

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(2)1324/04-05
(These minutes have been
seen by the Administration)

Ref : CB2/PL/ED

Panel on Education

Minutes of meeting
held on Monday, 14 March 2005 at 3:30 pm
in the Chamber of the Legislative Council Building

- Members present** : Dr Hon YEUNG Sum (Chairman)
Hon Audrey EU Yuet-mee, SC, JP (Deputy Chairman)
Hon Mrs Selina CHOW LIANG Shuk-ye, GBS, JP
Hon CHEUNG Man-kwong
Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung
Hon Jasper TSANG Yok-sing, GBS, JP
Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP
Hon Andrew LEUNG Kwan-yuen, SBS, JP
Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung
Hon Patrick LAU Sau-shing, SBS, JP
- Member in attendance** : Mr LEE Cheuk-yan
- Members absent** : Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, JP
Hon MA Lik, JP
- Public Officers attending** : Item IV
Mr Andrew POON
Principal Assistant Secretary for Education and
Manpower (Quality Assurance)
Mr CHAN Hung-to
Senior Education Officer (Harmonization of
Pre-primary Services)

Ms Linda LAI
Deputy Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Family
and Women)

Mr Freely CHENG
Principal Assistant Secretary for Health, Welfare and
Food (Family)

Mr FUNG Pak-yan
Assistant Director of Social Welfare (Family and Child
Welfare)

Mr Peter NG
Chief Social Work Officer (Family and Child Welfare)
2, Social Welfare Department

Item V

Mr Michael TIEN
Chairman of Working Group on Review of Secondary
School Places Allocation and Medium of
Instruction for Secondary Schools

Dr Anissa CHAN
Member of Working Group on Review of Secondary
School Places Allocation and Medium of
Instruction for Secondary Schools

Mr LIN Man-sheung
Member of Working Group on Review of Secondary
School Places Allocation and Medium of
Instruction for Secondary Schools

Professor LEE Wing-on
Member of Working Group on Review of Secondary
School Places Allocation and Medium of
Instruction for Secondary Schools

Mrs Cherry TSE
Member of Working Group on Review of Secondary
School Places Allocation and Medium of
Instruction for Secondary Schools

Mrs Fanny LAM
Member of Working Group on Review of Secondary
School Places Allocation and Medium of
Instruction for Secondary Schools

**Attendance by
invitation** : Item V

Hong Kong Professional Teachers' Union

Mr TONG Chung-fan
Secretary

Miss SY On-na
Deputy Director of Publication Department

Hong Kong Federation of Education Workers

Mr WU Siu-wai
Vice-chairman

Hong Kong Teachers' Association

Mr KO Gra-yee
President

Mr IP Kin-yuen
Co-ordinator, Professional & Academic Activities

The Association of Hong Kong Chinese Middle School

Mr YIP Chi-tim
Executive Committee Member

Hong Kong Association of English Medium Secondary
Schools

Mr Lawrence LOUR Tsang-tsay
Chairperson

Ms Rosalind CHEN
External Secretary

Federation of Parent Teacher Association, Tai Po District

Ms TUNG Yuk-wah
Secretary

Ms YUEN Kit-ching
Secretary

Federation of Parent-Teacher Associations of the
Central and Western District

Mrs Annie FUNG KI Mui-kuen
President

Mrs Rita CHEUNG CHENG Shuk-man
Vice-President

The Conference of Sheng Kung Hui Secondary School Heads

Mr Anthony TONG Kai-hong
Chairman

Mr Thomas TAI Tak-ching
Member

Pun U Association Wah Yan Primary School Parents
Teachers Association

Mr Andrew TAM
Executive Committee Member

Mrs Maria LEE CHENG
Education Policies Sub-Committee Member

The Alliance for Small-class Learning and Teaching to
Promote Quality Education

Mr CHOI Wing-tim
Chairman

Mr SHE Ki-poon
Member

Centre for Advancement of Chinese Language
Education and Research, and Support Centre for
Teachers using Chinese as the Medium of Instruction

Dr TSE Shek-kam
Associate Dean, Faculty of Education, The University
of Hong Kong

