

For information

Legislative Council Panel on Education

**Injection into the Language Fund –
Implementation of Initiatives**

Purpose

This paper reports the progress of the implementation of initiatives in relation to the injection of \$5 billion into the Language Fund in early 2014.

Background

2. The Language Fund was set up in March 1994 with a view to enhancing the Chinese language and English language proficiency of our population. In January 2014, the Finance Committee (FC) of the Legislative Council approved the injection of \$5 billion into the Language Fund to provide a stable stream of funding to facilitate the longer term strategic planning and development of language education.

3. Established in 1996 to advise the Government of language education issues in general, the Standing Committee on Language Education and Research (SCOLAR) has, through the use of the Language Fund, complemented and supplemented the efforts of the government, other advisory bodies and stakeholders by implementing research and development projects on language learning and language education issues, enhancing professional development of Chinese language and English language teachers, providing school-based support on language education, and creating a facilitating language environment for our students as well as in the community.

Progress Update

4. Upon approval of the injection of \$5 billion in the form of seed capital into the Language Fund, with a vision for further enhancing the Chinese (including Putonghua) and English language proficiency of our students and the workforce for better learning and better life, SCOLAR and its respective working groups have further deliberated the planning and implementation of various initiatives under the following **strategic areas** –

- (a) Facilitating effective language education policy formulation and implementation through initiating research studies, including longitudinal research and comparative studies in local and international settings;
- (b) Strengthening support of language learning in Chinese and English language in very early years;
- (c) Enhancing professional preparation and continuing development of language teachers;
- (d) Catering for learner diversity, including the needs of Non-native Chinese Speaking (NCS) students;
- (e) Creating and nurturing a facilitating language learning environment for students in and beyond school setting through partnership with relevant stakeholders, in particular, the community; and
- (f) Raising language proficiency of Hong Kong's workforce in response to the changing language landscape.

5. To ensure that the learner-centred initiatives will be effectively financed and implemented for achieving SCOLAR's vision, the initiatives are prioritised into **short-term** as well as **medium-and-long-term** and be implemented by phases. Short-term initiatives have been implemented in 2014 and 2015 while some of the medium-and-long-term initiatives have started to be implemented since 2016. A summary of the latest progress of the initiatives under the six strategic areas are appended in the ensuing paragraphs whilst further details are set out at Enclosure 1.

- (a) ***Facilitating effective language education policy formulation and implementation through initiating research studies, including***

longitudinal research and comparative studies in local and international setting

6. Since December 2015, over twenty bottom-up research and development projects on priority themes initiated by different scholars and researchers of local tertiary institutions and professional bodies have been launched to further facilitate effective language education policy formulation and implementation. A new round of invitation of proposals for bottom-up research and development projects is scheduled for the latter half of 2017.

7. To better understand the language landscape of Hong Kong, in particular, how languages are being used by the people of Hong Kong in home and workplace setting and the trend for informing policy formulation and implementation, the Thematic Household Survey 2015 was completed and the report has been released to the public in February 2016. In coming years, in view of the changing social, demographic and education contexts, a number of research studies on (i) early language and literacy development in Chinese and English language; (ii) study of Chinese language learning of NCS students; (iii) studies on language proficiency of working adults and Thematic Household Survey 2018 will be conducted as well.

(b) Strengthening support of language learning in Chinese and English language in very early years

(c) Enhancing professional preparation and continuing development of language teachers

8. Since the commencement of the 2015/16 school year, the “Scheme on Early Language and Literacy Development in Chinese and English Language of Young Children” (the Scheme) has been launched to strengthen the support of language learning in Chinese and English languages in very early years. The Scheme will continue till 2018/19 school year.

9. On-site or networked professional support services customised to the contexts of individual schools for effective Chinese and English language learning/teaching and whole-school language curriculum

planning have been and will continue to be provided to primary and secondary schools throughout the year.

(d) Catering for learner diversity, including the needs of Non-native Chinese Speaking (NCS) students

10. We have collaborated with non-government organisations (NGOs) in organising district-based programmes for NCS children (aged 3 to 9) to motivate them to learn Chinese through fun activities. Hands-on and quality Chinese Language learning and teaching resources, such as Apps and corpus for non-Chinese speakers will be developed in the latter half of 2016. Efforts will continue to be made to encourage, motivate and support NCS students to learn Chinese language in their early years as well as subsequent schooling through partnership with NGOs and other stakeholders.

