

**立法會**  
**Legislative Council**

LC Paper No. CB(2)1326/14-15  
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by the Administration)

Ref : CB2/HS/1/12

**Subcommittee on Poverty**

**Minutes of the twenty-eighth meeting  
held on Monday, 23 March 2015, at 2:00 pm  
in Conference Room 2 of the Legislative Council Complex**

- Members present** : Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung (Chairman)  
Hon Frederick FUNG Kin-kee, SBS, JP (Deputy Chairman)  
Hon Albert HO Chun-yan  
Hon LEE Cheuk-yan  
Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung  
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP  
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, GBS, JP  
Hon Ronny TONG Ka-wah, SC  
Hon CHAN Kin-por, BBS, JP  
Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun, SBS, JP  
Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che  
Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit, SC  
Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung  
Hon WONG Yuk-man  
Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming  
Hon Charles Peter MOK, JP  
Hon CHAN Chi-chuen  
Hon CHAN Yuen-han, SBS, JP  
Hon LEUNG Che-cheung, BBS, MH, JP  
Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki  
Hon KWOK Wai-keung  
Hon TANG Ka-piu, JP
- Public Officers attending** : Item I  
Mr Kevin YEUNG, JP  
Under Secretary for Education  
Education Bureau

Mrs Angelina CHEUNG  
Deputy Secretary for Education (6)  
Education Bureau

Ms Jane LEE  
Principal Assistant Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Poverty)  
Labour and Welfare Bureau

Item II

Mr Kevin YEUNG, JP  
Under Secretary for Education  
Education Bureau

Mrs Angelina CHEUNG  
Deputy Secretary for Education (6)  
Education Bureau

Miss Hera CHUM  
Principal Assistant Secretary (Special Education &  
Kindergarten Education)  
Education Bureau

**Attendance by : Item I  
invitation**

Civic Party

Mr Jeremy TAM Man-ho  
District Developer (KLE)

New People's Party

Mr KAM Man-fung  
Central Committee Member

葵涌關注劏房小組

梁詠婷女士  
Member

葵涌不適切居所關注組

鄧德全先生

Member

葵涌低收入基層關注組

潘志華先生

Member

葵涌低收入劏房住戶聯盟

Mr NG Kwan-lim

Spokesman

葵涌劏房戶關注組

Mr Minhas RASHAD

Member

Ms LEE Lan-chu

Neighbourhood and Worker's Service Centre

Miss Yoyo CHAN Ka-yiu

Organizer

Improve Grassroot Case Concern Group

Miss LAU Chun-ki

Social Worker

TSW Community Development Alliance

Mr KONG Kin-shing

Social Worker

TSW Child Health Care Voucher Scheme Group

Mr LAW Ka-fai

Citizen

Ms CHAU Mun-tai

Special Educational Needs Rights Association

Ms HUNG Da-yong  
Member

爭取低收入家庭保障聯席

Miss YEUNG Pui-yan  
Community Organizer

Alliance for Children Development Rights

Miss HO Yu-ying  
Community Organizer

Miss NGAI Lok-yi

**Clerk in attendance** : Mr Colin CHUI  
Chief Council Secretary (2) 4

**Staff in attendance** : Ms Catherina YU  
Senior Council Secretary (2) 4

Ms Kay CHU  
Council Secretary (2) 4

Miss Maggie CHIU  
Legislative Assistant (2) 4

Miss LEE Wai-yan  
Clerical Assistant (2) 6

Action

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- I. Provision of a one-off special subsidy for students on full grant under the School Textbook Assistance Scheme before the implementation of Low-income Working Family Allowance**  
[LC Paper Nos. CB(2)1064/14-15(01) and CB(2)1081/14-15(01) to (02)]

The Subcommittee deliberated (index of proceedings attached at **Annex**).

Action

**II. Enhanced support for post-secondary, secondary and primary students with special education and financial needs**

[LC Paper Nos. CB(2)1064/14-15(02), CB(2)1081/14-15(03) to (04) and CB(2)1106/14-15(01)]

2. The Subcommittee deliberated (index of proceedings attached at **Annex**).

**III. Item(s) for discussion at the next meeting**

3. Members noted that the Subcommittee should discuss the subject of "Measures to unleash labour force in families for increasing the grassroots' income" at the next meeting scheduled for Tuesday, 28 April 2015 at 4:30 pm.

