

Panel on Education

List of outstanding items for discussion
(position as at 12 December 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.

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
(Tentative)

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

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. Planning and provision of public sector school places

In discussing the proposed construction of a primary and a secondary school in Sheung Shui at the Public Works Subcommittee (PWSC) meeting on 29 October 2003, PWSC members expressed reservations about the need to construct the secondary school in view of the declining primary student population. They requested the Administration to withdraw the proposal and consult the Education Panel to clarify the related policy issues. 19 January 2004

In response, the Administration said that EMB had established an effective methodology to project the demand for school places for the school building programme. According to EMB's projection, the demand for secondary school places would increase up to the 2007-08 school year, although there might be a decline in student population in the longer term. Nevertheless, in view of PWSC members' concerns, the Administration agreed to withdraw the proposal and consult the Panel before resubmitting the proposal to PWSC.

At the meeting on 17 November 2003. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong also proposed to discuss "Review of the policy on provision of secondary schools" at a future meeting. The Administration agreed to discuss the subject at the meeting in January 2004.