#### HF Paper No. CB(9)111/14-15(12)

The Hong Kong Primary Native-speaking English Teachers Forum

## A Response to the Legislative Council Panel on Education's Discussion of the NET Scheme

#### **Purpose**

This paper responds to issues raised, and statements made, by Legislative Council Panel on Education members during the Panel meeting held on 20 November 2014<sup>1</sup> relating to the NET Scheme in Primary Schools ("NET Scheme"). The paper reflects the opinions of primary NETs ("PNETs") who work daily within the NET Scheme; have extensive knowledge of the Scheme's influence and achievement within schools; and have wide experience of the realities of the Scheme's implementation. Issues raised are detailed in section headings with responses to those issues numbered for ease of reference.

# I. Panel member(s) stated that there needs to be a platform for NETs to share knowledge instead of keeping their knowledge within their separate schools.

- 2. Such a platform already exists. The Hong Kong Primary Native-speaking English Teachers' Forum ("The HKPNETs Forum") was established in 2006 to facilitate a friendly exchange of ideas, resources, frustrations, humour and advice. Over 80% of **all** PNETs are members of the forum, with 6,500+ contributions having been made to the resource sharing library and 170,000+ contributions made to the knowledge sharing libraries<sup>2</sup>.
- 3. The forum was created by and is managed by PNETs for PNETs and receives no financial, promotional or directional support from the EDB or any other organisation. It is regarded by PNETs as their main source of information concerning the NET Scheme, their main platform for the sharing of resources and knowledge, and the only organisation that truly represents the views and interests of PNETs in Hong Kong.
- 4. The forum also provides support to SNETs, LETs and prospective PNETs via its guest library. To date over 540 such requests for support have led to over 6000 responses by forum members. Further support is provided to Hong Kong's education community via the publicly available online resources library.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> LegCo Webcast, Meeting of Panel of Education, 2014/11/10 4:30 pm, Conference Room 1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Numbers obtained from the HKPNETs Forum, Board List and Info Center (Forum Stats).

### II. Panel member(s) stated that the NET Scheme is expensive.

- 5. In 2015/16 the Hong Kong Scholarship for Excellence Scheme will have a total estimated expenditure of \$358 million<sup>3</sup> and will benefit 300 students. In 2015/16 the Study Subsidy Scheme for Designated Professions/Sectors will have a total estimated expenditure of \$965 million<sup>3</sup> and will benefit 3000 students. In 2014-15, the NET Scheme is expected to cost \$356.3 million<sup>4</sup> and will benefit **130,000+** students<sup>5</sup>.
- 6. In 2013, \$5,000 million was injected into Hong Kong's Language Fund<sup>6</sup>. Since the start of the NET Scheme, the Language Fund has received average annual funding of \$290 million<sup>6</sup> to support 'time limited' bi-literate and tri-lingual projects. During the same time period, the NET Scheme received average annual funding of \$240 million<sup>7</sup> and has provided on-going enhancement of English language teaching and learning on a **daily** basis.
- 7. Since 1998, the Quality Education Fund has spent an average of \$252 million per year<sup>8</sup> on projects focusing on individual educational institutions. The NET Scheme's average annual expenditure of \$240 million<sup>7</sup> targets **all** 454 aided and government primary schools<sup>9</sup> throughout Hong Kong, and targets students and teachers in those schools on a **sustained daily** basis.
- 8. In 2013/14 total government education expenditure was \$76.9 billion<sup>10</sup>. The NET Scheme accounted for **0.005**% of this expenditure. Total expenditure on primary education was \$13.5 billion<sup>11</sup>, of which **0.03**% was used to fund the NET Scheme.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> LC Paper No. CB(4)545/13-14(01), 14 April 2014, Legislative Council Panel on Education - Increasing Subsidised Higher Education Opportunities.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> LC Paper No. CB(4)116/14-15(01), 10 November 2014, Legislative Council Panel on Education - The Latest Development of the Native-speaking English Teacher ("NET") Scheme.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> In 2013, there were 259,870 children enrolled in public sector primary schools<sup>11</sup>. A conservative average estimate of the proportion of students in any given school who are regularly exposed to PNET teaching is 50%.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> LC Paper No. CB(4)198/13-14(03), 9 December 2013, LegCo Panel on Education - Injection into the Language Fund.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Annual actual costs for every year of the NET Scheme have not been published by the EDB. Estimates have been derived from 2012-13<sup>18</sup> and 2013-14<sup>4</sup> actual costs, discounted historically at a rate of 5% per year.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Quality Education Fund, Project Information, Project Statistics.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Numbers obtained from Committee on Home-School Co-operation, Primary School Profile, 2014.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Hong Kong: The Facts – Education, April 2014, HKSAR Government Information Services Department.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Government Expenditure on Education, 29 Apr 2014, Resource Management Section, Education Bureau.

