

立法會

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Panel on Education

Meeting on 9 January 2017

Background brief on issues related to Chinese history education at junior secondary level

Purpose

This paper summarizes the major views and concerns of the Panel on Education ("the Panel") on issues related to Chinese history education at junior secondary level.

Background

2. Chinese History was stipulated as a junior secondary compulsory subject by the Government of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region in 2001, and about 5% of the teaching time should be allocated to its contents (i.e. about two periods per week).

3. Currently, 89% of secondary schools offer Chinese History as an independent subject at the junior secondary level; 4% of schools adopt the curriculum mode which uses Chinese history as the main axis, supplemented with contents in world history; the other 7% of schools offer an integrated Chinese History curriculum based on specific topics.

4. Given that the Chinese History and History curricula have been implemented for years, and society has expressed great concern about history education, an Ad Hoc Committee ("the Committee") was set up by the Hong Kong Curriculum Development Council ("CDC") in May 2014 to review and revise the curricula. The revision of the Chinese History curriculum includes the adjustment of the ratio between ancient history and modern history, and the increase of elements in social aspects, culture, technology and art, etc. The first phase of consultation on the revised curriculum was concluded in October 2016. The second phase of consultation on the specific details and implementation of the curriculum will be conducted around May 2017.

Major views and concerns

5. The Panel deliberated on issues related to Chinese history education at junior secondary level at its meetings on 16 January and 9 February 2015. The major views and concerns expressed by members are summarized in the ensuing paragraphs.

Teaching of Chinese history

6. While some members considered that Chinese history should be taught as an independent subject throughout the junior secondary level, a member suggested that the effectiveness of various curriculum modes should be assessed before deciding whether Chinese history should be made an independent subject. Question had also been raised on the timetable, if any, for requiring schools to teach Chinese history as an independent subject at junior secondary level.

7. The Education Bureau ("EDB") explained that school visits had been conducted to understand the implementation of different curriculum modes for Chinese history education. EDB saw merits in allowing schools to select the curriculum mode that best suited their needs. There was no intention to combine Chinese history and world history in a single subject.

Curriculum review by CDC

8. Some members supported CDC's recommendation to adjust the ratio of ancient history and modern history in the junior secondary Chinese History curriculum from two-thirds and one-third respectively to equal halves as modern history was more relevant to students' life experience. A member, however, was concerned that modern Chinese history covered a number of controversial events which might not be easily understood by junior secondary students. Some members considered that it was reasonable for ancient Chinese history to form a greater portion in the curriculum as it had straddled centuries.

9. As explained by the Administration, study of modern Chinese history would enable students to better understand the background leading to the current developments in the Mainland. Also, secondary schools had reflected that very often, there was insufficient time to complete the curriculum relating to modern Chinese history at junior secondary level. It was against this background that the Committee had made the recommendation to adjust the ratio of ancient history and modern history in the curriculum.

10. Some members expressed the views that the new curriculum should cover controversial historical events from multiple perspectives, the development of school-based teaching materials should not be biased, the subject of Chinese History should not be reduced to a tool for brainwashing students, and more emphasis should be placed on students' ability to analyze, rather than to memorize, the contents. According to the Administration, textbooks were published according to the relevant Curriculum Guides issued by CDC and were reviewed by more than one expert from CDC in the relevant subjects. Students would also be encouraged to develop abilities to synthesize, analyze and evaluate historical events. Thematic study or exchange tours of Chinese history and other subjects had been organized to achieve thematic learning.

11. Some members were concerned that professional training for teachers would bring about effectiveness in the learning and teaching of Chinese history and sought information on the proportion of teachers currently teaching Chinese history who had taken this subject as their major in their undergraduate studies. Some members suggested that teachers should use more diversified teaching strategies to enhance students' interest in learning Chinese history. EDB responded that the majority of graduate teachers currently teaching Chinese history had majored in this subject. The Committee would strengthen the training and support for teachers as well as enhance students' interest in learning Chinese history.

Relevant Council questions and motion

12. Members raised questions related to the teaching of Chinese history in secondary schools and the revision of the junior secondary Chinese History curriculum at the Council meetings of 29 October and 12 November 2014, and 11 February and 13 May 2015.

13. At the Council meeting of 16 November 2016, a motion "Requiring the teaching of Chinese history as an independent subject at junior secondary level" moved by Hon CHEUNG Kwok-kwan and as amended by Hon Mrs Regina IP was passed. The wording of the motion is in **Appendix I**.

Latest position

14. The Administration will brief the Panel on the update of the curriculum review of junior secondary Chinese History at the meeting on 9 January 2017.

Relevant papers

15. A list of relevant papers on the Legislative Council website is in **Appendix II**.

Council Business Division 4
Legislative Council Secretariat
4 January 2017

**Motion on
“Requiring the teaching of Chinese history as an independent subject
at junior secondary level”
moved by Hon CHEUNG Kwok-kwan
at the Council meeting of 16 November 2016**

(Translation)

Motion as amended by Hon Mrs Regina IP

That as the Government has for many years permitted schools to teach Chinese history and world history or other humanities subjects at junior secondary level as a combined subject, but the contents of the curriculum make scanty mention of Hong Kong history and the interactive relationship between Hong Kong and the Mainland, and also neglect the importance of teaching Chinese classical works, historical works, philosophical works and belles-lettres as well as other Chinese literary classics, rendering the younger generation unable to get to know the development process of the Chinese nation in a correct, comprehensive and systematic manner, and depriving them of adequate opportunities to get to know the broad and profound Chinese culture and establish their sense of identification with and pride in the Chinese culture; in this connection, this Council urges the Government to require the subject of Chinese history as an independent and compulsory subject at the entire junior secondary level, and to expand the scope of the curriculum concerned to give more coverage to contemporary Chinese history and the interactive relationship between Hong Kong and the Mainland, and to strengthen the teaching of Chinese classical works, historical works, philosophical works and belles-lettres as well as other Chinese literary classics, so as to enable students to get to know the development process of the Chinese nation and China's development in recent years more comprehensively, objectively and rationally, and to gain a deeper knowledge and understanding of the long standing and established Chinese culture.

List of relevant papers

Committee	Date of meeting	Paper
Legislative Council	29.10.2014	Official Record of Proceedings Pages 105-108 (Question 13)
Legislative Council	12.11.2014	Official Record of Proceedings Pages 83-115 (Question 8)
Panel on Education	16.1.2015	Agenda Minutes
Panel on Education	9.2.2015	Agenda Minutes CB(4)797/15-16(01)
Legislative Council	11.2.2015	Official Record of Proceedings Pages 39-43 (Question 5)
Legislative Council	13.5.2015	Official Record of Proceedings Pages 43-49 (Question 10)
Legislative Council	16.11.2016	Official Record of Proceedings Pages (Members' motion)

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