

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. FC323/15-16
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seen by the Administration)

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Finance Committee of the Legislative Council

Minutes of the 77th meeting
held at Conference Room 1 of the Legislative Council Complex
on Friday, 24 June 2016, at 3:15 pm

Members present:

Hon CHAN Kin-por, BBS, JP (Chairman)
Hon CHAN Kam-lam, SBS, JP (Deputy Chairman)
Hon Albert HO Chun-yan
Hon LEE Cheuk-yan
Hon James TO Kun-sun
Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung
Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, GBS, JP
Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, GBS, JP
Hon Vincent FANG Kang, SBS, JP
Hon WONG Kwok-hing, BBS, MH
Hon Jeffrey LAM Kin-fung, GBS, JP
Hon Andrew LEUNG Kwan-yuen, GBS, JP
Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan, JP
Hon Starry LEE Wai-king, JP
Dr Hon LAM Tai-fai, SBS, JP
Hon CHAN Hak-kan, JP
Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun, SBS, JP
Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che
Hon WONG Kwok-kin, SBS
Hon IP Kwok-him, GBS, JP
Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-yee, GBS, JP

Hon Paul TSE Wai-chun, JP
Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung
Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip
Hon WONG Yuk-man
Hon Claudia MO
Hon Michael TIEN Puk-sun, BBS, JP
Hon James TIEN Pei-chun, GBS, JP
Hon NG Leung-sing, SBS, JP
Hon Steven HO Chun-yin, BBS
Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming, JP
Hon WU Chi-wai, MH
Hon YIU Si-wing, BBS
Hon Gary FAN Kwok-wai
Hon MA Fung-kwok, SBS, JP
Hon CHAN Chi-chuen
Hon CHAN Han-pan, JP
Dr Hon Kenneth CHAN Ka-lok
Hon CHAN Yuen-han, SBS, JP
Hon LEUNG Che-cheung, BBS, MH, JP
Hon Alice MAK Mei-kuen, BBS, JP
Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki
Hon KWOK Wai-keung
Hon Christopher CHEUNG Wah-fung, SBS, JP
Hon SIN Chung-kai, SBS, JP
Dr Hon Helena WONG Pik-wan
Hon IP Kin-yuen
Dr Hon Elizabeth QUAT, JP
Hon Martin LIAO Cheung-kong, SBS, JP
Hon POON Siu-ping, BBS, MH
Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan, JP
Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok, SBS, MH, JP
Hon Christopher CHUNG Shu-kun, BBS, MH, JP
Hon Tony TSE Wai-chuen, BBS
Hon Alvin YEUNG Ngok-kiu

Members absent:

Dr Hon LAU Wong-fat, GBM, GBS, JP
Hon Frederick FUNG Kin-kee, SBS, JP
Prof Hon Joseph LEE Kok-long, SBS, JP, PhD, RN
Hon WONG Ting-kwong, SBS, JP
Dr Hon LEUNG Ka-lau

Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit, SC
Hon Charles Peter MOK, JP
Hon Kenneth LEUNG
Hon Dennis KWOK
Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung
Hon TANG Ka-piu, JP
Hon CHUNG Kwok-pan

Public officers attending:

Ms Elizabeth TSE Man-ye, JP	Permanent Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury)
Ms Esther LEUNG, JP	Deputy Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury) ¹
Mr Alfred ZHI Jian-hong	Principal Executive Officer (General), Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau (The Treasury Branch)
Mr Eddie NG Hak-kim, SBS, JP	Secretary for Education
Mrs Marion LAI CHAN Chi-kuen, JP	Permanent Secretary for Education
Dr Catherine CHAN Ka-ki	Deputy Secretary for Education
Ms CHING Suk-ye	Principal Education Officer (Curriculum Development), Education Bureau
Prof NG Tai-kai	Executive Director, Hong Kong Academy for Gifted Education

Clerk in attendance:

Ms Anita SIT	Assistant Secretary General 1
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Staff in attendance:

