

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(2)2532/03-04
(These minutes have been
seen by the Administration)

Ref : CB2/PL/ED

Panel on Education

**Minutes of special meeting
held on Monday, 1 December 2003 at 4:30 pm
in the Chamber of the Legislative Council Building**

- Members present** : Hon YEUNG Yiu-chung, BBS (Chairman)
Dr Hon YEUNG Sum (Deputy Chairman)
Dr Hon David CHU Yu-lin, JP
Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan
Hon CHEUNG Man-kwong
Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung
Hon Jasper TSANG Yok-sing, GBS, JP
Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP
Hon SZETO Wah
Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, JP
Dr Hon LO Wing-lok, JP
Hon WONG Sing-chi
Hon Audrey EU Yuet-mee, SC, JP
Hon MA Fung-kwok, JP
- Members attending** : Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming, SC, JP
Hon Margaret NG
- Member absent** : Hon SIN Chung-kai

Public Officers attending : Item I

Professor Arthur LI, GBS, JP
Secretary for Education and Manpower

Mr Michael Stone, JP
Secretary-General
University Grants Committee

Ms Irene YOUNG
Principal Assistant Secretary for Education and
Manpower (Higher Education)

Item III

Professor Arthur LI, GBS, JP
Secretary for Education and Manpower

Mr CHENG Man-yiu, JP
Deputy Secretary for Education and Manpower (3)

Attendance by invitation : Item I

Heads of Universities Committee

Professor Paul CHU
President of the Hong Kong University of Science and
Technology
Convenor of the Heads of Universities Committee

The Federation of the Hong Kong Higher Education
Institutions Staff Associations

Professor SHUM Kar-ping
Chairman

Dr CHAN Che-wai
Vice-Chairman

Academic Staff Association, The University of Hong
Kong

Dr CHAN Che-wai
Chairman

(also Vice-Chairman of the Federation of the Hong Kong Higher Education Institutions Staff Association)

Mr SZE Wing-suen
Vice-Chairman

The Chinese University of Hong Kong Staff Association

Mr LI Wing-yuen
President

Non-Academic Staff Association, The University of Hong Kong

Mr Stephen CHAN Chit-kwai, JP
President

Mr LEE Chun-min
Assistant Secretary

The Teachers' Association of The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Professor KWAN Hoi-shan

