

For discussion
on 24 January 2017

Legislative Council Panel on Education

2017 Policy Address Education Bureau's Policy Initiatives

The Chief Executive delivered his 2017 Policy Address on 18 January 2017. This paper sets out the major education-related initiatives in the Policy Address.

2. Nurturing of talent starts with education. The vision and mission of our education policies is to offer all-round and balanced learning opportunities for our students, so as to tap their potential for whole person development and lay the foundation for lifelong learning, so that they can learn successfully and apply what they have learnt, and contribute to Hong Kong and our country.

3. Starting from the 2017/18 school year, we will implement the free quality kindergarten education policy and provide kindergartens with direct subsidy with a view to greatly enhancing the quality of kindergarten education and laying a solid foundation for children's balanced development and lifelong learning. Primary and secondary education is an important stage for students to accumulate knowledge, develop personal character and equip themselves for challenges ahead. We will enhance the support for secondary schools to provide life planning education and career guidance services to help young people better understand themselves and plan for their future. At the same time, we will provide flexible and diversified study and articulation pathways with multiple entry and exit points and promote continuing learning. These will help young people equip themselves to pursue their dreams and will strengthen their confidence in the future. We will continue to provide opportunities for young people to enrol in quality post-secondary programmes, and further develop and promote vocational and professional education and training (VPET) to cater for their diversified interests.

4. Education is an effective means to facilitate upward social movement. We will ensure that children and young people enjoy opportunities to quality education and training irrespective of their background. We will also strengthen the support for persons with special needs, including students with special education needs (SEN) and ethnic minority students. The aim is to remove the barriers that hold them back from realising their potential and integrating into the Hong Kong society.

New Initiatives

A. Kindergarten Education

5. Starting from the 2017/18 school year, the Government will implement the free quality kindergarten education policy and provide direct subsidy to eligible local non-profit-making kindergartens for the provision of quality half-day education service for all eligible children aged between three and six. Under the new policy, the Government's recurrent expenditure on pre-primary education is estimated to increase from about \$4 billion in 2016-17 to about \$6.7 billion in the 2017/18 school year. It is estimated that about 70% to 80% of the subsidised half-day kindergarten places will be free. As for whole-day kindergarten services, the school fees will also be maintained at a low level given that the Government will provide an additional grant for whole-day and long whole-day kindergartens to alleviate the financial burden of school fees on parents. We will improve the quality of kindergarten education in various aspects through different measures, including providing direct subsidies to eligible local non-profit-making kindergartens; further improving the teacher-pupil ratio; creating a career ladder for kindergarten teachers' professional development and advancement; stepping up quality assurance; and enhancing parent engagement and parent education etc. A grant will also be provided for kindergarten students from needy families to cover their school-related expenses. Besides, to facilitate the implementation of the new policy by kindergartens in the 2017/18 school year, the Government will provide all kindergartens joining the scheme with a one-off start-up grant in the 2016/17 school year to help them devise school-based administration procedures / guidelines to enhance management and set up internal monitoring mechanism that help ensure enhancement in the quality of kindergarten education services.

6. We shall organise an Education Forum for principals and teachers of

Guangdong, Shenzhen, Hong Kong and Macao to enhance their professional capacity through diversified modes such as theme-based seminars and experience sharing. This will enhance the quality of kindergarten education and strengthen the collaboration and exchange in kindergarten education among Hong Kong, the Mainland and Macao.

7. We will also invite the Standing Committee on Language Education and Research (SCOLAR) to consider, through the use of the Language Fund, launching Chinese and English enhancement programmes aiming at enhancing kindergarten teachers' Chinese and English literacy and pedagogy (including training on skills in teaching Chinese to non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students) in tandem with the implementation of the revised Kindergarten Curriculum Guide.

B. Primary and Secondary Education

(i) Enhancement of School Facilities

8. At present, there are about 900 ordinary public-sector schools in Hong Kong. Their premises were built in different periods in accordance with the standards at the time of construction and covered various facilities. Amongst them, around 200 were built according to prevailing standards. Over the years, the Government has put in place various measures to enhance school facilities and improve teaching and learning environment, having regard to the circumstances and needs of individual schools.

9. We understand that the community is concerned about school facilities at old school premises, especially those cuboidal shaped premises constructed between 1960s and 1980 at public housing estates for primary school use (i.e. the so-called "matchbox-style school premises"). The Education Bureau (EDB) together with the Panel and the sector have convened tripartite meetings earlier on and agreed to focus on addressing the common problems attributed to the unique design features of "matchbox-style school premises" first. EDB has arranged our consultants to visit the 26 "matchbox-style school premises"¹ to review the situation and summarised the following main issues arising from the

¹ There are 28 primary schools operating in "matchbox-style school premises" at present. Two of them have been allocated new school premises for reprovisioning purpose. Hence, the current arrangement is only applicable to the remaining 26 primary schools.

typical architectural design of “matchbox-style school premises” for formulation of improvement measures –

- (a) the internal corridor design between classrooms (i.e. classrooms being located along both sides of a central corridor) causes noise interference during classroom activities and poor ventilation at corridor areas;
- (b) use of hollow blocks for internal partition of classrooms renders it incapable of mounting heavy teaching equipment, such as electronic whiteboard; and
- (c) rainwater ingress through the grille walls at staircase landings creates wet and slippery floor and increases occurrence of accidents.

