

For information on
19 February 2013

**Legislative Council Panel on Education
Subcommittee on Integrated Education**

**Response to the Equal Opportunities Commission's Report of the
Study on Equal Learning Opportunities for Students with Disabilities
under the Integrated Education System**

Purpose

This paper sets out the Administration's response to the views and recommendations in the Report of the Study on Equal Learning Opportunities for Students with Disabilities under the Integrated Education System (the Report) released by the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC).

Background

2. The EOC commissioned the Centre for Special Educational Needs and Inclusive Education of the Hong Kong Institute of Education to conduct a study on equal learning opportunities for students with disabilities under the integrated education (IE) system from September 2010 to November 2011. The Report was released on 22 November 2012, putting forth a number of recommendations on the implementation of IE.

Administration's Response

3. The Whole School Approach (WSA) to IE currently implemented in Hong Kong is in line with the global trend in the development of IE. According to our observations and communication with schools, schools are in support of IE. With accumulated practical experiences gained over the years, more and more schools are adopting WSA in providing appropriate support for students with special educational needs (SEN) in the three inter-connected dimensions of school policies, culture and practices.

4. In EOC's study, a review on the implementation of IE was conducted. The majority of its major recommendations are consistent with the direction and scope of development promoted by the Education Bureau (EDB) and the education sector in the past

years. This reaffirms that the IE policy and approaches adopted over the years are in the right direction. For continuous improvement, we will make reference to the Report in the implementation of IE. The Administration's response to the views and 11 recommendations in the Report is at Annex I.

IE Policy and Practice

5. The EDB implements IE in accordance with five basic principles, namely early identification, early intervention, WSA, home-school co-operation and cross-sector collaboration. Under these basic principles, schools provide the most suitable learning environment and teaching adaptations for their students in the light of their learning needs and cultivate an inclusive culture in school.

6. The EDB has been providing ordinary primary and secondary schools with additional resources, professional support and teacher training to help them cater for the students with SEN. In terms of resources, the EDB has provided schools with additional teachers/teaching assistants, Learning Support Grant, Enhanced Speech Therapy Grant, Top-up Fund, etc. Schools may pool and flexibly deploy such resources to employ additional teaching staff or assistants and procure professional services, so as to enhance the learning effectiveness of the students with SEN.

7. On professional support, the professional staff of the EDB pays regular visits to schools to render advice on their support policies and measures, teaching strategies and resource deployment, etc. The educational psychologists and speech therapists also assist teachers in drawing up appropriate individual education plans for students and implementing various support measures. Moreover, the EDB has invited schools with rich experience and good practices in IE to serve as Special Schools cum Resource Centres and Resource Schools on WSA. They will offer school-based support for other schools, share experiences and support strategies in implementing IE and operate short-term attachment programme. To provide schools with practical guidance, the EDB published the "Operation Guide on the Whole School Approach to Integrated Education" and the "Special Arrangements for Internal Examinations for Students with Special Educational Needs". At the same time, we are further expanding the School-based Educational Psychology Service with the target of covering all public sector primary and secondary schools in the 2016/17 school year.

8. With regard to teacher training, we have set a teacher professional development framework and launched a new round of professional development programmes for teachers in the 2012/13 school year with set training targets, in order to further enhance the professional capacity of schools and teachers in catering for students with different types of SEN.

9. Successful implementation of IE hinges not only on the efforts of the EDB, schools and parents, but also the support and participation of various sectors in the community, particularly collaboration of the medical and social welfare sectors as well as non-governmental organisations (NGOs) sectors, with whom we work jointly to assist schools in identifying and catering for students with SEN. Over the past few years, we have launched a number of cross-sectoral collaboration programmes. We envisage that closer collaboration among different sectors will gain momentum, thus enabling students with SEN to learn and develop in a caring and inclusive society. As always, the EDB will continue to step up publicity and dissemination of information on IE through various activities. We are also exploring ways to promote the concept of inclusion in a systematic manner through various forms and means, including Announcements of Public Interest. We hope to enhance public awareness in this respect for fostering a caring and inclusive society.

IE Review

10. The Administration has kept various IE measures under review on an on-going basis. In 2005, the EDB set up the Task Force on Integrated Education in Mainstream Schools (IE Task Force), which comprises representatives from the education sector (including representatives from various school councils), tertiary institutions, other government departments, NGOs and parent groups. Through regular meetings of the IE Task Force, the EDB discusses with stakeholders the development of IE and possible improvement measures. The EDB also, from time to time, meets with representatives from voluntary organisations, parent groups and school councils, etc. to directly gauge their views on the implementation of IE.

11. The EDB conducted a comprehensive review of the implementation of IE in mid-2012, and submitted a paper to the Legislative Council Panel on Education on 10 July 2012 to brief Members on the progress of implementing IE and the way forward (see [Annex II](#)). With regard to the EOC's report, the IE Task Force was briefed and had a discussion in its meeting in December 2012. In essence, the IE Task Force agreed to the IE policy and the overall direction of its development. The IE Task Force's comments on the views and recommendations put forth in the Report are included in the consolidated response at Annex I.

Views Sought

12. Members are invited to note the content of this paper.

Education Bureau

February 2013

**Findings and Recommendations of the
Report of the Study on Equal Learning Opportunities for Students with Disabilities
under the Integrated Education System released by the Equal Opportunities Commission**

Administration's Response

Views and Recommendations of the Study Report	Response
<p>1. Identification of students with special educational needs (SEN)</p> <p><i>View:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The assessment procedure is simple and the assessment reports do not cover sufficient details. <p><i>Recommendations:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment should be taken 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Maternal and Child Health Centres (MCHC) of the Department of Health (DH) work together with parents to monitor children from birth to the age of five for any possible developmental disorders at different stages of growth. In 2005, the DH, the Hospital Authority (HA), the Education Bureau (EDB) and the Social Welfare Department (SWD) developed in collaboration a referral mechanism known as the Comprehensive Child Development Service to assist pre-primary institutions in early identification of pre-schoolers with any physical, developmental and behavioural problems for referral to MCHCs in the respective districts for assessment. Further referral to the Child Assessment Service (CAS) of the DH will be made if necessary. • The CAS provides comprehensive multi-disciplinary assessment services for children who are under 12 years of age with signs of developmental-behavioural problems, and arrange rehabilitation services for them as necessary. If schools, teachers, parents or any other persons suspect that a child under 12 years of age has SEN, they may refer the case via registered medical practitioners or psychologists to the CAS for a comprehensive assessment. The assessment team comprises multiple-disciplinary professionals

Views and Recommendations of the Study Report	Response
<p>at the pre-school stage;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A comprehensive and detailed assessment report should be provided to parents, teachers and professionals. 	<p>such as paediatricians, clinical psychologists, medical social workers, audiologists, speech therapists, optometrists, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, public health nurses and other personnel, who would work together to provide assessments and diagnosis as necessary. The assessment team would evaluate the child’s physical, cognitive, intellectual, linguistic, social and other abilities, and arrange and coordinate rehabilitation services for them with regard to their individual needs and family circumstances. Services to be arranged include treatment by the multi-disciplinary team of the HA, rehabilitation training and SEN support services, etc. In addition, the SWD provides pre-school rehabilitation services through the Pre-school Rehabilitation Services including the Special Child Care Centres, Early Education and Training Centres and the Integrated Programme in Kindergarten-cum-Child Care Centres. They provide early intervention services that are beneficial to the physical and mental development as well as the enhancement of social skills of the children with SEN, with a view to raising their opportunities to enroll in ordinary schools and to participate in the daily activities. They also assist their family in catering for their special needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While children await placement in respective education and training services, the CAS also provides interim support to parents, such as parenting programs, workshops and practical training etc., so as to enhance the parents’ understanding of their children and facilitate proper care and early intervention. In tandem, assessment reports prepared by the CAS of the DH are also provided to parents and special - centres concerned so that relevant support and follow up actions can be planned and delivered. Meanwhile, the HA offers appropriate support and training to parents and carers of the children receiving specialised treatment from the HA to enhance their understanding of their children’s symptoms and treatment needs. The multi-disciplinary team of HA also maintains close contact with relevant bodies