Staff Association of City University of Hong Kong

Mr Nicholas P H TAM
Chairman

Dr Y C CHAN
Vice-Chairman

Hong Kong Polytechnic University Staff Association

Dr Ettie LUK
Vice-Chairman

Dr H W J LEE
Executive Committee Member

Hong Kong Professional Teachers' Union

Professor CHAN King-ming
Member of the Executive Council

Mr CHAN Kwok-kuen
Member of the Executive Council

Hong Kong Baptist University Staff Association

Dr Stephen L CHAN
Chairman

Save Sub-Degree Programs Alliance

Mr LEUNG Wing-chung
Chairman

The Academic Staff Association of the Hong Kong
Institute of Education

Mr WONG Ping-ho
President

Dr Ken VOLK
Honorary Secretary

Lingnan University Staff Representatives

Dr LI Pang-kwong
Associate Professor

Mr NG Kwai-wah
Senior Research Administration Officer

Save the College Action Group, City University of Hong
Kong

Mr FUNG Wai-wah
Deputy Convenor

The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
Staff Association

Mr LAM Kin-lai
Chairman

Professor Gary BIDDLE

City University of Hong Kong Students' Union

Mr CHENG Cheuk-him
External Vice-President

Mr TSANG Ka-yin
President

Hong Kong Baptist University Student Union

Mr CHAN Fu-yin
President

Miss Shirley CHU Shuet-ling
Internal Vice President

Hong Kong University of Science & Technology
Students' Union

Mr Enric LI Lok-wai
External Vice-President

Mr Raymond LAU Kai -chung
External Secretary

Hong Kong Federation of Students

Miss LEE Tsan-yung
Vice-Chairperson

Mr LO Wai-ming
Financial Secretary

The Chinese University of Hong Kong Student Union

Mr Wayne TSANG
President

The Hong Kong Polytechnic University Students' Union

Mr OR Pok-man
President

Mr WONG Wai-tong
External Vice-President

Hong Kong University Students' Union

Mr MAK Ka-chun
President

Mr William LIU Kwun-wa
External Vice-Chairman
Law Association

Lingnan University Students' Union

Mr LAU Charn-sun
Councillor

Hong Kong Youth & Tertiary Students Association

Mr NG Chit-sang
President

Mr TSUI Hoi-wai
Member

Postgraduate Student Association, The University of
Hong Kong

Mr XIAN Wei-sheng
Chairman

Miss HO Wai-man
Vice-Chairperson

Asian Students Association

Mr LEE Khai-loon
Regional Secretary

Item III

Hong Kong Council of Early Childhood Education &
Services

Ms LAU Shung-man
Committee Member

Subsidized Primary Schools Council

Mr FUNG Man-ching
Chairman

Mr FUNG Ka-ching
Vice-Chairman

The Hong Kong Council of the Church of Christ in
China

Mr Hudson SOO Yee-yau
Assistant General Secretary (Education)

Hong Kong Professional Teachers' Union

Mr CHAN Kwok-kuen
Member of the Executive Council

The Alliance for Small-class Learning and Teaching in
Secondary Schools

Mr CHOW Shek-fai
Convenor

Mr HO Chi-chung
Spokesman

The Association of Hong Kong Chinese Middle School

Mr HO Ki-to
Executive Committee Member

Hong Kong Association of Heads of Secondary Schools

Mr WONG Wai-yu
Chairman

Mr KOO Chao-ming
Executive Committee Member

Tai Po Early Childhood Educational Principal
Association

Mrs KWOK Chor-kiu
Principal

Mrs YU CHAN Wai-ling
Principal

Hong Kong Kindergarten Association

Ms Carol TO Siu-ying
Committee Member, Public Relation

Ms NG Wah-lai
Committee Member, Academic

Evening School's Students Union

Ms YAU Yim-wah
Officer

The HKIEd Past Student's Association of Early
Childhood Teachers Education

Mrs MAK TSE How-ling
Chairman

Hong Kong Aided Primary School Heads Association

Headmaster LEUNG Shiu-chun
Chairman

Headmaster SO Yau-hang
Member

The Non-Profit-Making Kindergarten Council of Hong
Kong

Miss CHONG Yuen-yin
Vice-Chairman

Hong Kong Special Schools Council

Dr Simon LEUNG
Chairman

The Association of Heads of Primary Schools, the Hong
Kong Council of the Church of Christ in China

Mr CHAN Chi-tuen
Vice-Chairman

Mr LEE Yun-sang
Vice-Chairman

Individual

Miss Anita Chi-kwan LEE
PHD Student, Department of Comparative Literature,
Faculty of Arts, The University of Hong Kong

Clerk in attendance : Ms Doris CHAN
Chief Assistant Secretary (2)2

Staff in attendance : Mr Stanley MA
Senior Assistant Secretary (2)6

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I. University Grants Committee - Funding for 2004/2005
[LC Paper No. CB(2)479/03-04(01)]

Members noted the submission from Professor Jian-Hua Yin [LC Paper No.CB(2)467/03-04(03)].

Meeting with deputations

2. The Chairman welcomed representatives of the 26 deputations and the Administration to the meeting.

3. At the invitation of the Chairman, representatives of the 26 deputations presented their views and concerns about funding cuts for higher education, including the proposed funding cut for the University Grants Committee (UGC)-funded institutions in the 2004-05 academic year as summarized in paragraphs 4 to 29 below.

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Heads of Universities Committee (HUCOM)
[LC Paper No. CB(2)479/03-04(01)]

4. Professor Paul CHU, Convenor of HUCOM introduced the joint statement of HUCOM on the financing of higher education. He highlighted that funding for the UGC-funded institutions had been reduced, during a period when the overall public spending had increased substantially, by about 10% since the 1998/99 academic year. In particular, a further 10% funding cut and the withdrawal of funding support for taught postgraduate and sub-degree programmes in the 2004-05 academic year would severely affect the operation of institutions. Professor CHU stressed that HUCOM hoped that the Administration would take into account the aforesaid reductions in planning the funding provisions for the sector in the future.