10. In addition, our consultants will also seek to identify, from the technical perspective, potential scope for campus expansion and other flexible uses of space within existing school premises to alleviate the impact on teaching and learning environment resulted from inadequate space at these school premises. Based on the consensus reached with the sector earlier, the Government will allocate additional resources to take forward the aforementioned improvement scheme. EDB and our consultants will engage individual schools in in-depth discussions regarding possible improvement works items and related arrangements in the coming two months, with the view to conducting improvement works concerned during the 2017 summer break.

11. In the long run, we will actively seek to identify suitable sites and vacant school premises for reprovisioning existing schools and expedite relevant allocation exercises through the open and fair competitive school allocation mechanism.

(ii) Enhancing training for teachers

12. To create space for teachers’ professional development, the Government will implement a paid non-local study leave scheme on a pilot basis for serving secondary school teachers to broaden their professional perspective and acquire the latest global education developments by taking part in professional development activities, such as specific courses or experiential learning attachment programmes lasting for about one to three months.

Through participants' reflection, they will be able to apply what they have learnt in their work upon completion of relevant courses/programmes. Specific courses/programmes for the first batch of 50 teachers will be implemented starting from the 2017/18 school year. The scheme is expected to benefit some 150 teachers during its three-year pilot run.

(iii) Extending the Retention Period of Surplus Teachers

13. To address the temporary decline in secondary school student population and stabilise the teaching force, the Government has introduced a basket of targeted relief measures, aiming at maintaining the stability and strength of schools as well as the teaching force during this transient period, including the launch of "Extended Retention Period for Surplus Teachers" in the 2013/14 school year. The retention period of surplus teachers arising from reduction of secondary one (S1) classes in aided secondary schools in the three school years from 2013/14 to 2015/16 was extended from the original one year to three years.

14. The Government will continue with the provision of the relief measures. To further sustain the development of secondary schools affected by the temporary decline in secondary school student population and stabilise the teaching force, following last year's initiative to allow aided secondary schools to apply to extend the retention period of surplus teachers arising from reduction of S1 classes in the 2013/14 and 2014/15 school years up to the 2017/18 school year, aided secondary schools with surplus teachers arising from reduction of S1 classes in the 2016/17 school year are also allowed to apply to extend the retention period of the teachers concerned up to the 2017/18 school year. This measure involves around 15 schools and 60 teachers.

(iv) Enhancing Support for Students with Mental Health and Special Educational Needs

15. The Government launched a two-year pilot scheme named "Student Mental Health Support Scheme" in the 2016/17 school year to set up a multi-disciplinary platform to assist schools in supporting students with mental health needs by enhancing communication and collaboration among healthcare, education and social welfare professionals. The multi-disciplinary professional teams comprise psychiatrists, educational psychologists, school social workers,

psychiatric nurses, clinical psychologists, occupational therapists, etc. We will map out the way forward in the light of the experience of the pilot scheme and by making reference to the actual operation.

16. Starting from the 2017/18 school year, the Learning Support Grant that we provide for public sector ordinary secondary and primary schools will cover students with mental illness, hence helping schools to enhance their support in addressing these students' learning, social, emotional and behavioural needs. In addition, we will provide training courses for teachers related to promotion of students' mental health and provide supply teacher grant for schools.

17. From the 2017/18 to 2018/19 school years, we will also develop in public sector ordinary schools an evidence-based model with strategies and related teaching and learning resources for supporting the learning and development of senior secondary school students with autism having average to high average intelligence. EDB will evaluate the effects of the different strategies and compile a support manual cum resource package for the reference of schools in Hong Kong, as well as promote the application of the strategies and experiences to schools.

(v) Enhancing Support for Students in Special Schools

18. We will provide additional grant to schools for children with severe intellectual disability, schools for children with physical disability and schools for children with visual impairment cum intellectual disability for employing additional nurses and related staff to strengthen the care for students who are 24-hour dependent on ventilator and provide these students with appropriate support based on their actual needs. The new initiative will also help the current nurses in special schools to focus resources on catering for other students in need.

(vi) Encouraging opening up of school facilities

19. EDB, in collaboration with the Home Affairs Bureau, will encourage public sector schools to further open up their school premises and review the present situation of promoting sports development in schools with a view to encouraging students to develop a habit of taking part in sports activities.

