



中華人民共和國香港特別行政區政府總部教育局

Education Bureau

Government Secretariat, The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
The People's Republic of China

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15 August 2013

Miss Polly Yeung
Clerk to Education Panel
Legislative Council Complex
No. 1, Legislative Council Road
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Miss Yeung,

**Legislative Council Panel on Education
Follow-up to Discussion on 7 February**

An upsurge of applicant children residing in the Mainland with propensity of choosing school nets of the North District as their School Net under the Primary One Admission (POA) System for participation in Part B of the Central Allocation in recent years has led to a shortfall of Primary 1 places in the North District. To follow up with the discussion of the Panel on Education on 7 February 2013, the Administration, having taken into account views of different stakeholders, has decided to revise the arrangements under Part B of the Central Allocation for applicant children residing in the Mainland starting from POA 2014. This is to report to the Panel the implementation details of the revised arrangements as set out at the Annex.

For enquiries, please contact Ms L B Ip, Principal Assistant Secretary (Education Commission and Planning) at 3509 8505 or the undersigned at 3509 8512.

Yours sincerely,

(Ms Jessie Wong)

for Secretary for Education

**Primary One Admission System
Revised Arrangements for Central Allocation Starting from 2014**

The Current Primary One Admission (POA) System

At present, applicant children who meet all the following requirements are eligible to participate in the POA:

- (i) being Hong Kong residents;
- (ii) reach the age of 5 years 8 months in September of the enrolling year;
- (iii) not attending any primary schools; and
- (iv) have never been allocated a Primary 1 (P1) place under the POA System.

2. The POA System is divided into two stages: the Discretionary Places Admission stage and Central Allocation stage. During the stage of Discretionary Places Admission, all parents may submit their application to any public sector primary schools. The Education Bureau (EDB) will arrange central allocation for children who have not been offered a discretionary place. The Central Allocation stage is composed of two parts, viz. Part A - Unrestricted School Choices and Part B - Restricted School Choices. For Part A, parents of applicant children may choose a maximum of three primary schools from any school nets. As regards Part B, the 18 districts in the territory are divided into 36 POA School Nets. Parents will make school choices according to the Choice of Schools List of their School Net under the POA System (POA School Net) to which the applicant children's residential address belongs in order of preference for allocation of school places through a computer system.

3. Applicant children residing in the Mainland having met the requirements set out in paragraph 1 are eligible for participation in the POA. In the past few years, applicant children residing in the Mainland chose one of the eight school nets close to the boundary control points as their POA School Net for participation in Part B - Restricted School Choices of the Central Allocation. The eight POA School Nets were Tuen Mun: 70 (Tuen Mun West), 71 (Tuen Mun East); Yuen Long: 72 (Tin Shui Wai), 74 (Yuen Long East); the North District: 80 (Sheung Shui), 81 (Fanling), 83 (Sha Tau Kok); and Tai Po: 84.

Major Concern

4. An upsurge of applicant children residing in the Mainland with propensity of choosing school nets of the North District as their POA School Net for participation in Part B of the Central Allocation in recent years has led to a shortfall of P1 places in the North District. On one hand, some teachers have concern over having more students in a class. On the other hand, parents of applicant children residing in the school nets / district concerned hope that the possible impact on their children's chances of being allocated a school place there can be relieved.

Revised Arrangements Starting from 2014

5. In light of the situation mentioned in paragraph 4 and views of stakeholders, the EDB has adopted the following guiding principles to revise the arrangements for applicant children residing in the Mainland under the POA System starting from 2014:

- (i) Commuting daily from the Mainland to schools in Hong Kong will impose pressure on children both mentally and physically. This is not conducive to students' learning effectiveness and home-school cooperation. The EDB will continue to remind parents to consider carefully before deciding to arrange their children residing in the Mainland to participate in the POA and commute daily to schools in Hong Kong. They should also understand the situation of the boundary control points and avoid choosing schools adjacent to a busy boundary control point. As a matter of fact, the capacity of most of the existing boundary control points are reaching or have already reached their current limits. The facilitation measures¹ for cross-boundary students cannot satisfy every child. Parents have to make transport arrangements on their own and ascertain the availability of such arrangements for their children to travel to and from schools before making any decision for their children to commute daily to schools in Hong Kong;

¹ The Government, on safety grounds for children of tender age to commute daily through the boundary control points, has, where possible, provided facilitation measures including granting special quotas to cross-boundary school coaches with designated parking spaces, Students e-Channel, Cross-Boundary Students Simplified Clearance Procedures, On-board Clearance Services, etc.