Mr Derek LO	Chief Council Secretary (1) ⁵
Mr Raymond SZETO	Council Secretary (1) ⁶
Mr Frankie WOO	Senior Legislative Assistant (1) ³
Ms Michelle NIEN	Legislative Assistant (1) ⁵

**Item No. 1 – FCR(2016-17)51
RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ESTABLISHMENT
SUBCOMMITTEE MADE ON 6 JUNE 2016**

EC(2016-17)5

**HEAD 96 – GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT: OVERSEAS ECONOMIC
AND TRADE OFFICES**

Subhead 000 – Operational expenses

EC(2016-17)6

HEAD 92 – DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Subhead 000 – Operational expenses

EC(2016-17)7

**HEAD 152 – GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT: COMMERCE AND
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BUREAU (COMMERCE, INDUSTRY
AND TOURISM BRANCH)**

Subhead 000 – Operational expenses

EC(2016-17)8

VARIOUS HEADS OF EXPENDITURE

The Chairman advised that this item sought the Committee's approval of the recommendations of the Establishment Subcommittee made at its meeting held on 6 June 2016, namely the recommendations in EC(2016-17)5 to 8. No members requested a separate voting on the recommendations at a meeting of the Finance Committee ("FC").

2. There being no questions from members on the item, the Chairman put the item to vote. The Chairman declared that the Committee approved the item.

Item No. 2 – FCR(2016-17)48

HEAD 156 – GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT : EDUCATION BUREAU

Subhead 700 – General non-recurrent

New Item – "Gifted Education Fund"

3. The Chairman advised that this item invited the Committee to approve the creation of a new commitment of \$800 million for the establishment of the Gifted Education Fund ("the GE Fund").

4. Dr LAM Tai-fai, Chairman of the Panel on Education, reported that the proposal to set up the GE Fund was discussed at the meeting of the Panel on Education on 11 April 2016. The Panel had no objection in principle to the authorities' proposal to set up the \$800-million GE Fund for generating investment income to support the operation of the Hong Kong Academy for Gifted Education ("HKAGE") and strengthen school-based gifted education programmes. Nevertheless, some members of the Panel expressed concern about the current implementation of gifted education and the focus of HKAGE's work in the future. In addition, some members were concerned about whether there was sufficient training to enable teachers to identify gifted students at an early stage. The Panel also requested the Administration to provide more detailed information on this for FC's consideration.

5. Ms Emily LAU declared that she was an unremunerated director of HKAGE's Board of Directors. She supported the setting up of the GE Fund in order to support the operation of HKAGE.

Gifted Education Policy

6. Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung and Mr IP Kin-yuen were concerned about the Administration's emphasis that fostering gifted education was of pivotal importance to help nurture gifted students and enrich Hong Kong's pool of talents, thereby increasing our competitiveness. They did not subscribe to this. They opined that gifted education should adopt a people-oriented objective, fostering the talents of individual gifted students and at the same time, enabling students to attain all-round development in the domains of ethics, intellect, physique, social skills and aesthetics. They pointed out that not all talents in the above domains could be directly converted into economic benefits. Hence, the main objectives of gifted education should not be to support economic development.

7. Secretary for Education advised that gifted education targeted both students individually and the community at large. The objectives of the authorities included catering for the needs of gifted students and ensuring that it would bring out the best of our children who would be suitably nurtured, motivated and encouraged, so as to help them unleash their potentials, realize their ideals and contribute to the future development of Hong Kong, while at the same time, enabling them to achieve balanced and whole person growth at the personal level. Executive Director of the Hong Kong Academy for Gifted Education ("Executive Director of HKAGE") further explained that in addition to academic programmes, affective education was also an important part of gifted education, which would help gifted students optimize their interrelated

intellectual and personality attributes with learning experiences and services and advocate the affective development of gifted students. Affective education course was a compulsory subject for HKAGE students.