**IV. Any other business**

4. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 4:30 pm.

Council Business Division 2  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
23 April 2015

**Proceedings of the twenty-eighth meeting of the  
Subcommittee on Poverty  
on Monday, 23 March 2015, at 2:00 pm  
in Conference Room 2 of the Legislative Council Complex**

<b>Time marker</b>	<b>Speaker(s)</b>	<b>Subject(s)</b>	<b>Action required</b>
<i>Agenda item I – Provision of a one-off special subsidy for students on full grant under the School Textbook Assistance Scheme before the implementation of Low-income Working Family Allowance</i>			
001046 - 001651	Chairman	Opening remarks	
001652 - 001915	Civic Party	Presentation of views	
001916 - 002216	New People's Party	Presentation of views	
002217 - 002430	葵涌關注劏房小組	Presentation of views	
002431 - 002751	葵涌不適切居所關注組	Presentation of views	
002752 - 002918	葵涌低收入基層關注組	Presentation of views	
002919 - 003235	葵涌低收入劏房住戶聯盟	Presentation of views	
003236 - 003539	葵涌劏房戶關注組	Presentation of views	
003540 - 003847	Ms LEE Lan-chu	Presentation of views	
003848 - 004133	Neighbourhood and Worker's Service Centre	Presentation of views	
004134 - 004402	Improve Grassroot Case Concern Group	Presentation of views	
004403 - 004708	TSW Community Development Alliance	Presentation of views	
004709 - 005016	TSW Child Health Care Voucher Scheme Group	Presentation of views	
005017 - 005227	Ms CHAU Mun-tai	Presentation of views	
005228 - 005522	Special Educational Needs Rights Association	Presentation of views	
005523 - 005722	爭取低收入家庭保障聯席	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(2)1081/14-15(01)]	
005723 - 010010	Alliance for Children Development Rights	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(2)1081/14-15(02)]	
010011 - 010325	Miss NGAI Lok-yi	Presentation of views	
010326 - 011921	Chairman Admin	The Chairman summarized the major views and concerns of deputations and asked the Administration to advise on –	

Time marker	Speaker(s)	Subject(s)	Action required
		<p>(a) the objective and nature of the provision of a one-off special subsidy for primary and secondary students on full grant under the School Textbook Assistance Scheme ("STAS") in the 2015/16 school year ("the proposed one-off special subsidy");</p> <p>(b) whether it would consider extending the proposed one-off special subsidy to cover kindergarten students and those children of low-income families with a household income exceeding 50% of Median Monthly Domestic Household Income ("MMDHI") but not higher than 60% of MMDHI;</p> <p>(c) whether it would consider providing a 12-month back payment of the Low-income Working Family Allowance ("LIFA") for eligible low-income families; and</p> <p>(d) measures to facilitate needy ethnic minorities ("EMs") to apply for financial assistance under the Community Care Fund ("CCF").</p> <p>In response to (a) to (d) above as well as the major views and concerns of deputations, the Administration gave a succinct brief on its paper and added that –</p> <p>(a) the proposed one-off special subsidy would not be regularized as it would be a one-off arrangement made before the launch of LIFA;</p> <p>(b) as the proposed one-off special subsidy would target primary and secondary students who were eligible for full grant under STAS, it would not cover kindergarten students. Separately, issues relating to kindergarten students would be discussed by the Subcommittee to Study the Implementation of Free Kindergarten Education under the Panel on Education;</p> <p>(c) the LIFA Scheme would not have a retrospective payment arrangement. To determine the amount of LIFA to be disbursed, an applicant would be required to provide proof of eligibility for each of the previous 6 months prior to his/her submission of application;</p> <p>(d) the LIFA Scheme would be publicized through various channels to EMs. In addition, the Student Finance Office ("SFO")</p>	

