

LegCo Panel on Education

School-based Management

Purpose

This paper informs Members of the latest development of school-based management.

Public Consultation

2. The Advisory Committee on School-based Management (ACSBM) published a document entitled "Transforming Schools into Dynamic and Accountable Professional Learning Communities" in February 2000, setting out for public consultation the proposals on the governance structure and accountability framework of aided schools. A copy of the consultation pamphlet is attached at Annex A.

3. Apart from inviting members of the public to give their views on the proposals by completing an opinion form attached to the consultation document, the ACSBM also organised a total of five public forums in March and April this year to solicit views. These forums were attended by over 1 500 people. The consultation period ended in early May. About 3 000 opinion forms and 140 written submissions were received.

Public Views

4. Most of the comments received support the broad direction of the reform proposals in the consultation document, i.e. to enhance the transparency and accountability of school management committees (SMCs), and to introduce a participatory decision-making mechanism. However, views on individual proposals are divided, in particular those relating to the structure of the SMC (the division of roles and responsibilities among the SMC, the school sponsoring

body (SSB) and the school executive committee, and the number of parent and teacher representatives on the SMC), and requirements on school manager (age limit and the number of schools served by each manager). Some SSBs ask that they be allowed to adopt different governance models and be vested with greater authority in relation to the appointment and removal of school managers and principals. Moreover, they consider that involving parents and teachers in SMCs as school managers may lead to role conflict. On the other hand, parents' groups and teachers' associations welcome the proposal of introducing parent and teacher representatives to SMCs.

Latest Developments

5. The ACSBM held a meeting on 21 September 2000 to discuss public response and SSBs' views received during consultation. Members of the ACSBM reached a preliminary consensus at the meeting on the following principles in implementing school-based management –

- (a) schools should adopt a participatory governance structure to enhance the transparency and accountability of SMCs. SMCs must include all key stakeholders, including SSBs, teachers, parents, alumni and independent members. Manager nominated by the SSB should be no more than 60% of the total SMC membership;
- (b) schools' visions and missions should be set by SSBs. SSBs could also maintain full control of their private funds and assets;
- (c) the transition period would be extended (to five years) to allow more time for SSBs to put in place the proposed governance structure;
- (d) SMCs should be incorporated; and
- (e) the post of supervisor should be retained. However, the roles and responsibilities of the supervisor will need to be revised to fulfil the spirit that the decision of a school is made by the SMC collectively instead of the supervisor.

6. As regards other proposals which are more controversial, the ACSBM will further discuss them after collecting more views from different sectors (including the LegCo Panel on Education). These proposals include those on the school governance structure, the division of rights and responsibilities among different parties, the number of school managers from each category (including teacher and parent representatives), and the appointment of principals. The ACSBM will take into account the views of various parties and revise the proposals as soon as possible for submission to the Director of Education.

7. Major proposals in the consultation document, public views received, and response of the ACSBM are in Annex B.

Advice Sought

8. Members' views on the proposals on school-based management are invited.

Education Department
November 2000

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為學校創建專業新文化

Transforming Schools into
Dynamic and Accountable
Professional Learning Communities

校本管理諮詢文件

School-based Management Consultation Document

校本管理諮詢委員會
Advisory Committee on School-based Management

二零零零年二月
February 2000

Transforming Schools into Dynamic and Accountable

I. Introduction

The beginning of a new century is a propitious time to consider the importance of our schools and the expectations we have of them. To raise the attainments of our young people and to equip them to fully contribute to our changing society, we are looking to schools for increased effectiveness in teaching and learning.

The accelerated pace of technological advances and the international trend to world globalization will bring drastic change into our lives, demanding new attitudes, knowledge and skills. Hong Kong's stability and prosperity depend on our capacity to continue to keep pace with all this change, and our education system must not lag behind.

Schools Have a Part in Hong Kong's Tomorrow

It is the aim of school education to develop in students a foundation for lifelong learning that will enable them to build a better tomorrow for themselves and society. Schools establish a culture of lifelong learning by developing in students the attitudes, knowledge and skills which make learning as enjoyable as it is useful. Student enthusiasm for learning and the ability of students to master learning processes are emerging as essential tasks for our schools and teachers.

