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Subcommittee on Rights of Ethnic Minorities

Motion passed under agenda item I

“Further discussion on education for children of ethnic minorities”

at the meeting on 27 February 2018

Wording of the Motion

This Subcommittee urges the Administration to complete expeditiously the review of the “Chinese Language Curriculum Second Language Learning Framework” and set a timetable for formulating the Chinese language as a second language policy, while the introduction of a pilot scheme on teaching second language in primary schools should be proactively explored. In addition, apart from the Chinese language curriculum, the Government should offer additional channels for learning the Chinese language, with a view to providing non-Chinese speaking students with different opportunities and platforms to master the Chinese language, as well as improving their “reading, writing, listening and speaking” abilities on all fronts.

(Moved by Hon Claudia MO)

EDB response

The Education Bureau (EDB) has, starting from the 2014/15 school year, allocated about \$200 million per year to step up the education support for non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students in learning the Chinese language through, among others, the implementation of the “Chinese Language Curriculum Second Language Learning Framework” (“Learning Framework”) in primary and secondary schools. The flexibility of the “Learning Framework” allows teachers to set specific learning targets, learning progress and expected learning outcomes, as well as adapt and develop teaching materials for their NCS students with different starting points in learning Chinese and varying abilities to help NCS students with diversified learning needs learn Chinese progressively.

EDB has been reviewing the implementation of the “Learning Framework” and further enhances the related teaching strategies, assessment tools and supporting resources for schools as appropriate in a timely manner in the light of the views of various stakeholders and school practices on learning and teaching. At the curriculum level, we will review the entire “Learning Framework” and fine-tune the learning objectives and details of each Key Stage (i.e. Primary 1-3, Primary 4-6 and Secondary 1-3) having due regard to the overall performance of students where appropriate at an interval of three years. We have been actively analysing data regarding learning, teaching and assessment since the implementation

of the “Learning Framework” to inform the enhancement of the “Learning Framework”, the “Chinese Language Assessment Tools for NCS Students” and the supporting resources accordingly. It must be stressed that the “Learning Framework” has been implemented for only 3 years and the first cohort of NCS students that starts learning Chinese Language under the “Learning Framework” in Primary 1 is now studying Primary 4. The support measures need time to take root and create a sustainable impact on the NCS students. EDB will collect more data for in-depth analysis according to NCS students’ learning pace and refine the “Learning Framework” as necessary. We have no plan to introduce other policies and projects in addition to the current policy.

As regards additional channels of leaning the Chinese language beyond the school curriculum, the Standing Committee on Language Education and Research (SCOLAR) has been organising and supporting various projects and programmes, with the support of the Language Fund, to provide opportunities and platforms for NCS students to learn the Chinese language, including:

- (i) Collaborating with non-governmental organisations to organise district-based programmes for NCS children aged 3 to 9 for motivating them to learn Chinese through fun activities such as games and creative arts, etc.. Since the 2012/13 school year, a total of 10 programmes have been supported.
- (ii) Engaging organisations such as tertiary institutions, education organisations, publishers and training centres to develop learning and teaching materials for NCS students to enhance the effectiveness in teaching NCS students Chinese and to provide them with self-learning tools, including Chinese readers and self-learning applications.

EDB has been providing support services to newly arrived children, including NCS children, assisting them to integrate into the Hong Kong society and overcome learning barriers. For newly arrived NCS children, they can choose to attend full-time Initiation Programme before they enroll into mainstream schools. The Initiation Programme lasts for six months and the curriculum includes Chinese, English, learning skills and social adaptation.

EDB also subvents non-governmental organisations to run a 60-hour Induction Programme (IndP) for newly arrived children, including NCS children, studying in mainstream schools, so as to help them understand the community and local culture as well as master learning skills. The programme content for IndP includes learning Cantonese and basic Chinese, etc.

To help NCS students learn the Chinese language, EDB has commissioned a tertiary institute to run Chinese Language Learning Support Centres for offering remedial

programmes after school hours and during holidays. Besides, EDB also provides subvention to schools to run 4-week Summer Bridging Programme for NCS students to enhance their learning of the Chinese language during summer holidays.

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Wording of the Motion

This Subcommittee urges the Education Bureau to set learning targets by stages for local ethnic minority (“EM”) students in learning the Chinese language, so that these students can bridge over to mainstream classes after attaining a certain stage; and provide clearly to teachers key learning area curriculum guides formulated from the perspective of second language learners, which set out in details the Chinese language level that should be attained by local EM students in different levels of classes.

(Moved by Hon Dennis KWOK Wing-hang
Seconded by Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung)

EDB response

In view of the diversified linguistic backgrounds and years of learning Chinese among the non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students (notably EM students), distinct differences exist in the starting points of learning Chinese and their learning progress. If uniformed learning objectives by stages are set out for all NCS students in Hong Kong, they will not only fail to address the realistic learning circumstances of NCS students, but also be in-effective in catering for their learning diversity.

The “Chinese Language Curriculum Second Language Learning Framework” (“Learning Framework”) implemented in primary and secondary schools, which is developed from the perspective of second language learners, covers the listening, speaking, reading and writing domains, and sets out clearly the expected learning outcomes of NCS students at different key stages of learning. With reference to the “Learning Framework”, teachers can set specific learning targets, learning progress and expected learning outcomes for their NCS students with reference to their diversified learning needs to help them learn Chinese progressively in a “small-steps” approach so that they can be integrated into mainstream Chinese Language classes at a suitable time according to their own learning pace.

The Education Bureau (EDB) has provided diversified learning and teaching resources to schools, including Chinese as a Second Language Learning Packages covering the curricula at the primary and secondary levels, the “Chinese Language Assessment Tools for NCS Students” and teaching reference materials, which provide teachers with guidance on curriculum planning, learning and teaching, and assessment. These resources have been uploaded onto the EDB webpage and will be constantly updated.