

For Information

## **Legislative Council Panel on Education**

### **Supplementary Information on the Proper Use of Public Resources Allocated to International Schools**

#### **Purpose**

As a follow-up to previous discussion on international schools, Members requested at the meeting on 15 October for further written information concerning the proper use of public resources allocated to international schools. The information is outlined below for Members' reference.

#### **Operation of International Schools**

2. The international school sector comprises private schools which provide non-local curriculum to meet the educational needs of primarily non-local students. All along, international schools have been operating on a self-financing and market-driven basis.
3. In order to raise funds to finance the school operation, some international schools issue debentures for purchase by parents as a requisite condition for registration and admission of their children. The debentures issued would normally be redeemable in full to parents when their children leave a school. The debenture arrangement varies among international schools. Generally speaking, the funds raised are deployed for capital development including the provision and upgrading of school facilities, and for school development in the long term to meet with the parents' expectation on the standard of education service in the international school sector. In line with the operational autonomous principle of international schools, the Administration does not micro-manage the debenture arrangement of individual international schools. It is worth noting that some international schools overseas also have similar fund-raising arrangement to support their school development.
4. This notwithstanding, the Administration has always encouraged individual international schools to explain fully their debenture arrangement

to parents and to make sure that the terms and conditions relating to such arrangement are agreeable to parents. International schools are generally aware of the importance to galvanize parents' support in this respect, which is after all vital to preserving their competitiveness in the open market. There should be effective communication with parents in order to address their enquiries and concerns. Moreover, as a relief measure for families in need, international schools may put in place various forms of scholarship or financial assistance schemes. As a matter of fact, this is also a specific requirement in the Service Agreement signed by those non-profit-making international schools which have received government assistance in the form of vacant school premises or greenfield sites with the Government.

### **Accountability of International Schools in Use of Public Resources**

5. With a view to enhancing the accountability in delivering quality education of those non-profit-making international schools which have received government assistance in the form of vacant school premises or greenfield sites<sup>1</sup>, the schools concerned are required to enter into a Service Agreement with the Government and abide by the conditions of the Tenancy Agreement or Private Treaty Grant as appropriate, both renewable subject to the schools' satisfactory performance. The Service Agreement sets out the standard of operation and performance targets of the school as agreed with the Administration. It also requires the school concerned to formulate a School Development Plan ("SDP") which lays down clear student learning and teaching objectives, with performance indicators and targets. The Administration has been working closely with the schools concerned to ensure that the planned targets in the SDP are satisfactorily achieved. Furthermore, to enhance financial transparency and accountability of those international schools which have received government assistance, they are also required to submit their audited accounts to Education Bureau for examination on a regular basis.

### **Way Forward**

6. The Administration will continue to support the development of a vibrant international school sector to meet the community's demand for

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<sup>1</sup> Since 2007, we have allocated four vacant school premises and four greenfield sites to non-profit-making international schools.

international school places and to monitor the provision of public resources to international schools.

**Education Bureau**  
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