Mr KI Wing-wah
Associate Professor, Faculty of Education, The
University of Hong Kong

Federation of Parent-Teacher Associations Wong Tai Sin District Ltd

Mr Scipio WU
Consultant

Mr C Y SHUM
Committee

Federation of Parent Teacher Associations in Kwun Tong District

Ms LI Mei-mei
Vice-Chairman

Mr TSUI Kar-keung
Committee Member

Tseung Kwan O Parents Association

Mr CHIEH Shiu-kau
President

Ms KAM Mi-hing
Vice-President (Internal)

Chinese University of Hong Kong School Heads Alumni Association

Mr LIU Ah-chuen
Vice-Chairman

Ms YEUNG Ching-han
Academic Secretary

Hong Kong Parents Association

Ms CHAN Siu-wan
Secretary

Mr TAM Lai-sum
Treasurer

Committee on Home-School Co-operation

Mr Chris YU Wing-fai
Vice-Chairperson

Hong Kong Private Schools Association

Professor TAM Man-kwan
President

Dr LEUNG Ping-wa
Executive Member

The Chinese Language Society of Hong Kong Ltd.

Mr YAO Te-hwai
Chairman

Mr LEUNG Shung-yu
Vice-Chairman

Grant Schools Council

Mr George TAM Siu-ping
Chairman

Mrs LAU LI Kwok-kin
Vice-Chairman

Joint Parent-Teacher Association of Kwai Tsing District

Mr CHEUNG Wing-yin
Chairman

Mr TANG Yuk-wah
Advisor

The Joint Council of Parent-Teacher Associations of
The Shatin District

Ms WONG Lai-ching
Chairman

Mr LAM Tak-lam
Vice-Chairman

Hong Kong Direct Subsidy Scheme Schools Council

Mr CHAN Wai-kai
Chairman

Mr LAW Hing-chung
Vice-Chairman

Hong Kong Aided Primary School Heads Association

Mr LAM Seung-wan
Chairman

Federation of Parent-Teacher Association of Hong
Kong Eastern District

Mrs CHU CHUNG Pui-chi
Treasurer

Federation of Parent Teacher Associations of the
Northern District

Miss CHEUNG Shuk-kuen
Vice-Chairman

Miss Many CHAN
Treasurer

Clerk in attendance : Miss Flora TAI
Chief Council Secretary (2)2

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

Miss Sherman WOO
Legislative Assistant (2)2

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I. Confirmation of minutes
[LC Paper No. CB(2)1028/04-05]

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 February 2005 were confirmed.

II. Information paper(s) issued since the last meeting

2. Members noted that no information paper had been issued since the last meeting.

III. Items for discussion at the next meeting

[Appendices I and II to LC Paper No. CB(2)1030/04-05]

3. Members agreed that in order to avoid clashing with the Special Finance Committee meeting scheduled to be held on 11 April 2005, the next regular meeting would be re-scheduled for Wednesday, 6 April 2005 at 8:30 am.
4. Members noted that the Administration proposed the item of “Financial assistance scheme for evening adult education courses” for discussion at the next meeting. The Chairman requested the Administration to confirm whether the item of “Use of the Language Fund” would be ready for discussion instead. Members agreed that in addition to the item proposed by the Administration, the Panel would discuss the item of “Implementation of small class teaching” at the next meeting. Members also agreed that academics and members of the Steering Committee on Study of Small Class Teaching in Primary Schools would be invited to join the discussion of this item.

IV. Progress report on the implementation of the harmonisation of pre-primary services

[LC Paper No. CB(2)1030/04-05(01)]

5. At the Chairman’s invitation, Principal Assistant Secretary for Education and Manpower (Quality Assurance) (PAS(EM)QA) and Assistant Director of Social Welfare (Family and Child Welfare) (AD(FCW)) briefed members on the background and progress on the implementation of the harmonisation of pre-primary services from the 2005-06 school year with the aid of PowerPoint presentation.
6. The Chairman informed the meeting that to facilitate the implementation of harmonisation, the Administration intended to introduce a bill to amend the Child Care Services Ordinance into the Legislative Council in April 2005. He invited members to raise questions in respect of the policy implications of the harmonisation of pre-primary services.

