

Panel on Education

List of outstanding items for discussion
(position as at 17 October 2003)

**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. The Administration undertook to revert to the Panel when the report of the Working Group on the review of the academic structure for senior secondary education and interface with higher education is ready.

To be confirmed

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

At the meeting on 18 November 2002, Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong expressed concern about supervision of the operation of PSNFCs and their compliance with the Education Ordinance. Mr CHEUNG suggested that the Panel should discuss the issue and invite deputations to express views at a future meeting.

November 2003

The Administration plans to relax the regulatory control over private schools offering non-formal curriculum and proposes to discuss the item at the meeting in November.

4. Block insurance policy for aided and caput schools

Item proposed by Mr YEUNG Yiu-chung at the meeting on 18 November 2002. Mr YEUNG is concerned whether the scope of insurance coverage for teachers is adequate.

The Administration's information note was issued vide LC Paper No. CB(2)61/03-04(01) on 13 October 2003

The Administration has requested to defer discussion of the item as the tender evaluation process exercise for the item is still underway. The Administration will provide an information note after the tender evaluation process has been completed.

5. 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

**Proposed timing
for discussion**

6. Follow-up discussion on the proposal of outsourcing adult education courses

At the meeting on 28 April 2003, members agreed to continue discussion of the item at a future meeting when the Administration is ready to provide more information on the outsourcing proposal which should include, among others, the estimated tuition fee levels and quality assurance of the adult education courses provided by selected operators.

The Administration advised on 11 June 2003 that an information note will be provided after the tender evaluation process is completed.

The Administration's information note was issued vide LC Paper No. CB(2)102/03-04(01) on 16 October 2003

7. 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.

January 2004
(Tentative)

8. 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

**Proposed timing
for discussion**

9. Review of Operating Expenses Block Grant (OEBG)

At the Finance Committee's meeting on 8 November 2002, Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong requested the Administration to devise an adjustment mechanism for OEBG which could take into account the expenditure pattern of school. He also requested the Administration to address the issue of linking the salary adjustment of administrative/clerical staff and janitors working in aided schools to the civil service salary adjustment in its review of OEBG. The Administration responded that it would consult the Panel on Education upon completion of the review.

To be confirmed

10. 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

11. Introduction of an adjustment mechanism for the special allowance under the Native-speaking English Teacher (NET) Scheme

The Administration intends to seek the Panel's view on the proposal to introduce an adjustment mechanism for the special allowance for NETs, which is now fixed at the monthly rate of \$13,000, before making a submission to the Finance Committee.

To be confirmed