School(Tong Fuk)	Total
P.1	20	27	20	38	105
P.2	18	23	15	41	97
P.3	24	25	22	34	105
P.4	29	23	32	22	106
P.5	33	30	41	21	125
P.6	29	30	37	21	117
Total	153	158	167	177	655

Source: 2008/09 School Information of South Lantau and Peng Chau; and online resources. Figures **do not include** students displayed from the community due to lack of choice of local secondary schools and substandard facilities in local village schools.

Each weekday, over 700 students have to spend over 3-4 hours commuting to/from school. This affects their health, academic development, personal and family life. **Some of these children are minors of just 11 or 12 years old.**

3. **About one-third of our school-age population are non-Chinese speaking (NCS) whose educational needs have been “overlooked” in the government’s evaluations.** Waiting lists for ESF schools are well over 2 years and children attending these institutions have to commute 3-4 hours. Those who are currently attending local primary schools for social inclusion, affordability and proximity are placed into the same classrooms with local Chinese students. Teachers have to constantly translate what is taught into English. Both groups of students are consequently deprived of the chance to learn and develop properly.
4. Mui Wo (primary) School, located in a 70-year-old building, is confined to a very basic of 6 classrooms, a small music room, a computer room, and 3 toilet units. There is no space for a library, activity rooms or an all-weather assembly hall. The plan for extension of the original premises has been rejected twice by the former EMB due to unclear ownership of the lease. The EMB indeed advised the relocation of the school. Since 2006, **MWS has submitted two proposals for relocation. EMB has promised to inform them of an open bidding of the vacant premises. The school still has not received such a call.**
5. We maintain that the currently vacant site of **the Heung Yee Kuk Southern District Secondary School (SDSS) is the only option that can readily offer an integrated solution to all our urgent needs identified above.** We propose that Mui Wo School be relocated to this site alongside the re-opening of SDSS into an English medium secondary school. Alternatively, it can be a school with parallel Chinese and English medium of teaching. This, we believe is the most cost-effective way of solving the problem of the lack of space and facilities of MWS; to accommodate both Chinese and NCS students; and ultimately alleviate the hardship of long commute which has uprooted a great majority of our children from their families and the community.
6. **We believe that the needs of both groups of students, ZS and ours, are equally legitimate and urgent, and that the government is capable and responsible for solving both problems without delay, and should not attempt to address one at the expense of the other. Residents of South Lantau have felt profoundly wounded and disharmonised since the clash happened in June 2009.**
7. We request the concerned Legco members to understand our pressing local educational needs; and to (1) ensure that the government will address these needs, without further delay, through action plans and concrete timetables; and (2) investigate if due process has been violated in the request of the Christian Zheng Sheng College for relocation to SDSS.

Yours faithfully,

Dr Rosa Ma

On behalf of South Lantau Education Concern Group

Appendix 1b: South Lantau Population Projection (Planning Department, 2009)

表 15 (續) : 二零零九年至二零一四年按小規劃統計區劃分的居港人口推算數字

Table 15 (Cont'd) : Projected Hong Kong Resident Population by Tertiary Planning Unit, 2009-2014

(以年中計算 as at mid year)

小規劃統計區 TPU	2008 #	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
931	4 200	4 500	4 300	4 500	4 700	4 900	5 200
932	1 600	1 700	1 800	1 900	2 000	2 100	2 100
933	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
934	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
941	1 000	1 100	1 200	1 200	1 300	1 400	1 500
942	300	300	300	400	400	400	500
943	500	600	600	600	700	700	700
944	3 100	3 100	3 300	3 400	3 400	3 400	3 500
950	80 900	82 600	82 900	82 600	82 000	81 400	82 000
951	200	300	300	300	300	300	300
961	200	300	300	300	300	400	400
962	5 600	5 900	6 100	6 200	6 300	6 600	6 700
963	1 300	1 400	1 500	1 500	1 600	1 700	1 700
971	17 800	17 800	18 100	18 900	19 500	19 800	20 000
972	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
973	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
974	*	*	*	*	*	100	100
975	14 000	15 200	15 700	16 000	16 200	16 400	16 400
976	6 300	6 400	6 500	6 600	6 700	6 900	7 000