The Federation of the Hong Kong Higher Education Institutions Staff Associations (the Federation)
[LC Paper No. CB(2)530/03-04(01)]

5. Professor SHUM Kar-ping presented the views of the Federation as detailed in its submission which was tabled at the meeting. He highlighted that the Federation suggested that the Education and Manpower Bureau (EMB) should maintain the funding allocation for the UGC sector at the 2002-03 level for the next five academic years.

Academic Staff Association, The University of Hong Kong

6. Dr CHAN Che-wai said that the Administration should maintain the funding for the UGC sector at the 2002-03 level. He suggested that the Administration should reduce its non-recurrent expenditure, which was about the same as the \$12 billion funding for the whole UGC sector, as suggested by the Audit Commission. He expressed concern about the 50% and the over 100% increase in tuition fees for associate degree and taught postgraduate programmes respectively. He pointed out that funding for the UGC sector had been reduced by around 50% in the past decade, and considered that such reduction was not in line with Article 5 of the Basic Law that the way of life in Hong Kong shall remain unchanged for 50 years after reunification.

The Chinese University of Hong Kong Staff Association
[LC Paper No. CB(2)496/03-04(01)]

7. Mr LI Wing-yuen said that he supported the principles and arguments of the Federation in opposition to the funding cuts for higher education. He said that the Chinese University of Hong Kong had established working groups to improve efficiency in order to absorb an about 15% reduction in funding in the past five years, but it would be very difficult to absorb another reduction of about 13% in the 2004-05 academic year. He feared that the institution would have to

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resort to redundancy of staff, salary reduction and outsourcing to meet the funding cut, which would inevitably create staff conflicts and downgrade the quality of education.

*Non-Academic Staff Association, The University of Hong Kong
[LC Paper No. CB(2)493/03-04(01)]*

8. Mr Stephen CHAN presented the views of the Non-Academic Staff Association of the University of Hong Kong as detailed in its submission. He highlighted that the Association supported the Federation's suggestion that funding for higher education should be maintained at the 2002-03 level. Mr LEE Chun-min supplemented that further funding cuts would affect the employment and living standards of the university staff and their families.

*The Teachers' Association of The Chinese University of Hong Kong
[LC Paper No. CB(2)496/03-04(01)]*

9. Professor KWAN Hoi-shan presented the views of the Teachers' Association of the Chinese University of Hong Kong as detailed in its submission. He highlighted that staff salaries in UGC-funded institutions were now at similar levels with their western counterparts, and the Administration should consult staff and students on the design of a blueprint for the future development of higher education.

Staff Association of City University of Hong Kong

10. Mr Nicholas TAM said that the Staff Association of City University of Hong Kong supported the Federation's suggestion that funding for higher education should be maintained at the 2002-03 level. He pointed out that around 3 700 associate degree places would be reduced in the next four to five years, involving a funding cut of \$400 million. He stressed that the funding cuts would affect the morale and quality of the workforce in higher education, and jeopardize the competitiveness of Hong Kong in the face of knowledge-based economy. Dr Y C CHAN supplemented that university operation was now very cost-effective and staff salaries were not high. He considered that given the fiscal deficits, the pace of education reform should be slowed down. He added that reducing staff salaries for the sake of operating self-financing associate degree programmes was unacceptable.

*Hong Kong Polytechnic University Staff Association
[LC Paper No. CB(2)530/03-04(02)]*

11. Dr Ettie LUK and Dr HW LEE presented the views of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University Staff Association as detailed in its submission. They highlighted the adverse effects of the funding cuts on staff morale and students' financial ability to pursue higher education. Dr LEE added that the Association

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supported the views and suggestions of the Federation.

Hong Kong Professional Teachers' Union
[LC Paper No. CB(2)501/03-04(01)]

12. Professor CHAN King-ming presented the views of the Hong Kong Professional Teachers' Union as detailed in its submission. He highlighted that institutions had shared their part in reducing the fiscal deficit and the adoption of different funding policies for the sub-degree, degree and postgraduate degree sectors was unfair. The Union considered that the development of a healthy and competitive higher education sector was vital to the long-term development of Hong Kong. Mr CHAN Kwok-kuen stressed that the Union had incorporated in its submission the views and needs of stakeholders in the education sector.