(vii) Promoting Chinese History and Culture

20. In the consultation launched by EDB in October 2016 on the proposed revised junior secondary Chinese History subject, it is recommended that Chinese history education be fine-tuned by attaching equal weight to the ancient and modern times, with both political and cultural dimensions incorporated into the curriculum, so that our students may have a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of Chinese history. To promote Chinese history and culture, EDB will strengthen teachers' professional development and provide a one-off grant of \$100,000 and \$150,000 respectively to each public sector and Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS) primary and secondary school (including special schools), totaling about \$125 million², to help teachers enhance the teaching of General Studies in primary schools as well as Chinese Language, Chinese History and Chinese Literature in primary and secondary schools, so as to enable students to admire and inherit the spirit of excellence and the civilisation of the Chinese people. In accordance with school context and development needs, schools may flexibly deploy the grant to support teachers to improve their teaching, and develop school-based activities which are related to Chinese history and culture education. Measures could include producing high quality electronic or other relevant learning and teaching resources; supporting teachers to participate in interflow activities on learning and teaching in the Mainland; and organising joint school activities or competitions between local schools or between schools in Hong Kong and the Mainland to promote interchange and dissemination of good practices. Schools could use the grant till 2019/20 school year. Any unspent balance by end of 2019/20 school year will be clawed back by EDB³.

(viii) Enhancing Language Education

21. In respect of language education in primary and secondary schools, we will invite SCOLAR to consider supporting two initiatives by the Language Fund:

- (a) to provide a time-limited grant to enhance and sustain the support for English learning in primary schools with a view to enriching the

² The Government will reserve sufficient funding to cater for the cashflow of the proposal.

³ Schools are required to comply with the guidelines promulgated by EDB when using the grant, and have to set out the income and expenditure in its audited accounts to be submitted to EDB annually.

language environment on campus and refining the school-based English Language curriculum, catering in particular for the transition from kindergarten to junior primary as well as learner diversity with equal emphasis on more able and less able students; and

- (b) to provide a vocational English programme for senior secondary students who aspire to pursue VPET and training or who are prepared to work, with a view to enhancing their English proficiency and enabling them to obtain relevant qualifications from recognised courses for further studies and employment. It is proposed that these courses be provided by post-secondary institutions on a self-financed basis and recognised under the Qualifications Framework. Successful completion of the course will entitle students to certificates and an English qualification for admission to the Higher Diploma and Associate Degree programmes offered by the same institution, and help them lay a good foundation for future employment.

C. Post-secondary Education

(i) Regularising the Study Subsidy Scheme for Designated Professions/Sectors

22. Since the 2015/16 academic year, the Government has launched a three-cohort Study Subsidy Scheme for Designated Professions/Sectors (SSSDP) on a pilot basis to subsidise 1 000 students per cohort to undertake designated self-financing undergraduate programmes, so as to nurture talent to meet Hong Kong's social and economic needs. In consultation with various policy bureaux, we identified health care, architecture and engineering, testing and certification, creative industry, logistics as well as tourism and hospitality as the six disciplines with keen manpower demand. Given the positive feedback from various stakeholders, the Government decides to regularise SSSDP after the pilot run, making it a recurrent initiative from the 2018/19 academic year onwards and increasing the number of subsidised places from about 1 000 to about 3 000 per cohort. Current students of the designated programmes will also receive the subsidy from the 2018/19 academic year onwards. It is expected that about 13 000 students will benefit from the scheme in each academic year⁴. After regularisation of SSSDP, we will continue our annual

⁴ 3 000 students will be subsidised in each year of study (local undergraduate programmes in general require

liaison with other policy bureaux to make appropriate adjustments to the disciplines with keen manpower demand, the subsidised programmes and the number of places in the light of Hong Kong's social and economic development and the needs of the industries.

23. We will seek to keep the arrangement of having subsidised places under SSSDP allocated through the Joint University Programmes Admission System (JUPAS) to ensure that eligible students are selected through a merit-based system. Should there be unfilled places after all admission rounds under JUPAS, we will continue to allow participating institutions to admit local students via direct admission (with the number of students admitted through this channel not more than 10% of all subsidised places of each designated programme) so as to maximise the use of subsidised places under SSSDP for nurturing talent in support of sectors with keen manpower demand.

24. We will maintain the current two-tier subsidy arrangement, i.e. a subsidy of up to \$40,000 is provided to less costly programmes which are not laboratory-based while a subsidy of up to \$70,000 is provided to more costly programmes which are laboratory-based. The subsidy is tenable for the normal duration of the programme concerned (i.e. four to five years) and will be disbursed to the relevant institutions based on the actual enrolment of eligible students subject to the quota of subsidised places for the designated programmes. Students with financial difficulties may still apply for student financial assistance in respect of the actual amount of tuition fees payable (i.e. the tuition fees payable after deducting applicable subsidy).