(e) Creating and nurturing a facilitating language learning environment for students in and beyond school settings through partnership with relevant stakeholders, in particular, the community

11. Various creative and interesting Chinese (including Putonghua) and English language activities and programmes have been and will continue to be organised in schools/communities throughout the year. The annual territory-wide World Book Day Fest on promotion of reading was held in April 2016 with participation of over 2 600 students, teachers, principals and the public.

(f) Raising language proficiency of Hong Kong's workforce in response to the changing language landscape.

12. Vocational Chinese Language Programme for NCS school leavers has been launched since April 2016 through tertiary institutions. Under the Workplace English Campaign, publicity and public education programmes (such as TV programmes and mobile applications) have been and will continue to be organised throughout the year.

13. Members of SCOLAR, comprising renowned language/language

education academics, experienced principals and teachers, private sector personalities and parents, will from time to time, look into the changing needs of our students and the workforce, accord appropriate priorities and provide constructive feedback on details of the initiatives under planning. SCOLAR members will also closely monitor the implementation of the initiatives upon approval. The overall impact of the initiatives will be continuously reviewed to provide feedback for fine-tuning the implementation and facilitate planning of other initiative. SCOLAR would also regularly consider new circumstances and findings that warrant further consideration of strategic directions and new projects.

14. As at end May 2016, the available balance of the Language Fund (setting aside the \$5 billion seed capital) was \$0.609 billion.

Advice Sought

15. Members are invited to note the progress of the initiatives funded by the Language Fund.

Education Bureau
June 2016

Short-term Initiatives (Implemented in 2014 and 2015)

Strategic Areas	Initiatives	Objective(s)	Target Group(s)	Progress
(1) Facilitating effective language education policy formulation and implementation through initiating research studies, including longitudinal research and comparative studies in local and international settings	Bottom-up research and development projects	- To encourage and fund more research and development projects, including literature review and comparative studies, from tertiary institutions and professional bodies on Chinese and English language learning/development, diversified pedagogy and assessment that cater for learner diversity of achieving particular language goals	- Students and adults	The first round of projects have been launched since December 2015 and will be completed by 2018
	Language Landscape Studies – Thematic Household Survey 2015	- To continue to study the use of Chinese (including Putonghua) and English language, and the needs and practice of bilingualism of people of Hong Kong in different contexts	- Students and adults	The Survey was completed and the Report has been released to the public by the Census & Statistics Department in February 2016

Strategic Areas	Initiatives	Objective(s)	Target Group(s)	Progress
<p>(2) Strengthening support of language learning in Chinese and English language in very early years; and</p> <p>(3) Enhancing professional preparation and continuing development of language teachers</p>	<p>Support scheme on early language and literacy development in Chinese and English language of young children</p>	<p>- To provide professional support services to kindergartens and focused training and tailor-made learning/teaching resources (e.g. storybooks) to kindergarten teachers on Chinese and English language education in early years</p>	<p>- Pre-primary students (aged 3–6)</p>	<p>Support scheme has been launched since the commencement of 2015/16 school year</p>
	<p>Task Force on school-based language support service</p>	<p>- To continue to provide primary and secondary schools with on-site or networked professional support services customised to the contexts of individual schools for effective Chinese and English language learning/teaching and whole-school language curriculum planning, interface between different stages of schooling especially Kindergarten/Primary One, learning of Chinese for Non-Chinese Speaking (NCS) students</p>	<p>- Primary and secondary schools</p>	<p>Support services have been provided to primary and secondary schools throughout the year</p>

Strategic Areas	Initiatives	Objective(s)	Target Group(s)	Progress
(4) Catering for learner diversity, including the needs of NCS students	Development of supporting learning and teaching materials for NCS students learning Chinese language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To develop tailor-made learning aids (e.g. multi-media/web-based materials, e-packages) and Chinese readers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students 	Projects will commence in the latter half of 2016
	Development of community projects for NCS children in early years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To continue to organise fun and educational programmes in the community to motivate and support NCS children to learn Chinese language in their early years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pre-primary students (aged 3–9) 	Projects have been launched since mid-September 2015
(5) Creating and nurturing a facilitating language learning environment for students in and beyond school settings through partnership with relevant stakeholders, in particular, the community	Promotion of Chinese (including Putonghua) and English language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To continue to implement Chinese (including Putonghua) and English language school-based or community projects/programmes - To encourage/sponsor bottom-up initiatives that promote the importance of reading, language learning and language use in Chinese and English language, thereby rendering a facilitating language environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students and general public 	Activities/ programmes have been organised in schools/ communities throughout the year