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		<p>of the Working Family and Student Financial Assistance Agency would continue to provide multilingual information to promote its services. For EM students who would like to apply for financial assistance from SFO, they could seek help from SFO or their schools to fill in the required bilingual application forms;</p> <p>(e) following the funding approval by the Finance Committee ("FC") on 16 January 2015, the Administration had been pressing full steam ahead with the preparatory work for the LIFA Scheme. However, barring unforeseeable circumstances, a lead time of 15 to 18 months would be required as a substantial amount of work had to be done, such as development of information technology system and staff recruitment and training, etc. This was in the light that LIFA would be a brand new scheme involving vetting of asset level, income level, working hours and other criteria. The Administration would strive to expedite the launching of the LIFA Scheme; and</p> <p>(f) self-employed persons who encountered difficulties in providing proof of their hours worked might be required to make declaration in this regard when they applied for LIFA.</p>	
011922 - 012155	Chairman Mr KWOK Wai-keung Admin	<p>Noting that LIFA would provide different amounts of allowance for applicants subject to their eligibility, Mr KWOK Wai-keung wondered why the Administration did not expand the coverage of the proposed one-off special subsidy by providing a half subsidy with lower thresholds.</p> <p>The Administration advised that the level of household income of half grant recipients of STAS was generally much higher than the LIFA's income threshold of 60% of MMDHI for obtaining half-rate allowance. Hence, the Administration would not consider providing half grant recipients of STAS with a half subsidy under the proposed one-off special subsidy.</p>	
012156 - 012747	Chairman Dr KWOK Ka-ki Admin	<p>Dr KWOK Ka-ki urged the Administration to –</p> <p>(a) for the first round of LIFA application, extend the claim period from 6 months to cover 12 months prior to submission of application; and</p>	



Time marker	Speaker(s)	Subject(s)	Action required
		<p>(b) provide half grant recipients of STAS with a half subsidy under the proposed one-off special subsidy.</p> <p>The Administration –</p> <p>(a) advised that extending the claim period of LIFA to 12 months might not be feasible as such an extended claim period had not been taken into account in the design of the LIFA Scheme; and</p> <p>(b) reiterated that the proposed one-off special subsidy was a one-off arrangement made before the launch of LIFA. Hence, thresholds for the proposed one-off special subsidy were set based on thresholds of the LIFA Scheme, thereby students who were on full grant under STAS would be eligible for the special subsidy. That said, Dr KWOK's view would be relayed to the Commission on Poverty ("CoP").</p>	
012748 - 013439	Chairman Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung Admin	<p>Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung was of the view that it was a waste of time to have a discussion with Government officials as members' views on the proposed one-off special subsidy were not considered seriously.</p> <p>The Administration restated its reply to Mr KWOK Wai-keung and Dr KWOK Ka-ki at (b) above. It added that it was difficult to give consideration to extending the claim period of LIFA at this stage. That said, to enhance assistance for low-income working families, the Administration had implemented targeted measures, such as re-launching the one-off living subsidy for low-income households not living in public housing and receiving CSSA. At its recent meeting, the CCF Task Force was considering launching, for the third time, the aforesaid one-off living subsidy in the coming year.</p> <p>The Chairman said that half grant recipients of STAS were also facing financial difficulties and required more support to relieve their financial burden. He urged the Administration to be more flexible when it considered the provision of a one-off special subsidy at half of the amount (i.e. \$1,800) for half grant recipients of STAS. The Chairman expressed regret at the non-attendance of CCF's representatives.</p>	