(ii) Implementation of Matching Grant Scheme

25. The Government has launched six rounds of Matching Grant Scheme (MGS) since 2003 to help the higher education sector diversify its funding sources. We will launch the seventh MGS for application by qualified local self-financing degree-awarding institutions (i.e. the Open University of Hong Kong, the Technological and Higher Education Institute under the Vocational Training Council (VTC) and all approved post-secondary colleges registered under the Post Secondary Colleges Ordinance (Cap. 320)), with a view to further enhancing the education quality of the self-financing post-secondary education

four years of study). As some are five-year programmes (e.g health care-related courses), we assume that about 1 000 students will be fifth-year undergraduate students.

sector by helping such institutions tap more funding sources and fostering a philanthropic culture. The duration of the seventh MGS will be two years, commencing from the third quarter of 2017. As the new round of MGS only covers local self-financing degree-awarding institutions, we will reserve \$500 million for the matching purpose which will lapse after two years. Please refer to **Annex** for more details of the Scheme.

(iii) Supporting Higher Education Cooperation between Hong Kong and the Mainland

26. We will continuously support the newly-established Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao University Alliance (GHMUA) in synergising and deepening the co-operation among higher education institutions in the three places in areas such as teaching, research and technology transfer, and student exchange; and by making reference to the GHMUA experience, actively support universities in Hong Kong to strengthen cooperation with leading institutions in other Mainland cities such as Beijing and Shanghai, thereby raising the level and standard of regional co-operation.

(iv) Promoting Innovation and Technology Industry

27. The Government will request the universities to conduct more research projects that meet the needs of the development of Hong Kong and are impactful and translational, so as to tie in with the work to promote the development of industries and re-industrialisation. In this regard, the Government will request the University Grants Committee (UGC) to complete the review on the allocation of research grants within one year and expand the assessment criteria to include research impact and effectiveness of knowledge and technology transfer.

28. The Government will also request, through UGC, all the universities to refine their three-year knowledge and technology transfer plans expeditiously within six months and strengthen the role of their Knowledge Transfer Offices in co-ordinating and commercialising the research output. UGC will, as appropriate, consult the Innovation and Technology Bureau when carrying out these tasks, with a view to addressing the development needs of the innovation and technology industries in Hong Kong. Universities should implement their refined plans as soon as possible. UGC will continue to keep in view the

implementation progress and take this into account as one of the assessment criteria for funding allocation in future.

D. Vocational and Professional Education and Training

(i) Campus Development of Vocational Training Council

29. In response to the Government's invitation in 2014, VTC submitted in August 2015 a strategic development plan for its campuses to the Government with a view to upgrading the teaching facilities for VPET, and enhancing the learning environment for students as well as the image and quality of VPET. Having regard to VTC's need for campus development, the Government has identified a site at Cha Kwo Ling in Kowloon East for VTC to develop a campus with adequate capacity and state-of-the-art facilities. Planning work is being carried out. Besides, the Government supports VTC in principle to construct the Aviation and Marine Engineering Centre on the site of the Hong Kong Institute of Vocational Education (Tsing Yi) to further upgrade the training facilities for VPET.

(ii) Implementation of Qualifications Framework

30. The Government will play an active role in the setting up of the country's Qualifications Framework (QF) and share our experience in the implementation of QF in Hong Kong and provide advice where needed. We will also continue to explore opportunities for co-operation with other countries or places in the development of QF. EDB has executed Cooperation Arrangement or Memorandum of Understanding with relevant authorities in New Zealand, Scotland and Ireland, and is conducting comparability study of QFs with them. All these international cooperation initiatives can promote mutual trust and understanding, facilitate learner mobility, and also enhance the international image and recognition of the Hong Kong QF.

On-going Initiatives

A. Primary and Secondary Education

(i) Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Education

31. In December 2016, the Report on Promotion of STEM Education – Unleashing Potential in Innovation was published to provide concrete examples of promoting Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education in primary and secondary schools. We are rigorously updating the relevant curricula, and will continue to refine learning and teaching resources, strengthen teacher professional development, and establish inter-school communities of practice. Also, we will reinforce the partnerships with community stakeholders to provide students with quality learning activities.

32. In early 2016, a one-off grant of \$100,000 was disbursed to each public sector and DSS primary school. Schools can flexibly make use of the grant to purchase equipment/resource materials and organise STEM-related learning activities to support school-based STEM education. This year, we will provide a one-off grant of \$200,000 to each public sector and DSS secondary school to facilitate the implementation of school-based STEM education.

(ii) Basic Law Education

33. EDB will, through different means such as ongoing development of learning and teaching resources, renewal of relevant curricula, organisation of Basic Law education related learning activities and professional development as well as exchange programmes with teachers and students from the Mainland, further promote the learning of the Basic Law and understanding of “One Country, Two Systems”. EDB is developing a 15-hour learning module on “Constitution and the Basic Law” and updating relevant learning and teaching materials, which will be ready for school use by mid-2017.