There is no single formula or technique which guarantees quality learning outcomes for each student. Success requires more sophisticated approaches to students' learning needs. For this, schools need more freedom than they currently have. Each school needs a capacity to manage its own affairs. This is why school-based management lies at the heart of all of Hong Kong's efforts to create world-class schools. And, this is why nations with similar aspirations have already adopted or plan to adopt a form of school-based management that reflects their cultural heritage.

Schools need to be able to operate as self-managing institutions - to have flexibility over curriculum and teaching practice, as well as over staffing and budgets. Above all, schools need authority to put in place the organisational and teaching strategies which will provide the best learning opportunity for every student on campus. And they need to be able to access all available resources as they help students strive for excellence. In all these endeavours they also need to work in collaboration with parents and the community at large.

School-based Management Has a Part in Tomorrow's Schools

School-based management is not a superficial change. It requires a new professionalism from teachers, enhanced leadership from principals and deeper commitments from parents and the community.

School-based management must never be an isolated initiative unconnected to student learning. Overseas evidence is beginning to show powerful links between improved learning outcomes for students and the capacities that schools acquire through school-based management. It is this potential for improving learning outcomes that makes the argument for school-based management so compelling in the Special Administrative Region (SAR) of Hong Kong - first for the empowerment of schools, principals and teachers, and secondly, for the improved effectiveness of the education system as a whole.

Every student is unique. Every school has a unique group of students and there can be no standard way for schools to achieve the best for their students. School-based management builds the capacities of individual schools, giving them the opportunity to develop their own characteristics and style. Schools will enjoy administrative and

Pressional Learning Communities

financial autonomy within the framework of an SAR-wide education system. In the light of its own educational philosophies and the systemic requirements of the Education Department, each school will have flexibility in administration and be able to exercise professional judgement in organising its own curriculum and teaching arrangements. Schools will have the capacity to provide an education which meets the individual needs of their students.

The Community Has a Part in School-based Management

In this time of change, nothing could be more beneficial to the welfare of students than a decision to entrust the governance of a school into the care of the wider school community. Local governance embraces diversity, broadening the vision of what might be achieved in schools. It gives a school direct access to the expertise of its key stakeholders - the sponsoring body, the principal, teachers, parents, alumni and members of the community. It promotes the mutual understanding of educational issues in the school. Local governance thrives on collaboration and enables responsible risk-taking in the search for better educational processes. Above all, it empowers the stakeholders themselves to work with initiative for the educational welfare of the students under their care.

Since the introduction of school-based management, schools have been responding proactively to the changes school-based management involves. Indeed, the continued success of reform will depend on schools' capacity to self-manage effectively. In particular, they need freedom to decide on the best ways to educate their students.

Schools make a difference to the life of every student. Well-governed schools make the best difference of all. No other public institution has such a profound effect on the future well-being of all members of our society.

II. Proposal of the Advisory Committee on School-based Management

The Advisory Committee on School-based Management (ACSBM) is now seeking the public's views on a proposed school management framework, recommendations on the composition and legal status of School Management Committees and responsibilities of school managers. The recommendations include proposals for

- each School Management Committee to be registered as an incorporated body under the Education Ordinance;
- membership of a School Management Committee:
 - ◆ up to 60% of the total membership nominated by the School Sponsoring Body;
 - ◆ the principal;
 - ◆ 2 or more teacher managers, to be elected by the teaching staff;
 - ◆ 2 or more parent managers, to be elected by the parent-teacher association;
 - ◆ 1 or more alumni managers, to be elected by the alumni association; and
 - ◆ 1 or more independent managers, to be nominated by the School Management

Our vision for quality education will be realised ...

Committee from among committed community members and relevant professionals.

- each School Management Committee to draft its own constitution, stipulating the composition and responsibilities of the School Management Committee and the ways in which the school will be managed;
- the number of schools which managers may serve on to be limited to five - in order to ensure that managers have sufficient energy and time to perform their function properly;
- the names of school managers, their tenure and the sector they represent to be public information;
- school managers to declare any personal interests which may be in conflict with the best interests of the school (including the interests of relatives, friends and business associates) and anything which may be construed to confer financial advantage or other benefits; and
- school managers to be eligible for office between the ages of 21 and 70.