9. In this context, the NET Scheme cannot be seen as anything other than exceptionally good value for a programme that targets **all** Hong Kong primary schools, and **all** students and teachers within those schools.

### III. Panel member(s) stated that evidence is needed to show the NET Scheme is effective.

10. In the meeting it was stated that the aim of the NET Scheme was to enhance education, provide more resources to schools, allow students to have more contact with English and provide a better learning environment for learning English. However, the objectives for the NET Scheme laid out in the Scheme's official documentation<sup>12</sup> are, and always have been, stated as:

To support and strengthen English language teaching and learning for all public sector primary schools in one form or another by

- a) Providing an authentic environment for children to learn English;
- b) Developing children's interest in learning English, helping them build the confidence for near-native communication, cultivating a lasting interest in, and establishing the foundation for, life-long learning of the language;
- c) Helping local teachers develop innovative teaching and learning methods, materials, curricula and activities suited to the needs of local children; and
- d) Disseminating good practices in language teaching and learning developed within the scheme through Regional Education Office (REO) based teacher development programmes such as experience-sharing seminars/workshops and networking activities.

Assessment and evaluation of the effectiveness of the NET Scheme should, and must, be done with reference to these formal objectives.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> LC Paper No. CB(2)901/01-02(03), 21 January 2002, Legislative Council Panel on Education - NET and English Language Teaching Assistant Scheme in Public-sector Primary Schools.

- 11. In advance of the 10 November LegCo Education Panel meeting, NET Scheme Questionnaires were distributed to NET Scheme stakeholders to seek opinions on the effectiveness of the NET Scheme with specific reference to the aforementioned objectives. The results<sup>13</sup> revealed the following:
  - 89% of primary subject heads were satisfied14 with the NET Scheme.
  - 80% of primary principals and subject heads 15 were satisfied.
  - 95%+ of PNETs<sup>16</sup> were satisfied.

This provides clear evidence that key stakeholders believe the NET Scheme to be effective.

12. The NET Scheme Questionnaire asked how strongly participants agreed with the following questions (relating directly to the objectives of the NET Scheme):

#### Subject Heads:

- a) NET can enhance student reading and writing abilities.
- b) NET can help other teachers to teach new and creative teaching strategies.
- c) NET can help panel to design and make school-based teaching materials for students.
- d) NET can provide students with a better language rich environment.
- e) NET can increase students' motivation and interest in learning English.
- f) NET can enhance teachers' professional development.

### **Primary NETs**

- a) I can encourage students to communicate more in English.
- b) I can help local teachers develop innovative learning and teaching methods.
- c) I can fulfill the role as a resource teacher, designing and developing learning and teaching materials.
- d) I can enrich the English language environment in school.
- e) I can cooperate well with other English teachers in co-teaching and co-planning.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Results of Questionnaire on the Review of NET Scheme, Ip Kin-yuen, Legislative Councillor.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> The method by which 'satisfaction rates' were determined from the questions contained in the questionnaire - that asked for responses to be ranked from strongly disagree to strongly agree - has not been made public.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Satisfaction rates weighted according to the number of responses received per stakeholder category to allow for schools which only returned either a principal or a subject-head response, as well as those that returned both.

Despite being key participants and stakeholders in the NET Scheme, and despite providing 45% of all questionnaire responses received, the NET satisfaction rates have not been made public. Given the subject heads' satisfaction rate, an extrapolated NET satisfaction rate of 95%+ is not only appropriate but likely to be lower than the actual rate.

f) I need more support to adapt to the school environment in Hong Kong.

The percentage of respondents disagreeing/agreeing/strongly-agreeing with each of these questions will provide clear evidence as to the effectiveness of the NET Scheme and, specifically, provide clear evidence as to the effectiveness of each individual objective of the NET Scheme. In the interest of a full and frank discussion - based on evidence rather than anecdotal hearsay - LegCo members are urged to ensure that this information is made public, that it is presented separately for primary and secondary schools, and that it clearly states the level of agreement for each individual question from each type of stakeholder (principal, subject head, NET).