Hong Kong Baptist University Staff Association
[LC Paper No. CB(2)467/03-04(01)]

13. Dr Stephen CHAN presented the views of the Hong Kong Baptist University Staff Association on the target of 10% efficiency saving and the operation of the Matching Grant Scheme as detailed in its submission. He stressed that the Government should bear in mind the interest of students in formulation of policies for the UGC sector.

Save Sub-Degree Programs Alliance
[LC Paper No. CB(2)496/03-04(02)]

14. Mr LEUNG Wing-chung presented the views of the Save Sub-Degree Programs Alliance on the Government's funding policy on sub-degree programmes as detailed in its submission. He urged the Administration to withdraw the self-financing policy for sub-degree programmes and review its development plans for the sub-degree sector.

The Academic Staff Association of the Hong Kong Institute of Education

15. Mr WONG Ping-ho said that the Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIEd) had implemented a number of measures in response to a 20% funding cut in the 2004-05 academic year, which had seriously affected the quality of education of the Institute. He pointed out that as a result of the funding cuts, staff workload had increased substantially and staff redundancy appeared inevitable. He cited a number of examples to support his view that HKIEd had not been fairly treated in the course of its development. He expressed support for the Federation's suggestions on the provision of funding to higher education.

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Lingnan University Staff Representative
[LC Paper No. CB(2)496/03-04(03)]

16. Representing the staff of the Lingnan University, Mr NG Kwai-wah and Dr LI Pang-kwong presented the views as detailed in the submission. Mr NG explained the funding mechanism in the UGC sector and pointed out that UGC-funded institutions should serve different roles in the provision of higher education. Dr LI cited the increase in class size to illustrate the adverse effect of funding cuts on the quality of higher education.

Save the College Action Group, City University of Hong Kong
[LC Paper No. CB(2)493/03-04(03)]

17. Mr FUNG Wai-wah introduced the submission of the Save the College Action Group. He expressed concern about the rapid development of the self-financing sub-degree sector in recent years and the quality of the sub-degree programmes offered by new operators. He considered that the Administration should withdraw its policy objective of enhancing 60% of students to have access to post-secondary education.

The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology Staff Association
[LC Paper No. CB(2)530/03-04(03)]

18. Mr LAM Kin-lai said that further funding cuts in higher education as a result of the fiscal deficits would jeopardize the long term development of Hong Kong. He expressed support for the Federation's suggestion that funding for higher education should be maintained at the 2002-03 level. Professor Gary Biddle also presented his views as detailed in his submission entitled "Hong Kong's future - Dark and Bright Views" which was tabled at the meeting. Professor Biddle suggested to identify and implement needed structural reforms in education and tax base and to enhance higher education funding to enable Hong Kong to realise its potential as China's education hub.

City University of Hong Kong Students' Union

19. Mr CHENG Cheuk-him presented the views of the City University of Hong Kong (CityU) Students' Union as detailed in its submission. He said that CityU Students' Union strongly objected to the large funding cuts in a short period. The CityU Students' Union considered that the Administration should suspend its funding cut proposals, publish a blueprint for the future development of higher education and explain how the quality and development of higher education could be enhanced in the light of the proposed funding cuts. Mr TSANG Ka-yin supplemented that the community should reconsider the recommendations of Lord Sutherland in the Higher Education Report for the benefits of the future development of the UGC sector.

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Hong Kong Baptist University Student Union

20. Mr CHAN Fu-yin said that the introduction of the Matching Grant Scheme would put institutions with a short history in a disadvantageous position as there was not a culture of private endowment in Hong Kong. He said that the Hong Kong Baptist University Student Union strongly objected to further funding cuts in the 2005-08 triennium, and requested the Administration to provide a blueprint for the future development of the higher education system in Hong Kong.

Hong Kong University of Science & Technology Students' Union
[LC Paper No. CB(2)501/03-04(02)]

21. Mr Enric LI presented the views of the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST) Students' Union as detailed in its submission. He highlighted that the HKUST Students' Union urged the Administration to publish a blueprint for the development of the higher education system for wide consultation, to collaborate with institutions and their staff to formulate policies for higher education, and to withhold any further funding cuts for the UGC sector in the 2005-08 triennium. Mr Raymond LAU cited examples to support his request that the Secretary for Education and Manpower should be cautious in his speeches in relation to the policies for higher education.