Views and Recommendations of the Study Report	Response
	<p>such as schools or pre-school organisations, so that appropriate referrals and support can be arranged to meet the developmental needs of these children.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At primary school stage, all public sector primary schools in Hong Kong make use of the “Observation Checklist for Teachers” and “Teachers’ Observation Checklist for Identifying Speech and Language Impaired Students in Primary Schools” provided by the EDB to early identify primary one students with learning difficulties or speech and language impairments (SLI), and provide early support for students in need. Students identified to have persistent learning difficulties are referred by schools to the educational psychologists for assessments. The educational psychologists will then provide a comprehensive assessment report to the schools concerned for follow-up. A summary report will also be given to parents. Case conferences will be held after the assessments, in which the educational psychologists will explain to teachers and parents the assessment results and the SEN of the student, and together they will draw up a follow-up plan. On support for children with SLI, school-based speech therapists also provide schools with the students’ speech and language assessment reports, and explain to teachers and parents the speech and language problems and treatment plans of the children.
<p>2. Initiatives of schools to implement integrated education (IE)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EDB agrees and has been requesting schools to make appropriate planning for cultivation and implementation of inclusive culture, policies and practices, to actively promote the Whole School Approach (WSA) to IE, and to adopt the 3-Tier Intervention Model in supporting students with SEN. To enhance the effectiveness of IE, the EDB will continue to provide schools with additional resources, professional support and teacher training, and encourage the sector to share effective support strategies

<p>Views and Recommendations of the Study Report</p>	<p>Response</p>
<p><i>View:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some principals, teachers and professionals express disagreement about adopting necessary modification to the facilities and pedagogy, thus affecting the learning of students with SEN. <p><i>Recommendations:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools should formulate long-term plans and policies on the curricula and accommodation for students with SEN; • Schools should achieve consensus with stakeholders in the direction and goals of implementing IE. 	<p>and measures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the EDB’s promotion over the years, schools have set up student support teams or functional teams of similar nature led by principals, vice-principals or senior teachers to plan, implement and review support services for students with SEN, including making changes in facilities and pedagogy to remove barriers to learning. The teams should communicate and collaborate closely with parents and stakeholders in order to reach a consensus on culture building, policy formulation and implementation so that students with SEN can be provided with appropriate education.

Views and Recommendations of the Study Report	Response
<p>3. Allocation of resources and manpower</p> <p><i>View:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some principals, teachers, professionals and parents of students with SEN consider that schools do not receive enough government subsidies/ resources to implement IE. <p><i>Recommendation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The EDB should issue guidelines that set out clear referral procedures and enhance professional collaboration between ordinary schools and special 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To support students with SEN, the EDB has been providing schools with additional resources, including additional teachers to cater for students with low academic achievement, Learning Support Grant, Enhanced Speech Therapy Grant and Top-up Fund, etc. Schools may deploy such resources flexibly to employ additional teaching staff and procure professional services, having regard to the needs of their students and the situation of the school. The EDB attaches great importance to communicate with schools and stakeholders. Apart from issuing circulars and circular memoranda to elucidate its policies and measures to the sector as necessary, the EDB has also produced the “Operation Guide on the WSA to IE” which provides guiding principles and practicable strategies to assist ordinary schools in implementing the policy and achieving the objectives of inclusion. To enhance parents’ understanding of the implementation of IE and their roles, the EDB has prepared the “Parent Guide on the WSA to IE”, providing parents with information on the procedures for identifying and assessing different types of SEN and on various support strategies. These documents have been uploaded onto the EDB website for reference of schools and parents. The EDB also disseminates from time to time the IE policy and measures to various stakeholders through briefing sessions, talks and seminars. On admission arrangements, it has been a long-standing practice for parents to apply for a place for their children in ordinary primary and secondary schools through the established mechanisms, i.e. the Primary One Admission System and Secondary School Places Allocation System. We encourage parents to

Views and Recommendations of the Study Report	Response
<p>schools to facilitate the effective implementation of the dual-track mode of “mainstream IE and special education”.</p>	<p>proactively provide information on SEN of their children to the EDB and schools. Subject to the consent of the parents, the EDB will collect and send the information to the students’ school for reference and follow-up actions. Should students be assessed suitable for placement in special schools, the specialist conducting the assessment will send the assessment report to the EDB for arranging such students to attend special schools accordingly. The EDB conducts briefing sessions every year to inform parents of pre-schoolers with SEN of the referral procedures and support measures offered by schools, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After children are admitted to schools, if parents find their children in need of special support in terms of learning or adjustment, they should discuss the matter with the school so that the school can provide necessary support services for their children accordingly. Student guidance teachers and social workers in ordinary schools may, according to the guidelines of the EDB, refer the students with SEN to special schools for intensive support services as appropriate. During regular school visits, professional staff of the EDB may provide advice and suggestions on individual cases when needed. In fact, the respective section of the EDB receives referral cases from ordinary schools every school year and necessary arrangements are made accordingly. • The EDB will continue to foster collaboration between ordinary schools and special schools. We will continue to invite special schools to serve as Special Schools cum Resource Centres (SSRCs) and ordinary schools with rich and proven experience in IE to serve as Resource Schools on WSA. They will conduct professional exchanges with ordinary schools and provide school-based support for them. SSRCs also provide short-term attachment programmes to assist ordinary schools in supporting

<p>Views and Recommendations of the Study Report</p>	<p>Response</p>
	<p>intellectually disabled students with severe adjustment difficulties. Students concerned will be arranged to join the short-term attachment programmes which last for three to six months at a suitable SSRC. Apart from offering short-term attachment programmes, teachers of SSRCs will provide teachers of ordinary schools with training and consultation to enhance their professional capability so that they can support these students when they return to their own schools upon completion of the short-term attachment programmes.</p>
<p>4. Preparation and training of school staff</p> <p><i>View:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some teaching staff interviewed consider that they are not familiar with IE and have not received proper training. The number of staff who have received training is insufficient. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We concur that the successful implementation of IE hinges on teachers' abilities and skills in dealing with students with SEN. In this connection, from the 2007/08 school year onwards, the EDB commissioned structured training courses for serving teachers on the support for students with SEN pitched at three levels of competencies, namely Basic, Advanced and Thematic (BAT) Courses. Since the EOC's study was conducted between the years 2010 and 2011, the data collected in the study may not fully capture the latest situation in the education sector. For example, there has been a steady increase in the number of teachers who have received training in special education. By the end of the 2011/12 school year, over 25% of the teachers in ordinary schools had completed BAT Courses of 30 contact hours or more, or equivalent, and over 80% of the primary schools had 10% or more of the teachers having completed basic training in special education. In view of the positive feedback of the sector and other stakeholders, the EDB continued from the 2012/13 school year onwards to offer BAT Courses to teachers. An additional training course on Education of Students with Severe or Multiple Disabilities is also arranged for special school teachers to meet their specific training needs. The EDB