#### IV. Panel member(s) stated that cooperation between LETs and NETs is poor.

- 13. Where is the evidence to support this assertion? What concrete evidence exists to show cooperation is poor? Anecdotal inferences are not proof of an absence of cooperation within the Scheme. Evidence-based critical analysis is essential to ensure an accurate assessment of the amount of cooperation taking place in NET Scheme schools is attained.
- 14. Factual evidence of the amount of cooperation taking place in 23% of all Hong Kong primary schools can be obtained by analyzing the NET Scheme Questionnaire responses to determine the percentage of respondents who agree or strongly agree with the following questions:

#### **PNETs**

- b) I can help local teachers develop innovative learning and teaching methods.
- e) I can cooperate well with other English teachers in co-teaching and co-planning.

#### Subject Heads

- b) NET can help other teachers' to teach new and creative teaching strategies
- c) NET can help panel to design and make school-based teaching materials for students
- f) NET can enhance teachers' professional development

LegCo members are urged to ensure this information is made public, that it is presented separately for primary and secondary schools, and that it clearly states the level of agreement for each question from each type of stakeholder.

15. The overwhelming opinion of members of the HKPNETs Forum is that cooperation is commonplace in the vast majority of schools where co-teaching, co-planning and integration are integral aspects of the school environment. The

wide-ranging, varied and numerous pedagogical innovations undertaken by NETs in schools (listed in section VIII below) provide ample evidence that this is indeed so.

16. Academically rigorous evaluation of the NET Scheme highlighted that schools should follow the EDB NET Deployment Guidelines<sup>17</sup> to ensure collaboration<sup>18</sup>. On this evidence, schools in which collaboration is anecdotally described as being poor are, more than likely, not following the Deployment Guidelines. To quote from the conclusions of the academic evaluation<sup>19</sup>, "The [EDB] deployment guidelines for the NET were appropriate, and where they were followed in schools the PNET Scheme was effective in supporting the development of language proficiency for students."

17. Care should also be taken not to assume that the opinion of a small number of individuals represents the predominant opinion of **all** schools participating in the NET Scheme. There is a small subset of schools that have a very high turnover of NET teachers (4-6 different NETs in the last 8 years<sup>20</sup>) and it seems reasonable to suppose that this high turnover of employees is indicative of schools themselves being responsible for cooperative and integrative issues rather than the numerous NETs they have employed. These schools are well known amongst the PNET community and are listed here for Panel members' benefit:

AD&FD Of Pok Oi Hospital Mrs Cheng Yam On Millenium School

CCC Heep Woh Primary School

CCC Kei Faat Primary School (Yau Tong)

Chinese YMCA Primary School

HHCKLA Buddhist Wisdom Primary School

Ho Yu College and Primary School (Sponsored by Sik Sik Yuen)

Islamic Dharwood Pau Memorial Primary School

Kowloon Women's Welfare Club Li Ping Memorial School

Ma Tau Chung Government Primary School (Hung Hom Bay)

Ng Wah Catholic Primary School

PLK Women's Welfare Club Fung Lee Pui Yiu Primary School

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> NET Deployment Guidelines, NET Scheme for Primary Schools, NET Section, Curriculum Development Institute, Education Bureau, 2012.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> LC Paper No.CB(4)852/12-13(07), 9 July 2013, Legislative Panel on Education – The Latest Developments of the NET Scheme.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Evaluation of the Native-speaking English Teacher Scheme for Primary Schools in Hong Kong 2004 – 2006, The University of Melbourne Assessment Research Centre.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Vacancies listed in the HKPNETs Forum Resources library, Recruitment – Year-on-Year Tracking.