III. Frequently Asked Questions

Q1: *Why will the School Management Committee include parents, teachers, alumni and other community members as managers?*

A1: The inclusion of these managers in the School Management Committee will provide wider perspectives and experience when making decisions which determine the achievements of the school. Parents will be able to raise any concerns and give advice on the development and education of students. Teachers, alumni and community members will be able to contribute their specific expertise to the benefit of the school and the improvement of learning outcomes.

Q2: *Won't school-based management generate excessive paperwork and increase teachers' workload at the expense of learning activities? Isn't this counter-productive?*

A2: There is a common misunderstanding that school-based management is about writing endless and lengthy school plans and reports. Quite the contrary, school-based management provides a forum for formulating a shared vision, creating a sense of ownership and revitalising the professionalism of principals and teachers in the improvement of teaching and learning. Annual school plans and reports provide a means for setting direction, introducing improvements and evaluating the progress of development. Meetings and professional collaboration are processes of orderly cooperation and teamwork. They make teaching more effective and ensure that resources are used where they will have maximum impact on students' learning. Lengthy documentation is not required.

Q3: *School Sponsoring Bodies have provided good management of schools in the past; won't the introduction of School Management Committees make them redundant?*

A3: School Sponsoring Bodies have provided the essential ethos and values under

which schools have been managed. This role will continue; indeed it must. This is one reason why the structure of School Management Committees is weighted in support of School Sponsoring Bodies. They will be able to increase the effectiveness of their schools by the nomination of quality persons as managers of the School Management Committees. It is a key principle of school-based management that all stakeholders shall be represented. School Sponsoring Bodies will provide wisdom that can come from no other source.

Q4: *Does the proposed School Management Committee force a "one-size-fits-all" model?*

A4: On the contrary, the proposed changes allow flexibility and cater for individual differences among schools. Each School Management Committee will have its own membership and draw up its individual constitution in consultation with its sponsoring body. However, for good reasons, it is important that this key principle be upheld among all schools: participatory decision-making requires all key stakeholders to be included. The corporate status under the Education Ordinance empowers each School Management Committee to collectively manage the school in the best interests of the students.

Q5: *Why does the School Management Committee need a corporate status?*

A5: At present, the supervisor and individual managers are personally responsible for legal liability arising from the decisions of the School Management Committee. However, when School Management Committees are incorporated under the Education Ordinance, individual managers will not incur personal liability in relation to the activities and decisions of the School Management Committee providing that they act with prudence and in good faith.

Q6: *Who is eligible to be a school manager?*

A6: If you

- are between the ages of 21 and 70,
- have completed secondary education or equivalent,
- are concerned about the education and development of children and young people, and
- would like to contribute time and effort in school decision-making,

then you will make an ideal school manager.

Q7: *When will a changed decision-making framework be put in place?*

A7: The Education Ordinance will need to be amended. Approved legislation would take effect from the 2001/2002 school year. A three-year transition period is also proposed to allow schools to prepare for setting up the new framework.

The recommendations on the proposed management framework are detailed in the School-based Management Consultation Document "Transforming Schools into Dynamic and Accountable Professional Learning Communities". If you are interested, you may obtain a copy from all District Education Offices, District Offices, or view or download the document from the following web-site:

<http://www.ed.gov.hk/sbm/consultation>

The Advisory Committee on School-based Management attaches great importance to your views and comments on our proposals. Your responses are crucial to the success of our task. You are welcome to send in your views on the consultation document by mail, fax, e-mail or on-line through our web-site on or before **30 April 2000 (Sunday)**.