8. Mr Albert CHAN expressed concern that the implementation of gifted education would only further aggravate the problems of "spoon-feeding" and intensive drilling of the current education mode. He enquired if students who demonstrated exceptional achievements in music, sports or arts domains would be defined as gifted students and what support was given by the authorities to such students.

9. In response, Deputy Secretary for Education said that the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts and the Hong Kong Sports Institute provided professional training to students who demonstrated exceptional achievements in music or sports domains. The Quality Education Fund established by the Administration had been supporting gifted students in their development in cultural, arts and sports domains. In response to the requests from Mr Albert CHAN and Ms Claudia MO, the Administration would provide supplementary information on how the Quality Education Fund supported gifted students in their development in cultural, arts and sports domains and comparison between the proposed fund and the existing Quality Education Fund.

[Post-meeting note: The Administration's supplementary information was issued to members vide LC Paper No. FC281/15-16(01) on 15 July 2016.]

10. Ms Claudia MO and Dr KWOK Ka-ki opined that even as the authorities promoted gifted education, the resources for special education services should also be increased to support students with disabilities or special education needs. Mr Abraham SHEK supported the enhancement of the support for the development of gifted education. He also enquired what support was available for low-achieving students and what the results of the relevant measures were. The Administration undertook to provide the relevant supplementary information after the meeting.

[Post-meeting note: The Administration's supplementary information was issued to members vide LC Paper No. FC281/15-16(01) on 15 July 2016.]

Identification and selection of gifted students

11. Dr Helena WONG, Ms Claudia MO, Mr CHAN Chi-chuen, Mr Albert HO, Mr IP Kin-yuen and Mr WU Chi-wai enquired what the definition of giftedness was, how the HKAGE identified, selected and admitted gifted students. In particular, they expressed concern that the academic performance of some gifted students in school might not be particularly outstanding and some gifted students might even have special education needs.

12. Secretary for Education, Deputy Secretary for Education and Executive Director of HKAGE replied that according to a broad definition of giftedness, students who demonstrated exceptional achievements or potentials in specific domains (for example, specific academic aptitude in a subject area, creative thinking, natural leadership, etc.) were considered as gifted students. The definition of giftedness adopted the concept of multiple intelligences and there was no single objective and quantitative benchmark for identifying gifted students, nor was it related to the results in general school examinations. Generally speaking, it was held in the great majority of countries that the percentage of gifted children was around 6% to 10% of total student population. Since the establishment of HKAGE in 2008, a total of about 57 000 student members had been admitted. The HKAGE expected the total number of its members to reach 5% of the total primary and secondary school student population in Hong Kong in the 2024-2025 school year when the "10-year Development Plan" was completed.

13. Executive Director of HKAGE said that HKAGE accepted student members by way of school nomination and self-nomination (through submission of student profiles and relevant documentary proof). After selection, student nominees shortlisted, including those with special education needs, would become preliminary student members who were eligible to participate in designated web-based programmes. In order to obtain full membership, students were required to meet the web-based programme completion requirements. Executive Director of HKAGE further explained that the design of the programmes for gifted students was intended to provide challenging learning opportunities to these students and enable them to unleash their full potentials. The web-based learning programmes were not intended to test the knowledge and skills of students but to assess if they had interest in exploring a specific subject area and possessed specific aptitude, nor were they related to the scope of public examinations in Hong Kong.

14. Dr KWOK Ka-ki, Mr Albert HO and Mr WU Chi-wai enquired what measures the authorities had put in place to assist teachers and parents in identifying gifted students. In particular, Dr KWOK Ka-ki expressed concern that grassroots parents or those in socially disadvantaged groups might know very little about gifted education and did not know how to identify their children's giftedness or did not take the initiative to nominate their children for admission to HKAGE's programmes for the gifted. Ms Emily LAU enquired what programmes were offered by the Education University of Hong Kong to assist teachers in identifying gifted students. Mr IP Kin-yuen opined that the authorities should also increase the resources for the development of school-based gifted education.

