



Federation of Hong Kong Higher Education Staff Associations
香港高等院校教職員會聯會

Dr C W Chan, Vice-Chairman, Federation of Hong Kong Higher Education Staff Associations
Department of Mechanical Engineering, The University of Hong Kong, Pokfulam Road, Hong Kong.

Tel/fax: 2859 7906

Dr. Philip Wong
Chairman
Finance Committee
Legco
(Fax: 21210420)

18th December 2003

Dear Dr. Wong,

Proposed budget for Higher Education in 2004-05

We understand your Committee is going to discuss the budget for Higher Education in 2004-05 on 19th December 2003. It would be appreciated if you can table this letter and the attachment for the discussion of this issue in the meeting.

We wish to draw your attention to the fact that the overall Education budget has gone up by 61% since 1997, whilst the funding for Higher Education has gone down by 15% over the same period. In this year alone, the overall Education budget has increased by 11%. We understand the need for the Government to control the fiscal deficit, and we are willing to contribute as far as possible.

To combat the cut in the fiscal budget, the Education sector needs only to go back to last year's (2002-03) overall Education budget level over the next five years to meet the target set by the Financial Secretary, which is to reduce fiscal expenditure by 11% in 5 years. Cutting back to last year's budget is achievable, since the non-recurrent expenditure has increased by 55% this year, a jump of \$4.2 billion. Cutting back the non-recurrent expenditure to last year's level over the next 5 years will almost meet the saving target set by the Financial Secretary. For more details of this proposal by the Federation, please refer to the attached document.

As the schools and the universities appear to be satisfied with last year's budget levels, a small downward adjustment from this year's figure should be acceptable to them. Returning to last year's funding levels should not lead to any significant degradation in the quality of education. If last year's budget for the universities is maintained, not only will the funding for the taught master degree programs and existing higher diploma/associate degree programs be maintained, the proposed 13% cut in the Higher Education funding in 2004-05 can also be gradually phased in. In addition to maintaining the quality of these programs, students and parents will not have to pay much higher tuition fees.

At this difficult time, it is extremely important that scarce funds be carefully spent, so as not to greatly affect the quality of education. We urge the Committee to consider our proposal as an alternative to the one proposed by the Government.

In summary, we believe that the proposed funding cut for Higher Education not only goes well beyond the target set by the Financial Secretary, but will also be detrimental to the development of higher education in Hong Kong, as outlined by the Vice-Chancellors and Presidents of the universities.

We look forward to a positive response to our proposal.

Yours sincerely,

C. W. Chan

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Vice-Chairman

Federation of the Hong Kong Higher Education Staff Associations

在十二月立法會教育事務委員會中，高教聯提出一個在財赤下教育撥款的建議。可惜局長因忙於「打機」而忽視了我們的建議，現我們公開這建議讓各界參考及討論。

二零零三年十二月九日

高等院校教職員會聯會(高教聯)

高教聯在財赤下教育撥款的建議書

(一) 大學已對財赤作出承擔

自1998年至2003/04年，本港大學撥款已削減15.4%。今年又提議再削款13%。加上削減對副學士及高級文憑課程的撥款及取消修課課程碩士學位的資助，就算不包括05-08年度的任何削款，總體削款已達45%或以上。這樣大幅度的削款，八大校長已表示會嚴重影響大學的正常運作及高等教育的質素。

(二) 教育撥款現況

自回歸以來，政府對整體教育撥款增幅達61%。尤其是今年(03/04)的增幅更達11%，而財政司的減赤指標，不外是五年內削減11%左右。要達到財政司的指標，教統局只需要把教育開支的預算回復到02/03年的水平便可達到。對此，小、中、大學應不會有異議。今年的整體教育撥款，非經常性的開支（包括建新校舍），由76億大幅加至118億，增加了42億（增幅達55%），佔整體教育開支的19%。最近審計署公佈，教統局浪費達14億，主要用在非經常性開支方面。因此，削減這類開支的空間是很大的。

(三) 平穩教育撥款的建議

現時教統局的減赤建議，不但大學撥款大幅削減，中、小學也不能倖免。這政策引起教育界極大的恐慌。從上述的分析，高教聯認為必須提出一個平穩的撥款政策。我們建議經常性開支包括小、中、大學的撥款可維持於今年(03/04)的水平，而逐步回落到去年(02/03)的水平，減幅只不過是五年內3-4%；而非經常性開支因今年大幅增加55%，只需以後每年削減7%左右，那麼整體教育撥款便可回復到02/03水平。

(四) 平穩削減建議對社會利多於弊

這方案不但可達到減赤的要求，而小、中、大學不需要互相惡性競爭資源。同時現有的高級文憑、副學士及修課課程碩士學位可維持資助，教統局削減04/05年大學撥款13%的計劃亦可分期進行。學生及家長不用多付50至100%或以上的高昂學費。同時，更可維持現有的高等教育質素。

總結

高教聯提出的平穩教育撥款建議是可行的。我們現教促政府認真考慮並切實執行這建議。教統局的現有撥款政策已引起小、中、大學極大的反對聲音，影響社會的融洽及穩定，令社會失去前進的動力。而這政策將令大學撥款在回歸十年內削減一半，引致政府違反「基本法」[五十年不變]的原則和精神。這是我們不希望見到的事情。