Hong Kong Federation of Students
[LC Paper No. CB(2)501/03-04(03)]

22. Miss LEE Tsan-yung and Mr LO Wai-ming presented the views of the Hong Kong Federation of Students as detailed in its submission. Mr LO stressed that if the proposed funding cut for the 2004-05 academic year was adopted, the Federation of Students strongly objected to any further reduction of funding for the UGC sector in the 2005-08 triennium.

The Chinese University of Hong Kong Student Union

23. Mr Wayne TSANG said that the Chinese University of Hong Kong Student Union suggested that -

- (a) institutions with a short history was less capable of raising funds and should be given the minimum grant after the prescribed period for provision of the matching grant;
- (b) EMB should extend the transitional period for withdrawal of funding support to the associate degree programmes of CityU and PolyU from six to nine years; and

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- (c) EMB should publish a blueprint for the future development of the education systems for public consultation on the appropriate funding cuts for various education sectors in the next few years.

The Hong Kong Polytechnic University Students' Union
[LC Paper No. CB(2)467/03-04(02)]

24. Mr WONG Wai-tong presented the views of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU) Students' Union. He highlighted that the PolyU Students' Union objected to further funding cuts in the 2005-08 triennium, and requested that students should be represented in the consultation and decision-making process of the funding cuts for the higher education sector.

Hong Kong University Students' Union
[LC Paper No. CB(2)496/03-04(04)]

25. Mr MAK Ka-chun presented the views of the Hong Kong University Students' Union (HKUSU) as detailed in its submission. Mr William LIU also presented the views of the HKUSU in respect of the funding cuts for the Postgraduate Certificate in Laws programme as detailed in the statement of its Law Association.

Lingnan University Students' Union

26. Mr LAU Charn-sun said that the Lingnan University Students' Union (LUSU) considered that the community should discuss the funding cuts for the various education sectors when a comprehensive blueprint for the long-term development of the education systems was available. LUSU suggested that the Administration should explain its policy on role differentiation among institutions and whether it would sacrifice the small institutions in order to foster the development of a few world class universities. LUSU also suggested that the Administration should suspend the implementation of further funding cuts until the community had reached a consensus on the future development of the education systems.

Asian Students Association
[LC Paper No. CB(2)501/03-04(04)]

27. Mr LEE Khai-loon presented the views of the Asian Students Association as detailed in its submission. He stressed that the Asian Students Association opposed further funding cuts for the higher education sector in the 2005-08 triennium.

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Hong Kong Youth & Tertiary Students Association
[LC Paper No. CB(2)496/03-04(05)]

28. Mr NG Chit-sang presented the views of the Hong Kong Youth and Tertiary Students Association as detailed in its submission. He considered that both the Administration and the institutions should contribute to reduce the fiscal deficits. He suggested that institutions should appoint student representatives in their finance committees in order to enhance cost-effective use of public funds. He considered that university staff should not adopt the attitude that reduction of funding would invariably bring about a decline in quality of education, and should share the burden of reducing the fiscal deficits.

Postgraduate Student Association, The University of Hong Kong
[LC Paper No. CB(2)479/03-04(02)]

29. Miss HO Wai-man and Mr SIAN Wei-sheng presented the views of the Postgraduate Student Association of the University of Hong Kong as detailed in its submission. The Association suggested that the Administration should conduct extensive consultation before proposing any further funding cuts for the UGC sector.

The Administration's response

30. At the invitation of the Chairman to respond, Secretary for Education and Manpower (SEM) said that the Administration had listened to the views of the 26 deputations clearly, and agreed that education was crucial to the long-term development of Hong Kong. SEM, however, pointed out that while deputations had expressed objection to further funding cuts in higher education, they had not made any constructive suggestions to reduce the fiscal deficits. SEM considered that most of the allegations in respect of the funding cuts were due to a lack of understanding of Government policies on education. SEM stressed that given the fiscal deficits, the Government would have to improve efficiency and enhance cost-effectiveness in the use of public resources, and EMB would have to deploy the education resources in cost-effective ways.