Address: **The Secretary, Advisory Committee on School-based Management** 11/F,
Wu Chung House, 213 Queen's Road East, Wanchai, Hong Kong

Fax No.: 2574 5509 / 2891 0512

E-mail: sbmed@pacific.net.hk

Web-site: <http://www.ed.gov.hk/sbm/consultation>

A series of forums will also be organised for the general public. Details are as follows:

Date and Time	Venue
11 March 2000 (Sat) 10:00 a.m.	Academic Community Hall The Hong Kong Baptist University Waterloo Road, Kowloon Tong
18 March 2000 (Sat) 10:00 a.m.	School Hall True Light Girls' College 54A Waterloo Road, Yaumatei
22 March 2000 (Wed) 3:00 p.m.	School Hall Munsang College (Hong Kong Island) 26 Tai On Street, Sai Wan Ho, Hong Kong
7 April 2000 (Fri) 3:00 p.m.	School Hall Shatin Tsung Tsin Secondary School Sun Chui Estate, Shatin, New Territories
11 April 2000 (Tue) 4:00 p.m.	School Hall Kwai-ming Wu Memorial School of Precious Blood Luk Yeung Sun Chuen, Tsuen Wan, New Territories

School-based Management Consultation Document

We attach great importance to your views and comments on our proposals. Your support and response can make our task a success. We would be grateful if you could complete the following Opinion Form and return it to us **before 30 April 2000** by mail, fax, e-mail or on-line through our website.

Address: **The Secretary, Advisory Committee on School-based Management** 11/F, Wu Chung House, 213 Queen's Road East, Wanchai, Hong Kong
Fax no: 2574 5509/2891 0512
Web-site: <http://www.ed.gov.hk/sbm/consultation>
E-mail: sbmed@pacific.net.hk

*Transforming Schools into
Dynamic and Accountable Professional Learning Communities
School-based Management Consultation Document*

Opinion Form

My/Our views on the consultation document are as follows:

	Agree	Disagree	Comments (if any)
1. The direction underpinning the recommendations made by the ACSBM.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
2. Specific recommendations set out in the consultation document:			
(a) Constitution of school management committees (para. 3.4 and 3.5)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
(b) Membership of school management committees (para. 3.6)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
(c) Registration of school management committees as incorporated bodies (para. 3.8)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
(d) Maximum no. of schools to be served by each school manager (para. 3.12)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
(e) Disclosure of personal data and declaration of interests by school managers (para. 3.13)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
(f) Attendance of school managers at school management committee meetings (para. 3.14)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
(g) Qualifications of school managers (para. 3.15)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
(h) Transition period for restructuring school management committees (para. 3.36 and 3.37)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name: _____ Method of contact: _____

Organization represented (if applicable): _____

If necessary, please set out your views on a separate sheet. Thank you!

Major proposals in the consultation document, public views and response of ACSBM

Major proposals in the consultation document	Public views	Response of ACSBM
<p><i>Structure of SMC</i></p> <p>Each school shall have an SMC which will be responsible for making decisions on major school policies, procedures and practices.</p>	<p>Views on the proposal are divided. Teachers' associations and parents' groups support the introduction of a participatory school governance structure. Some SSBs, however, ask that they be allowed to adopt different governance models.</p>	<p>Members initially agree that SMCs should adopt a participatory governance structure. On different governance models and the division of rights and responsibilities among different parties, further discussion is necessary.</p>
<p><i>SMC constitution</i></p> <p>Each SMC has to draw up its own constitution.</p>	<p>The proposal is generally supported. However, many SSBs consider that they should have the power to set both the vision and mission for their sponsored schools.</p>	<p>After deliberations, Members initially agree that schools' visions and missions should be set by SSBs.</p>
<p><i>SMC composition</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • managers nominated by the SSB: up to 60% of the total membership • principal: an ex-officio member • alumni and independent managers: one or more from each category 	<p>Views on the number of teacher and parent managers are divided. Some SSBs oppose to the idea of introducing teacher and parent managers into SMCs; others request to reduce the number of managers from each of these categories to one or more. On the other hand, some teachers' associations and parents' groups propose to further increase</p>	<p>ACSBM initially agrees that managers nominated by the SSB should be no more than 60% of the total SMC membership. As regards the number of teacher and parent representatives, ACSBM will further discuss the issue after collecting views from different sectors.</p>

