

(Translation)

**Motion on
“Striving for 15-year free education”
moved by Hon CHEUNG Man-kwong
at the Legislative Council meeting
of Wednesday, 16 February 2011**

**Motion as amended by Hon Audrey EU Yuet-mee, Hon Starry LEE
Wai-king and Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun**

That, given that early childhood education (‘ECE’) is an important stage in children’s articulation to primary education, and the provision of quality ECE for children is a responsibility that the Government cannot shy away from; last year, the Macao SAR Government already announced the implementation of 15-year free education, indicating that Hong Kong’s basic education policy lags behind that of Macao; given Hong Kong’s strong financial position and its increase in fiscal reserve year after year, the Hong Kong Government is definitely able to and needs to make greater commitment to ECE; in this connection, this Council urges the Government to expeditiously implement 15-year free education, include ECE in the scope of subsidization, draw up a pay scale and directly subsidize the payment of kindergarten teachers’ salaries, establish a sound teacher training system, reduce kindergarten teachers’ administrative duties, reasonably increase the subsidies for half-day and whole-day kindergartens, including providing rent allowances and formulating a pre-primary education curriculum, so as to enable parents and children to benefit from completely free basic education, create quality teaching conditions for kindergarten teachers, retain quality kindergarten teachers and when implementing 15-year free education, comprehensively lower teacher-student ratios to upgrade the quality of basic education, thereby creating a new chapter of Hong Kong education; this Council also urges the Government to set up an education fund for teachers and allocate the unspent amounts of the Teacher Development Subsidy to this fund to encourage teachers to receive on-the-job training, and increase the number of clerical staff in ECE institutes; and improve the pedagogical approach of ECE in Hong Kong by making reference to overseas experience and circumstances; before the actual implementation of free ECE, the Education Bureau should expeditiously complete a comprehensive review of the existing Pre-primary Education Voucher Scheme, with a view to raising the subsidy ceiling and streamlining the administrative procedure of the Pre-primary Education Voucher Scheme to benefit more parents of children and kindergarten teachers; moreover, the Government should also review the curriculum contents, teaching quality and teacher qualifications, etc. under the existing 12-year free education system.