34. To help schools better plan for Basic Law education, EDB has been organising professional development programmes for both principals and teachers since the 2016/17 school year to enhance learning and teaching effectiveness. In the updated “Secondary Education Curriculum Guide” to be published in 2017, suggestions are provided to schools on the implementation of Basic Law education, including supplying in the appendix a Planning and Self-evaluation Tool for Basic Law education for schools to effectively plan, implement and evaluate the implementation of Basic Law education.

(iii) Information Technology in Education

35. The Fourth Strategy on Information Technology in Education has been fully implemented since its launch in the 2015/16 school year. We have made good progress in all measures. We have established Wifi campus for about 80% of some 1 000 public sector schools in Hong Kong while the remaining schools are scheduled to commence relevant works in the next one to two school years. Other measures such as setting up of Centre of Excellence schools for sharing good practices in e-learning, reviewing of school curriculum, building up professional leadership and capacity of school heads and teachers, enhancing the supply of e-learning resources have also been successfully rolled out. According to findings from a survey completed in August last year, schools in general acknowledged that e-learning has strengthened the learning motivation and self-directed learning ability of students. To enhance support to schools in the practice of e-learning, we will disburse an extra one-off Information Technology grant at an average amount of \$200,000 per school this year.

(iv) Supporting the “Belt and Road” Initiative

36. In alignment with the direction for the ongoing curriculum renewal, EDB will strengthen students’ understanding of the background and meaning of the history, religion and culture of the countries/regions along the Belt and Road (B&R) through the relevant subjects (e.g. Chinese History, History, Arts and Religious Studies) and learning activities. Students’ understanding of the vision and action plans for promoting the B&R initiative, its importance to the future development of Hong Kong, the opportunities created, as well as their understanding of the current international political structure and financial and economic development will also be facilitated through subjects such as Liberal Studies, Geography, Economics and Life and Society. Apart from Chinese and English, students are encouraged to learn the languages of the countries/regions along B&R to enhance their ability to communicate with people in these countries/regions.

37. EDB will also encourage schools to organise related student activities and competitions such as project learning competitions to provide opportunities for students to explore and understand further the history of B&R, and the strategies and actions adopted by the Mainland government for promotion of the B&R Initiative, as well as providing 5 600 student places in Mainland Exchange Programmes along the Silk Road this year. The B&R initiative has been made a priority theme under the Quality Education Fund for the current school year to

subsidise students to take part in related activities so as to broaden their horizons.

(v) Establishment of the Gifted Education Fund

38. To nurture talents and enhance the international competitiveness of Hong Kong, an allocation of \$800 million was approved by the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council in June 2016 for setting up the Gifted Education Fund (the Fund) for generating investment income to further support the development of gifted education in Hong Kong. EDB will set up the Advisory Committee on Gifted Education to advise the Secretary for Education on the future development of gifted education, etc.

39. With support from the Fund, the Hong Kong Academy for Gifted Education will continue to provide professional development for gifted education in a systematic manner, as well as strengthen strategically collaboration with other sectors such as universities and professional bodies in designing appropriate programmes for gifted students. Meanwhile, EDB will continue to implement school-based gifted education programmes including providing professional development for principals and teachers of primary and secondary schools, and establishing school networks for sharing of practical experience to cater for the more able students in schools.

(vi) Turning the Senior Secondary Curriculum Support Grant and Career and Life Planning Grant into Regular Teaching Posts

40. To enhance the implementation of the senior secondary curriculum, and strengthen life planning education and related guidance services, schools may turn the Senior Secondary Curriculum Support Grant as well as the Career and Life Planning Grant (CLPG) into regular teaching posts from the 2016/17 school year onwards. In the 2016/17 school year, around 230 public sector secondary schools have turned both or one of the grants into regular teaching posts. We will review the measure in the 2017/18 school year taking into account the situation of its implementation.

(vii) Increasing the Ration of Graduate Teacher Posts in Public Sector Primary Schools

41. To attract more talents to join the teaching force of primary education so as to enhance the quality of teaching, we have increased the ratio of graduate teacher posts in public sector primary schools from 50% to 55% and 60% in the 2015/16 and 2016/17 school years respectively and the ratio will be further enhanced to 65% in the 2017/18 school year.

(viii) Enhancing the Opportunities for Primary and Secondary Students to Join Mainland Exchange Programmes

42. In alignment with the curriculum, EDB will continue to adopt a variety of strategies to further enhance the quality and quantity of Mainland exchange programmes, including the increase of quotas to organise more programmes of different types, themes and places of visit with due consideration to the ongoing renewal of the school curriculum, the prospects for pursuing further studies or career in the Mainland and the development initiatives of our country etc. Apart from consolidating students' classroom learning and deepening their understanding of the indivisible relationship between our country and Hong Kong, joining the programmes enable students to gain first-hand experience of our country's development from multiple perspectives, and to think about the roles and responsibilities of individuals and Hong Kong in terms of our country's development, as well as the opportunities to be grasped, the challenges to be encountered and then the contribution to be made. Over 57 000 students were subsidised to participate in Mainland exchange programmes in the 2015/16 school year. Subsidy quotas will be further increased to more than 90 000 in the 2016/17 school year with a view to enabling every student to join at least one Mainland exchange programme in both the primary and secondary stages.