Follow-up discussion

31. The Chairman informed the meeting that the Administration intended to submit its funding proposal on the item to the Finance Committee for consideration on 12 December 2003. Members agreed to continue discussion of the item with the Administration at a special meeting to be held on 9 December 2003 at 4:30 pm.

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II. Matching Grant Scheme for University Grants Committee-funded Institutions

[LC Paper No. CB(2)442/03-04(01)]

32. In view of time constraint, members agreed to defer discussion of the item to the special meeting scheduled for 9 December 2003.

III. Proposed education funding cuts

33. Members noted the submissions from the following -

- (a) Hong Kong Laboratory Technicians' Association [LC Paper No. CB(2)530/03-04(05)];
- (b) the Postgraduate Student Association of the University of Hong Kong [LC Paper No. CB(2)479/03-04(02)];
- (c) Association of Principals of Secondary Schools, the Hong Kong Council of the Church of Christ in China [LC Paper No. CB(2)467/03-04(11)]; and
- (d) six submissions from individuals [LC Paper Nos CB(2)467/03-04(04) - (09)].

Meeting with deputations

34. At the invitation of the Chairman, representatives of the 15 deputations and Miss Anita LEE presented their views and concerns about proposed education funding cuts as summarized in paragraphs 35 to 49 below.

Hong Kong Council of Early Childhood Education & Services

35. Miss LAM Shung-man said that allocation for early childhood education should be increased instead of being reduced. She stressed the importance of quality early childhood education in the development of an individual and urged the Administration to allocate more resources for early childhood education.

Subsidized Primary Schools Council
[LC Paper No. CB(2)497/03-04(03)]

36. Mr FUNG Ka-ching presented the views of the Subsidized Primary Schools Council (SPSC) as detailed in its submission. He added that SPSC supported the construction of more new schools to speed up the implementation of whole-day primary schooling, but opposed the provision of more Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS) schools or private independent schools. SPSC agreed

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that all stakeholders in education should share a part to reduce the budget deficits, and was ready to discuss with EMB on the ways to enhance cost-effectiveness as well as quality of primary school education.

The Hong Kong Council of the Church of Christ in China
[LC Paper No. CB(2)467/03-04(10)]

37. Mr Hudson SOO said that the Hong Kong Council of the Church of Christ in China considered that there was no room for reduction of funding in basic education. He added that the Government should not reduce the number of practical and pre-vocational schools as it would affect the right of students with special learning needs to receive proper education. He also suggested that in the light of a decline in student population, the Government should implement small class teaching to improve quality of school education without increasing the public expenditure.

Hong Kong Professional Teachers' Union
[LC Paper No. CB(2)501/03-04(05)]

38. Mr CHAN Kwok-kuen presented the views of the Hong Kong Professional Teachers' Union as detailed in its submission. He highlighted that the Government should, instead of reducing education funding to reduce the budget deficits, explore workable alternatives to increase revenue and review its policy on the construction of new DSS or private independent schools with a view to achieving savings.

The Alliance for Small-class Learning and Teaching in Secondary Schools
[LC Paper Nos. CB(2)467/03-04(12) and CB(2)530/03-04(06)]

39. Mr CHOW Shek-fai presented the views of the Alliance for Small-class Learning and Teaching in Secondary Schools as detailed in its submissions. He highlighted that the Alliance opposed further funding cuts in education as it would affect the quality of education and jeopardize the competitiveness of Hong Kong in the long term.

The Association of Hong Kong Chinese Middle School

40. Mr HO Ki-to said that the Association of Hong Kong Chinese Middle School considered that there was limited room for funding cuts in secondary school sector. The Association agreed that all stakeholders in education should share a part in reducing the budget deficits, and suggested that the Government should introduce a voluntary retirement scheme for serving teachers and principals to achieve savings.

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Hong Kong Association of Heads of Secondary Schools

41. Mr WONG Wai-yu said that there was limited room for funding cuts in the secondary school sector while the education reform was being implemented. The Hong Kong Association of Heads of Secondary Schools agreed that all stakeholders in education should contribute to reducing the budget deficits. The Association suggested that the Government should review its policies on construction of new schools, recruitment of native-speaking English teachers, repair and maintenance of aided secondary schools, provision of Quality Education Fund, etc, with a view to achieving savings.

