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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

Arts education in schools

Purpose

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

Background

Formal curriculum

2. According to the Administration, since 2002, about 10% to 15% and 8% to 15% of lesson time have been recommended to arts education in the formal curriculum at primary and junior secondary levels respectively. Arts education is also one of the eight Key Learning Areas at these levels.

3. The new senior secondary ("NSS") curriculum starting from the 2009-2010 school years also provides students with opportunities to pursue arts education. In particular, the Education Bureau ("EDB") and the Leisure and Cultural Services Department ("LCSD") under the Home Affairs Bureau ("HAB") have launched various schemes to encourage students' participation in arts activities, as shown in **Appendix I**.

Outside schools

4. The Administration also promotes a number of arts education activities outside the formal curriculum, as shown in **Appendix II**.

Financial support

5. As stated in the Financial Secretary's 2010-2011 Budget, the Administration would allocate in 2011-2012 over \$2.8 billion for the development of art and cultural software in Hong Kong. The Administration also injected \$1.5 billion into the arts portion of the Arts and Sport Development Fund in July 2010, with the annual investment returns being used to subsidize the long-term development of arts and culture. From 2010 to 2015, additional resources of \$21 million would be used to enhance the promotion of arts and culture in schools to develop young people's interest and appreciation abilities in these areas.

Members' concerns

6. The Panel discussed issues relating to arts education in schools in the context of considering the development of arts and culture in Hong Kong at its meetings between 2006 and 2010. The main concerns of members are highlighted in the ensuing paragraphs.

Enhancing cultural literacy

7. Members considered that the Government should strengthen its efforts to raise young people's cultural literacy by implementing arts education programmes in schools and to cultivate a wider audience base for the performing arts. It should also support students to enjoy arts performances free of charge or at a concessionary rate.

8. According to the Administration, LCSD had been implementing various programmes, such as the School Arts Amateur Scheme, to cultivate cultural literacy at school and community levels. It also co-ordinated schools under the School Culture Day Scheme to take part in arts education activities performed at LCSD venues which mainly featured local artists and arts groups. In addition, the Hong Kong Arts Development Council ("HKADC") had provided more information on local arts groups and artists on its website to facilitate schools to co-operate with arts groups to promote arts appreciation in school curricula. HAB had been discussing with EDB how to build up close partnership between educational institutions and arts groups/artists in launching arts education programmes for schools.

9. Some members suggested the provision of a dedicated television channel for arts and culture to enhance the cultural literacy of young people, and noted that HKADC had set up a working group to study the suggestion.

Arts education under the NSS curriculum

10. Members noted that under the NSS curriculum, students might choose Music and Visual Arts as elective subjects. They called on EDB to follow through the students' learning process and maintain records on the implementation of these subjects, such as the numbers of schools offering these subjects and of students taking them. A concern was also raised about the general trend for schools to give excessive weight on core subjects, such as Chinese Language, English Language and Mathematics, and attach less importance to arts subjects.

11. The Administration advised that more than 70% of the local secondary schools had indicated interest in offering Visual Arts as an elective subject under the NSS curriculum. EDB would maintain a database to keep track of the implementation of the NSS curriculum, as such information would facilitate tertiary institutions' planning of undergraduate programmes. In addition, a diversity learning grant would be provided for schools to offer selective subjects. Classes on arts subjects and arts-related applied learning courses would be scheduled at a designated time such as Saturday mornings to facilitate students' attendance.

12. Some members suggested that the funding to the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts ("HKAPA") should be increased to complement the enhancements to arts education arising from the implementation of the NSS curriculum. The Administration advised that in 2008-2009, an additional funding of some \$12.5 million was provided to HKAPA to expand its training programmes to prepare graduates for entry into the theatre and entertainment arts industry. A review would also be conducted on HKAPA's role in the promotion of arts education. In addition, in its Report on the Higher Education Review 2010 released in December 2010, the University Grants Committee ("UGC") recommended that it should be entrusted with the responsibility to oversee funding for HKAPA which was currently funded by HAB, with a view to facilitating co-operation between HKAPA and the eight UGC-funded institutions in a number of areas, such as teaching and experimental and out-of-classroom learning.