(ix) Promoting Interflows between Sister Schools in Hong Kong and the Mainland

43. EDB has implemented a three-year pilot scheme with effect from the 2015/16 school year through which a fixed grant of \$120,000 per annum and professional support are provided to local public sector and DSS schools (including special schools) that have formed sister schools with their counterparts in the Mainland. Schools show good response to the pilot scheme. The number of sister schools has increased by about 200 after the implementation of the pilot scheme and the number of Hong Kong schools that

have sister school(s) in the Mainland is over 540.

(x) Strengthening Life Planning and Enhancing Business and School Partnership

44. Besides providing a recurrent CLPG to all eligible public sector schools, EDB will continue to strengthen the support to schools for the implementation of life planning education (LPE) through various measures, such as conducting advisory visits to schools; organising different professional development activities for teachers; increasing the number of structured training places; and setting up networks for schools and teachers, etc. EDB has also commissioned non-governmental organisations to run two pilot projects on work experiences for students with specific learning difficulties and NCS students. From the 2016/17 school year, schools may turn CLPG into regular teaching posts to consolidate their school-based experiences and provide more stable teacher manpower in implementing LPE. Schools which opt to turn the grant into regular teaching posts in the 2016/17 or 2017/18 school year can also apply for a one-off “Transitional Career and Life Planning Grant”, at the amount of \$100,000, to address school-based needs and to facilitate the implementation of the tasks in their original school plans. In tandem, schools need time to revise their school plans to effectively deploy the additional regular teaching post to enhance the quality of LPE through such means as strengthening small group counselling or arranging school-based career exploration activities, etc., to better support students in LPE.

45. EDB will continue to encourage more business entities and community organisations to participate in the Business-School Partnership Programme (BSPP) to forge a closer partnership with schools. In the 2015/16 school year, more than 140 business entities and community organisations joined the BSPP. Over 950 activities were organised and over 275 000 students benefitted from the activities. To further mobilise different sectors of the community to provide work experience programmes and nurture a culture of supporting the young people for better life planning in society at large, EDB has launched the Work Experience Movement in the 2016/17 school year. Up to now, more than 200 commercial and community organisations have participated in the Movement to offer career exploration opportunities for students.

B. Post-secondary Education

(i) Increasing the Number of Subsidised Senior Year Undergraduate Intake Places

46. From the 2015/16 academic year and in the triennium that follows, the intake of senior year undergraduate places in UGC-funded institutions will progressively increase by a total of 1 000 places, i.e. from 4 000 to 5 000 per annum. In other words, 5 000 meritorious sub-degree graduates will be able to articulate to subsidised degree programmes each year by the 2018/19 academic year.

(ii) Hong Kong Scholarship for Excellence Scheme

47. We will continue to implement the Hong Kong Scholarship for Excellence Scheme to support up to 100 outstanding local students per cohort to pursue studies in world renowned universities outside Hong Kong in 2017/18 academic year, with a view to grooming a top cadre of talents with global vision, international network and world-class education, thereby contributing to enhancing Hong Kong's competitiveness as Asia's World City in a globalised knowledge economy. While there is no limitation on the disciplines of study, priority will be given to programmes that are conducive to building up Hong Kong's long-term competitiveness, in particular the disciplines related to innovation and technology.

(iii) Mainland University Study Subsidy Scheme

48. To support more financially needy Hong Kong students for pursuing undergraduate studies in the Mainland, the Government has advanced the review of the Mainland University Study Subsidy Scheme (MUSSS). The designated Mainland institutions to be covered under MUSSS 2017/18 will include 90 Mainland institutions participating in the Admission Scheme in the 2017/18 academic year and 66 Mainland institutions under "Project 985" and/or "Project 211" not having participated in the Admission Scheme. It is envisaged that the expanded MUSSS will benefit the bulk of needy Hong Kong students pursuing undergraduate studies in the Mainland.

(iv) Supporting the B&R Initiative

49. To encourage more outstanding students from countries and regions along B&R to pursue studies in Hong Kong, the Chief Executive proposed in the 2016 Policy Address the offering of Hong Kong Scholarship for B&R Students to 100 students in phases. To this end, we announced the launch of Hong Kong Scholarship for B&R Students (Indonesia) in December 2015. Also, by making use of private donations, we will launch the B&R Scholarships for students from Malaysia and Thailand in the 2017/18 academic year so as to further strengthen the ties and educational exchange between Hong Kong and economies along the B&R routes. We will continue to expand the scholarship scheme to other B&R countries gradually. We will also strengthen people-to-people bonds and support for B&R students through organising cultural exchange activities.

