

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(4)892/15-16
(These minutes have been seen
by the Administration)

Ref : CB4/PL/ED

Panel on Education

Minutes of meeting
held on Monday, 1 February 2016, at 4:30 pm
in Conference Room 1 of the Legislative Council Complex

- Members present** :
- Dr Hon LAM Tai-fai, SBS, JP(Chairman)
 - Hon IP Kin-yuen (Deputy Chairman)
 - Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung
 - Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP
 - Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, GBS, JP
 - Hon WONG Kwok-hing, BBS, MH
 - Hon Andrew LEUNG Kwan-yuen, GBS, JP
 - Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan, JP
 - Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun, SBS, JP
 - Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che
 - Hon IP Kwok-him, GBS, JP
 - Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-yee, GBS, JP
 - Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung
 - Hon WONG Yuk-man
 - Hon NG Leung-sing, SBS, JP
 - Hon Steven HO Chun-yin, BBS
 - Hon Gary FAN Kwok-wai
 - Hon MA Fung-kwok, SBS, JP
 - Hon Charles Peter MOK, JP
 - Hon CHAN Chi-chuen
 - Dr Hon Kenneth CHAN Ka-lok
 - Hon Dennis KWOK
 - Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung
 - Dr Hon Helena WONG Pik-wan
 - Hon Martin LIAO Cheung-kong, SBS, JP
 - Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan, JP
 - Hon Christopher CHUNG Shu-kun, BBS, MH, JP
- Member attending** : Prof Hon Joseph LEE Kok-long, SBS, JP, PhD, RN

**Members
absent** : Hon Albert HO Chun-yan
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, GBS, JP
Hon Starry LEE Wai-king, JP
Hon CHAN Hak-kan, JP
Hon Michael TIEN Puk-sun, BBS, JP

**Public Officers : Agenda item III
attending**

Mr Eddie NG, SBS, JP
Secretary for Education

Mrs Marion LAI, JP
Permanent Secretary for Education

Mr Kevin YEUNG, JP
Under Secretary for Education

Mrs Michelle WONG, JP
Deputy Secretary for Education (3)

Agenda item IV

Mr Eddie NG, SBS, JP
Secretary for Education

Mr Brian LO, JP
Deputy Secretary for Education (1)

Dr Richard ARMOUR, JP
Secretary-General
University Grants Committee

Agenda item V

The Administration

Mr Eddie NG, SBS, JP
Secretary for Education

Mr Brian LO, JP
Deputy Secretary for Education (1)

Dr Richard ARMOUR, JP
Secretary-General
University Grants Committee

The Hong Kong Institute of Education

Professor Stephen CHEUNG, BBS, JP
President

Agenda item VI

Mr Kevin YEUNG, JP
Under Secretary for Education

Mrs HONG CHAN Tsui-wah
Deputy Secretary for Education (4)

Ms Teresa CHAN
Principal Education Officer (School Administration)
Education Bureau

Clerk in attendance : Miss Polly YEUNG
Chief Council Secretary (4)4

Staff in attendance : Miss Carrie WONG (*Item V only*)
Assistant Legal Advisor 4

Mr KWONG Kam-fai
Senior Council Secretary (4)4

Miss Mandy NG
Council Secretary (4)4

Ms Sandy HAU
Legislative Assistant (4)4

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I. Information paper(s) issued since the last meeting

- (LC Paper No. CB(4)498/15-16(01) -- Joint letter dated 31 December 2015 from Hon WONG Kwok-hing and Hon TANG Ka-piu concerning the provision of school laboratory technicians
- LC Paper No. CB(4)498/15-16(02) -- Administration's written response dated 14 January 2016 to the joint letter dated 31 December 2015 from Hon WONG Kwok-hing and Hon TANG Ka-piu concerning the provision of school laboratory technicians
- LC Paper No. CB(4)529/15-16(01) -- Information paper provided by the Education Bureau concerning the progress of the School-based Professional Support Programmes financed by the Education Development Fund in the 2014-2015 school year)

Members noted the above papers issued since the last meeting.

II. Items for discussion at the next meeting

- (Appendix I to LC Paper No. CB(4)542/15-16 -- List of outstanding items for discussion
- Appendix II to LC Paper No. CB(4)542/15-16 -- List of follow-up actions)

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2. The Chairman sought members' view on whether the next regular meeting originally scheduled for 14 March 2016 should be re-scheduled, as some members including himself would be out of town and might not be able to attend the meeting. Mr IP Kwok-him indicated his support for re-scheduling the meeting. Mr Tommy CHEUNG said that it would be advisable to hold the meeting in the afternoon rather than in the morning. Members did not raise any contrary view. The Chairman proposed and members agreed that the next regular meeting would be re-scheduled to be held on Tuesday, 22 March 2016, at 4:30 pm.

3. The Chairman informed members that the Administration had proposed to discuss the following items at the next regular meeting –

- (a) Review on Territory-wide System Assessment ("TSA"); and
- (b) Pilot Project on Special Educational Needs Coordinators.

4. Dr Kenneth CHAN relayed the concerns of some parents about TSA, notably whether the performance of individual students was ranked and whether participation in TSA should be voluntary. He considered that the Panel should follow up these concerns. The Chairman noted Dr CHAN's view and advised that the Administration was expected to brief the Panel the outcome of the review on TSA conducted by the Coordinating Committee on Basic Competency Assessment and Assessment Literacy at the next regular meeting.

5. The Chairman said that he would finalize with the Deputy Chairman the items to be discussed at the next regular meeting with reference to members' views and the Panel's "List of outstanding items for discussion". Members would be notified accordingly.

(Post-meeting note: Upon finalization by the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman, the agenda for the meeting to be held on 22 March 2016 was issued to members vide LC Paper CB(4)652/15-16 on 25 February 2016.)