Tai Po Early Childhood Educational Principal Association

42. Mrs KWOK Chor-kiu said that Tai Po Early Childhood Educational Principal Association considered that the Government should increase funding for the provision of early childhood education. She highlighted that despite a lack of sufficient funding support from the Government, the frontline workers in early childhood education had contributed substantially to the development of the young children in Hong Kong.

Hong Kong Kindergarten Association

43. Ms Carol TO said that Hong Kong Kindergarten Association considered that there was no room for reduction of funding in early childhood education. The Association suggested that given the decline in birth rate, the Government should increase funding allocation for early childhood education, and maintain the current level of subsidies on rents and salary grants for kindergartens. Ms TO pointed out that early childhood education only took up 1.8% of the education budget. She considered that the Government should review the percentage of education resources that should be allocated to early childhood education.

Evening School's Students Union

44. Ms YAU Yim-wah said that the outsourcing of adult education courses run by EMB had deprived some adult learners of their education opportunities. She pointed out that starting from August 2003, EMB had commissioned non-profit-making operators to run the adult education courses and as a result, many adult learners would not enrol in these programmes due to the higher fees. She suggested that the Administration should speed up its review on extending the scope of the Continuing Education Fund to benefit more adult learners. The Evening School's Students Union opposed education funding cuts as it would lead to further increase in programme fees.

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The HKIEd Past Student's Association of Early Childhood Teachers Education

45. Mrs MAK TSE How-ling said that the HKIEd Past Student's Association of Early Childhood Teachers Education appreciated that the Government had increased allocations for the professional development of kindergarten teachers in the past decade. The Association suggested that the Administration should not reduce funding for early childhood education as it would affect the quality of the workforce and early childhood education.

Hong Kong Aided Primary School Heads Association
[LC Paper No. CB(2)493/03-04(02)]

46. Headmaster LEUNG Shiu-chun presented the views of the Hong Kong Aided Primary School Heads Association as detailed in its submission. He highlighted that the Association considered that there was no room for reducing funding in primary school education. Headmaster SO Yau-hang supplemented that funding for primary schools had already been reduced in the past few years.

The Non-Profit-Making Kindergarten Council of Hong Kong

47. Miss CHONG Yuen-yin said that the Non-Profit-Making Kindergarten Council of Hong Kong considered that the percentage of reimbursement of rent to non-profit-making kindergartens should be made more dependent on the quality of education than student enrolment. She suggested that the Administration should work out a set of quality indicators for the evaluation of the performance of kindergartens.

Hong Kong Special Schools Council

48. Dr Simon LEUNG said that the Special Schools Council suggested that the Administration should not reduce funding for special education as it would adversely affect the quality of special education, which would in turn affect the learning progress and development of children with different types of learning difficulties. He pointed out that funding cuts for special education would ultimately result in increase of social welfare expenditure in the long term.

Miss Anita Chi-kwan LEE
[LC Paper No. CB(2)530/03-04(08)]

49. Miss Anita LEE presented her views as detailed in the submission. She suggested that the implementation of the matching grant scheme should be supported by introducing other incentives such as tax reduction for donations made. She considered that the self-financing policy for the sub-degree sector was in contradiction with the policy to encourage life-long learning. She suggested that the Government should formulate a comprehensive policy for higher education which would facilitate integration of all aspects of higher

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education.

The Association of Heads of Primary Schools, the Hong Kong Council of the Church of Christ in China
[LC Paper No. CB(2)530/03-04(07)]

50. Mr CHAN Chi-tuen presented the views of the Association of Heads of Primary Schools, the Hong Kong Council of the Church of Christ in China as detailed in its submission. The Association considered that different sectors and schools in education had different operational needs and expenses, and the Government should allocate resources to them in accordance with their needs and circumstances.

The Administration's response

Admin

51. At the invitation of the Chairman, SEM said that the Administration shared the view of deputations that the provision of quality basic education was crucial to the long-term development of the community. However, in the light of the fiscal deficits, the Government would have to achieve savings in the budget expenditure for different sectors of the community. He undertook that EMB would take into account the views of the deputations and determine the appropriate funding reductions for different sectors in education.

IV. Any other business

52. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 8:10 pm.

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
27 May 2004