50. Apart from encouraging more outstanding students from countries and regions along B&R to pursue studies in Hong Kong, the Government has been promoting exchange activities outside Hong Kong for students' participation. The Scheme for Subsidy on Exchange for Post-secondary Students was introduced since January 2015 to provide local students enrolling in full-time locally accredited sub-degree or undergraduate programmes with means-tested subsidy up to \$15,000 per student. Starting from July 2016, the Scheme has been extended to cover exchange activities of shorter duration with the ceiling of subsidy raised to \$60,000 per student. Besides, to capitalise on the new opportunities created by the B&R initiative, the Scheme for Subsidy on Exchange to B&R Regions for post-secondary Students was introduced to encourage and support local students in need to go on exchanges in the B&R regions starting from July 2016. Each eligible student can apply for subsidies under the scheme twice capped at around \$50,000 in total.

C. Vocational and Professional Education and Training

51. The Government set up the Task Force on Promotion of Vocational Education (Task Force) in June 2014 with a view to mapping out strategies to promote vocational education in the community. The Task Force submitted its report to the Government in July 2015, proposing a three-pronged approach with a total of 27 recommendations. The Government is actively following up with all the recommendations with major progress in the following aspects –

- (a) Rebranding “vocational education and training” to VPET, covering

programmes up to degree level with a high percentage of curriculum consisting of specialised contents in vocational skills or professional knowledge;

- (b) Carrying out a series of publicity and promotion activities to enhance the professional image of VPET;
- (c) Fully subsidising Applied Learning courses in secondary schools starting from the 2016/17 academic year;
- (d) Extending the Pilot Training and Support Scheme;
- (e) Regularising SSSDP from the 2018/19 academic year; and
- (f) Co-organising a VPET Conference with VTC in June 2017 and supporting VTC in organising a large scale skills competition during the same period.

D. Enhancing Support for Ethnic Minority Students in Learning Chinese Language

52. EDB, based on the research framework formulated, continues to collect and analyse data to evaluate the effectiveness of the series of measures implemented since the 2014/15 school year to step up support for NCS students (notably ethnic minority students) to learn the Chinese language, and will refine the support measures as appropriate, with a view to facilitating the mastery of the Chinese language of NCS students and their integration into the community. Major support measures include, among others, the implementation of the “Chinese Language Curriculum Second Language Learning Framework” (Learning Framework) in primary and secondary schools, which is developed from the perspective of second language learners, to help NCS students overcome the difficulties of learning Chinese as a second language with a view to enabling them to bridge over to mainstream Chinese Language classes as soon as possible, and the introduction of Applied Learning Chinese (for NCS students) courses at senior secondary levels to provide NCS students with an additional channel to acquire an alternative recognised qualification which would be useful for their further studies and career pursuits.

53. To facilitate schools' implementation of the Learning Framework and creation of an inclusive learning environment, starting from the 2014/15 school year, EDB has increased the additional funding to schools to about \$200 million per year. All schools admitting 10 or more NCS students are provided with an additional funding ranging from \$0.8 million to \$1.5 million, while schools admitting less than 10 NCS students may also have an additional funding on a need basis for organising diversified modes of after-school support for learning Chinese to consolidate their NCS students' learning of the language in an immersed Chinese language environment. A dedicated team has also been set up to ensure the schools concerned make optimal use of the enhanced funding to support their NCS students' learning of the Chinese language. In tandem, schools are provided with learning and teaching resources, teachers' professional development and school-based professional support to facilitate their implementation of the Learning Framework.

54. EDB is now reviewing the "Professional Enhancement Grant Scheme for Chinese Teachers (Teaching Chinese as a Second Language)" under the Language Fund so as to continue to encourage more Chinese language teachers to pursue programmes on enhancing their pedagogical knowledge and skills in teaching Chinese to NCS students.

55. With the development of the B&R initiative, we envisage that NCS students (notably ethnic minority students) having mastery of the Chinese language complemented by their native languages would enhance social integration and harmony and also constitute a pool of talents to the Hong Kong society.

E. Continuing Support for Financially Needy Students

56. The Government will continue to implement various student financial assistance programmes to ensure that no student in Hong Kong will be denied access to education due to a lack of means.

57. Under the new free quality kindergarten education policy, apart from continuing to provide fee remission under the Kindergarten and Child Care Centre Fee Remission Scheme, the Government will also provide a school-related expense grant for needy families to defray expenditure incurred from learning or education of their children. Before the implementation of the

new policy in the 2017/18 school year, Community Care Fund (CCF) has provided a one-off grant, up to \$3,770, for kindergarten students from needy families in the 2016/17 school year to cover their school-related expenses, benefitting about 40 000 students.

58. CCF launched two three-year pilot programmes starting from the 2014/15 school year. The first one is the provision of a hostel subsidy for needy undergraduate students (up to \$8,790 in the 2016/17 school year). The other is to increase the academic expenses grant for students pursuing eligible self-financing post-secondary programmes (up to \$2,190 in the 2016/17 school year). We are now conducting reviews for the programmes, with a view to working out effective measures to support the needy students.