6. Before proceeding to the discussion items, the Chairman drew members' attention to Rule 83A of the Rules of Procedure which provided that a Member shall not move any motion or amendment relating to a matter in which he had a pecuniary interest, whether direct or indirect, or speak on any such matter, except where he disclosed the nature of that interest. He reminded members to declare interests, if any, in the matter under discussion.

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III. Policy on kindergarten education

(LC Paper No. CB(4)542/15-16(01) -- Paper provided by the Administration)

7. Members noted two papers prepared by the Deputy Chairman [subsequently issued vide LC Paper Nos. CB(4)557/15-16(01) and (02)] tabled at the meeting.

8. The Chairman informed members that the Subcommittee to Study the Implementation of Free Kindergarten Education had completed its work and submitted a report to the Panel [LC Paper No. CB(4)532/15-16(01)] on 25 January 2016.

Briefing by the Administration

9. At the invitation of the Chairman, the Secretary for Education ("SED") briefed members on the key features of the free quality kindergarten ("KG") education policy and related measures, as set out in the Administration's paper [LC Paper No. CB(4)542/15-16(01)]. He highlighted that the full-year recurrent expenditure on free quality KG education would be about \$6.7 billion in the 2017-2018 school year, representing a substantial increase of more than 60% of the estimated recurrent expenditure on pre-primary education of \$4.1 billion in 2015-2016. A new Kindergarten Education ("KGE") Division would be set up to take charge of the formulation of strategies/measures, planning and preparation as well as the smooth implementation of the new KG education policy. In this regard, the Administration proposed to create one supernumerary post as the head of the new KGE Division at the rank of Assistant Director of Education ("ADE") (D2) for three years from 2016-2017 to lead the multi-disciplinary team for undertaking the preparation and start-up work and one permanent post of Principal Education Officer ("PEO") (D1) starting from 2016-2017 to assist ADE in steering the various tasks. Subject to members' views, the Administration planned to make a submission to the Establishment Subcommittee ("ESC") for consideration and the Finance Committee for approval.

Discussion

Provision of Government subsidy under the new KG policy

10. Mr Gary FAN noted that the Government subsidy under the new KG

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policy would cover half-day ("HD") service in local non-profit-making ("NPM") KGs as the basic provision for all eligible KG students. He considered the arrangement unsatisfactory as it was estimated that slightly more than 50% of KG students would not need to pay school fees in the 2017-2018 school year. He sought confirmation on whether the estimation was correct. Mr Gary FAN and Dr Kenneth CHAN enquired about the Administration's plan, if any, to extend the scope of free KG education to whole-day ("WD") and long whole-day ("LWD") KG services.

11. SED advised that in the 2017-2018 school year, it was estimated that about 70% to 80% of HD KG places would be free, i.e. a maximum of 80 000 KG students would not need to pay school fees. It was envisaged that not all KG places would be totally free when the policy was first implemented. For example some KGs would need to charge tuition fees to cover rental cost in excess of the rental subsidy or other approved operating expenses. Premised on the principle that WD/LWD services should be provided on a co-payment basis, the Government and parents would each bear part of the additional cost. SED highlighted that the basic tenet of the new policy was that the Government subsidy to each eligible KG would be sufficient for it to provide quality KG education according to the standards prescribed by the Government.

12. Dr Kenneth CHAN was concerned about the provision of WD/LWD KG places to meet the needs of working parents. In this regard, SED advised that the planning standards for provision of KG places would be reviewed and revised as necessary as a long-term goal from the present 250 WD and 730 HD places to 500 WD and 500 HD places respectively for every 1 000 children aged between three and six.

13. Mr Tommy CHEUNG noted that under the prevailing Pre-primary Education Voucher Scheme ("PEVS") and the new KG policy, Government subsidy was limited to local NPM KGs only. He was of the view that such an arrangement would in effect restrict parents' choice and affect the diversified development of the KG sector. Mr CHEUNG also remarked that the original objective of providing rental subsidy was to encourage more KGs to operate in less accessible areas rather than to relieve the rental burden of KGs. He said that he would not support the arrangements for rental subsidy as proposed by the Administration.

14. Mr WONG Yuk-man queried the Government's commitment to provide 15-year free education as the Government subsidy would only cover HD service in NPM KGs. He opined that education was a form of

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investment. When introducing new initiatives, value-for-money should not be the sole consideration. Mr WONG asked the Administration to study the concerns set out in the Deputy Chairman's papers tabled at the meeting. He said that he might also submit his views in writing.

15. The Deputy Chairman noted that the tuition fee threshold for HD KG classes under PEVS was \$33,770 per student per annum in the 2015-2016 school year. However, according to the Administration, the basic HD unit subsidy calculated on a per student unit cost basis under the new policy would be about \$32,900 in the 2017-2018 school year. He sought explanation on the disparity and was concerned that small KGs with fewer students would be disadvantaged under the reduced amount of unit subsidy and might not be able to deliver quality KG education.

16. In response, SED explained that the basic HD unit subsidy of \$32,900 in the 2017-2018 school year was based on the subsidy calculated at the 2013-2014 price level as well as the change in price level projected for the years up to 2017-2018. When the new subsidy scheme was launched, the actual amount of subsidy for the 2017-2018 school year would be adjusted as appropriate. The Deputy Secretary for Education(3) ("DS(Ed)3") supplemented that on top of the estimated basic HD unit subsidy which would be calculated on a per student unit cost basis to include teaching staff salary, supporting staff salary and other operating expenses, some school-specific grants, such as rental subsidy, premises maintenance grant and grant for employing a cook for KGs with a kitchen, etc. would also be provided to cater for the special circumstances of KGs or students.

