

In the 1999-2000 financial year, the Government spent about \$24,746 million on primary and secondary education. Of this amount, about \$17,470 million was for the provision of 9-year free education (Primary 1 to Secondary 3), and \$7,276 million on senior secondary education (Secondary 4 to Secondary 7).

At present, only 85% of Secondary 3 students from public sector schools receive subsidised Secondary 4 education, while another 5% receive subsidised vocational training. The Chief Executive has in his 2000 Policy Address announced that, starting from the 2002/03 school year, all Secondary 3 students who have the ability and wish to continue their study will be given the opportunities to receive subsidised Secondary 4 education or vocational training. To this end, additional schools will need to be built. The first batch of eight schools, involving a construction cost of more than \$800 million, will come on stream in the 2003/04 school year. We expect that an extra \$740 million in recurrent expenditure will be incurred by the 2007/08 school year.

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