Views and Recommendations of the Study Report	Response
<p><i>Recommendations:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All school staff, including principals, teachers, teaching assistants, should be encouraged to receive training in special education; • Pre-service teacher training programmes in tertiary institutions should include special education as a core module; • The Government should provide incentives for teaching staff to pursue further studies in special education by, for example, making completion of such training a prerequisite for promotion. 	<p>will closely monitor the progress of teacher training and regularly review the training targets. We will also organize training programmes, talks, seminars and workshops on special education for principals, teachers and teaching assistants on a need basis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At present, the four teacher education institutes (the University of Hong Kong, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Institute of Education and the Open University) have made “supporting students with SEN” or related subject a compulsory module. For the Baptist University of Hong Kong, while the relevant subject is an elective, module combinations have rendered the subject a compulsory module. The EDB will continue to encourage teacher education institutions to enhance prospective teachers’ knowledge in students with SEN and the relevant support strategies. • Currently, ordinary school teachers who have completed BAT Courses amounting to 90 contact hours or more are considered as having completed the acceptable refresher training courses for promotion purpose. As for special school teachers, successful completion of the aforesaid training course on Education of Students with Severe or Multiple Disabilities or BAT Courses with an aggregated 240 contact hours or equivalent will be recognised as having special education qualification for promotion purpose. • As professionals, teachers will engage in continuing study having regard to the development of their schools and needs in teaching. When considering prospective candidates for promotion, schools will take into account a number of factors. Teachers’ professionalism and performance in supporting students

Views and Recommendations of the Study Report	Response
	with SEN are believed to be one of them.
<p>5. Appointment of designated SEN coordinators</p> <p><i>View:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The implementation of IE is hindered by inadequate manpower, heavy workload and a lack of collaboration among teachers. <p><i>Recommendations:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Government should consider setting up a functional post at management level in school, viz. a designated teacher, to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The EDB has always encouraged schools to adopt a WSA in implementing IE and set up student support teams to coordinate various support measures to cater for student diversity. In the 2008/09 school year, the EDB created a deputy headship post in primary schools, the duties of which are, among others, to spearhead and coordinate efforts to support students with SEN. In fact, the EDB has advised primary and secondary schools to assign their vice-principals to lead and coordinate the task for effective engagement of the teaching force in implementing IE. Schools may consider deploying their manpower as appropriate so that senior teachers will be designated to assist the principals and vice-principals in coordinating and implementing the WSA to IE. With regard to EDB's support for schools with rich experience in IE to support other partner schools, the EDB invited special schools to serve as SSRCs in the 2003/04 school year and extended the invitation to ordinary schools with rich experience and good practices in IE to serve as Resource Schools in the 2005/06 school year. They offer school-based support for other ordinary schools and share with them effective strategies and measures in implementing IE. Proven effective, this measure was regularised in the 2009/10 school year. Currently, there are 13 Resource Schools and 12 SSRCs.

Views and Recommendations of the Study Report	Response
<p>deal with matters of students with SEN;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools should connect with other schools with rich experiences in IE for support. 	
<p>6. WSA</p> <p><i>View:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some teachers and professionals are not familiar with the “Code of Practice on Education” under the Disability Discrimination Ordinance (DDO) and “Catering for Student Differences ~ Indicators for Inclusion”. They also express that they do not 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The “Code of Practice on Education” issued by the EOC in accordance with the DDO assists educational establishments in developing policies that prevent and eliminate disability discrimination. It also provides schools and personnel in the sector with practical guidance. The EDB has issued circulars reminding all schools that, in formulating and revising their school policies, they should comply with the DDO and avoid any form of discrimination. The EDB has uploaded some common examples and reference materials on adopting the principle of equal opportunities in school onto its website for reference of schools. Schools are also reminded to browse through the EOC website to have a better understanding of the frequently asked questions and important cases on equal opportunities. Moreover, the EDB disseminates from time to time relevant information through various means such as talks, sharing sessions, information leaflets and the online Special Education Newsletter. The EDB published the “Operation Guide on the WSA to IE”, which provides guiding principles and practicable strategies for ordinary schools to formulate policies, measures and evaluation mechanisms for achieving the objective of inclusion. Furthermore, the EDB organises thematic seminars, workshops, talks and experience-sharing sessions in each school year for teachers to keep abreast of the latest

Views and Recommendations of the Study Report	Response
<p>know much about the development of integrated education and related support resources.</p> <p><i>Recommendations:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools should reduce segregation and discrimination in class placement of students with SEN (especially for students with intellectual disability, Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorders and Autism Spectrum Disorders who are generally not welcome); • Schools should refer to the guidelines on WSA provided by the EDB in the processes 	<p>development in special education.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EDB has been promoting the WSA to IE. Schools should provide appropriate support to and make necessary adaptations to cater for the varying needs of individual students with SEN. Students with SEN should be free from discrimination in admission and class placement, which should be conducted professionally based on, among others, students’ abilities, psychological development and social needs. Schools will make the most appropriate class placement arrangements in the light of their individual circumstances and an array of factors, including teaching and learning arrangements, division of responsibilities among the teaching force and the effectiveness of class management. It is worth noting that class placement is a professional decision which should rest with schools. It is not appropriate for the EDB to issue guidelines requiring all schools to adopt a standardised class placement model. At the meeting of the Task Force on Integrated Education in Mainstream Schools (IE Task Force) held in December 2012, principal representatives opined that class placement was made primarily on the basis of students’ abilities and learning needs. Schools should formulate class placement criteria that meet their individual circumstances. It is not advisable to standardise the class placement practice. • Special Education Support Officers, inspectors and specialists of the EDB have reminded schools during their visits that reference should be made to the “Catering for Student Differences ~ Indicators for Inclusion” when drawing up their IE policies and annual school plans.

Views and Recommendations of the Study Report	Response
of student admission and class placement.	
<p>7. Specialised and long-term individual education plan (IEP) for students with SEN</p> <p><i>View:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most parents of students with SEN are satisfied with their children’s learning in schools while some parents expect schools to provide more resources and support for their children. <p><i>Recommendations:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EDB should consider allocating more resources, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Government is adopting a dual-track mode in delivering special education. The EDB will, subject to the assessment and recommendations of specialists and the consent of the parents, refer students with severe or multiple disabilities to special schools for intensive support services. Other students with SEN may attend ordinary schools. Since students with severe or multiple disabilities in special schools are in need of intensive support services, the EDB will request and assist schools in drawing up IEP for them. Regular review on the progress and effectiveness of these IEP is carried out by schools. • Most of the students with SEN in ordinary schools are able to cope with the mainstream curriculum and attend classes together with other students. To facilitate their studies, the EDB encourage schools to adopt the 3-Tier Intervention Model to provide additional support for students with SEN in accordance with their individual needs. The level of intervention will be adjusted according to the progress and needs of students as shown in their formative and summative assessments. • For students in ordinary schools who are in need of Tier-3 individualised support, we request schools to draw up IEP for them and follow up regularly. For other students with SEN, schools are required to record the support and adaptations offered as well as their performance and progress for regular review and adjustment of the level of support required. In other words, schools have been providing appropriate support and follow-up for all students with SEN by schools under the prevailing mechanism. If schools are requested to formulate a comprehensive IEP for each student with SEN, we have to be mindful of the