17. In this connection, the Chairman requested the Administration to inform the Panel of the estimated range of rental subsidy for eligible KGs on top of the basic HD unit subsidy upon the implementation of free kindergarten education in the 2017-2018 school year. The Administration agreed to provide relevant information after the meeting.

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18. The Chairman noted that for eligible KGs operating in self-owned school premises or premises owned by their school sponsoring bodies with zero/nominal rent, a premises maintenance grant would be provided to alleviate the financial burden arising from major repairs. He sought further information on the grant.

19. In reply, DS(Ed)3 advised that the premises maintenance grant would be determined with reference to the depreciation expenses of school premises over the past few years. The level of grant would be set on a per

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student basis. KGs could use the grant for maintenance and repairs according to proper procedures.

Issues related to the teaching profession

20. Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che noted that instead of introducing a mandatory salary scale as urged by many stakeholders, the Administration had recommended salary ranges for KG teaching and supporting staff positions. He was concerned about the measures, if any, to be taken against KGs in case of non-compliance. Notwithstanding the provision of the one-off time-limited tide-over grant to help KGs defray salary-related expenses, he was gravely concerned that in the long run, the amount of Government subsidy based on the mid-point salary would be insufficient in meeting the high expenditure on staff salaries for KGs which had employed a large number of long-serving teachers. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung shared Mr CHEUNG's concern. Mr CHEUNG and Mr LEUNG enquired about the mechanism of making adjustments to the recommended salary ranges. Mr WONG Yuk-man queried the efficacy of requiring KGs to comply with the recommended reference salary ranges instead of putting in place a mandatory salary scale for KG teachers.

21. Mr Tommy CHEUNG did not support the setting of reference salary ranges under the new policy as this would undermine the flexibility of individual KGs in determining the remuneration for their staff. He was concerned that private independent KGs, which would not receive any Government subsidy, might not be able to offer competitive salaries comparable to those of NPM KGs.

22. SED advised that the salary ranges had been recommended with a view to facilitating KGs to set reasonable salaries for their staff. Under the new KG education policy, KGs in receipt of Government subsidy would be required to observe the rules and guidelines set by the Education Bureau ("EDB") to ensure that the subsidy would be used appropriately on staff remuneration. KG teachers should not be paid a salary below the lower end of the recommended salary range. EDB would remind KGs to comply with the relevant rules and guidelines. Non-compliance might render the KGs concerned no longer eligible to participate in the subsidy scheme.

23. The Permanent Secretary for Education ("PS(Ed)") advised that the prevailing mid-point salary received by KG teaching staff was around \$18,500 per month. Under the recommended salary ranges, the mid-point salary, which was around \$25,000 per month, would be used to work out the

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Government's financial provision to KGs. During the two-year period covered by the tide-over grant, KGs should formulate their school-specific financial and staffing policy for migration to the new policy. SED further said that a clear three-level teaching staff structure for KGs had also been recommended. The Administration would devise an appropriate mechanism for adjusting the recommended salary ranges taking into consideration relevant factors such as the Consumer Price Index.

24. Dr Helena WONG noted that the basic HD unit subsidy would cover teaching staff salary, supporting staff salary and other operating expenses. She sought confirmation that the portion for teaching staff salary could not be used for other purposes. DS(Ed)3 confirmed that the subsidy for teaching staff salary could only be used exclusively for this purpose. Part of the subsidy for other operating expenses, if in surplus, could be used for salary-related purposes under certain conditions.

25. Ms Cyd HO said that a career ladder and competitive remuneration were essential for maintaining a quality teaching force. She noted that for appointment or promotion to senior teacher posts, KGs would be encouraged to give priority to suitable teachers with degree qualification. The qualification requirement of KG principals should continue to be a bachelor of education degree in early childhood education or equivalent. However, Ms HO said that each year, about 3 000 candidates applied for admission to the early childhood education ("ECE") bachelor programme offered by The Hong Kong Institute of Education ("HKIEd") but there were only 18 first-year intake places. She was concerned that the inadequate provision of first-year-first-degree ("FYFD") places in publicly-funded ECE programmes would hinder the professional upgrading of KG teachers.

26. DS(Ed)3 advised that currently, besides offering 18 full-time FYFD places, HKIEd also offered several hundred places in its part-time ECE programmes. For degree-holders of other disciplines, programmes on postgraduate diploma of education were offered to facilitate them to attain the required qualification of KG teachers.

27. Ms Cyd HO opined that the Administration should increase the number of full-time FYFD places in ECE degree programme. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung concurred that to build up a quality KG teaching force, the Administration should increase the number of full-time FYFD places in ECE degree programme. He sought information on the number of places available under various types of ECE programmes in Hong Kong, such as full-time, part-time, undergraduate and post-graduate programmes.

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28. SED advised that the Administration considered it more appropriate to provide teacher training places through diversified means. The provision of part-time ECE programmes could better suit the needs of serving KG teachers to upgrade their qualification. Currently, about 30% of serving KG teachers (including principals) were degree-holders. The Administration would provide information after the meeting on the annual intake of different modes and levels of ECE programmes.

Support for students with special educational needs ("SEN")

29. Dr Fernando CHEUNG noted that unlike the primary and secondary school sectors where a promulgated policy on integrated education prevailed, there was currently no policy on implementing integrated education in KGs. He said that according to the findings of a survey conducted in 2014 by the Hong Kong Society for Protection of Children and HKIEd, one out of seven KG students had developmental disorder or SEN. He was of the view that merely enhancing the teacher-pupil ratio to 1:11 could hardly ensure that the needs of these KG students could be catered for. He considered it necessary to strengthen training for teachers to facilitate early identification of KG students with developmental problems. He also urged the Administration to formulate a policy on integrated education for the KG sector.