SKH Mung Yan Primary School
Tai Kok Tsui Catholic Primary School
Tai Po Methodist School
Tsuen Wan Trade Association Primary School
Tung Koon School
SKH Chi Fu Chi Nam Primary School
SKH St Thomas' Primary School
YCH Chan Iu Seng Primary School
YOT Madam Lau Wong Fat Primary School

- V. Panel member(s) stated (in a follow-up document<sup>14</sup>) that "due to language and cultural differences, it is unsatisfactory for NETs to perform duties of guidance and counseling for students."
- 18. The objectives of the NET Scheme do not include guidance and counseling services for students. Principals and subject heads making this criticism demonstrate a lack of understanding of the objectives and scope of the NET Scheme, and the expected role of a PNET in their school.
- VI. Panel member(s) stated (in a follow-up document<sup>14</sup>) that "some of the NETs are not integrating well into the atmosphere of Hong Kong Schools. NETs need time to understand the difference between Hong Kong and foreign education systems ... This is why they cannot cooperate and integrate into the current teaching practice of the schools."
- 19. Where is the evidence to support this assertion? What proportion of responses to the NET Scheme Questionnaire explicitly stated this to be the case? Are stakeholders who make this assertion adhering fully and accurately to the EDB NET Deployment Guidelines<sup>17</sup>? As discussed in section IV above there is plenty of evidence to suggest that cooperation and integration is widespread within the NET Scheme.
- 20. The Hong Kong education system, along with all national education systems, has its own peculiarities. To suggest this is reducing the effectiveness of the NET Scheme is disingenuous. PNETs are well aware of the peculiarities of the system within which they work, but are also aware that they have been tasked by the government, the EDB and the LegCo Education Panel with the role of introducing 'innovative teaching and learning methods, materials, curricula and activities' into schools in order to change "current teaching practices". Schools that do not understand, encourage and support this vital component of the PNET role create perceived issues of poor cooperation

and integration through their own actions. Schools that **do** understand, encourage and support this vital component of the PNET role experience high levels of cooperation, integration and teacher/student development.

- VII. Panel member(s) stated (in a follow-up document<sup>14</sup>) that "the largest problem faced by NETs was said to be cultural difference, including the exam-based learning environment in Hong Kong, which is taking more time for them to settle... Authorities should get the NETs to further understand the culture, lessons and working environment of local schools, to help them integrating into the atmosphere of local schools."
- 21. What proportion of PNET responses to the NET Scheme Questionnaire explicitly stated that cultural differences were delaying their ability to settle? Since 2006, there have been 200,000+ expressions of opinion<sup>21</sup> in the HKPNETs Forum and not once has any PNET suggested this to be the case.
- 22. Issues such as Hong Kong's exam-based learning environment are not regarded by PNETs as 'cultural differences'. As professional teachers, PNETs regard such issues as systematic pedagogical differences that impact the NET Scheme by restricting a PNET's ability to fulfill NET Scheme objectives. Stakeholders stating or interpreting PNET opinion as meaning that PNETs are not settling, or not integrating, are expressing an implicit desire for the status quo to be maintained and demonstrating a fundamental misunderstanding of a key tenet of the NET Scheme, namely:

"[NET] deployment should ensure ... the implementation of curriculum reform, professional development of teachers, and adoption of innovative learning and teaching practices. Effective deployment of the NET within this framework will lead to successful realisation of the Primary NET Scheme objectives."<sup>17</sup>

Stakeholders are urged not to interpret attempts to implement such mandated reform, development and adoption as a failure to settle, or a failure to integrate. Authorities should ensure that principals and subject heads understand the objectives of the NET Scheme as laid out in the NET Deployment Guidelines and that they adhere to those guidelines. Making the NET Deployment Guidelines mandatory would go a long way towards achieving this.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Numbers obtained from the HKPNETs Forum, Statistics Centre.

## VIII. Panel member(s) stated that NETs don't make a difference and can't promote learning.

- 23. Where is the evidence to support this assertion? What concrete evidence is there to indicate that NETs make no difference to the education of primary school students?
- 24. Visit schools in Hong Kong, and talk to students, teachers and parents in those schools, and it is immediately obvious that NETs make a substantial difference to the English learning environment (in and outside the classroom), to teacher development and to student learning.
- 25. Examples of the innovative, modern and pedagogically-sound methods and activities that PNETs have brought to Hong Kong schools are listed below, grouped according to their relevance to NET Scheme objectives. This is by no means an exhaustive list but serves to demonstrate the difference PNETs make in schools and the ways in which they promote student and teacher learning. The list also provides further concrete evidence as to the effectiveness of the NET Scheme.