Views and Recommendations of the Study Report	Response
<p>and delineating the function and implementation format of IEP;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools should be requested to provide specialised and long-term IEP for each student diagnosed with SEN in order to protect their rights of receiving appropriate educational arrangements. 	<p>need to strike a balance between teachers' workload and the effectiveness of the proposed measure in further enhancing the support already provided. At the IE Task Force meeting, representatives of primary and secondary school principals held that IEPs were tailor-made for individual students. If every student with SEN was to be provided with an IEP regardless of the level of severity of their special needs, not only schools would be overwhelmed with extra workload, the actual cost-effectiveness of the arrangement would also be in question.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Therefore, we have reservation about the recommendation of drawing up IEP for each student with SEN.
<p>8. Caring school</p> <p><i>View:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The majority of students with SEN report that they have good relationship with teachers while some hold opposite views. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The EBD has been encouraging schools to cultivate a caring school culture. As part of the efforts, it has co-organised the "Caring School Award Scheme" with the Hong Kong Christian Service and Hong Kong Association of Careers Masters and Guidance Masters since the 2008/09 school year. The Scheme commends schools that promote and embrace the caring school policy and initiatives. It also encourages schools to build a caring culture through various activities and programmes. Under the Scheme, the most caring award for students with special needs is one of its major awards all along. About 290 primary and secondary schools took part in the Scheme in the 2012/13 school year. The EDB attaches great importance to the whole-person development of and nurturing of values among students. We have strengthened the personal development education and life education as an element in

Views and Recommendations of the Study Report	Response
<p><i>Recommendations:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching staff should foster the spirit of education for all and reduce the rejection of students with SEN; • Schools should help students understand the importance of mutual respect and elimination of discrimination through public education, and enhance the social skills of students with SEN; • Zero tolerance should be adopted towards any form or degree of bullying. 	<p>our curriculum with a view to instilling in students a sense of respect for others, and helping them acquire communication, social and conflict-management skills to minimise bullying. The EDB has produced the “Co-creating a Harmonious School” and “Co-creating a Harmonious School – Stop Bullying” resource packages, which include advice for schools on formulation of anti-bullying policy through WSA; lesson plans on nurturing students’ empathy; issues on how to handle cyber bullying.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EDB adopts a zero tolerance policy towards school bullying. Any form of bullying, be it verbal, physical and cyber, for whatever reasons (including physique, capability, religious, racial, sex orientation and gender), is not acceptable. The EDB regularly issues circulars to schools asking them to treat the matter seriously and take proactive measures to ensure the safety of students at schools, and create a harmonious school environment. The EDB also organises seminars and workshops for schools to draw their attention to relevant guidelines which should be observed when handling school bullying incidents. If bullying unfortunately takes place, schools should intervene and take follow up actions in accordance with the relevant guidelines as soon as possible, in the interest of education, guidance and protection of their students. They should take vigorous actions to help the bullying students rectify their behavioural problems, step up protection for the bullied students and restore a harmonious school environment.
<p>9. Home-school communication and cooperation/public</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EDB recognises the importance of home-school cooperation. It has been urging schools to establish a regular communication mechanism with parents, the details of which have been set out in the “Operation Guide on the WSA to IE”, including engaging parents in devising support plans, monitoring their children’s learning progress and the effectiveness of support measures, etc. to tie in with the work of

Views and Recommendations of the Study Report	Response
<p>education</p> <p><i>View:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a significant discrepancy between teachers and parents in their perception toward the sufficiency and appropriateness of support given by schools to students with SEN (insufficient communication between schools and parents). <p><i>Recommendations:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools should notify parents about their IE policy and support as soon as possible so as to eliminate their mistrust and worries. 	<p>the schools. The EDB has also required schools to elucidate their policies, additional resources and support measures, etc. on IE in their Annual School Reports, and upload such information onto their school websites for parents' reference. To enhance parents' understanding of their roles and responsibilities in the context of the implementation of IE, the EDB issued the "Parent Guide on WSA to IE" as early as 2008. The Parent Guide has been uploaded onto the EDB's website and is updated from time to time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EDB fully appreciates the importance of public education in promoting IE and has been enhancing the public's and parents' awareness of IE through various media. In the last five years, a series of public education activities were rolled out. We will continue to organise different activities to promote inclusion and enhance public awareness and acceptance of people with disabilities so as to create a caring and inclusive community. • Major public education activities implemented by the EDB in the last five years are set out as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In the 2008/09 school year, the EDB, DH and Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) jointly produced a series of 10 episodes of TV programme "Parenting", based on parents' real-life experiences in taking care of their children with SEN, to enable the public to gain a better understanding of different types of SEN. - Since May 2009, an online Special Education Newsletter has been published regularly to help parents

Views and Recommendations of the Study Report	Response
<p>Parents of students with SEN should recognise their rights of participation and giving opinions;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EDB may enhance the public’s and parents’ knowledge of IE and their respect for human rights through media publicity (e.g. TV and internet). 	<p>and the public gain a better understanding of IE policy and support measures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In 2009, two video production and broadcasting contests were jointly organised with the DH and the Subsidized Primary Schools Council for the promotion of IE to assist schools in cultivating an inclusive school culture, - In late June 2011, the EDB participated in the “Learning and Teaching Expo 2011” organised by the HKEdCity and introduced to teachers and the education sector the support strategies adopted by ordinary schools in implementing IE as well as the characteristics of learning and teaching in special schools through booth displays and school visits. - In late June 2011, the EDB staged the “Special Schools Variety Show” jointly with the RTHK, the Hong Kong Special Schools Council and HKIEd at the Hong Kong Coliseum in Hung Hom not only to enhance public understanding and appreciation of the capabilities and talents of special school students but also to honour special schools for their contributions and achievements. Between June and August 2011, an eight-part series featuring special schools was also produced and broadcast on the radio programme “Crazy and Happy”. - In mid 2012, “The Visual Art Contest on Inclusion”, which aimed at enhancing public awareness of and support for IE, was organised. The prize presentation ceremony and display of winning entries were held at the “Learning and Teaching Expo 2012” at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition

Views and Recommendations of the Study Report	Response
	<p>Centre in November 2012. A roving exhibition of the winning entries was staged at various public venues, such as Art in MTR – Community Art Galleries and the Hong Kong Cultural Centre, to further promote the message of inclusion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Between October 2012 and January 2013, two mini-series in Chinese (“讓我高飛” and “天生我才”) featuring the stories of four primary and secondary students with SEN were broadcast. The mini-series can be viewed on the websites of the EDB and the HKEdCity. - From 22 to 24 November 2012, a major public event – “Learning and Teaching Expo 2012” – was held to highlight the development and achievements of IE. Local and overseas academics were invited to give thematic talks and seminars. Relevant government departments and statutory bodies (including the EOC), NGOs, tertiary institutions, parent groups and schools set up booths to showcase their services, teaching materials and ancillary equipment for supporting students with SEN. In tandem, the EDB also arranged school visits to enable the sector, schools, teachers and parents to keep abreast of the latest development of IE. A theme song (天生有才) was composed for the event to boost the promotion of the characteristics and support needs of students with SEN.
10. Community network support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EDB concurs that cross-sector collaboration can promote professional exchanges and create synergy, thus enhancing the effectiveness of the support for students with SEN. Moreover, to enhance the identification and intervention of students with SEN, the EDB has engaged in cross-sector collaboration with tertiary institutions in developing screening/assessment tools and teaching materials for use by

Views and Recommendations of the Study Report	Response
<p><i>View:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In general, schools receive funding through the New Funding Mode and have contact with NGOs. Most schools report that the support services have certain effectiveness while some consider the effect varying. <p><i>Recommendations:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools may build up long-term collaborative relationship with NGOs, professional organisations, special schools and IE resource schools to provide support services for SEN students' learning and staff training; 	<p>teachers and parents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Report also noted that schools in general use government funding for procuring service from NGOs, organising activities or talks, as well as providing consultation service or collaboration projects. In fact, schools can tap external professional knowledge through procurement of services and research projects jointly conducted with tertiary institutions. In addition, schools can work with NGOs to promote inclusive culture and support students with SEN. The EDB also organises seminars, network conferences and professional exchange sessions to enable teachers to share successful experiences and achievements. Schools can also establish networks with SSRCs and Resource Schools on WSA to facilitate continuous professional development. Professional staff of the EDB pays regular visits to schools to provide advice on schools' support policy, measures, teaching strategies, resources deployment (including additional resources provided for schools, screening tools and teaching resources developed for various types of students with SEN) and home-school co-operation, etc. The EDB also meets with voluntary organisations, parent groups and school councils from time to time to directly gauge their views on the implementation of IE and explore with them opportunities for collaboration. The EDB will continue to disseminate information to schools about special education resources available, including strengthening the database and network of its Special Education Resource Centre to facilitate convergence of various resources and information for use and sharing among teachers. Books and publications on special education are also procured and subscribed by the Centre for the sector's reference. The relevant information has been uploaded onto the EBD's website.