Financial assistance schemes to parents

7. Members noted that upon harmonisation, the Administration planned to provide financial assistance to all pre-primary children based on an enhanced Kindergarten Fee Remission Scheme (KGFRS) by expanding the scope of the existing KGFRS to cover all eligible children aged six or below in day nurseries (DNs), day crèches (DCs) and kindergartens (KGs). In line with the grandfathering arrangement, the Administration would apply the “no worse-off” principle for existing Child Care Centre Fee Assistance Scheme (CCCFAS) recipients to opt to continue receiving assistance under the existing

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CCCFAS if they would receive less under the enhanced KGFRS, until their children left KGs, DNAs or DCs.

8. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong pointed out that while CCCFAS provided assistance on a means-tested sliding scale with a parental contribution based on household income with no preset ceiling, KGFRS provided three levels of assistance (i.e. 100%, 75% or 50%) based on a means-test of an applicant's family income. Mr CHEUNG asked whether the Administration had estimated the number of parents who would be eligible for assistance under the existing CCCFAS but would become ineligible under the enhanced KGFRS upon harmonisation.

9. AD(FCW) responded that the Administration was not able to assess the impact of the substitution of CCCFAS by KGFRS on the new applicant families without ascertaining their profile. The Administration considered that the eligibility criteria for remission of fees under the enhanced KGFRS were appropriate and reasonable. He explained that under the enhanced KGFRS, a four-member family with an income of approximately \$8,000 or below, between \$8,000 and \$12,000 and between \$12,000 and \$21,000 would be eligible for a 100%, 75% and 50% fee remission respectively. In other words, four-member families with a medium income of around \$18,000 would still be entitled to 50% remission of fee. He added that the enhanced KGFRS would be further improved to include both air-conditioning and meal charges into the calculation of the fee remission, and provide half-day fee assistance to children aged three to six attending half-day child care centres (CCCs) or full-day CCCs without social needs who were currently not eligible for assistance under CCCFAS.

10. The Chairman asked whether the Administration could forecast the number of parents who were eligible under the existing CCCFAS but would become ineligible under the enhanced KGFRS upon harmonisation.

11. Deputy Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Family and Women) (DS(HWF)FW) explained that although the Administration could base on the family income levels of current applicants of CCCFAS to do an estimate, the figures would be misleading. The prevailing trend was that more parents (at present over 80%) would send their children to KGs rather than DNAs, and that the percentage of parents who decided to send their children to KGs after harmonisation might increase.

12. Dr Fernando CHEUNG considered that the Health, Welfare and Food Bureau (HWFB) should have examined the impact of harmonisation on existing CCCFAS recipients. He pointed out that harmonisation of KGs and CCCs had social and economic implications as it would affect the working parents who were eligible for certain percentage of fee remission under the existing CCCFAS but were ineligible under the enhanced KGFRS.

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Dr CHEUNG requested the Administration to provide estimates of the number of parents who would receive less or no subsidy upon harmonisation based on the family incomes of the existing CCCFAS recipients.

13. DS(HWF)FW responded that it might be possible that a portion of existing CCCFAS recipients would be adversely affected under the enhanced KGFRS if the grandfather arrangement was not adopted for existing recipients. She pointed out that given the continuing decline in child population and that the profile of the new applicant families was uncertain, it would be difficult to forecast, based on the income levels of the existing recipients, with reasonable accuracy the number of parents who were eligible under the existing CCCFAS but would become ineligible for assistance under the enhanced KGFRS. In any case, even if a forecast were done, the results would be misleading as it certainly could not reflect the real situation.

14. DS(HWF)FW further said that the three levels of assistance (100%, 75% or 50% remission) and a common means-testing mechanism of the enhanced KGFRS would ensure that no children would be deprived of KG education due to a lack of means. She pointed out that under the enhanced KGFRS, a four-member family with a monthly income of approximately \$8,000 or below and families in receipt of comprehensive social security assistance would be given a full remission. Families within the income range of approximately \$8,000 to \$12,000 would be given a 75% remission of fees, which meant that they would only be required to pay a monthly fee of a few hundred dollars. The Administration considered that the levels of assistance provided under the enhanced KGFRS were reasonable and appropriate. Furthermore, it was anticipated that about 80% of the existing beneficiaries would be better or no worst off under the enhanced KGFRS.