30. PS(Ed) advised that under the new KG policy, the overall enhancement of teacher-pupil ratio for eligible KGs to 1:11 would create more space for KG teachers to collaborate among themselves to take care of the diverse needs of students. EDB would offer more structured in-service training programmes for KG teachers to enhance their capacity to cater for students' diverse learning needs and to facilitate early identification of children with special needs. DS(Ed)3 supplemented that KG students who were diagnosed with special needs/developmental problems would be arranged to receive rehabilitation services provided by the Social Welfare Department ("SWD") through the Integrated Programme in KG-cum-Child Care Centres, Special Child Care Centres or Early Education Training Centres. Meanwhile, SWD had launched a pilot scheme through the Lotteries Fund to provide on-site rehabilitation services for children with special needs at KGs.

31. Mr Dennis KWOK was concerned about the need to shorten the waiting time for KG students suspected to have developmental disorder or SEN to receive assessment service. DS(Ed)3 advised that the Department of Health ("DH") had allocated additional resources for this purpose. At the

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request of Mr KWOK, the Administration agreed to provide information after the meeting on the waiting time for pre-school children with suspected developmental disorders to receive assessment services provided by DH/Hospital Authority.

Staffing proposal

32. Mr CHAN Chi-chuen noted that to implement the new KG policy, the Administration had proposed to create 22 non-directorate posts in 2016-2017 and a further 37 non-directorate posts in 2017-2018, one supernumerary post at the rank of ADE(D2) for three years and one permanent post at the rank of PEO(D1). Mr CHAN sought information on the existing manpower for administering KG education and the justification for the proposed additional manpower.

33. PS(Ed) advised that there were currently four KG Sections responsible for overseeing different areas of work under the KG education policy and related issues under PEVS. Given the scale, importance and complexity of the tasks involved under the new KG policy, a new KGE Division, to be headed by an ADE(D2) and underpinned by a PEO(D1), would be set up to take charge of the formulation of strategies, planning and preparation as well as the smooth implementation of the new policy. To support the full implementation of the new KG policy, it was envisaged that 22 and 37 non-directorate posts should be created in 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 respectively. Some of these non-directorate posts were time-limited lasting for one to three years so as to tie in with the work in the start-up years.

34. Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che said that it might be helpful to create additional posts to implement a new and important policy on KG education. Noting that the major responsibilities of the proposed ADE(D2) post and PEO(D1) post were to steer and oversee the implementation of new KG policy, the Deputy Chairman considered it necessary for the Administration to provide further justification for the proposed creation of the two posts. Mr Tommy CHEUNG said that he did not support the staffing proposal, as he was concerned that when the time-limited posts were about to expire, the Administration would likely convert them into permanent posts on the ground of operational needs. Mr WONG Yuk-man opined that as there were existing staff to administer PEVS, it was hardly necessary to create new directorate posts to implement the new KG policy. Mr WONG said that he would seek further explanation when the staffing proposal was considered by ESC.

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35. Concluding the discussion, the Chairman urged the Administration to take into account members' views and concerns expressed at the meeting when considering the submission of its staffing proposal to ESC.

IV. Recurrent funding for University Grants Committee-funded institutions in the 2016/17 to 2018/19 triennium

(File Ref.: EDB(HE)CR 2/2041/14 -- Legislative Council Brief issued by the Education Bureau)

Briefing by the Administration

36. At the invitation of the Chairman, SED briefed members on the distribution of indicative student number targets of University Grants Committee("UGC")-funded institutions and the recurrent funding for UGC-funded institutions in the 2016-2017 to 2018-2019 triennium, details of which were set out in the Legislative Council Brief [File Ref.: EDB(HE)CR 2/2041/14]. He highlighted that the recurrent funding for UGC-funded institutions for the 2016-2017 to 2018-2019 triennium would amount to \$53.6 billion, i.e. \$17.9 billion each year. The indicative tuition fee would be maintained at the current level, i.e. \$42,100 per student per year for UGC-funded programmes at degree level, during the 2016-2017 to 2018-2019 triennium.

Declaration of interest

37. Dr Kenneth CHAN declared that he was an associate professor of Hong Kong Baptist University ("HKBU"). Dr Fernando CHEUNG and Dr Helena WONG declared that they were teaching at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University.

Discussion

Issues related to the provision of undergraduate places

38. Dr Helena WONG noted that a large number of secondary school leavers meeting the minimum general requirements for university admission had to pursue sub-degree or self-financing programmes due to insufficient UGC-funded FYFD places. She opined that the Administration should increase the provision of UGC-funded FYFD places instead of

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maintaining it at 15 000 places per annum. The Deputy Chairman considered that the Administration should increase the provision of subsidized FYFD places rather than senior year undergraduate intake places.

39. The Deputy Secretary for Education (1) ("DS(Ed)1") advised that the publicly-funded and self-financing post-secondary sectors complemented each other. Through the development of both sectors, about 46% of students in the relevant cohort currently had access to degree-level education. Upon full implementation of the series of measures to increase subsidized higher education opportunities and given the declining student population in the coming years, it was expected that all secondary school leavers meeting the minimum general requirements for university admission could have access to degree-level education by 2022 assuming that the performance of secondary school graduates was maintained at the current level. SED further said that the percentage of young people receiving degree-level education in Hong Kong was comparable to that of overseas jurisdictions.

40. Dr Helena WONG requested the Administration to provide the projected number of secondary school leavers meeting the minimum general requirements for university admission, and the number of publicly-funded and self-financed FYFD places for each academic year up to 2022.

(Post-meeting note: The Administration's written information was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(4)776/15-16(01) on 24 March 2016.)

