

Panel on Education

List of outstanding items for discussion
(position as at 29 January 2004)

**Proposed timing
for discussion**

1. University admission system

In discussing curriculum reform on 21 January 2002, the Panel requested the Administration to ensure that the future senior secondary curriculum and university admission system would align with the new curriculum for basic education.

To be confirmed

The consultation on the new senior secondary and university education academic systems as recommended in the 2004 Policy Address will include recommendations for university admission.

2. Support for students with learning difficulties

In discussing the issue of students with learning difficulties at the meeting on 28 February 2002, members agreed to revisit the issue at a future meeting. The Administration undertook to revert to the Panel after consulting the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA), Equal Opportunities Commission, parents associations and tertiary institutions on the views and concerns of members on the necessary support arrangements for students with learning difficulties.

To be confirmed

At the meeting on 18 November 2002, Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung suggested to follow up the issue in December's meeting. The Administration explained that the Education and Manpower Bureau (EMB) was co-ordinating efforts with the Department of Health, HKEAA and parent-teacher associations on arrangements to improve support services for students with learning difficulties. The Administration provided on 12 December 2002 an information paper which summarises the services provided by EMB for children with specific learning difficulties for members' reference.

**Proposed timing
for discussion**

3. Transparency and representation of the new Education Commission (EC)

The Bills Committee on Education Reorganisation (Miscellaneous Amendments) Bill 2002 requested the Secretary for Education and Manpower to make a pledge to increase the transparency and representation of EC in his speech during the resumption of Second Reading debate on the Bill. Some members of the Bills Committee were also of the view that the new EC following the merger should become a statutory body in the longer term in order to enhance its advisory role. At the meeting of the House Committee on 7 February 2003, Ms Cyd HO suggested that the issue should be followed up by the Panel on Education.

To be confirmed

4. Study on teaching in small class

The Panel discussed the item at meetings held on 18 November 2002, 28 April, 19 May and 16 June 2003 respectively. At the meeting on 16 June, the Panel requested the Administration to evaluate and identify the good practices for inviting interested sponsoring bodies to apply for their schools to participate in the proposed study, and explain the criteria for its evaluation of the good practices. The Administration agreed to revert to the Panel after six months with a preliminary report on the effective strategies and practices for implementing teaching in small class in primary schools.

February 2004

5. Implementation of four-year first-degree programmes

Ms Emily LAU noted that there were views in the community opposing the proposed four-year structure for first-degree programmes. On 5 July 2003, she suggested the Panel to discuss with the Administration on the implementation of four-year first-degree programmes.

To be confirmed

As announced in the 2004 Policy Address, the Administration will consult the public on proposed changes to the academic structure at the senior secondary school level, and corresponding changes to the normative duration of undergraduate programmes.

**Proposed timing
for discussion**

6. Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA) to conduct examinations outside Hong Kong

The Bills Committee on the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (Amendment) Bill 2003 requested SEM to report to the Panel of Education on how HKEAA would enforce measures to secure confidentiality of public examinations when HKEAA is about to conduct examinations outside Hong Kong.

To be confirmed

7. Native-speaking English Teacher (NET) Scheme in primary schools

At the meeting on 17 November 2003, members expressed support for the implementation of the NET Scheme in primary schools and requested the Administration to review the performance of NETs in primary schools with a view to developing a long-term strategy for the provision of NETs in schools.

To be confirmed

The Administration said that a systematic evaluation on the performance of the primary NET Scheme was underway. The Administration will revert to the Panel when the evaluation report is available.

8. Regulation of private schools offering non-formal curriculum (PSNFCs)

At the meeting on 15 December 2003, members suggested that the Administration should explore the feasibility to establish an industry compensation fund for providing compensation to students in the event of closure of PSNFCs.

To be confirmed

The Administration undertook to consult the stakeholders on feasible options and revert to the Panel in due course.