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Panel on Home Affairs and Panel on Education Background brief prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat for the joint meeting on 13 May 2011

Sports education in schools

Purpose

This paper provides background information on sports education in schools and summarizes the major concerns of members of the Panel on Home Affairs ("the Panel") about the subject.

Background

2. In April 2001, the Home Affairs Bureau ("HAB") established a Sports Policy Review Team to conduct a review of the Government's sports policy. In its Review Report published in May 2002, HAB outlined the direction for future sports policy in a number of areas, including student sport. The review found that despite much work done by various organizations to encourage students to take part in and develop an interest in sport, there had been no single body co-ordinating the development of sporting opportunities for students and no defined strategy for matching the development of sports facilities, whether in schools or in nearby public venues, to the needs of students.

3. Based on the recommendations on "more sport for every student" stated in the Review Report, the Administration has taken a number of initiatives to encourage students' participation in sport in the past 10 years, including -

- (a) expanding the School Sports Programme ("SSP"), with a view to achieving the objective of "one student, one sport". SSP, currently comprising seven subsidiary programmes, is jointly organized by various National Sports Associations and subvented by the Leisure and Cultural Services

Department ("LCSD"). The programmes of SSP are organized in line with the daily schedule of schools so that students can participate in such programmes in the school environment during their leisure time. At present, SSP has a participation rate of more than 90% of local primary and secondary schools;

- (b) setting up the Student Sport Activities Co-ordinating Subcommittee under the Community Sports Committee ("CSC")¹ in May 2004 to advise on the strategies for promoting student sports from primary one to tertiary level, implementation of SSP, co-ordination of the various measures for the promotion of student sports, the use of sports facilities for school sport activities and the funding arrangements for student sports; and
- (c) encouraging schools to adopt a more focused approach for sport and allocate an appropriate part of their curriculum time to Physical Education ("PE").

5. According to the Education Bureau ("EDB"), in basic education (primary 1 to secondary 3) and senior secondary education (secondary 4 to secondary 6), it is suggested that at least 5% of the total lesson time should be allocated to PE education. Under the new senior secondary curriculum, PE is also one of the eight key learning areas.

6. In July 2010, the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council ("LegCo") approved the Government's injection of \$3 billion into the Arts and Sports Development Fund ("ASDF"). According to the Administration, the sports portion (i.e. \$1.5 billion) of ASDF would be deployed to provide, among others, more opportunities for training and competition for students.

Members' concerns

7. The Panel has discussed the issues relating to sports education in schools in the context of considering the Government's sports policy and support for elite athletes in Hong Kong at its meetings since 2002. The major concerns of members are summarized in the ensuing paragraphs..

¹ CSC was established in October 2003 to advise the Administration on the strategies and initiatives to promote community participation in sports.

Inadequacy of sports facilities

8. Some members expressed dissatisfaction with the long-standing inadequacy of sports facilities in schools. Many teachers found it difficult to make arrangements for their students to make use of LCSD's sports facilities because of transport or other logistical problems. HAB was urged to discuss with EDB how to promote sports in schools, such as facilitating schools to utilize LCSD's sports facilities during non-peak hours. The Administration advised that to encourage schools to make use of such facilities, LCSD had launched the Recreation Facilities Free Use Scheme under which schools could apply for free use of the sports facilities at nearby LCSD sports centers.

Promotion of sports in schools

9. Members noted EDB's recommendation that no less than 5% of the total lesson time in primary and secondary schools should be allocated to PE. There was a view that HAB should put in place concrete measures to promote sports in schools in collaboration with EDB. According to the Administration, it had all along provided support for the Hong Kong Schools Sports Federation, and spent more than a million dollars to support students to take part in the national secondary school games in 2010. The Administration would study how to support student athletes in a more integrated manner.

10. Members sought information on the measures to be taken to cultivate the young generation's interest in sport and to achieve the objective of "one student, one sport". The Administration advised that it would enhance SSP to encourage young people to take part in sports activities. The Sports Award Scheme had been launched to give recognition by means of awards to schools that had promoted sports development and to students who had participated in sports actively.

11. There was a concern about how the Administration would encourage parents to let their children undergo intensive training in specific sports. The Administration advised that the fostering of a sporting culture in schools and the community would take time. The phenomena of parents not preferring their children to engage in sports was changing, and more parents, particularly those who were former athletes, were willing to let their children participate in sports training outside school hours.

Relevant papers

12. A list of the relevant papers with their hyperlinks at the LegCo's website is in the **Appendix**.

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
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**Relevant papers on
Sports education in schools**

Committee	Date of meeting	Paper
Panel on Home Affairs	23.5.2002 (Item IV)	Agenda Minutes
Panel on Home Affairs	9.12.2005 (Item IV)	Agenda Minutes CB(2)809/05-06(01)
Panel on Home Affairs	16.10.2006 (Item I)	Agenda Minutes
Panel on Home Affairs	13.4.2007 (Item V)	Agenda Minutes
Panel on Home Affairs	8.1.2010 (Item V)	Agenda Minutes
Council Meeting	24.2.2010 (Item I)	Estimates of Expenditure 2010-2011 Budget Speech
Panel on Home Affairs	20.10.2010 (Item I)	Agenda Minutes
Panel on Home Affairs	10.12.2010 (Item VI)	Agenda Minutes
Panel on Education	10.1.2011 (Item VI)	Agenda Minutes
Panel on Home Affairs	14.1.2011 (Item V)	Agenda Minutes