Career development in arts and culture

13. To complement the promotion of arts education, members suggested that internship schemes should be arranged to prepare students for a future career in the creative/cultural industry. There was a concern that the supply of graduates from HKAPA might be inadequate to meet the demand for arts talents,

particularly upon the implementation of the West Kowloon Cultural District project. The Administration was requested to strengthen the manpower training for arts professionals, and establish a mechanism to encourage students taking arts subjects under the NSS curriculum to pursue tertiary studies in arts administration and related subjects.

14. The Administration responded that EDB had arranged workshops and briefing sessions to advise parents and students on the career prospects in taking arts subjects. The consultancy study commissioned by the Administration in 2009 on performing arts groups would cover the future development of small and medium sized arts groups, which would play a key role in providing job opportunities for arts graduates in future.

Relevant papers

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

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
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The Administration's major arts education projects in schools

Project	Details
A Journey on Learning the Arts for Senior Secondary Students Scheme	The Education Bureau, Leisure and Cultural Services Department ("LCSD") and various arts groups join hands to support students' participation in arts activities and performances for free outside the classroom setting. Genres covered include Chinese and Western music, Chinese opera, drama, dance, movie sharing sessions and exhibitions, etc. Docent service or seminars are arranged in some programmes.
Arts Experience Scheme for Senior Secondary Students	LCSD offers a series of tailor-made performing arts programmes for senior secondary students, supplemented by extension activities with interactive and educational elements (e.g. pre-performance talks and post-performance seminars and workshops).
Enhancement of educational programmes	LCSD produces teaching kits and worksheets for special exhibitions, enhance the programmes in museums and film archive to include learning sessions and workshops and the training of docents to engage students in the appreciation and critique of artworks. Artists will also be lined up to share their creative experience with students.

Source: LC Paper No. CB(2)1497/09-10(03)

Appendix II

The Administration's major arts education activities outside the formal curriculum

Activity	Details
School Culture Day Scheme	The Leisure and Cultural Services Department ("LCSD") arranges student visits to its performing arts venues, museums and public libraries during school days with tailor-made programmes.
School Arts Animateur Scheme	LCSD joins hands with local professional arts groups to implement various activities at schools including introductory performances, workshop series and student finale performances/ exhibitions.
Let's Enjoy Cantonese Opera in Bamboo Theatre	LCSD and district groups co-organise free Cantonese opera presentations specially composed for students at bamboo theatres at various districts and interactive educational activities.
Music Office	The Music Office runs an instrumental music training scheme for some 5 000 youngsters every year.

Source: LC Paper No. CB(2)1497/09-10(03)

**Relevant papers on
Arts education in schools**

Committee	Date of meeting	Paper
Panel on Home Affairs	7.4.2006 (Item IV)	Agenda Minutes
Panel on Home Affairs	17.7.2006 (Item II)	Agenda Minutes
Panel on Home Affairs	14.12.2007 (Item IV)	Agenda Minutes
Panel on Home Affairs	15.2.2008 (Item V)	Agenda Minutes CB(2)1805/07-08(03)
Panel on Home Affairs	30.6.2008 (Item I)	Agenda Minutes
Panel on Home Affairs	12.6.2009 (Item IV)	Agenda Minutes
Joint Subcommittee to Monitor the Implementation of the West Kowloon Cultural District Project	16.4.2010 (Item IIb)	Agenda Minutes
Panel on Home Affairs	14.5.2010 (Item V)	Agenda Minutes
Panel on Education	10.1.2011 (Item VI)	Agenda Minutes
Joint Subcommittee to Monitor the Implementation of the West Kowloon Cultural District Project	14.1.2011 (Item IIc)	Agenda Minutes