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013440 - 013929	Chairman Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung	Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung was of the view that public resources should be used to help the needy. Besides, the Administration should be more generous in setting the amount of money provided under its financial assistance measures, especially one-off measures, to support grass-root families.	
013930 - 014503	Chairman Deputy Chairman	<p>The Deputy Chairman was of the view that the Administration should –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) disburse the proposed one-off special subsidy two or three times as the implementation of LIFA had been delayed for nearly half a year;</li> <li>(b) extend the proposed one-off special subsidy to cover STAS recipients with a household income exceeding 50% of MMDHI but not higher than 60% of MMDHI;</li> <li>(c) allow LIFA to take retrospective effect; and</li> <li>(d) be responsible for the delay in the implementation of LIFA as it refused to adjust the FC agenda and to accord priority to the item on LIFA.</li> </ul> <p>The Administration –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) advised that the one-off special subsidy was a one-off arrangement instead of a compensation in response to the delay in the implementation of LIFA; and</li> <li>(b) reiterated his reply to Mr KWOK Wai-keung.</li> </ul> <p>In response to the Deputy Chairman's query on the income threshold for LIFA, the Administration explained to members the two-tiered income threshold and asset threshold of LIFA.</p>	
014504 - 015517	Chairman Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che Alliance for Children Development Rights Admin	<p>Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che asked the Administration to advise on –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) the percentage of students receiving full grant and half grant of STAS, and the number of students receiving half grant of STAS;</li> <li>(b) the number of kindergarten students; and</li> <li>(c) whether it had any statistics on hand to identify needy kindergarten students and the additional provision required for extending the proposed one-off special subsidy to cover needy kindergarten students.</li> </ul>	

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		<p>The Administration advised that –</p> <p>(a) about 35% of primary and secondary students were receiving STAS grants, of which around 60% (i.e. over 130 000 students) were full grant recipients and 40% (i.e. nearly 100 000 students) were half grant recipients; and</p> <p>(b) there were about 180 000 kindergarten students in Hong Kong.</p> <p>In the light of the above statistics, Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che estimated that there were around 35 000 needy kindergarten students. They could be covered by the proposed one-off special subsidy with an additional provision of about \$10 million. To save the administrative cost of identifying needy kindergarten students, he urged the Administration to consider delegating the power to kindergartens to vet applications for the aforesaid subsidy, and providing appropriate safeguards against abuse.</p> <p>The Alliance for Children Development Rights suggested that the Administration should provide the proposed one-off special subsidy for needy kindergarten students who were eligible for full or 75% fee remission under the Kindergarten and Child Care Centre Fee Remission Scheme ("KCFRS"). The Administration advised that the aforesaid suggestion might leave out some needy kindergarten students who did not need to apply for assistance under the KCFRS.</p> <p>The Chairman urged the Administration to seriously consider members' views on enhancing the proposed one-off special subsidy to benefit more needy. The Administration appealed for members' support for the aforesaid subsidy and undertook to relay members' concerns about kindergarten students to CoP.</p>	
015518 - 015600	Chairman 葵涌不適切居所關注組	Presentation of views	
015601 - 015707	Chairman 葵涌劏房戶關注組	Presentation of views	
015708 - 015737	Chairman TSW Community Development Alliance	Presentation of views	

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015738 - 015839	Chairman 爭取低收入家庭保障 聯席	Presentation of views	
015840 - 015924	Chairman 葵涌低收入劏房住戶 聯盟	Presentation of views	
015925 - 020028	Chairman Alliance for Children Development Rights	Presentation of views	
020029 - 020844	Chairman Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung Admin Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung	<p>Pointing out the main objective of CCF, Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung urged the Administration to accept the suggestions of members and deputations to expand the coverage of the proposed one-off special subsidy to benefit more needy people who fell outside the social safety net or those within the safety net but had special circumstances that were not covered.</p> <p>The Administration reiterated that the suggestions on providing a one-off special subsidy for needy kindergarten students and a half subsidy for half grant recipients of STAS would be relayed to CoP.</p> <p>Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung asked the Administration to prepare an estimate on the additional provision required, of which the amount should be limited, for expanding the coverage of the proposed one-off special subsidy to facilitate the discussion between the Administration and the CCF Task Force.</p> <p>The Chairman said that the Administration and the CCF Task Force should thoroughly consider the suggestions of members and deputations to enhance the proposed one-off special subsidy, such as increasing the amount of subsidy, extending the coverage of the subsidy to needy kindergarten students and half grant recipients of STAS. He also requested the Administration to keep members informed of the development, if any, of the discussion by the CCF Task Force on the suggestions and the LIFA Scheme.</p> <p>[<i>Post-meeting note:</i> At its meeting on 27 March 2015, CoP endorsed the provision of a one-off special subsidy for primary and secondary students on full grant under STAS before the launch of LIFA. Each eligible student will be given a one-off subsidy of \$3,600 in the 2015/16 school year.]</p>	