59. Also, CCF launched a three-year pilot programme starting from the 2015/16 school year to enhance the academic expenses grant for eligible post-secondary students with SEN. Each eligible student will receive an additional academic expenses grant up to \$8,320 in the 2016/17 school year.

60. We will continue to support students in need in participating in after-school activities including after-school support on learning through school and NGOs.

F. Enhancing Support for Students with Special Educational Needs

61. To facilitate the implementation of the Whole School Approach to integrated education in public sector primary and secondary schools, EDB has been providing schools with additional resources, professional support and teacher training.

62. Since the 2016/17 school year, the School-based Educational Psychology Service has covered all public sector ordinary primary and secondary schools. From the same school year onwards, for the public sector ordinary primary and secondary schools with a large enrolment of students with SEN, the ratio of educational psychologist to schools will be progressively improved to 1:4 so that these schools could provide more comprehensive and regular follow-up and intervention services for the students concerned, as well as strengthen their preventive and developmental work.

63. Funded by CCF, EDB has launched a three-year pilot project on Special Educational Needs Coordinators (the pilot project) in the 2015/16 school year, under which a cash grant is provided for public sector ordinary secondary and primary schools with relatively more students with SEN and financial needs so that the schools could strengthen the teaching team and arrange a designated teacher as the SEN coordinator. A total of 124 schools (65 secondary schools and 59 primary schools) participates in the pilot project, with about 9 700 students with SEN being the beneficiaries in the 2015/16 school year. EDB has appointed expert consultants to evaluate the effectiveness of the project and to provide training for the coordinators. We will consider the way forward having regard to the outcome of the project.

64. We will keep in view the implementation of integrated education and special education and seek views from different stakeholders on an on-going basis with a view to ameliorating the implementation of various measures and making improvements where necessary and feasible.

Education Bureau
18 January 2017

Implementation Details of the Seventh Matching Grant Scheme (MGS)

The following matching formula will be adopted for the seventh MGS with reference to the previous round of MGS –

- (a) Over the two-year implementation period, we will set aside \$12 million (i.e. a “floor”) for each institution as a guaranteed minimum for the amount of private donations it secures. The floor level, which is lower than that in the previous round (i.e. \$60 million), is proportionally reduced according to the scale of the Scheme. Any request of the institutions over and above the amount will be considered on a first-come-first-served basis.
 - (b) By the end of the two-year period, funding under the guaranteed minimum which has yet to be matched by the concerned institutions will be opened up for allocation to match donations above the floor of other institutions on a first-come-first-served basis.
 - (c) There will be an upper limit of \$100 million (i.e. a “ceiling”) applicable to the aggregate Government matching grants to be received by each institution. The ceiling is set with reference to the amounts of matching grants received by local degree-awarding self-financing institutions in the previous round of MGS.
 - (d) The matching should be \$1 for \$1 up to \$12 million, beyond which a \$1 for \$2 matching ratio is adopted (i.e. \$1 Government grant for every \$2 of private donations secured by the institution concerned).
2. Reference will be made to the previous round of MGS in determining the basic operating terms and conditions of the seventh MGS. The broad principles are as follows –
- (a) Only new donations paid to the institutions on or after the effective date specified by the Government are eligible for matching grants.
 - (b) The fact that an institution has secured a government matching grant

for a project does not commit the Government to providing recurrent grants or further matching grants to the institution for the project. Recurrent expenditures of all projects undertaken by institutions with funding secured under MGS will have to be met by the institutions from their own available resources.

- (c) To ensure fairness in the matching process, there will be no “double matching” or “double subsidies”. In other words, donations from various public/Government funds (e.g. projects sponsored by the Quality Education Fund or the Innovation and Technology Fund), those from the Hong Kong Jockey Club and donations already matched with public funds under other matching schemes will not be eligible for any Government matching grants under MGS.
- (d) To ensure accountability and transparency in the operation of MGS –
 - (i) The Education Bureau (EDB) will coordinate all participating institutions’ disclosure of donations and the intended use of both the private donations and the Government matching grants received. Institutions should also disclose publicly in their annual accounts, separately in respect of matched donations and of the matching grants, the aggregate amount of donations/grants received and income generated from the donations/grants; and the total amount of expenditure using the donations/grants broken down into broad category of purposes;
 - (ii) the use of Government matching grants and the donations matched will be subject to audit. Auditors will need to confirm to EDB that the conditions of the grants have been met; and
 - (iii) the institutions will need to ensure that all Government matching grants are spent on a cost-effective manner.

3. Government matching grants can be used for enhancing the quality of teaching and learning and the quality of governance, and/or implementing capital works projects in campuses in Hong Kong. Grants will be provided to match private donations specified for the abovementioned purposes.