#### a) Providing an authentic environment for children to learn English.

- The use of authentic storylines and authentic scripts in theatre and drama.
- Letter exchanges with primary school children overseas; Penpal programmes.
- Immersion in English for all NET lessons.
- Teaching Maths and PE in English to encourage English use outside English lessons.
- English Wonderlands, Wonderworlds, Funlands and Activity Rooms.
- English assemblies using local and international themes.
- Extensive language-rich environments in English Rooms.
- English TV, English Radio, English weather forecasts and English school announcements.
- English Ambassador led tuck shops and value exchange programmes.
- Language-rich school environments.
- The coaching of sports using an English medium of instruction to encourage students' use of English outside the classroom.
- Recess Activities: walkabout, speak-to-the-NET, Fun@Lunch programmes etc.
- Musical productions: writing, choreography, scenery and directing.
- Reading theatre and drama productions from script development to performance.
- English passports and participation cards to motivate use of English in school.
- English Corners in the playground, main hall, English room, library etc.

- Non-timetabled access to a native speaker.
- Bi-lingual and tri-lingual school-based signage.
- Teaching science through the medium of English using videos, experiments, critical analysis and investigation.
- Inter-class poetry competitions.
- School picnic English activities.
- School newspapers, magazines and pamphlets.
- Reading buddy and parent reading schemes.
- Appreciation of different cultures and good manners expected in authentic environments.
- Encouraging students to see English as a means of communication, not just a subject for assessment.
- Excursions to interview and speak to native speakers.
- The development of school-wide reading programmes using leveled readers.
- Write a letter to the NET programmes.
- After school English activity clubs, fun English clubs etc.
- Leveraging pop culture to improve motivation.
- Seasonal activities reflecting real school experiences of students in foreign countries.
- Festival based activities and learning to encourage understanding of international and local culture and history.
- Organising and leading English trips abroad.
- School-wide English display boards to encourage continuous use of authentic language.
- Learning vocabulary through physical movement e.g. skipping.
- Providing cultural support and understanding to Non-Chinese Speaking students.
- b) Developing children's interest in learning English, helping them build the confidence for near-native communication, cultivating a lasting interest in, and establishing the foundation for, life-long learning of the language.
- Home reading programmes including parental training and support.
- Extended reading programmes using levelled books to ensure student success.
- Buddy reading programmes to support weak readers and promote peer exchange.
- Implementation of the Primary Literacy Programme Reading (PLPR).
- Development and implementation of school- wide synthetic phonics programmes.
- Analytic phonics programmes to support reading skills acquisition.
- Supporting students to overcome cultural shyness.
- Daily reader comprehension programmes using appropriate reading texts.

- Encouraging all teachers and school management to model English usage.
- Word walls: High frequency words, pictionary, content words, themed words.
- Process writing to develop creativity and self-referential learning and expression.
- The use of English iPad apps in the classroom to increase student interest.
- Pictorial content word display sheets in all classrooms to aid vocabulary acquisition.
- Promoting critical thinking, creativity and self-learning in class-based activities.
- Vocabulary acquisition through Total Physical Response.
- Learning through digital media and digital communication.
- Implementation and management of the Primary Literacy Programme Reading and Writing (PLPRW).
- Computer-based enhanced learning such as intranet English Corners and blogs.
- Leveled guided reading programs for small class teaching offering appropriate and varied reading material to encouraging student participation.
- Small group guided writing to encourage creative writing through cognitive progression.
- Project-based learning: making compasses/food/origami/robots/books, splitting colours, planets of the universe, space dinosaurs, sharks, trees of HK, insects, dangerous animals, rocks, the sun, space etc.
- Recording, and lip syncing, songs to implicitly demonstrate how mouth shapes work for English words and sounds.
- Encouraging children to embrace risk taking in their learning to promote self-directed personal development.
- The implementation of different methods and pedagogies into lessons, allowing children to experience different ways of learning to meet differing needs within and without the classroom.
- Online computer-based homework/revision support platforms.
- Encourage learning through fun for younger learners.
- Cameo writing to encourage descriptive and detailed creative writing.
- Publishing books, poetry and comics for display in the English Room and around the school.
- High frequency word programmes to develop vocabulary acquisition.
- Scripting, recording and publishing of E-books for bespoke targeted learning.
- The use of songs, raps, poems and games to teach target language.
- Online English learning platforms to promote self-learning and home-learning.
- Matching students to book levels to ensure students read appropriate texts.
- Matching books to book levels so that students can choose appropriate texts.
- Special needs evaluation and continuous assessment in the classroom.