41. Mr NG Leung-sing opined that in allocating student numbers to UGC-funded institutions, consideration should be given to Hong Kong's manpower needs. For example, additional places should be allocated to disciplines related to the development of innovation and technology. The Deputy Chairman noted that the Government would increase the number of UGC-funded FYFD places in medicine, dentistry and other healthcare disciplines in the 2016-2017 to 2018-2019 triennium. He enquired whether these places would be provided in addition to, or within, the overall UGC-funded FYFD places (i.e. 15 000 per annum). Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che enquired on the criteria adopted by UGC for allocating additional FYFD places to individual disciplines.

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42. DS(Ed)1 said that the additional FYFD places in medicine, dentistry and other healthcare disciplines would be included in the overall UGC-funded FYFD places, i.e. 15 000 places per annum. SED advised that when considering the increase in FYFD places in certain disciplines, the Government would take into consideration all relevant factors, including the manpower requirements, capacity of teaching staff, availability of equipment and facilities, opportunities of practical training etc. Secretary-General("SG")/UGC explained that slight adjustment might be made to the indicative student number targets to provide additional UGC-funded FYFD places to meet changes in manpower needs. He further said that individual institutions had the discretion to allocate FYFD places among different programmes within their indicative student number targets.

43. Noting that the Government would increase the number of UGC-funded FYFD places in healthcare-related disciplines in the 2016-2017 to 2018-2019 triennium, Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung was concerned whether there would be a corresponding increase in practical training places for these students. Dr Fernando CHEUNG was concerned that the additional 68 UGC-funded FYFD places in healthcare disciplines could hardly meet the strong demand for qualified physiotherapists, occupational therapists and other professional staff to provide services for the elderly and special schools. He urged the Administration to review the manpower needs and increase the number of FYFD places in relevant disciplines.

44. DS(Ed)1 advised that in reviewing the healthcare manpower requirement, EDB had sought the views of the Food and Health Bureau. In addition to increasing the number of UGC-funded FYFD places in healthcare disciplines, over 400 subsidized FYFD places in healthcare disciplines were also provided under the Study Subsidy Scheme for Designated Professions/Sectors.

45. Mrs Regina IP enquired about the percentage of young people in the relevant cohort pursuing self-financing undergraduate programmes. DS(Ed)1 said that the percentage of young people in the relevant cohort pursuing self-financing and publicly-funded undergraduate programmes was 22% and 24% respectively.

46. Noting the rapid growth of the self-financing post-secondary sector in the past decade, Mrs Regina IP expressed concern about the regulation and quality assurance mechanism of the self-financing post-secondary education sector, as well as their difficulty in recruiting students in the face

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of declining student population in the coming years.

47. DS(Ed)1 advised that the Administration had implemented a number of measures to support the development of the self-financing post-secondary sector. The Code of Good Practices on Governance and Quality Assurance had been promulgated for voluntary adoption by the self-financing post-secondary institutions to promote good governance and enhance transparency. Regarding the quality of the self-financing post-secondary programmes, the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications was responsible for the quality assurance of all operators and programmes except the UGC-funded institutions which enjoyed self-accrediting status. Non-local post-secondary programmes offered in Hong Kong leading to the award of non-local academic qualifications were required to be registered under the Non-local Higher and Professional Education (Regulation) Ordinance (Cap. 493).

Re-distribution of FYFD places through the Competitive Allocation Mechanism ("CAM")

48. Dr Helena WONG noted that under CAM, each UGC-funded institution was required to set aside a certain percentage of its FYFD places for re-distribution among the institutions by UGC. Such re-distribution might lead to the reduction in student number targets of some institutions. For example, the number of FYFD places allocated to HKBU as reflected in the indicative student number target for the 2016-2017 to 2018-2019 triennium had already been reduced by 52 places as a result of such re-distribution.

49. Dr Kenneth CHAN echoed Dr Helena WONG's concern and said that some institutions might decide not to offer certain programmes to freshmen if there was a large reduction in the number of FYFD places following re-distribution. He queried whether the operation of CAM was conducive to the development of an institution and considered that it should be abolished. Noting that the re-distribution of FYFD places under CAM was made with reference to the outcome of UGC's assessment of the Academic Development Proposals of individual institutions, Dr Kenneth CHAN and Dr Fernando CHEUNG were of the view that CAM would operate in favour of large and long-established institutions. The Deputy Chairman expressed concern about the transparency and criteria for the re-distribution of FYFD places under CAM.

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50. SG/UGC advised that the re-distribution of FYFD places was conducted by UGC according to four main criteria which had been agreed with the institutions, namely the strategy, mission and vision of the institution; academic programme design; teaching and learning; and addressing the needs of society in general. These criteria was equally applied to all UGC-funded institutions. Currently, CAM was conducted on a triennial basis and each exercise was conducted independently by a dedicated group comprising outstanding overseas and local experts not coming from any of the UGC-funded institutions. After the indicative student number targets of each institution had been approved, the institution could decide on the number of FYFD places to be allocated to different programmes as it saw fit. SG/UGC highlighted that the performance-based CAM would encourage institutions in their pursuit of excellence in accordance with their missions and strategies, and help ensure that publicly-funded student places were put to their best use.

Issues related to provision of postgraduate places

51. Dr Kenneth CHAN noted that the number of places in UGC-funded research postgraduate programmes varied greatly among institutions. He pointed out that institutions with fewer research postgraduate students might be disadvantaged in terms of the amount of block grant allocated for teaching, the quantity of research activities, and the workload of teaching staff participating in research projects etc.

52. Dr Helena WONG referred to Annex A of the Legislative Council Brief [File Ref.: EDB(HE)CR 2/2041/14] and requested the Administration to provide a breakdown of indicative student number targets under research postgraduate programmes by "MPhil" and "PhD" students.

(Post-meeting note: The Administration's written information was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(4)776/15-16(01) on 24 March 2016.)