Strategic Areas	Initiatives	Objective(s)	Target Group(s)	Progress
(6) Raising language proficiency of Hong Kong's workforce in response to the changing language landscape	Development of vocational Chinese language programmes for NCS school leavers	- To provide vocational Chinese language courses (pegged to Qualification Framework) to NCS school leavers for improving their Chinese language proficiency	- NCS school leavers	Programmes have commenced since April 2016.
	Workplace English Campaign	- To continue to promote vocational English to the workforce to raise their awareness on the importance of English language at workplace	- Working adults	Publicity and public education programmes have been organised throughout the year

Medium-and-long-term Initiatives (Starting in 2016 subject to availability of funding)

Strategic Areas	Initiatives	Objective(s)	Target Group(s)	Progress
(1) Facilitating effective language education policy formulation and implementation through initiating research studies, including longitudinal research and comparative studies in local and international settings	(a) Studies on early language and literacy development in Chinese and English language	- To research on the Chinese and English language and literacy development of young children, including tracking through longitudinal studies, children’s language learning/development at different stages, as base-line data	- Pre-primary to junior primary students (aged 3 – 9)	Preparation in progress
	(b) Study of Chinese language learning of NCS students	- To continue to research on how and what NCS students learn Chinese language in the classrooms	- Pre-primary to junior primary students (aged 3 – 9)	Preparation in progress
	(c) Enhancing the teaching of Chinese Language Subject	- To continue to provide school professional support on teaching Chinese Language Subject	- Primary and secondary students	Support services will continue to be provided to primary and secondary schools throughout the years

Strategic Areas	Initiatives	Objective(s)	Target Group(s)	Progress
	(d) Bottom-up research and development projects	- To continue to encourage and fund research and development projects initiated by tertiary institutions and professional bodies on Chinese and English language learning/development and pedagogy	- Students and adults	The second round of invitation of proposals is scheduled for the latter half of 2017
	(e) Language Landscape Studies – Thematic Household Survey 2018	- To continue to study the use of Chinese language (including Putonghua) and English language, and the needs and practice of bilingualism of people of Hong Kong in different contexts	- General public, especially students and adults	Preparation in progress
	(f) Studies on language proficiency of working adults	- To examine the language proficiency (including spoken and written Chinese and English language) of the work force of Hong Kong	- Working adults of different age and profession	Preparation in progress

Strategic Areas	Initiatives	Objective(s)	Target Group(s)	Progress
<p>(2) Strengthening professional support of language learning in Chinese and English language for schools and teachers; and</p> <p>(3) Enhancing professional preparation and continuing development of language teachers</p>	(g) Support scheme on early language and literacy development in Chinese and English language of young children	- To continue to provide professional support services to kindergartens and focused training and learning/teaching resources to kindergarten teachers in Chinese and English language education in early years	- Pre-primary students (aged 3 – 6)	Support scheme will continue till 2018/19 school year
	(h) Task Force on school-based language support service	- To continue to provide primary and secondary schools with on-site or networked professional support services customised to the contexts of individual schools for effective Chinese and English language learning/teaching and whole-school language curriculum planning	- Primary and secondary schools	Support services will continue to be provided to primary and secondary schools throughout the years
	(i) Tailor-made training for English teachers	- To offer quality professional development programme(s) (e.g. language across curriculum) for English language teachers in	- Primary and secondary school	Preparation in progress

Strategic Areas	Initiatives	Objective(s)	Target Group(s)	Progress
		primary and secondary schools	teachers	
(4) Creating and nurturing a facilitating language learning environment for students in and beyond school settings through partnership with relevant stakeholders, in particular, the community	(j) Customised Support to schools for effective language learning and teaching	- To continue to provide focused programme(s) for primary and/or secondary schools to enhance Chinese/English language learning/teaching	- Primary and secondary schools	Preparation in progress
	(k) Promotion of Chinese (including Putonghua) and English language	- To continue to implement Chinese (including Putonghua) and English language school-based or community projects and encourage/sponsor bottom-up initiatives that promote the importance of reading, language learning and language use in Chinese and English language, thereby rendering a facilitating language environment	- Students and general public	Activities/programmes will continue to be organised in schools/communities throughout the years

Strategic Areas	Initiatives	Objective(s)	Target Group(s)	Progress
(5) Raising language proficiency of Hong Kong's workforce in response to the changing language landscape	(1) Workplace Language Campaign	- To extend the Workplace English Campaign to promotion of vocational language (including both Chinese and English language) to raise the awareness of the workforce on the importance of Chinese (including Putonghua) and English language at the workplace	- Working adults	Publicity and public education programmes will continue to be organised throughout the years and new programme is being planned.