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Education Bureau  
Government Secretariat, The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region  
The People's Republic of China

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21 June 2018

Clerk to Panel on Education  
Legislative Council Complex  
1 Legislative Council Road  
Central, Hong Kong  
(Attn: Ms Angel Wong)

Dear Ms WONG,

**Legislative Council Panel on Education  
Follow-up to Meetings on 13 April and 11 May 2018**

Your letters dated 19 April and 14 May 2018 refer. Our response to the five motions related to “one school social worker for each school” policy passed at the Panel meetings on 13 April and 11 May 2018 is set out at the appendices.

Regarding the information on the number of school social workers as requested in your letter of 14 May 2018, according to our information, there are 368 graduate social workers and 176 non-graduate social workers serving in public sector primary schools in the 2017/18 school year.

For enquiries, please contact Ms Kitty HO on 2863 4681.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'YY SO'.

(Ms YY SO)  
for Secretary for Education

**Panel on Education**  
**Motion Passed under the Agenda Item**  
**“Arrangements for Student Guidance Teachers (SGTs) / Student Guidance Personnel (SGP)**  
**under the Policy of ‘One School Social Worker for Each School’ in Primary Schools”**  
**at the Meeting on 13 April 2018**  
**Moved by Hon IP Kin-yuen**

Regarding the motion moved by Hon IP Kin-yuen under the agenda item “Policy of ‘One School Social Worker for Each School’ in Primary Schools” at the Panel meeting on 13 April 2018, the full text of which is at the Annex, our response is as follows:

2. The Education Bureau (EDB) has all along been improving the student guidance service in primary schools by enhancing the manpower ratio and funding mode progressively for healthy growth of students. The long-term objective of the new policy of ‘one school social worker for each school’ is to ensure that each public sector school has at least one school-based registered graduate social worker with professional qualifications to meet its needs. Building on the Comprehensive Student Guidance Service, the new policy provides schools with additional resources to enhance student guidance service in terms of quality and stability.
3. To ensure that the policy can cater for the needs of schools, we have sought the views of different school councils/associations/bodies. The related associations have expressed their support to the arrangements of the policy. The EDB recognises the work and contributions of Student Guidance Teachers (SGT) and Student Guidance Personnel (SGP) throughout the years. To ensure that the policy of “one school social worker for each school” meets the needs of schools, we have arranged several meetings with SGTs and social work associations to gauge their concerns and listen to their views, and have taken on board their suggestions as appropriate.
4. As regards those schools with SGTs, they can continue with the existing arrangements, including the appointment of SGTs, the regrading of non-graduate SGTs, and the transfer of the

current SGTs under the same sponsoring body, having regard to their school-based needs. The EDB has not set a deadline for these schools to switch to the new funding mode. Under the new funding mode, the guidance resources provided for all schools will be increased. Hence, schools currently employing more than one SGP with existing resources, including those related to guidance service and other sources in combination with the surplus under the Operating Expenses Block Grant/Expanded Operating Expenses Block Grant/Expanded Subject and Curriculum Block Grant, can continue to employ additional guidance personnel in a similar way in the future. Moreover, we encourage schools to accord priority to employing serving SGP meeting the qualification requirements under the new funding mode. In case schools are not able to switch to the new funding mode after the three-year transitional period owing to the need for more time to handle personnel or contractual matters in respect of their serving SGP, including retaining their serving SGP due to specific needs, they may discuss with the EDB.

5. While implementing the new policy, the EDB will review the mode of collaboration between student guidance and social work services, and explore with the sector together various feasible proposals, including the suggestion of “one social worker plus one guidance teacher” in Hon YIP’s motion, so as to enable schools to adopt the best way to provide social work and guidance services for supporting students.

**Education Bureau**

**June 2018**



**Panel on Education**

**Motion Passed under the Agenda Item**

**“Arrangements for Student Guidance Teachers (SGTs) / Student Guidance Personnel (SGP)  
under the Policy of ‘One School Social Worker for Each School’ in Primary Schools”**

**at the Meeting on 13 April 2018**

**Moved by Hon IP Kin-yuen**

This Panel urges that the Administration must consult serving Student Guidance Teachers (“SGTs”), student guidance personnel and Student Guidance Officers in primary schools and respect their views before implementing “one school social worker for each school” in primary schools. The Government should attach importance to and retain the present mode of provision of guidance teachers and various types of guidance professionals to schools, including maintaining or increasing the grant for providing student guidance services for all primary schools, so as to ensure that the “1 + 1” guidance service mode, namely the provision of at least one SGT and one school-based social worker for each primary school, can be adopted without affecting the current resources and manpower for guidance services, so that guidance teachers and professional social workers with background in the fields of education and counselling can provide early intervention, intensive counselling and long-term follow-up on student issues, thereby enhancing and improving social work and counselling services in primary schools.

