

LegCo Panel on Education

**List of issues suggested for discussion
(as at 14 April 1999)**

1. Progress of Year 2000 (Y2K) compliance exercise in Government, Government-funded and Government-regulated organisations

At the House Committee meeting on 12 March 1999, Members noted with concern that in the monitoring of the Y2K compliance exercise in Government, Government funded and Government-regulated organisations, the Information Technology and Broadcasting Bureau primarily played a co-ordinating role. The implementation of Y2K compliance in different sectors is the responsibility of individual Policy Bureaux. In view of the importance of the Y2K compliance exercise, Members agreed that LegCo Panels should closely monitor the progress of the exercise in the policy areas under their respective purview and review the matter with the relevant Policy Bureaux and related non-government organizations. It is also suggested that the first round of meetings on Y2K issues should be held in **April or May 1999**.

2. Supervision of the administration of UGC-funded tertiary institutions including staff recruitment and administration of employment contracts

Item proposed by Hon CHEUNG Man-kwong and Hon Emily LAU. Mr CHEUNG was concerned about the new procedures introduced by UGC- funded tertiary institutions for staff recruitment and administration of employment contracts, and the monitoring and appeal mechanisms in these institutions. Ms LAU would like to discuss the operation and effectiveness of the Councils of the tertiary institutions in overseeing the administration of the institutions. Ms LAU also suggested inviting Council members of the tertiary institutions to give their views to the Panel.

Members agreed to discuss this item at the Panel meeting on **17 May 1999**.

3. Benchmark qualification for English language teachers

Item proposed by Hon Emily LAU. Education Commission Report No. 6 has recommended that minimum language proficiency standards for all language teachers be specified. Members are concerned about the teaching of English language in schools and would like to receive an update on the issue.

4. Integrated education

Item proposed by Hon CHEUNG Man-kwong who is concerned about the policy and resources for integrating children with learning difficulties or adjustment problems into the mainstream schools. He would also like to know the outcome of the two-year pilot scheme on integrated education, such as the difficulties encountered and the possible solutions.

5. Provision of library facilities in primary schools

Item proposed by Hon CHEUNG Man-kwong. Education Commission Report No. 5 has recommended provision of a library in each primary school. Mr CHEUNG is concerned about the policy and resources allocated for this purpose.

6. Native-speaking English Teachers Scheme

Item proposed by Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung at the meeting on 30 March 1999. Mr LEUNG would like to receive a briefing on the progress and effectiveness of the Scheme. Since the Scheme has been implemented for only half a year, the Administration suggested and members agreed to discuss the issue in **September 1999**.

7. Subsidy to kindergartens

At the policy briefing on 12 October 1998, Hon CHOY So-yuk asked the Administration to consider increasing the subsidy to kindergartens so that more kindergartens could achieve the target of having 60% of teachers to be Qualified Kindergarten Teachers without having to increase the tuition fees.

8. Policy on university hostels

When discussing a Public Works Subcommittee paper (PWSC(98-99)9) about the new student hostel in City University on 4 September 1998, PWSC members had urged for a more generous provision for publicly-funded student hostel places at UGC - funded institutions. The PWSC Chairman has advised that issues related to the policy on university hostels be further considered by the Panel on Education.

9. Review of academic structure

The Education Commission (EC) has been tasked to review the structure of preprimary, primary, secondary and tertiary education which will cover, among others, the age at which students should begin each stage of education, the duration of each stage, the curriculum and assessment methods, and the interface between the different stages. On 20 April 1998, two working groups, namely, the Working Group on Pre-primary and Universal Basic Education and the Working Group on Post-Secondary 3 Education, were set up under the EC to conduct the review. The Working Groups will consult the various advisory bodies and education community.

The EC Chairman has briefed the Panel on the Consultation Paper on Aims of Education at a meeting on 1 February 1999. The Panel may wish to follow up on future developments.

Legislative Council Secretariat

14 April 1999