Allocation of recurrent funding to UGC-funded institutions

53. Regarding the recurrent funding for UGC-funded institutions for the 2016-2017 to 2018-2019 triennium amounting to \$53.6 billion (i.e. \$ 17.9 billion each year), members noted that the Government would earmark sufficient funding in the Estimates of Expenditure of the respective financial years in the triennium.

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54. Mr NG Leung-sing was pleased to note that in 2015-2016 financial year, over 20% of recurrent government expenditure were spent on education. However, he was concerned about the reduction in recurrent funding for Lingnan University and HKIEd over the 2016-2017 to 2018-2019 triennium. Noting the wide difference in the amounts of triennial funding allocated to various institutions, Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung was concerned about UGC's methodology and criteria for determining the levels of recurrent grants for individual institutions.

55. SG/UGC advised that UGC's assessment of recurrent grants for individual institutions was based primarily on the distribution of indicative student number targets. The funding methodology would assess the resources required to meet the teaching and research requirements of each institution. The bulk of the block grant allocated to the institutions for teaching was determined on the basis of the student numbers, their study levels, modes of study and disciplines of study. UGC had set up a working group to evaluate the Academic Development Proposals submitted by individual institutions for each triennium.

56. Dr Fernando CHEUNG referred to the student number targets of individual institutions and enquired whether the targets had any bearing on the unit cost per student place. SED advised that the unit cost per student place would be determined by the number of students as well as the cost required in the teaching and learning of the disciplines. The unit cost for certain programmes, such as clinical programmes, was higher.

57. Referring to the social work undergraduate programmes offered by UGC-funded institutions, Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che pointed out that it was necessary to engage or deploy field instructors to supervise social work students undertaking their practicum. He sought explanation on why the price weighting of 1.0, instead of a higher weighting, was adopted for these programmes when UGC determined the teaching element of the block grant. SG/UGC agreed to provide further information in response to Mr CHEUNG's concern after the meeting.

(Post-meeting note: The Administration's written information was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(4)776/15-16(01) on 24 March 2016.)

58. Dr Helena WONG enquired whether the recurrent funding to UGC-funded institutions had included funding to support overseas students to study in Hong Kong under the Hong Kong Scholarship for "Belt and

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Road" Students ("B&R Scholarship"). In this regard, SED explained that the B&R Scholarship would be launched by expanding the scope of the Targeted Scholarship Scheme under the HKSAR Government Scholarship Fund ("GSF"). The Government planned to inject \$1 billion into GSF and finance the B&R Scholarship by the investment income from the seed money.

59. Dr Helena WONG noted that under the existing arrangement, about 50% of the research element of the block grant disbursed to UGC-funded institutions were allocated on a more competitive basis according to the institutions' success in obtaining Research Grants Council ("RGC") Earmarked Research Grants. She requested the Administration to explain the allocation of research funding if the institution had succeeded in obtaining funding from other sources, such as from the Innovation and Technology Fund.

60. In this regard, SG/UGC advised that under the prevailing arrangement, the allocation of research funding was informed by the results of the Research Assessment Exercise and the institutions' success in obtaining RGC Earmarked Research Grants. UGC had reviewed the arrangement in September 2015 and considered that it should be maintained. The Administration would provide more information in writing after the meeting.

(Post-meeting note: The Administration's written information was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(4)776/15-16(01) on 24 March 2016.)

V. Development and change of title of The Hong Kong Institute of Education and The Hong Kong Institute of Education (Amendment) Bill 2016

(File Ref.: EDB(HE)CR 4/2041/07 -- Legislative Council Brief issued by the Education Bureau)

61. Members noted that all other Hon Legislative Council ("LegCo") Members had been invited to take part in the discussion of this item. They also noted the letter submitted by Professor Stephen CHEUNG, President of HKIEd, [subsequently issued vide LC Paper No. CB(4)558/15-16(01)] tabled at the meeting.

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Briefing by HKIED

62. At the invitation of the Chairman, Prof CHEUNG gave a PowerPoint presentation on the development of HKIED, as well as HKIED's role in strengthening school leadership, nurturing competent teachers and promoting innovative learning and teaching. He highlighted that HKIED had also made good progress in developing into a multi-disciplinary institution.

63. Prof CHEUNG informed members that the grant of university title to HKIED was widely supported by its staff, students and alumni. He called on Members to support the early passage of The Hong Kong Institute of Education (Amendment) Bill 2016 ("the Bill") within the current legislative session to effect the change of HKIED's title to "The Education University of Hong Kong" ("EdUHK"). This would enable some 3 000 graduates this year to be awarded qualifications by EdUHK. As the Bill mainly involved the change of title of HKIED and given the busy schedule at LegCo, Prof CHEUNG hoped that the Bill would not need to be scrutinized by a Bills Committee and that the legislative process could be expedited. He also informed members that HKIED had set up a taskforce with representatives from students, alumni and staff to review institutional matters including governance.

(Post-meeting note: A set of the PowerPoint presentation material [LC Paper No. CB(4)558/15-16(02)] was circulated to members by e-mail on 2 February 2016.)

Discussion

Issues related to the Bill

64. Mr WONG Kwok-hing expressed full support for the grant of university title to HKIED and considered it a milestone in the development of higher education in Hong Kong. He agreed that it might not be necessary for Members to form a Bills Committee to scrutinize the Bill. However, Mr WONG was gravely concerned that due to ongoing filibustering, the Bill might not be passed by LegCo before the expiry of the current session. In such an event, he asked whether the future EdUHK could re-issue a certificate to these 3 000 students who graduated this year. In response, Prof CHEUNG advised that this was not feasible, although HKIED planned to issue letters to confirm that these graduates were its past students.