**Panel on Education**

**Motion Passed under the Agenda Item**

**“Arrangements for Student Guidance Teachers (SGTs) / Student Guidance Personnel (SGPs)  
under the Policy of ‘One School Social Worker for Each School’ in Primary Schools”**

**at the Meeting on 13 April 2018**

**Moved by Hon CHEUNG Chiu-hung, Fernando**

Regarding the motion moved by Hon CHEUNG Chiu-hung, Fernando under the agenda item “Policy of ‘One School Social Worker for Each School’ in Primary Schools” at the Panel meeting on 13 April 2018, the full text of which is at the Annex, our response is as follows:

2. To dovetail with the implementation of the Comprehensive Student Guidance Service, the Education Bureau (EDB) has been providing teachers with professional support, including provision of relevant training courses on guidance. To enhance the professional standards of these training courses, the EDB commissioned tertiary institutions to run a one-year part-time Certificate Course on Student Guidance for Teachers of Primary Schools in place of the in-house induction training as from the 2002/03 school year. As at the 2008/09 school year, a large number of teachers had completed the course. This, coupled with the fact that similar courses were offered by other tertiary institutions, gave rise to the discontinuation of the course from the 2009/10 school year.
3. At present, tertiary institutions are still offering social work or guidance related training covering a wide range of areas such as counselling skills and practice, case management, personal growth education, catering for student diversity, comprehensive student guidance service and small group interaction. In addition, the EDB commissions tertiary institutions to run the Certificate Course on Student Guidance and Discipline for Teachers of Primary Schools every year to support school teachers and strengthen guidance work. Hence, we are of the view that sufficient student guidance training courses are available for aspiring teachers to choose.
4. While implementing the new policy, the EDB will review the mode of collaboration between

student guidance and social work services, and explore with the sector together various feasible proposals, including the suggestion of “one social worker plus one guidance teacher” and provision of relevant training, so as to enable schools to adopt the best way to provide social work and guidance services for supporting students.

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**Panel on Education**  
**Motion Passed under the Agenda Item**  
**“Arrangements for Student Guidance Teachers (SGTs) / Student Guidance Personnel (SGP)**  
**under the Policy of ‘One School Social Worker for Each School’ in Primary Schools”**  
**at the Meeting on 13 April 2018**  
**Moved by Hon CHEUNG Chiu-hung, Fernando**

This Panel urges the Education Bureau to review and reinstate the provision of training programmes on student guidance, so that more quality teachers who aspire to take up counselling work may receive formal training, thereby enhancing the provision of counselling work at schools.



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**under the Policy of ‘One School Social Worker for Each School’ in Primary Schools”**  
**at the Meeting on 13 April 2018**  
**Moved by Hon SHIU Ka-chun**

Regarding the motion moved by Hon SHIU Ka-chun under the agenda item “Policy of ‘One School Social Worker for Each School’ in Primary Schools” at the Panel meeting on 13 April 2018, the full text of which is at the Annex, our response is as follows:

2. The Education Bureau (EDB) has all along been improving the student guidance service in primary schools by enhancing the manpower ratio and funding mode progressively for healthy growth of students. The long-term objective of the new policy of ‘one school social worker for each school’ is to ensure that each public sector school has at least one school-based registered graduate social worker with professional qualifications to meet its needs. Building on the Comprehensive Student Guidance Service, the new policy provides schools with additional resources to enhance the service in terms of quality and stability.

3. Under the new funding mode, the guidance resources provided for all schools will be increased. Hence, schools currently employing more than one Student Guidance Personnel (SGP) (including non-graduate social workers) with existing resources, including those related to guidance service and other sources in combination with the surplus under the Operating Expenses Block Grant/Expanded Operating Expenses Block Grant/Expanded Subject and Curriculum Block Grant, can continue to employ additional guidance personnel in a similar way in the future. In case schools are not able to switch to the new funding mode after the three-year transitional period owing to the need for more time to handle personnel or contractual matters in respect of their serving SGP, including retaining their serving SGP due to specific needs, they may discuss with the EDB.

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**Panel on Education**

**Motion Passed under the Agenda Item**

**“Arrangements for Student Guidance Teachers (SGTs) /Student Guidance Personnel (SGP)  
under the Policy of ‘One School Social Worker for Each School’ in Primary Schools”**

**at the Meeting on 13 April 2018**

**Moved by Hon SHIU Ka-chun**

Given that some serving student guidance personnel (“SGP”) in schools possess non-social work degree qualifications, with some of them holding degrees in educational counselling while some holding other degrees in the field of counselling, which do not meet the requirement of social work degree qualifications under the Government’s policy of “One School Social Worker for Each School” in Primary Schools, this Panel urges the Government to provide a five-year transitional period for these serving SGP to obtain social work degree qualifications so that they will meet the requirements set out under the Government’s policy for taking up the duties of a social worker in schools.