Major proposals in the consultation document	Public views	Response of ACSBM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> teacher and parent managers: two or more from each category 	the number of teacher and parent managers.	
<i>The SMC will be incorporated under the Education Ordinance</i>	The proposal is generally supported. Some SSBs however worry that they will “lose control” over their SMCs once SMCs become separate legal entities.	Members initially agree to adopt the original proposal.
<i>Each school manager cannot serve on more than five SMCs</i>	Most teachers’ associations and parents’ groups support this proposal. However, some SSBs do not agree to the proposal of setting an upper limit on the number of schools a manager could serve. Some suggest increasing the limit to ten schools. Some SSBs also request to exempt their full-time staff, employed specifically to manage the schools under the SSBs’ sponsorship, from the requirement.	ACSBM will further discuss the issue after collecting views from different sectors.
<p><i>Disclosure of personal data and declaration of interests</i></p> <p>The Education Department (ED) will register school managers and make their information available to the public. In addition, managers will be required to</p>	The proposal is generally supported.	Members initially agree to adopt the original proposal.

Major proposals in the consultation document	Public views	Response of ACSBM
<p>declare to the SMC any personal interests which may conflict with their duties as managers of the SMC.</p>		
<p><i>Attendance at SMC meetings</i> Managers who are absent from three consecutive meetings without leave can be required from the SMC to resign from office. If resignation is not received, the SMC can seek cancellation of the manager’s registration from the Director of Education.</p>	<p>The proposal is generally supported.</p>	<p>Members initially agree to adopt the original proposal.</p>
<p><i>Qualifications of school managers</i> There is no need to stipulate a minimum level of academic qualifications on managers. However, we could consider requiring new managers to have received secondary education or its equivalent.</p>	<p>The majority of the response supports the proposal. However, there are also views that the requirement will discourage community members who are devoted in education but have not received secondary education from serving on SMCs.</p>	<p>Members initially agree not to impose any minimum level of academic qualifications on managers.</p>

Major proposals in the consultation document	Public views	Response of ACSBM
<p><i>Age of school managers</i></p> <p>All school managers should be aged between 21 to 70.</p>	<p>The proposal receives general support. However, some SSBs hold a different view and consider that many of their managers over the age of 70 are fit to continue to serve on SMCs.</p>	<p>Members initially agree to introduce a category of “Honorary Managers”. This category of managers is not subject to the requirements (on age, academic qualifications or the number of schools served) of school managers but will not have any voting rights in SMCs.</p>
<p><i>Roles of SSBs</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maintaining full control of the use of their private funds and assets • taking part in the selection of the principal • nominating SSB managers • requesting cancellation of the registration of SMC managers appointed by SSBs. 	<p>Some SSBs have expressed concerns over possible disputes arising from control and use of funds and assets.</p>	<p>Members initially agree that SSBs should maintain full control of their private funds and assets. As regards selection of principals, ACSBM will further discuss the issue after collecting more views from different sectors.</p>

Major proposals in the consultation document	Public views	Response of ACSBM
<p><i>Roles of SMCs</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensuring that the Education Ordinance is complied with and the vision of the SSB is fulfilled • setting the mission and goals of the school • determining policies on teaching and learning • planning and budgeting as well as managing human resources (including staff development and performance management) • establishing a community network and support system 	<p>Many SSBs consider that they should have the power to set the vision as well as the mission for their sponsored schools.</p>	<p>Members initially agree that schools' visions and missions should be set by SSBs.</p>

Major proposals in the consultation document	Public views	Response of ACSBM
<p><i>Roles of ED</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enforcing relevant legislation • developing policies and educational guidelines • setting system-wide educational priorities • setting and monitoring education standards • providing schools with necessary public funds 	<p>The proposal is generally supported.</p>	<p>Members have not discussed this proposal.</p>
<p><i>Transition period</i></p> <p>A transition period of three years is allowed so that schools could make appropriate plans to introduce a participatory school management mechanism.</p>	<p>Most teachers' associations and parents' groups support the proposal. However, SSBs consider that a longer transition period will allow them to be better prepared for the implementation of new management initiatives.</p>	<p>Members initially agree to extend the transition period (to five years) to allow more time for SSBs to put in place the proposed management structure.</p>
<p><i>Post of supervisor</i></p>	<p>Many SSBs consider that for schools' operational reasons, the post of supervisor should be retained.</p>	<p>Members initially agree to retain the post of supervisor. However, the roles and responsibilities of the supervisor will need to be revised to fulfil the spirit that the decision of a school is made by the SMC collectively instead of the supervisor.</p>