Views and Recommendations of the Study Report	Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The EDB should publicise more extensively about the resources and support available. 	
<p>11. Way forward for students with SEN</p> <p><i>View:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some teachers are concerned about further education and career of students with SEN following the development of the new senior secondary curriculum. <p><i>Recommendations:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Government and related organisation should offer a wide range of appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Government is committed to providing young people, including students with SEN, with flexible and diversified study pathways with multiple entry and exit points. At present, 17 local post-secondary institutions are offering 550 undergraduate programmes, and 390 sub-degree programmes that encompass a variety of professional and academic courses, Yi Jin Diploma programmes, vocational education and training programmes, Youth Pre-employment Training Programme and Youth Work Experience and Training Scheme and other courses. The aforesaid programmes/courses should be able to meet the different needs of secondary school leavers. In this connection, the Vocational Training Council (VTC) took a step further and established a new Youth College in the 2012/13 academic year to provide dedicated support for non-Chinese speaking students and students with SEN to enable them to have appropriate professional education and training opportunities. The post-secondary institutions in Hong Kong are committed to offering equal opportunities to all applicants for admission. The admission decisions of these institutions are based on a holistic assessment of the performance of the applicants. A sub-system under the Joint University Programmes Admissions System has been created for the admission of students with SEN so that they do not need to compete with other applicants. Yet, they must meet the minimum entrance requirements of the corresponding programmes. The VTC also has special admission process for students with SEN. An applicant with SEN who meets the entrance requirements of the programme and satisfies the interview

Views and Recommendations of the Study Report	Response
<p>courses, related manpower and resources for students with SEN to enable them to enjoy equal opportunities in education up to the post-secondary level and career development;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Universities and tertiary institutions should set up well-defined practices in providing adjusted admission criteria, flexible duration of study and appropriate support measures in meeting the needs of the students with SEN. 	<p>assessment will be offered a place.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tertiary institutions have strived to provide equal opportunities in learning. It is understood that they have put in place special arrangements and support services for accommodating students with regard to their special educational needs and field of study. This includes assignment of academic advisors; provision of counselling and guidance in academic studies; special examination and assessment arrangements; flexibility in course registration; special study measures (e.g. enlargers, computers, additional tutorial sessions, advance copies of lecture notes, etc.); suitable on-campus housing, study facilities and amenities; scholarship/financial assistance; acquisition and provision of appropriate equipment or instruments; and career counselling in job search, etc. The Administration has always strived to help people with disabilities secure productive and gainful employment after graduation, thereby enabling them to achieve self-reliance and full integration into society. Through the SWD, the VTC, the Employees Retraining Board and the Labour Department, the Administration provides necessary training, rehabilitation and employment support services for the disabled with different abilities, so as to improve their social adjustment capabilities, enhance their social and vocational skills, and equip them with the work and communication skills required for jobs in the open market. The Administration also provides financial incentives to encourage employers to employ people with disabilities; launched the “Enhancing Employment of People with Disabilities through Small Enterprise Project” to provide funding for NGOs for establishing small enterprises to create more employment opportunities for people with disabilities; and to promote equal opportunities in employment for people with disabilities through cross-sectoral collaboration.

For information on 10 July 2012

Legislative Council Panel on Education

Progress of Implementing Integrated Education in Ordinary Schools and the Way Forward

Purpose

This paper aims to brief Members on the progress of implementing Integrated Education (IE) in ordinary schools and the way forward.

Background

IE Policy

2. The prevailing IE policy aims to provide appropriate education for students with special educational needs (SEN). The Education Bureau (EDB) will, subject to the assessment and recommendations of specialists and the consent of the parents, refer students with severe or multiple disabilities to special schools for intensive support services. Other students with SEN may attend ordinary schools. In the legal aspect, with the enactment of the Disability Discrimination Ordinance (DDO) in 1996, the Equal Opportunities Commission issued a Code of Practice on Education (CoP) in 2001 to provide schools and educators with practical guidance and assist educational establishments in developing policies that prevent and eliminate disability discrimination. The CoP stipulates that educational establishments should not discriminate against students with disabilities and have the obligation to provide reasonable accommodation for students with SEN, including adaptations to teaching, communication and assessment methods. On school education, we encourage schools to provide the least restrictive environment and make appropriate adaptations to cater for student diversity and SEN, with a view to cultivating an inclusive school culture. Details of the support measures taken by the EDB for the implementation of IE are set out below.

Progress

Principles and Strategies for Support

3. The EDB promotes IE in accordance with five basic principles: (a) early identification; (b) early intervention; (c) Whole School Approach; (d) home-school co-operation; and (e) cross-sector collaboration.

(a) Early Identification and (b) Early Intervention

4. For students with SEN, early identification is the first and critical step towards effective intervention. The EDB provides schools with tools and training for early identification of students with SEN. This strategy was adopted as early as 1985, and has been improved from time to time over the past two decades or so. Today, all public sector primary schools in Hong Kong implement the Early Identification and Intervention of Learning Difficulties Programme for Primary One Pupils, according to the guidelines issued by the EDB. Under the programme, teachers make use of the “Observation Checklist for Teachers” and the “Hong Kong Specific Learning Difficulties Behaviour Checklist (for Primary School Pupils)” to identify as early as possible Primary One students with learning difficulties and arrange for early intervention. In the 2010/11 school year, for example, all public sector primary schools in Hong Kong reported the identification of Primary One students with learning difficulties, with the number of such students totaling 10 866. For students whose learning progress remain unsatisfactory after intervention and those who have severe learning difficulties, they will be further assessed and provided with support services by educational psychologists, or referred to other relevant specialists for assessment. The EDB has also designed the “Teachers’ Observation Checklist for Identifying Speech and Language Impaired Students in Primary Schools” to facilitate teachers to early identify primary students with speech and language impairments (SLI) and refer them to speech therapists for assessment and support services if necessary. Taking the 2010/11 school year as an example, public sector schools reported that 4 501 Primary One students were assessed as having SLI.

5. As for students who are entering Primary One and assessed as having SEN, after obtaining their parents’ consent, the EDB will transfer their information to the primary schools concerned before the commencement of the new school year so that the schools will learn about their special needs and arrange suitable support as early as possible. In the 2011/12 school year, about

95% of the parents of such Pre-Primary One students agreed in their reply slips that the EDB could transfer information about their children's SEN to the primary schools concerned. To facilitate their progression to secondary schools, the EDB issues a circular memorandum annually to remind all primary schools to transfer information about their Primary Six students with SEN to the secondary schools concerned as soon as possible after obtaining the consent of their parents so that such students can receive timely support when they progress to secondary level. From the 2006/07 to 2010/11 school years, about 80% of the parents of Primary Six students consented to the transfer of information about their children's SEN by their primary schools to the secondary schools concerned.

6. The number of students with SEN in ordinary schools has been on the rise in recent years. It has increased from 17 600 in the 2008/09 school year to 28 600 in the 2011/12 school year. This reflects increasing awareness of SEN among parents and teachers, as well as the effectiveness of the existing mechanisms for early identification and information transfer.