**Panel on Education**  
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**under the Policy of ‘One School Social Worker for Each School’ in Primary Schools”**  
**at the Meeting on 13 April 2018**  
**Moved by Hon HO Kai-ming**

Regarding the motion moved by Hon HO Kai-ming under the agenda item “Policy of ‘One School Social Worker for Each School’ in Primary Schools” at the Panel meeting on 13 April 2018, the full text of which is at the Annex, our response is as follows:

2. We recognise the work and contributions of Student Guidance Teachers (SGT) throughout the years. Under the new policy of “one school social worker for each school”, those schools with a SGT are not required to replace the SGT with a social worker. Having regard to their own needs, schools can continue with the existing arrangements, including the appointment of SGTs, the regrading of existing non-graduate SGTs, and the transfer of the current SGTs under the same sponsoring body. We have not set a deadline for these schools to switch to the new funding mode.
  
3. We are of the view that student guidance and social work services are complementary to each other. Under the Comprehensive Student Guidance Service (CSGS), schools have been providing students with comprehensive and extensive guidance service through collaboration among teachers, guidance personnel, social workers or other professionals. For schools adopting the new funding mode, we believe that they can make use of the more sufficient resources available under the CSGS to further enhance the quality of student guidance service. In parallel, we will explore with the sector together various feasible proposals, including the suggestion of “one social worker plus one guidance teacher”, so as to enable schools to adopt the best way to provide social work and guidance services for supporting students.

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**Panel on Education**  
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**at the Meeting on 13 April 2018**  
**Moved by Hon HO Kai-ming**

To raise the quality of student guidance services in Hong Kong’s primary schools with a view to catering for the development needs of students in a holistic manner, this Panel urges the Government to take forward various measures to enhance the provision of student guidance services in primary schools, including:

1. recognising and respecting the professionalism of Student Guidance Teachers (“SGT”); and making a pledge that in the course of enhancing the provision of student guidance services in primary schools, the relevant grade will not be deleted and the number of posts will not be reduced; and
2. implementing the 1+1 proposal by providing one SGT plus one social worker to each school in order to enable various disciplines to collaborate with each other and bring their capabilities into play.

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**“Arrangements for Student Guidance Teachers (SGTs) /Student Guidance Personnel (SGP)**  
**under the Policy of ‘One School Social Worker for Each School’ in Primary Schools”**  
**at the Meeting on 11 May 2018**  
**Moved by Hon IP Kin-yuen**

Regarding the motion moved by Hon IP Kin-yuen under the agenda item “Policy of ‘One School Social Worker for Each School’ in Primary Schools” at the Panel meeting on 11 May 2018, the full text of which is at the Annex, our response is as follows:

2. The Education Bureau (EDB) issued a circular memorandum entitled “The Policy of ‘One School Social Worker for Each School’ in Primary Schools” on 27 April 2018, setting out the details of the policy. Under the new policy, the guidance resources provided for all schools will be increased so that schools can improve their student guidance services. Taking those schools with a Student Guidance Teacher (SGT) as an example, apart from being able to continue with the existing arrangements, including the appointment of SGTs, the regrading of non-graduate SGTs, and the transfer of the current SGTs under the same sponsoring body, these schools will also be provided with an enhanced Top-up Student Guidance Service Grant (Top-up Grant), the amount of which will be increased by around \$100,000. Schools can deploy the Top-up Grant or combine it with the surplus under the Operating Expenses Block Grant/Expanded Operating Expenses Block Grant/Expanded Subject and Curriculum Block Grant to hire social work service from organization or employ social workers on their own to help prevent and address student problems.

3. As mentioned above, under the new funding mode, the guidance resources provided for all schools will be increased. Hence, schools currently employing more than one Student Guidance Personnel (SGP) with existing resources can continue to employ additional guidance personnel in a similar way in the future. Moreover, we encourage schools to accord priority to employing serving SGP if they meet the qualification requirements under the new funding mode. In case schools are



not able to switch to the new funding mode after the three-year transitional period owing to the need for more time to handle personnel or contractual matters in respect of their serving SGP, including retaining their serving SGP due to specific needs, they may discuss with the EDB.

4. While implementing the new policy, the EDB will review the mode of collaboration between student guidance and social work services, and explore with the sector together various feasible proposals, including the suggestion of “one social worker plus one guidance teacher”, so as to enable schools to adopt the best way to provide social work and guidance services for supporting students.

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**Panel on Education**  
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**at the Meeting on 11 May 2018**  
**Moved by Hon IP Kin-yuen**

On 27 April this year, the Education Bureau issued to primary schools a circular memorandum on “The Policy of One School Social Worker for Each School in Primary Schools”. Under the new policy, if a public sector primary school retains its existing Student Guidance Teacher, it will not be provided with a regular social worker post on the establishment. Moreover, the Bureau has not introduced adequate measures to allow schools to retain existing professionals providing guidance service to students, including student guidance personnel.

Obviously, such policy is not in line with the four motions passed by this Panel on 13 April. It also falls short of the public expectation for the allocation of additional resources for social workers on top of the existing resources. This Panel reiterates our demands in the four motions passed that the authorities should conduct a review expeditiously to enhance the guidance system of primary school teachers as well as the collaboration between social workers and other student guidance personnel under the system, so as to better help students overcome anxieties associated with growth and learning.