Time marker	Speaker(s)	Subject(s)	Action required
<i>Agenda item II – Enhanced support for post-secondary, secondary and primary students with special education and financial needs</i>			
020845 - 021202	Chairman Admin	Briefing by the Administration on the funding proposals for CCF to launch two programmes in enhancing support for primary, secondary and post-secondary students with special educational needs ("SEN") and financial needs.	
021203 - 021835	Chairman Admin	<p>The Chairman expressed support for providing a cash grant for eligible ordinary schools to arrange SEN co-ordinators ("SENCO"). He, however, commented that –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) the cash grant should be provided for all ordinary schools admitting students with SEN to address their special needs irrespective of their financial status; and</li> <li>(b) the proposed level of cash grant, equivalent to the mid-point salary of Graduate Masters/Mistresses or Assistant Primary School Masters/Mistresses, would not be adequate to allow schools to release or employ senior teachers, who were considered more appropriate to take up the post of SENCO. He asked if the Administration would consider increasing the amount of cash grant and reviewing the pilot programme on SENCO during the three-year pilot period.</li> </ul> <p>The Administration advised that –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) as the pilot programme on SENCO would be launched under CCF, eligibility criteria were set for the aforesaid programme to facilitate the selection of pilot schools and ensure that the funding would be spent on supporting those in need. Under the pilot programme, SENCO support would be provided for all students with SEN, regardless of their financial status, in the pilot schools; and</li> <li>(b) a clear direction on the qualification and training requirements and responsibilities of SENCO was expected to be given after the three-year pilot period. The effectiveness of SENCO would also be assessed in the pilot period.</li> </ul>	
021836 - 022244	Chairman Mr Frankie YICK Admin	<p>Mr Frankie YICK called on the Administration to –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) provide the amount of Learning Support Grant ("LSG") for ordinary schools</li> </ul>	

Time marker	Speaker(s)	Subject(s)	Action required
		<p>according to the number of students with SEN they admitted without setting a ceiling of \$1.5 million per annum for each ordinary school; and</p> <p>(b) enhance the support of educational psychologists for students with SEN studying in ordinary schools.</p> <p>The Administration noted Mr YICK's views and was concerned that the removal of the LSG ceiling of \$1.5 million might induce schools concerned to admit more students with SEN, which would not be conducive to the implementation of integrated education. The Administration would keep in view the implementation of LSG.</p>	
022245 - 022650	Chairman Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che Admin	<p>Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che urged the Administration to provide samples of Individual Education Plans ("IEPs") for SENCO to follow and closely liaise with the schools participating in the pilot programme on SENCO to enhance the support for their students with SEN.</p> <p>The Administration advised that according to the proposal, SENCO would co-ordinate the formulation, implementation and review of SEN support measures, including IEPs, in school. The Administration would review the duties of SENCO by seeking advice from overseas experts and taking into account the experience gained from the pilot programme on SENCO.</p>	
022651 - 023133	Chairman Mr LEE Cheuk-yan Admin	<p>Mr LEE Cheuk-yan asked if the Administration would consider shortening the pilot period of the SENCO programme and regularizing the programme as soon as possible.</p> <p>The Administration advised that time was required to allow the participating schools to familiarize with the operation with the new SENCO post, and identify requirements and duties of SENCO before considering whether the pilot programme on SENCO should be regularized. The Administration would closely monitor the implementation of the pilot programme and start the evaluation from the second year of the pilot programme.</p> <p>The Chairman asked the Administration to earmark the required resources to carry out the aforesaid review.</p>	

<b>Time marker</b>	<b>Speaker(s)</b>	<b>Subject(s)</b>	<b>Action required</b>
<i>Agenda item III – Item(s) for discussion at the next meeting</i>			
023134 - 023148	Chairman	Item for discussion at the next meeting	

Council Business Division 2  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
23 April 2015