(c) Whole School Approach (WSA)

7. We encourage schools to adopt a WSA, which entails three interconnected dimensions of a school, namely school policies, culture and practices, in supporting students with SEN. A 3-Tier Intervention Model is used by schools to cater for the individual needs of students with SEN. Tier-1 support refers to the use of basic resources and quality teaching in the regular classroom to help students with transient or mild learning difficulties. Tier-2 support refers to "add on" intervention, such as pull-out or after-school remedial programmes and hired professional services (such as speech therapy services), for students with persistent learning difficulties. Tier-3 support refers to intensive individualised support for students with severe learning difficulties.

Support for Schools with regard to Early Identification, Early Intervention and WSA

8. The EDB has been providing ordinary schools with additional resources, professional support and teacher training to help them cater for students with SEN. The EDB's expenditure on additional support and services for IE increased from \$860 million in the 2008/09 school year to about \$980 million (estimated) in the 2011/12 school year, representing an increase of about 14%.

Additional resources

9. Over the past five years, the EDB provided, enhanced and regularised various kinds of additional resources in the light of the needs of students with SEN and ordinary schools, including the provision of Learning Support Grant for secondary schools and elevation of the ceiling of the Grant to \$1 million per annum starting from the 2008/09 school year, and regularisation of two grants introduced in the 2006/07 school year, namely, Enhanced Speech Therapy Grant for students with SLI and Intensive Support Grant for hardcore cases of students with SEN, with effect from the 2009/10 school year. That was on top of other additional resources all along provided by the EDB, including additional teachers/teaching assistants under the Intensive Remedial Teaching Programme and the Integrated Education Programme, additional teachers to cater for secondary students with low academic achievement, and the Top-up Fund for procuring special equipment for students with disabilities, etc. The purposes and details of the additional resources are set out at Annex I. Schools may pool and flexibly deploy such resources to support the students with SEN, including employing additional teaching assistants and procuring professional services such as speech therapy and other specialist services, so as to bring in professional knowledge and enhance the effectiveness of schools in supporting these students.

Professional Support

10. The professional staff of the EDB pay regular visits to schools to render professional advice on school policies, IE support measures, teaching strategies, resource deployment, home-school co-operation and other matters. Also, the EDB's educational psychologists, audiologists and speech therapists provide case assessment, consultation and professional support services for schools.

11. Schools generally appreciate the support services provided by educational psychologists. As such, starting from the 2008/09 school year, the EDB has been extending the School-based Educational Psychology Service (SBEPS) to support schools in catering for students with different types of SEN at the school system, teacher and student levels. The SBEPS includes case assessment and counselling for students, professional development/consultation for teachers, parent education and professional advice on school development and various school-based support services. In the 2011/12 school year, SBEPS has been extended to 460 public sector primary and secondary schools.

12. To encourage exchanges and collaboration within the sector, the EDB invited special schools to serve as Special Schools cum Resource Centres (SSRCs) in the 2003/04 school year and extended the invitation to ordinary schools with rich experience and good practices in IE to serve as Resource Schools on Whole School Approach (RS-WSA) in the 2005/06 school year to offer school-based support to ordinary schools and share effective support strategies and measures with them. Proven effective, this measure was regularised in the 2009/10 school year. Currently, there are 13 RS-WSA (8 primary schools and 5 secondary schools) and 12 SSRCs.

13. Individual students with SEN may require enhanced or additional professional support to cater for their disabilities and learning difficulties. Such services have all along been provided and continuously enhanced by the EDB. Specifically, the EDB provides additional resource teachers and Braille production officers to the schools for children with visual impairment to provide on-site support and Braille translation services for visually impaired students studying in ordinary schools. The EDB and the schools concerned are exploring how to further enhance the effectiveness of such services. In the past two years, we have successfully expedited the Braille production process so that visually impaired students can be provided with Braille books as soon as possible. As for the support for students with hearing impairment, from the 2010/11 school year onwards, they are provided with two hearing aids if necessary and the replacement period for such aids is shortened from five years to three years. In addition, a pilot project has been launched to refine the mode of additional support for such students.

14. As for students with specific learning difficulties, the EDB launched a five-year project in the 2011/12 school year to support primary schools in applying an evidence-based and widely recognised “Tiered Intervention Model on the Teaching of Chinese Language in Primary Schools” for supporting primary students with specific learning difficulties. At present, 80 primary schools are already trying out the Model with the support of the EDB’s professional staff. It is anticipated that another 40 primary schools will join the project in the coming school year. The EDB is concurrently conducting a pilot project on the enhancement of support services for students with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) in some primary and secondary schools. The project includes structured on-top group training for students with ASD and support for 30 primary schools in developing and piloting a comprehensive school support model at junior primary level for early intervention and mastering of teaching strategies for such students. The EDB will evaluate the effectiveness of the

pilot project to consider the way forward. In addition, the EDB is developing a “Coaching Programme on Development of Executive Skills” to help secondary students with attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (AD/HD) enhance their ability of self management. The programme is being tried out in some public sector secondary schools.

15. In the 2008/09 school year, the EDB published the Operation Guide on the Whole School Approach to Integrated Education, which provides guiding principles and practicable strategies for ordinary schools to formulate policies, measures and evaluation mechanisms for achieving the objective of inclusion. In the 2009/10 school year, the EDB issued a document on special arrangements for school internal assessment for students with SEN to explain the special examination arrangements that should be made by schools for the fair assessment of both ordinary students and those with SEN. Moreover, to facilitate the identification and intervention of students with SEN, the EDB has engaged in cross-sector collaboration with tertiary institutions in developing screening/assessment tools and diversified teaching materials for use by specialists, teachers and parents. Details of the screening tools and teaching materials developed in recent years are set out at Annex II.

Enhanced Special Support

16. As reflected by schools from time to time, while their professional teams comprising guidance and counselling teachers/officers, school social workers and educational psychologists can take care of students with different needs within their areas of expertise, some students with severe emotional and adjustment difficulties have not shown significant improvement despite the exertion of effort in providing school-based support. We agree that schools need additional or enhanced support under such circumstances. Therefore, we provide them with Intensive Support Grant where appropriate so that they can immediately employ teaching assistants to help their teachers handle such difficult cases. If case conferences conclude that short-term pull-out remedial support can facilitate the students’ adjustment, we will refer the students to the Adjustment Unit run by the EDB or short-term attachment programmes run by SSRCs for intensive support so as to help them establish daily routines. When the students return to ordinary schools, the EDB officers will also assist the schools in holding multi-disciplinary case conferences where necessary to map out support plans, such as devising behaviour contracts, award schemes and personal growth plans, etc. In addition, the schools can arrange one-to-one remedial service and draw up individual learning programmes for them.

Teacher Training

17. The successful implementation of IE hinges on the professional competence of teachers in special education and their abilities and skills in dealing with students with SEN. In this connection, strengthening training is one of the major strategies adopted by the EDB. In the 2007/08 school year, the EDB put in place a five-year teacher professional development framework on IE to provide Basic, Advanced and Thematic Courses on various types of SEN systematically with a view to enhancing teachers' professional capacity in catering for students with SEN. We expected that a critical mass of teachers having completed such courses will be formed in each ordinary school and these teachers will guide their colleagues in implementing the WSA and appropriate teaching strategies to support their students with SEN. The EDB also organises training courses for school heads, school management and teaching assistants to ensure that school staff at all levels can receive training of different breadth and depth. Furthermore, the EDB organises seminars, workshops, talks and experience-sharing sessions for teachers to keep abreast of the latest development in special education. It is expected that more than 25% of the teachers of ordinary schools will have received 30 hours or more structured training in catering for students with SEN by the end of the 2011/12 school year.

