

## NOTE FOR FINANCE COMMITTEE

### Textbooks and Stationery Grants under the School Textbook Assistance Scheme

#### INTRODUCTION

This Note informs Members of the rates of textbooks and stationery grants under the School Textbook Assistance Scheme (STAS) for the 1999/2000 school year.

#### RATES OF TEXTBOOKS AND STATIONERY GRANTS

2. The rates of grants under STAS are determined annually with reference to the average costs of textbooks and stationery at various levels of study, based on an annual survey conducted before the start of a school year. The rates for primary students are set at the average costs; those for secondary students at 80% of the average costs.

3. On 17 August 1999, the Secretary for the Treasury approved under delegated authority the rates of grants for the 1999/2000 school year as follows -

<b>Class level</b>	<b>\$ per student per annum</b>
Primary 1 to 6	1,332
Secondary 1 to 3	1,756
Secondary 4	1,632
Secondary 5	960
Secondary 6	1,492
Secondary 7	422

4. We have included a provision of \$288,899,000 for the grant in the 1999-2000 Estimates under Head 173 Student Financial Assistance Agency. If necessary, supplementary provision will be sought in the normal manner.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

5. On 21 May 1986, after considering agenda item FCR(86-87)26 on the revision of the textbooks and stationery grants payable to eligible students in the primary and junior secondary levels of public sector schools, Members delegated to the Secretary for the Treasury the authority to approve future revisions of the grant. We undertook to inform Members annually of these revisions approved by the Secretary for the Treasury under delegated authority.

6. On 28 November 1997, after considering agenda item FCR(97-98)70 on the extension of STAS to eligible students in Secondary 4 to 7, Members delegated to the Secretary for the Treasury the authority to set the initial grant rates for these students for implementation in the 1998/99 school year. Members also delegated to the Secretary for the Treasury the authority to revise the rates annually thereafter, having regard to the average cost of textbooks and stationery.

7. On 13 November 1998, after considering agenda item FCR(98-99)43, Members further approved an expansion of the ambit of STAS to include eligible students in local private schools under the Direct Subsidy Scheme.

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Education and Manpower Bureau  
October 1999