- (ii) All eligible applicant children (having met the requirements set out in paragraph 1), irrespective if they are residing in the Mainland or POA School Net, will be offered a public sector P1 place;
- (iii) The concerns of applicant children residing in the POA School Net that their chances of being allocated a P1 place in the school net to which they belong are dampened due to the increase of applicant children residing in the Mainland should be addressed; and
- (iv) Arrangements under the POA should be similar for all eligible applicant children unless with sound justifications. In other words, the residential status of parents of applicant children will not be taken into account in the allocation of school places.

In gist, the arrangements for applicant children residing in the POA School Net will remain unchanged. For applicant children residing in the Mainland, starting from POA 2014, while the arrangements for them to participate in the Discretionary Places Admission stage and Part A of the Central Allocation stage will remain unchanged, the arrangements for them to participate in Part B of the Central Allocation stage will be revised. Specific implementation details are set out in paragraphs 6 to 11.

Implementation Details

6. As the applicant children are residing in the Mainland, they do not belong to any POA School Net. Their parents, starting from POA 2014, will not choose any school net as their applicant children's POA School Net for participation in Part B of the Central Allocation.

7. After the Discretionary Places Admission stage (i.e. in November each year), the EDB will estimate the provision of P1 places for the Central Allocation stage and the number of applicants having not been offered a discretionary place, and then compile a separate Choice of Schools List for Central Allocation for applicant children residing in the Mainland. The Choice of Schools List will provide applicant children residing in the Mainland with more school choices which will help them mix with students residing in the POA School Net and adapt to the local education system. Parents of applicant children residing in the Mainland will select primary schools from the Choice of Schools List in order of preference and fill in the Choice of Schools Form for participation in Part B of the Central Allocation.

8. The Choice of Schools List mentioned above will include the eight School Nets close to the boundary control points (i.e. Tuen Mun: 70 (Tuen Mun West), 71 (Tuen Mun East); Yuen Long: 72 (Tin Shui Wai), 74 (Yuen Long East); the North District: 80 (Sheung Shui), 81 (Fanling), 83 (Sha Tau Kok); Tai Po: 84) and other districts having cross-boundary students, especially those schools which are ready and willing to support cross-boundary students. The EDB will invite in writing, in early January each year, parents of applicant children residing in the Mainland to make school choices and provide them with the Choice of Schools List for the Central Allocation.

9. The number of school places provided by schools in the school nets / districts in the aforesaid Choice of Schools List for Central Allocation will vary subject to the respective demand and supply of individual school nets / districts. We will decide the number of school places of each school in the school nets / districts concerned for applicant children residing in the Mainland according to the following principles:

- (i) All schools in the eight School Nets mentioned in paragraph 8 will in principle set aside a minimum of two school places per provisional P1 class² for applicant children residing in the Mainland;
- (ii) Due consideration will be given to individual schools in the eight School Nets, specifically those which have been admitting relatively more cross-boundary students. We will consider allowing these schools on application to include more school places in the Choice of Schools List for Central Allocation for applicant children residing in the Mainland. The premise is that the demand for P1 places from applicant children residing in the school nets / districts concerned will be taken into account;
- (iii) Should the number of school places of a school net among the eight School Nets exceed the number of applicant children residing in the school net concerned, the number of school places per provisional P1 class to be provided by schools in the school net concerned will in principle be increased correspondingly. The premise is that the demand for P1 places from applicant children residing in the district(s) concerned will be taken into account. In practice, the number of places will be determined having regard to the total number of

² The provisional number of P1 classes under the POA System for public sector primary schools may include the additional number of classes arising from the situation as mentioned in point (iv) below.

applicant children residing in the Mainland and the situation, if any, under point (ii) and / or point (iv) below;