18. In addition, the EDB has maintained communication with teacher education institutions to encourage them to make "supporting students with SEN" a compulsory item for the pre-service education programmes. The institutions have responded positively. They have either included or planned to include this topic as a compulsory module in their teacher training programmes to enhance prospective teachers' knowledge in this area.

19. The EDB has set up a database to accurately monitor training in special education received by teachers and their needs for such training. We will regularly provide schools with data on training in special education received by their teachers to enable them to draw up plans for their teachers' professional development. If special attention is called for, we will remind the schools concerned to adjust their school-based professional development programmes so as to arrange for their teachers to receive training in special education at an early date.

Monitoring

20. Under the School Development and Accountability Framework introduced by the EDB, schools are required to assess the effectiveness of their support for students with SEN through self-evaluation each year, just as other important school policies and measures, so as to be accountable to its stakeholders. Moreover, the EDB requires schools to submit a self-evaluation report on the implementation of the WSA to IE at the end of a school year. To further enhance transparency, from the 2009/10 school year onwards, schools are also required to set out in their reports how resources are deployed to provide support services for students with SEN. In parallel, the EDB will arrange for its professional staff to conduct regular school visits and annual reviews, and organise training and sharing sessions for schools to ensure the effective deployment of resources for supporting students with SEN.

21. According to our observation during regular school visits and information collected from schools' annual year-end self-evaluation reports on the implementation of the WSA to IE, schools in general have put in place mechanisms for planning, implementing and evaluating support services for students with SEN. Examples include setting up student support teams to co-ordinate activities for the promotion of an inclusive culture, planning appropriate programmes to enhance the learning outcomes of the students, pooling and deploying resources in a flexible manner, monitoring the use of resources, and reviewing the quality of support measures. As revealed in schools' self-evaluation reports, students with SEN have shown improvements in their social adjustment, learning performance and learning attitude. The satisfaction rate on home-school co-operation has also risen. Schools consider that they can establish good partnership and maintain regular communication with parents so as to monitor their students' progress.

(d) Home-School Co-operation

22. Communication and co-operation between parents and schools are essential for supporting students with SEN. To enhance parents' understanding of their roles, the EDB issued and uploaded onto its website the Parent Guide on WSA to IE in the 2008/09 school year, providing parents with information on the procedures for identifying and assessing different types of SEN and on various support strategies. We also updated the online version of the Operation Guide on the WSA to IE in May 2010, reminding schools about the need to establish a systematic and regular communication mechanism with parents in

order to strengthen communication and co-operation with them. Schools should also let parents take part in the planning, implementation and evaluation of intervention programmes by, for example, inviting parents to case conferences and reporting to them regularly the learning progress of their children, etc.

(e) Cross-sector Collaboration

23. We believe that cross-sector collaboration can promote professional exchanges and create synergy, thus enhancing the effectiveness of support for students with SEN. In addition to the joint development of screening/assessment tools and diversified teaching materials with tertiary institutions as mentioned in paragraph 15 above, the EDB is fully aware of the importance of public education in promoting IE. Major initiatives implemented in the last five years are set out as follows:

- ◆ Since May 2009, an online newsletter in Chinese (融情) has been published regularly to help parents and the public gain a better understanding of IE. A total of 15 issues have been published up to July 2012. Topics covered include the IE policy, resources and support strategies, and good practices and experiences in implementing IE in schools.
- ◆ To assist schools in cultivating an inclusive school culture, various kinds of promotional activities have been organised from time to time, including the video production and broadcasting contests jointly organised with the Department of Health (DH) and the Subsidized Primary Schools Council for the promotion of IE in 2009.
- ◆ To enable the public to gain a better understanding of different types of SEN, the EDB, DH and Radio Television Hong Kong jointly produced a series of 10 episodes of TV programme “Parenting” in the 2008/09 school year, telling the real-life experiences of parents in taking care of their children with SEN.
- ◆ Compact discs containing the contents of the above two promotional activities and proposals for extended activities were produced and distributed to schools in the 2009/10 school year with a view to cultivating an inclusive culture in schools through learning activities.

The compact discs have been uploaded to the Hong Kong Education City (HKEdCity) website for access by the general public.

- ◆ The EDB participated in the Learning and Teaching Expo 2011 organised by the HKEdCity in late June 2011 and introduced to teachers and the sector the support strategies adopted by ordinary schools in implementing IE and the characteristics of learning and teaching in special schools through booth displays, talks and school visits.

The Way Forward

24. As far as policy is concerned, the adoption of the WSA in Hong Kong is in line with the global trend in the development of IE. Efforts made by the EDB and the school sector in the past years under the five basic principles mentioned in paragraph 3 above have brought about some progress in the implementation of IE. There have been more and more successful cases of culture building and policy formulation and implementation. An inclusive culture and the spirit of the WSA have gradually taken root in schools. Our wish is that schools will regard catering for students with SEN as part of their daily teaching and student support work. Our experience shows that the five basic principles mentioned above are both practicable and effective. The EDB will continue to implement IE through the efforts and strategies mentioned above.

25. On review arrangements, the EDB has kept the implementation of IE under constant review by monitoring the deployment of resources and implementation of measures through its daily work, sending officers on study tours to overseas countries and Mainland China to learn from their experiences, and collecting feedback from the sector and stakeholders through different channels. The EDB set up the Task Force on Integrated Education in Mainstream Schools (IE Task Force) in 2005, comprising representatives from the school sector, other government departments, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and parent groups. Through regular meetings, the EDB briefs the members of the IE Task Force on the progress of implementing IE and seeks their views on improvement measures. As at June this year, the IE Task Force has held 19 meetings and the minutes are available on the EDB's website for public access. In addition to this formal communication platform, we also keep in touch and, where necessary, meet with school councils, NGOs and parent groups to strengthen communication and co-operation. In future, whilst continuing the above efforts, we will explore ways to systematically collect

various types of data that can reflect the effectiveness of IE and support its implementation.

26. On practical work, we have conducted a review on teacher training under the teacher professional development framework on IE. The results indicated that the sector approved of the value and effectiveness of the training courses, agreeing that the training courses could enhance teachers' knowledge, skills and confidence in teaching students with SEN. In recent years, the number of students identified as having SEN has been increasing, and parents and the general public now have very high expectations of the support provided by schools for students with SEN. To further enhance the professional capacity of schools and teachers in catering for students with different types of SEN, the EDB announced in June this year that it will continue to provide structured training courses for teachers and set the targets for the next round of training.

27. As regards professional support, the Chief Executive announced in his 2011-12 Policy Address that the EDB would further extend the SBEPS. The service, now covering about 50% of public sector primary and secondary schools, will be extended to all public sector primary and secondary schools by the 2016/17 school year to further enhance the support for students with SEN. In the 2012/13 school year, another 70 or so primary and secondary schools will be covered by the SBEPS. In the current school year, we have reviewed the Enhanced Support Service for Hearing Impaired Integrators, which is targeted at students with hearing impairment studying in ordinary primary schools, and put forward a number of improvement measures on the scope of service and mode of operation. We plan to implement an enhanced mode of operation starting from the 2012/13 school year to boost the effectiveness of the service. As regards teaching and learning, we will continue our efforts to enhance the professional capacity of the EDB's staff in order to provide more comprehensive support for schools to cater for students with SEN. We will also continue to develop diversified teaching materials through cross-sector collaboration with a view to helping schools support students with SEN and enhance their learning outcome.