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65. The Deputy Chairman declared that he was a former lecturer at HKIEd. He welcomed the grant of university status to HKIEd and hoped that the legislative exercise to effect HKIEd's change in title could be completed swiftly and without hiccups.

66. Dr Kenneth CHAN was pleased that HKIEd would be granted university status, instead of merging with the Chinese University of Hong Kong according to some past suggestions. Regarding the new English name to be adopted by HKIEd upon acquiring university status, Dr CHAN asked whether consideration had been given to other alternatives, such as "The Hong Kong University of Education".

67. Prof CHEUNG informed members that about 10 000 staff, students and alumni had taken part in a poll. Among them, 90% agreed that the new Chinese name should read "香港教育大學". As regards the English name, "The Education University of Hong Kong" had been selected to avoid resemblance with "University of Hong Kong" or "Hong Kong University of Science and Technology".

68. Dr Helena WONG supported early passage of the Bill. She enquired whether SED would take any action to expedite the legislative process, such as seeking the agreement of the Chief Secretary for Administration ("CS") to withdraw the Copyright (Amendment) Bill 2014 currently being debated in the Council. SED stressed that the Government and HKIEd were fully aware of the importance of the early passage of the Bill within the current session. However, he was not in a position to comment on behalf of CS regarding the Government's legislative programme.

69. Mr CHAN Chi-chuen recalled that the Panel on Education ("the Panel") had paid a visit to HKIEd in May 2015. While he supported the grant of university title to HKIEd, he remarked that the real bottleneck had in fact been caused by the Copyright (Amendment) Bill 2014. He urged the Administration to seriously consider the amendments proposed by Members or the outcome of the forthcoming four-party meeting with a view to reaching a consensus with all stakeholders on the said Bill.

70. On the legislative timetable, the Chairman advised that after gazettal on 19 February 2016, the Bill would receive its First Reading on 2 March 2016. It would then be referred to the House Committee on 11 March 2016 for consideration of whether a Bills Committee should be formed. If no Member suggested that a Bills Committee should be formed, the Bill would be ready for resumption of Second Reading debate along with other Bills awaiting resumption.

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Institutional governance

71. The Deputy Chairman supported the two-phase approach under which HKIEd's change to university title would be dealt with first. Both the Deputy Chairman and Dr Kenneth CHAN sought further information on the work of the taskforce headed by Prof CHEUNG.

72. Prof CHEUNG said that as head of institution, it was incumbent upon him to uphold academic freedom, as well as to strike a balance between institutional autonomy on the one hand, and public accountability on the other. The taskforce, which was headed by him with representatives from students, alumni and staff, had examined various issues including the new name to be adopted by HKIEd. After completion of the first phase to apply for university title, the taskforce would proceed to the second phase and conduct consultation on governance-related issues. In this regard, Dr Kenneth CHAN called on the taskforce to commence the second phase of work expeditiously.

73. Dr Helena WONG enquired about the progress of the study on university governance commissioned by UGC. She suggested that the Panel should hold a public hearing when the report of the study was available. SG/UGC said that the study had been completed and UGC had submitted the report to EDB in September 2015. SED supplemented that the report was being considered by EDB and would be provided to the Panel in due course.

74. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung queried the long time taken by EDB to study the report submitted by UGC. Dr Helena WONG and Dr Fernando CHEUNG were of the view that SED should be more specific on the timing for providing the report to the Panel. SED said that the Administration would aim to provide the report in a few months. The Chairman expressed his dissatisfaction that SED was unable to indicate a specific timeframe at this meeting for submitting the report to the Panel. He urged SED to revert to the Panel with a more specific timing after the meeting.

(Post-meeting note: The Administration's written response (English version only) was received on 29 February 2016 and issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(4)666/15-16(01) on 1 March 2015.)

75. Dr Fernando CHEUNG declared that he was teaching at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University. Whilst supporting HKIEd's change of title, he referred to renowned overseas institutions such as the Massachusetts

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Institute of Technology and the California Institute of Technology, and remarked that apart from the title, the quality of the study programmes and the achievement of the graduates were also very important for an institution. Dr CHEUNG also urged the staff and students of HKIEd to appreciate Members' concerns about institutional governance.

Mission and future development of EdUHK

76. Mr NG Leung-sing was pleased to note that HKIEd was committed to nurturing competent teachers who possessed positive personality and positive work attitude. Prof CHEUNG concurred that teachers played a key role in helping their students develop a positive outlook on life.

77. Noting that HKIEd was offering a number of FYFD programmes in disciplines complementary to education, Mr NG asked whether FYFD programmes catering for elite athletes were available. Prof CHEUNG advised that currently, HKIEd offered part-time programmes in health and physical education so that elite athletes could pursue their career and further education in parallel and become qualified coaches or teachers of physical education in schools upon graduation. A total of 11 and eight athletes had been admitted to HKIEd in the last and current academic year respectively.

78. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung considered that the grant of university status to HKIEd was long overdue. He noted with concern that on one hand, HKIEd was granted university status; but on the other hand, the recurrent funding provided to it would be reduced from \$809.4 million in the 2016-2017 academic year, to \$805.3 million in 2017-2018 and \$802.2 million in 2018-2019. Mr LEUNG considered that more resources should be provided to HKIEd for its future development.

79. The Chairman enquired whether the future EdUHK would position itself as a teacher education institution or a multi-disciplinary university. Prof CHEUNG re-affirmed the "Education-plus" mission of HKIEd and advised that the core activity of EdUHK would remain the training of teachers while also offering programmes in social science and humanities that were complementary to education.

