



中華人民共和國香港特別行政區政府總部教育局
Education Bureau
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The People's Republic of China

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11 May 2012

Ms Amy Yu
Clerk to Education Panel
Room 203E, 2/F, Legislative Council Complex
No. 1, Legislative Council Road
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Ms Yu,

**Support for pre-primary education of
non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students**

Thank you for referring to us the letter from Hon Tanya Chan dated 19 April 2012. With regard to the concern over the support for pre-primary education of NCS students, the Education Bureau would like to report on the progress as follows:

The Legislative Council Panel on Education discussed the education support for NCS students at its meeting held on 12 December 2011. Under the policy of facilitating NCS students' early adaptation to the local education system and early integration into the community, there is the consensus to continue with encouraging NCS parents to send their children to local kindergartens¹ so as to promote an early exposure to an immersed Chinese environment for NCS children to smooth their progression to mainstream primary schools.

On this, we have responded actively. To facilitate NCS children's development of Chinese language skills and social communication skills, our

¹ Kindergartens, kindergartens-cum-child care centres and schools with kindergarten classes are referred to as "kindergartens".

local kindergartens would continue to adopt a naturalistic and holistic approach to language learning and an integrated learning and teaching approach to create a stimulating and language-rich environment to provide students with authentic, meaningful and developmentally appropriate language learning experiences through try-outs, exploration and interpersonal interactions.

In tandem, we would enhance the provision of school-based professional support services to kindergartens to focus on rendering assistance to teachers in designing teaching and learning activities to facilitate children's acquisition of Chinese in an authentic environment. When inviting schools in April 2012 to apply for the support services in the 2012/13 school year, we have accorded due priority to the aspect of "offering support to NCS children". We have also solicited expertise from the tertiary sector through the "University-School Support Programmes" to partner with kindergartens for promoting whole-child development including NCS children. These measures aim at accumulation of effective strategies and diversified modes to support NCS children in the learning of the Chinese language.

On teacher empowerment, while we have planned to enrich the content of the seminars / workshops on young children development and learner diversity, we would also continue with curriculum development visits and focus group interviews so as to collect information and good practices on catering for learner diversity (particularly on NCS children's learning of Chinese) for organising more experience sharing sessions in the 2012/13 school year. Moreover, we would develop teaching and learning materials tailor-made for NCS children and more structured programmes in kindergartens to make the learning and teaching of Chinese more interesting and tangible for NCS children.

Besides, to further arouse NCS children's interest in learning Chinese, we have recently, through the Standing Committee on Language Education and Research², invited proposals to organise district-based projects / programmes to motivate NCS children to learn Chinese through fun activities such as drama, creative art, etc.. The pilot run of these district-based projects / programmes in districts with relatively more NCS children such as Yuen Long, Kwai Chung & Tsing Yi, Kwun Tong, Yau Tsim & Mong Kok, etc. would start in July 2012.

² The Standing Committee on Language Education and Research a Committee advises the Government on language education issues.

As regards parent education, we would continue to organise parent briefing sessions on school admission dedicated for NCS parents in districts with relatively more NCS residents. In view of the positive response at previous sessions, we have planned to invite kindergartens and schools which have accumulated experience in supporting NCS students to disseminate key messages to parents at the upcoming briefings, Support Services Centres for Ethnic Minorities funded by Home Affairs Department, radio programmes, Maternal and Child Health Centres through promotion videos and in the newspapers for ethnic minority groups, etc.

Apart from the above support services for NCS students, we have planned to step up the support to NCS students at primary and secondary levels in the following directions:

- (i) expanding the network of schools supporting NCS students so that more schools, in addition to the existing designated schools, would be involved in gearing up for the implementation of the Supplementary Guide to the Chinese Language Curriculum for NCS Students and catering for the diverse aspirations in academic study and career pursuit of NCS students. The platform for sharing practices and experiences on the development and adoption of appropriate teaching pedagogies among schools admitting NCS students would be restructured;
- (ii) acknowledging that some NCS students consider GCSE (Chinese) Examination as having a relatively simpler content vis-à-vis their Chinese proficiency, we are examining the desirability of NCS students' participation in this examination with reference to the different designs and relevant requirements for Chinese proficiency, the related support to schools / students in terms of teacher training and provision of teaching and learning materials, etc., and the possibility of giving NCS students the option of sitting for the relevant overseas examinations with financial assistance instead so that when enhancing assessment for learning, we may facilitate NCS students to cross over to different levels in the learning process in primary and secondary education to realise their potentials;
- (iii) formulating different modalities of school-based professional support to ensure that schools can provide an environment for immersion in the Chinese language;
- (iv) putting in place a framework for objective and evidence-based assessment of the effectiveness, cost-effectiveness and viability of

the support measures and evaluation of the support modes and measures for schools; and

- (v) kick-starting a longitudinal study on the modalities of school-based professional support and NCS students' performance in learning the Chinese language, with a view to evaluating the efficacy of the support for NCS students with diverse learning abilities.

We are now collecting views from stakeholders particularly schools admitting NCS students. We aim to report further the progress of the implementation of the above support measures to the Legislative Council Panel on Education in end-2012.

Yours sincerely,



(Ms L B Ip)
for Secretary for Education