- Targeting of diversity in the classroom.
- Teaching of exam techniques and exam preparation.
- Incorporating and encouraging deep learning.
- The writing and use of bespoke eBooks targeted at learning objectives.
- Special needs support and targeted teaching strategies within the classroom.
- The use of roleplay to stimulate learning through Total Physical Response.
- English and phonemic awareness learning through song and dance.
- Pedagogically sound and research-based teaching techniques.
- Task-based teaching to increase motivation and interest through goal-led learning.

# c) Helping local teachers develop innovative teaching and learning methods, materials, curricula and activities suited to the needs of local children.

- The use of students' "Zone of Proximal Development" to determine appropriate lesson content.
- Textbook adaptation to improve applicability and student understanding.
- Professional development for local colleagues: How to develop non-textbook units of Work, how to learn and teach reading skills, note-taking and its application within the classroom setting, guided reading, guided writing, shared reading skills, questioning techniques, drama in the classroom, the reading process and the importance of reading skills to students' learning etc.
- Provision of specific one-to-one support for local colleagues' external professional development needs.
- Promotion of 'Learning to Read, Reading to Learn'.
- Improving local colleagues' English language ability through daily authentic communication in English.
- 'No-textbook' curriculum development.
- Dictation adaptation to facilitate increased student learning.
- Contributions to summer learning programmes.
- Summative assessment rationalisation to match assessment to learning.
- Co-planning preparation, scheduling and chairing.
- Proofreading of English school letters, articles, newsletters, publications and meeting minutes.
- Co-planning best practice, support and methodological development.
- Action research projects to facilitate curriculum improvement.
- Contributions to kindergarten English assimilation programmes.
- Acting as an on-the-spot resource for English language clarification and interpretation.
- Development of English language iPad apps for use in the classroom.

- School-based phonics professional development and support.
- Implementation of English Language Curriculum Guides imperatives in lessons.
- Cross-subject themed activities to encourage multi-lingual learning.
- Distribution of latest developments in ESL research.
- The effective use of guided reading and guided writing in the classroom.
- Acting as a source of new ideas, and a driver of their development and promotion within the school.
- Workshops for kindergarten and primary-one parents on Home Reading schemes and student support.
- Mentoring of student teachers during their teaching practice placements.
- Mentoring of new English teachers and teachers previously unexposed to co-teaching and modern teaching methods.
- Providing advice and methodologies to facilitate curricula and cultural support of Non-Chinese Speaking students.
- Advising teachers on the correct usage of English and English grammar.
- Librarian training to understand the importance of, and methods needed to create, a leveled reading system suitable for all students.
- Proof-reading of local colleagues' academic papers and assignments.
- Theme-based Unit of Work development and implementation.
- Translation services for school management and teachers.
- School-based classroom management professional development and support.
- Continuous curriculum development to facilitate student learning.
- TSA results evaluation and recommendations for curriculum adaptation.
- Supporting Panel Chair to develop the English curriculum.
- Schedule of Work creation, administration and rationalisation.
- The integration of innovative/communicative teaching strategies.
- Piloting and development of the PLPRW programme.
- Supporting local colleagues with LPAT exam preparation and practice, and with other forms of English study.
- Practicing critical literacy and checking school texts for outdated, sexist, incorrect and culturally offensive material and providing solutions to those issues.
- Highlighting inaccuracies in TSA and other assessment materials.
- Proofreading and correcting English versions of school documents.
- The development of textbook replacement curriculum programmes and materials.
- Phonics and high frequency word assessment as a tool for targeted learning.
- Techniques to challenge and expand exceptional students.
- Summative assessment proof-reading and critical analysis.
- Evidence-based decision making to determine curriculum content and direction.

#### Conclusion

Since its inception in 2002, the NET Scheme has enabled hundreds of thousands of students to receive a sustained, authentic and immersed language experience in preparation for their journey of life-long learning. It has enabled tens of thousands of teachers to benefit from exposure to innovative, modern and pedagogically-sound teaching methods suited to the needs of those students. And it has enabled hundreds of schools to develop and improve school-based curricula, language environments and learning programmes. In this light, the NET Scheme has shown itself to be the gold standard for long-term language education intervention programmes in Hong Kong.

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The HKPNETs Forum

**8 December 2014**