Concluding remarks

80. Summing up, the Chairman said that the Panel supported the Administration's introduction of the Bill into LegCo.

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VI. Issues related to the Block Insurance Policy taken out by the Government for aided schools

(LC Paper No. CB(4)542/15-16(02) -- Paper provided by the Administration)

Briefing by the Administration

81. At the invitation of the Chairman, the Under Secretary for Education ("US(Ed)") briefed members on the Block Insurance Policy ("BIP") taken out by the Government for aided schools, as set out in the Administration's paper [LC Paper No. CB(4)542/15-16(02)].

Discussion

Objectives and coverage of BIP

82. The Deputy Chairman noted that BIP aimed to provide aided schools with appropriate protection for their daily operation. He was concerned whether BIP also provided protection for teachers and students in aided schools or they had to acquire additional insurance at their own costs. He also enquired about the insurance protection for teachers and students in government schools.

83. US(Ed) advised that BIP protected aided schools against legal liability for accidental injury to any person, including students and school employees, arising out of school business. Teachers of government schools were civil servants and the Government would take care of the legal liability rested with it as the employer of government school teachers. Principal Education Officer (School Administration) further explained that students from government schools, similar to those studying in aided schools, would be eligible to apply for Group Personal Accident Insurance ("GPAI") up to \$100,000 per student if they suffered from accidental death or permanent disablement while participating in any school activities. No proof of negligence from the school was required. Under BIP, the maximum indemnity limit of Public Liability Insurance ("PLI") for aided schools was \$100 million per any one occurrence. The Employees' Compensation Insurance ("ECI") carried the same maximum indemnity limit per any one event for each school. The Government would indemnify the insured schools for claims that, if ruled by the Court, exceeded the insurance policy limit of PLI and ECI.

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84. Dr Helena WONG was concerned whether students and teachers participating in school activities outside the school or outside Hong Kong were eligible to apply for compensation under the various types of insurance of BIP. She enquired whether it was necessary for teachers and students to acquire insurance at their own costs.

85. US(Ed) advised that students and teachers of aided schools were covered by the various types of insurance under BIP. PLI protected schools against legal liability for any accidental injury caused to any person arising out of school business. To substantiate any claims for compensation under PLI, proof of school negligence was necessary. An employee of an aided school was entitled to compensation under ECI in respect of death or injury by accident or disease arising from and in the course of employment. In addition, GPAI provided some financial consolation to students who suffered from accidental death or permanent disablement while participating in any school activities.

86. Referring to excessive lead found in the drinking water of certain schools and kindergartens, Dr Helena WONG expressed concern about the harmful effect on the health of teachers and students. She considered that there had been negligence of schools, and enquired whether the teachers and students affected could lodge PLI claims.

87. In reply, US(Ed) clarified that BIP had been taken out by the Government for aided primary and secondary schools but not kindergartens. For aided schools insured under BIP, any person who suffered from accidental injury and/or accidental loss of or damage to any property arising out of school business might lodge PLI claims; but proof of school negligence was required. As far as the incidents of excessive lead in drinking water were concerned, investigation was underway and the underlying causes were yet to be confirmed. It would be for the insurer of PLI to examine the claim if one was lodged.

88. The Chairman said that he did not agree with the view that there had been negligence on the part of schools in the incidents of excessive lead found in drinking water. He considered that schools were also victims in the incidents.

89. The Deputy Chairman noted that to substantiate any claim for compensation under PLI, proof of school negligence was necessary. He was concerned that such a requirement might result in confrontation between students/parents and schools, which was not conducive to

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developing cordial home-school relations.

Maximum indemnity limits under BIP

90. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung and the Deputy Chairman considered that the Administration should raise the maximum indemnity limit of GPAI because the prevailing ceiling of \$100,000 per student might be insufficient to cover medical and healthcare expenses. The Deputy Chairman said that some schools had taken out additional accident insurance with a more comprehensive benefit coverage for their students. However, parents were required to bear part of the expenses on premium. He was concerned that this would cause difficulties to students and parents from needy families.

91. US(Ed) advised that members' views would be taken into consideration in the next tendering exercise which was conducted once every two years. He recapitulated that GPAI provided some financial consolation to students and was a kind of additional protection for students. It should not be perceived as a comprehensive personal insurance for students. Schools and parents might consider acquiring additional insurance for enhanced protection if necessary according to their own needs and circumstances.

VII. Any other business

Report of the Subcommittee to Study the Implementation of Free Kindergarten Education

(LC Paper No. CB(4)532/ 15-16(02) -- Paper entitled "Report of the Subcommittee to Study the Implementation of Free Kindergarten Education and the proposal for priority allocation of a debate slot to the Chairman of the Subcommittee" prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat)

92. The Chairman advised that the Subcommittee to Study the Implementation of Free Kindergarten Education ("the Subcommittee") had completed its work and submitted a report to the Panel. As stated in LC Paper No. CB(4)532/15-16(02), the Subcommittee had proposed that the

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Panel, as the parent committee, should seek the House Committee's agreement on 5 February 2016 for the priority allocation of a debate slot for Ms Starry LEE, Subcommittee Chairman, to move a motion for debate on the Subcommittee's Report at the Council meeting of 27 April 2016 with the recommendation that in addition to the debate on the Subcommittee's Report, only one other debate on a Member's motion not intended to have legislative effect should be held at the Council meeting concerned. Members raised no objection to the Subcommittee's proposed arrangements.

(Post-meeting note: At the meeting on 5 February 2016, the House Committee agreed to the priority allocation of a debate slot to Ms Starry LEE for moving a motion on the Subcommittee's Report at the Council meeting of 4 May 2016.)

93. Noting that the Government had just announced the policy on free quality kindergarten education but the Subcommittee had wrapped up its work earlier than its original work plan due to exigency, the Deputy Chairman considered that the Panel should take over from the Subcommittee and arrange a meeting to receive views on the new policy.

94. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 7:30 pm.

Council Business Division 4
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