

Follow-up Items for the Finance Committee Meeting on 25 September 2020

Members requested the Administration to provide information on the following matter-

FCR(2020-21)71

- (b) Regarding the second round of the One-off Relief Grant under the Anti-epidemic Fund for tutorial schools (see Annex D9 of FCR(2020-21)2), considering that the Administration has announced the class suspension in February 2020, please indicate the reasons why the Administration requested the tutorial schools must be registered in accordance with the Education Ordinance and have been “in operation in the three months immediately before class suspension (i.e. November and December 2019 and January 2020)”; and the current financial proposal regarding the financial assistance for tutorial schools (see Annex A12 of FCR(2020-21)71) specifies that the tutorial schools applying for the grant must be “registered under the Education Ordinance on or before the planned resumption of face-to-face classes on 23 September 2020 and are still in operation on the date of receiving the invitation for application”. The Administration is requested to consider and adjust the eligibility criteria of the former to make it in line with Annex A12 of FCR (2020-21) 71 in terms of the operating date requirement.

The response of the Education Bureau is as follows:

We had previously provided relief subsidies through the second round of the Anti-epidemic Fund (AEF) to help Private Schools Offering Non-formal Curriculum (generally referred to as “tutorial schools”) that were affected by class suspension. As stated in the Finance Committee (FC) paper (FCR(2020-21)2), these schools must have been registered and in operation under the Education Ordinance (Chapter 279) three months before class suspension (i.e. November and December 2019 and January 2020), and were still in operation as at the date of application. Eligible schools had been in operation for a longer period of time before class suspension started at the end of January 2020, and had been more seriously affected. After securing

the approval of the FC, we have completed the work in respect of the provision of subsidies for the tutorial schools through the second round of the AFF. All applications have been processed in accordance with the above application criteria, and subsidies have been disbursed to all eligible applicants.

We now suggest providing further assistance to the affected tutorial schools through the third round of the Anti-epidemic Fund. The epidemic has resurged sporadically since the beginning of 2020, and this has caused the schools to suspend face-to-face classes in different periods. In response to the views expressed by the sector, we have fine-tuned the application requirements as appropriate, and trust that more schools would benefit. We urge eligible schools to submit applications as soon as possible.