- (iv) Anticipating that the supply of school places provided under points (i), (ii) and (iii) may not fully meet the demand from applicant children residing in the Mainland, we will require schools in the eight School Nets to provide more school places through measures such as making use of vacant classrooms, converting rooms for other purposes into additional classrooms, etc. for the Choice of Schools List for Central Allocation for applicant children residing in the Mainland. The premise is that the demand for P1 places from applicant children residing in the school nets / districts concerned (based on the projections mentioned in paragraph 7) will be taken into account. If the number of school places provided by the schools in the school nets / districts concerned exceeds the estimated demand, the EDB will decide the number of school places to be provided by individual schools having due consideration to the situation of their respective school nets / districts;
- (v) In addition to the eight School Nets, we will, based on the results of the annual survey to schools on the number of cross-boundary students, invite schools in the school nets with cross-boundary students in kindergartens and / or primary schools, especially those ready and willing to support cross-boundary students, to provide some school places for the Choice of Schools List for Central Allocation for applicant children residing in the Mainland. The premise is that the demand for P1 places from applicant children residing in the school nets concerned will be taken into account. The EDB will decide the number of school places to be provided by individual schools; and
- (vi) If the demand for P1 places from applicant children residing in the Mainland cannot be fully met after the steps afore-mentioned, we will require schools in school nets mentioned in (v) above (i.e. schools in school nets with cross-boundary students in kindergartens and / or primary schools) to provide school places for the Choice of Schools List for Central Allocation for applicant children residing in the Mainland. The premise is that the demand for P1 places from applicant children residing in the school nets concerned will be taken into account. We will adhere to the principles as set out in points (i) to (iv) above for provision of school places by the schools.

Computer Procedures in the Central Allocation

10. As usual, all parents, when completing Part B Restricted School Choices of the Choice of Schools Form for Central Allocation, may select a maximum of 30 schools in order of preference in the Choice of Schools Form. Computer processing of school choices of an applicant child is based on his / her choices. In case of oversubscription to a school, the “Random Number” generated by the computer for each applicant child will decide the order of priority in allocating a school place to an applicant child. In the light that the Choice of Schools List for Central Allocation for applicant children residing in the Mainland will include more schools, the EDB will remind parents of applicant children residing in the Mainland to pay attention to the number of school places provided by schools as well as districts in the List and consider the transport arrangements for their children to the districts of the schools of their choice. If an applicant child residing in the Mainland cannot be allocated a school place after computer processing of all his / her school choices, the computer will analyse the district(s) of the schools of his / her choice to allocate a P1 place from the remaining school places in the district(s) according to the order of preference in the Choice of Schools Form. In case there is no surplus school place in all districts of the applicant child’s school choices, the computer will allocate a P1 place from the remaining school places of the neighboring district(s) of the district(s) concerned in the Choice of Schools List for Central Allocation; a P1 place from the remaining school places in other districts in the Choice of Schools List for Central Allocation will be allocated to the applicant child should all places in the neighboring district(s) concerned have been exhausted.

Enrolment Cap

11. The basis for allocation of students under the POA for schools implementing small class teaching is 25 per P1 class and 30 students for other schools. To address schools’ concerns, the EDB has allowed schools to admit flexibly some students outside the POA System through an enrolment cap set at 27 for primary schools implementing small class teaching and 33 for other schools with 30 per class. The enrolment cap will in principle remain unchanged.

12. The supply and demand of school places in individual school nets under the POA System are subject to year-on-year changes due to various

reasons. To ensure adequate provision of P1 places to meet the demand from all applicant children (including those residing in the POA School Net and in the Mainland), the EDB will continue with the established flexible arrangements to increase the supply of P1 places. The flexible arrangements include making use of vacant classrooms within the school net / district concerned, converting rooms for other purposes into additional classrooms, borrowing school places from adjacent school nets, etc. If necessary, the temporary measure of allocating more students to each P1 class in the school net / district concerned³ will be put in place. The EDB will engage the schools concerned when working out the arrangement.

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³ Under POA 2013, when the number of school places provided by each P1 class in schools in the North District was increased to 30, schools implementing small class teaching would be provided with additional Assistant Primary School Master/Mistress posts for six years (i.e. from the 2013/14 to 2018/19 school years) on par with the provision for other schools with 30 students to support that cohort of students. When more than 30 school places per P1 class were required, schools would be provided an additional grant for six years, the calculation of which is based on the unit cost.