15. Executive Director of HKAGE replied that the Gifted Education Section of the Education Bureau and HKAGE had all along been providing Professional Development Programmes to teachers to facilitate the effective identification of gifted students, implementation and development of gifted education programmes in school context. The Education University of Hong Kong also offered electives on gifted education to its students. HKAGE would also step up its promotional efforts to enhance public understanding of gifted education.

Programmes of the Hong Kong Academy for Gifted Education

16. Ms Claudia MO and Mr CHAN Chi-chuen considered that HKAGE's programmes mainly focused on the domains of mathematics and science. Ms MO suggested that HKAGE should step up nurturing its members' talents in the fields of language and creativity. Mr CHAN Chi-chuen and Dr KWOK Ka-ki also opined that apart from nurturing its members' gifted talents, HKAGE should at the same time help them improve their competency in other academic subjects in which their performance was weaker.

17. Executive Director of HKAGE replied that apart from the courses of their gifted domains, members of HKAGE could also take elective courses in other different domains of their choice. Many members gifted in the fields of mathematics and science would also take elective courses relating to humanities. He explained that the teaching approach adopted by HKAGE's programmes was similar to that in universities. Compared with the courses in conventional schools, gifted students would have a greater learning interest in its programmes whose medium of instruction included both Chinese and English.

18. Mr Gary FAN asked about the details of the affective education course and the reasons for HKAGE to operate the course in collaboration with other organizations. Executive Director of HKAGE replied that the Affective Education Division, which was set up by HKAGE last year, aimed to help gifted students optimize their interrelated intellectual and personality attributes constructively with the learning experiences and services, and advocate affective development of gifted students through a range of learning experiences and services for its members, their parents and gifted education practitioners. He said that gifted students spent most of the time in schools and families in their daily life. For this reason, HKAGE would operate the affective education course in collaboration with schools and non-governmental organizations so as to assist the affective development of gifted students from more perspectives.

19. Dr KWOK Ka-ki and Mr LEE Cheuk-yan noted that the places of study for HKAGE's programmes were mainly located in the campus of the University of Hong Kong or the Chinese University of Hong Kong. In their view, this would bring a heavy burden of transport expenses on students from grass-roots or disadvantaged families living in the New Territories (such as Tung Chung and Tin Shui Wai), thus discouraging them from joining HKAGE's programmes. They urged the Administration and HKAGE to offer subsidies to these students. Ms Claudia MO also suggested that students from grassroots or disadvantaged families should be given priority in admission to HKAGE's programmes.

20. Executive Director of HKAGE replied that apart from the campuses of the universities, HKAGE had also offered a few courses in some schools in certain districts (such as Tai Po and Tin Shui Wai). HKAGE would endeavour to run more courses in the community for convenient attendance by its members, and offer more web-based courses which would be open to all students (not just members of HKAGE). Secretary for Education advised that the establishment of the GE Fund could provide long-term and stable source of income to support the operation of HKAGE which could consider by itself offering transport subsidies to its members in need in the future. In response to Mr IP Kin-yuen's enquiry, Executive Director of HKAGE clarified that HKAGE's programmes in 2016-2017 would continue to be free. HKAGE currently had no plan to run any fee-charging courses. At Mr LEE Cheuk-yan's request, the Administration undertook to provide supplementary information on the distribution of HKAGE members by school districts.

[*Post-meeting note:* The Administration's supplementary information was issued to members vide LC Paper No. FC281/15-16(01) on 15 July 2016.]

21. Mr Abraham SHEK asked about HKAGE's support for parents of gifted students in addition to offering courses for nurturing these students. Executive Director of HKAGE replied that HKAGE had offered different types of courses to its members' parents so as to enhance their understanding of gifted education, strengthen their parenting approach and create a more suitable environment for the growth of gifted students. HKAGE had also provided an interactive platform for mutual learning and sharing of experience among its members' parents.