28. As for public education and cross-sector collaboration, the EDB will continue to step up publicity and information dissemination through various activities to promote the concept of inclusion. To this end, we organised the Visual Arts Contest on Inclusion in mid 2012, with a view to promoting an inclusive school culture and enhancing public and schools' awareness of and

support for IE through the contest and a series of related activities, including exhibitions of the submissions. In addition, we will organise a major public event – Learning and Teaching Expo 2012 – in November 2012 to highlight the development and achievements of IE. Local and overseas academics will be invited to give thematic talks and seminars. Relevant government departments and statutory bodies, NGOs, tertiary institutions, parent groups and schools will set up booths to showcase their services, teaching materials and ancillary equipment, etc. for supporting students with SEN. We will also arrange school visits to enable the sector, schools, teachers and parents to keep abreast of the latest development in IE.

29. Regarding the Government's support for non-Chinese speaking students with SEN, please refer to LC Paper No. CB(2)773/11-12(01) (Annex II) submitted by the EDB to the Legislative Council (LegCo) on 9 January 2012.

30. As for the Government's efforts in training professionals such as speech therapists and educational psychologists to enhance the specialist support services for students with SEN, please refer to LC Paper No. CB(2)1698/11-12(01) submitted by the EDB to the LegCo on 13 April 2012.

ADVICE SOUGHT

31. Members are invited to note the content of this paper.

Education Bureau
July 2012

Additional Resources for Ordinary Schools

1. Learning Support Grant

This is a cash grant provided for public sector primary and secondary schools according to the number of students with SEN and the tier of support required. The grant includes a basic provision of \$120,000 for the first one to six students requiring intensive support, with a ceiling at \$1,000,000 per school per annum.

2. Enhanced Speech Therapy Grant

This is a cash grant provided for eligible public sector primary schools for employing their own speech therapists or procuring school-based speech therapy services to support their students with SLI. Eligible schools are provided with a basic grant according to the number of approved classes each year and a top-up grant based on the number of students with moderate or severe SLI. The rates are subject to adjustment in accordance with the annual movement of the Composite Consumer Price Index.

3. Intensive Remedial Teaching Programme / Integrated Education Programme

Schools participating in these programmes are provided with additional teachers/teaching assistants for supporting students with SEN or low academic achievement under the WSA. We also encourage participating schools to migrate to the funding mode of Learning Support Grant to enjoy flexibility in deploying and consolidating resources for the provision of a variety of support services. Under the Integrated Education Programme, schools admitting five or more target students are provided with an additional Certificated Master/Mistress, while schools admitting eight or more target students are provided with an additional learning support assistant.

4. Additional teachers to cater for secondary students with low academic achievement

The EDB provides additional resources for secondary schools to support their students with low academic achievement. With effect from the 2006/07 school year, we provide an additional 0.7 Graduate Master/Mistress (GM) for each class of territory bottom 10% students enrolled in public sector ordinary schools and an additional 0.3 GM for each class of territory Band 3 students enrolled not within the bottom 10% students. The provision started at Secondary One level in the 2006/07 school year and was extended at one level per year up to Secondary Three in the 2008/09 school year. In the 2011/12 school year, the number of additional teachers provided for each eligible secondary school under this measure ranged from one to seven.

5. Intensive Support Grant for hardcore cases of students with SEN

For schools with particularly difficult cases, we will consider providing them with a time-limited additional grant where appropriate for employing temporary teaching assistants to cater for the imminent needs of individual students for intensive support.

6. Top-up Fund

If necessary, schools may apply for an additional cash grant to purchase special furniture and equipment (such as Braille and CCTV magnifier) or carry out minor conversion work (such as building ramps and converting toilets) for students with disabilities.

**Screening Tools and Teaching Materials developed for
Students with Special Educational Needs
in Recent Years**

2003

- Teaching Children with Autism to Mind-Read (Chinese version only)
- Resource Package on Correcting Students' Misarticulation I & II (Chinese version only)
- Resource Package on Narrative skills and Utterance Expansion (Chinese version only)

2004

- Resource Package on Social Communication Skills (Chinese version only)
- “An Electronic Book on Early Identification and Intervention of Learning Difficulties Programme for Primary One Pupils” (Chinese version only)

2005

- Resource Package on Verbal Comprehension and Expression (Chinese version only)
- Enhancing the Reading and Writing Skills of Students: A Parent Training Manual (Chinese version only)

2006

- Cantonese (Hong Kong) Expressive Language Scales (Chinese version only)
- Teachers' Observation Checklist for Identifying Speech and Language Impaired Students in Primary Schools (Chinese version only)

2007

- Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) and Strengths and Weaknesses of ADHD – symptoms and Normal-behaviour (SWAN) – EDB collaborated with the Department of Psychology and Department of Psychiatry of the Chinese University of Hong Kong to localize both tools for the early identification of children with AD/HD. (Chinese version only)

- Information Pamphlets (Early identification of hearing problem of children, Hearing impairment and communication, Types of hearing impairment, Unilateral hearing impairment, How to help hearing impaired students, How to face the problem of my hearing impairment, Where can hearing impaired students get support after leaving school, hearing devices, Bone anchored hearing aids, Earmolds, Cochlear implants, FM System)
- Information Pamphlet — How to Support Children with Specific Learning Difficulties in Reading and Writing
- Information Pamphlet — How to Support Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders
- Information Pamphlet — How to Support Children with Intellectual Disability
- Information Pamphlet — Early Identification and Intervention of Learning Difficulties Programme for Primary One Pupils (EII)

2008

- The Chinese Reading and Writing Abilities Screening Test for Secondary School Students (For use by teachers) (Chinese version only)
- Guide on School-based Speech Therapy Services (Chinese version only)
- Teachers' Observation Checklist for Identifying Speech and Language Impaired Students in Secondary Schools (Chinese version only)
- Resource Package on Language Enhancement Strategies (Chinese version only)
- 中文字詞認讀訓練 (第二版) 字得其樂 — A computerized training kit of Chinese word learning for children with specific learning difficulties in Hong Kong (Chinese version only)

2009

- The Hong Kong Specific Learning Difficulties Behaviour Checklist (for Junior Secondary School Students) (Chinese version only)
- Overcoming the Barrier: a Guide for Teachers on Helping Secondary School Students with Specific Learning Difficulties CD ROM (Chinese version only)
- 想法解讀 II — 教導自閉症兒童認識及處理情緒教材套 — A “Theory of Mind” teaching package (2nd Phase) for students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (Chinese version only)

- 中學生社交思考課程 ILAUGH – A social thinking training programme (Chinese version only)
- Resource Package on Communication Enhancement Strategies for Hearing Impaired Students (Chinese version only)
- Information Pamphlet – Government Assessment Services for School-aged Children Suspected to have Developmental Disorders

2010

- Read and Write Made Easy: A Resource Pack for Supporting Junior Secondary Students in Chinese Reading and Writing (Chinese version only)
- Fun with Maths: A Resource Pack for Supporting Primary School Students in Mathematics (Chinese version only)
- READ & WRITE: A Jockey Club Learning Support Network: A Resource Pack for Supporting Junior Primary Students in Chinese Reading and Writing (Chinese version only)
- IT Support in Reading and Writing for Secondary Students (Training Manual)
- “Development of Executive Skills (DOES) Resource Package” – to support primary school students with AD/HD by enhancing their executive skills
- Resource Package on Proper Cantonese Pronunciation (Chinese version only)

2011

- “Chinese Learning Package for Junior Secondary Students with Specific Learning Difficulties” DVD ROM (Chinese version only)
- Implementation Guide on the Tiered Intervention Model in Primary Schools (Chinese version only)
- Trainers’ Guide on the Tiered Intervention Model in Primary Schools (Chinese version only)

2012

- Resource Package on Vocabulary Enhancement Strategies (Chinese version only)