Future development of the Hong Kong Academy for Gifted Education

22. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung was concerned that in Singapore, Taiwan and South Korea, around 1% to 2% of the student population would be identified as gifted for receiving special gifted programmes, and HKAGE expected that the total number of members would reach 5% of the total primary and secondary school student population in Hong Kong in the 2024-2025 school year when the "10-year Development Plan" was completed. Moreover, according to paragraph 13 of the Administration's paper (FCR(2016-17)48), HKAGE would implement various initiatives with the ultimate goal of developing Hong Kong into a regional gifted education hub which would in turn enhance its capacity to attract talents. Mr LEUNG asked about the reason for the above percentage estimated by HKAGE being higher than the figures in the neighbouring countries and regions, and the performance indicators for the new initiatives to be implemented by HKAGE.

23. The Permanent Secretary for Education ("PS(Ed)") replied that Hong Kong's neighbouring countries and regions had attached great importance to gifted education and each of them had a different mode of training. For example, in Singapore, there were specialized schools for gifted students. Hence, the percentage of gifted students receiving gifted education services in various places could serve as general reference, but direct comparison of such figures might not be appropriate. Executive Director of HKAGE responded that HKAGE currently had not set any specific quantitative targets for the new initiatives to be implemented. According to the past records, HKAGE would arrange for its members to take part in international competitions and exchange activities about five times every year. HKAGE would also take part in international conferences, researches and exchanges on gifted education once or twice a year, with a view to adopting the best practices after gaining knowledge of such practices.

Annual financial provision for HKAGE's operation

24. Mr IP Kin-yuen asked about the justifications for the Administration's proposal to support HKAGE's operation with investment returns generated by the GE Fund instead of providing HKAGE with recurrent funding. Mr IP considered that compared with recurrent funding, the Administration's plan to set up an Advisory Committee on Gifted Education to offer advice on the use and management of the GE Fund would give rise to additional administrative work. Mr CHAN Chi-chuen noted that EDB might make use of a small portion of the principal if it considered that the cumulative income from investment returns of the GE Fund was insufficient to meet the funding shortfall of HKAGE in a particular year. He suggested that more investment returns could be obtained by increasing the amount of the GE Fund, thus reducing the need to use the principal.

25. PS(Ed) replied that as a matter of fact, it would make no difference to HKAGE's operation no matter whether HKAGE was funded by investment returns of the GE Fund or recurrent funding. Apart from advising on the use and management of the GE Fund, the proposed Advisory Committee on Gifted Education would also advise the Administration on the medium to long-term strategic development of gifted education in Hong Kong, as well as new measures and initiatives for promoting gifted education. She further said that HKAGE's estimated expenditure in 2015-2016 was \$34.3 million. Under the principle of fiscal prudence, the Administration considered that \$800 million would be an appropriate amount for the GE Fund. In addition to the investment returns of the GE Fund, HKAGE would continue to explore other sources of funding, such as seeking donations and sponsorship from the business sector.

26. Mr WONG Yuk-man was concerned whether acceptance of sponsorship from the business sector by HKAGE would affect its operation or direction of development. PS(Ed) responded that HKAGE was established in 2008 with a start-up funding of \$200 million (comprising a one-off grant of \$100 million approved by the Finance Committee and a private donation of \$100 million), which had been a major source of income for supporting the operation of HKAGE. HKAGE's initial plan was to seek sponsorship from the business sector for projects on an individual basis in the future. The Administration undertook to provide supplementary information on the projects for which HKAGE intended to seek commercial sponsorship.

[Post-meeting note: The Administration's supplementary information was issued to members vide LC Paper No. FC281/15-16(01) on 15 July 2016.]

27. At 5:30 pm, the Chairman declared that the meeting be adjourned.
28. The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 pm.

Legislative Council Secretariat
20 September 2016