15. Dr Fernando CHEUNG maintained the view that the Administration should project the number of parents who would become ineligible for any fee remission after harmonisation on the basis of a snapshot of the current income levels of existing CCCFAS recipients. He also requested the Administration to provide information and statistics to support its claim that some 80% of parents would receive a higher level of subsidy after harmonisation. In response, DS(HWF)FW agreed to provide appropriate information for members' reference.

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[*Post-meeting note* : The Administration's response was issued vide LC Paper No. CB(2)1240/04-05(01) on 15 April 2005.]

Financial assistance schemes to service providers

16. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong noted that upon harmonisation, the Administration planned to expand the ambit of the Kindergarten Subsidy Scheme (KSS) to cover grants to CCCs so that government subsidies (other

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than reimbursement of rent, rates and government rent) to service providers of pre-primary services would be provided under a single scheme. He pointed out that due to a decline in student population in recent years, KGs and KG-cum-CCCs might operate a small class of less than 10 students at different levels upon harmonisation. He expressed concern that these KGs and KG-cum-CCCs would encounter financial difficulties as the current provision of subsidy for small classes on a pro-rata basis would not be sufficient to meet the costs of a teacher and other operational overheads incurred for the operation of a small class of nine pupils or less. He asked whether the Administration would review the existing criteria for provision of subsidy under KSS.

17. PAS(EM)QA responded that under the KSS, the Administration would provide subsidy for KG pupils based on groups of 15 children and part thereof. For the remainder group of pupils not in a multiple of 15, full subsidy would be given if the remainder was 10 pupils or more, and pro-rata subsidy would be given for nine pupils or less. He considered that the pre-primary sector could improve cost-effectiveness in delivery of their services by way of improving teaching strategies and learning activities as well as better planning of class structure at different levels in order to make effective use of available resources. He added that the current criteria and rate of subsidy under KSS were approved by the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council. Any changes or variation would, however, require the approval of the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council.

18. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong considered that the Administration should retain the savings arising from a declining student population for re-allocation to the pre-primary sector. He reiterated that the current criteria for allocation of subsidy under KSS did not address the needs of KGs and KG-cum-CCCs which operated small classes at different levels. He considered that the Administration should review the rate of subsidy in the light of the staff and operational costs incurred for the operation of small classes, given the savings arising from the declining student population.

19. The Chairman shared the concern that many KGs and CCCs had encountered enrolment and financial difficulties as a result of a substantial decline in student population in recent years. He said that while the rates of subsidies had been approved by the Finance Committee, the Administration could review the situation after full implementation of the harmonisation exercise. He suggested that the Administration could provide a paper for members' discussion at a future meeting, if necessary.

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[*Post-meeting note* : The Administration replied on 4 April 2005 that KSS was last reviewed in March 2002 and EMB would not review KSS in the near future.]

20. Dr Fernando CHEUNG expressed concern that some CCC supervisors

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had estimated that upon harmonisation, the parents' share of the administrative costs of CCC operations would increase from around 30% to 70%.

21. DS(HWF)FW responded that, according to the Administration's estimate, CCC operators with reasonable enrolment would receive a higher level of grant under KSS than the direct subsidy equivalent to 5% of the fee approved on the basis of approved capacity from the Social Welfare Department (SWD) (the 5% Subsidy Scheme). Only those with unsatisfactory enrolment, however, might be adversely affected under KSS upon harmonisation.

22. Mr LEE Cheuk-yan expressed concern that upon harmonisation, it was unlikely that KGs would operate a CCC section which would operate from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm and provide a wider range of pre-primary services. He asked whether CCCs would be provided with additional resources under KSS in view of their longer hours of operation and wider variety of services, or whether they would be allowed to set higher fees to meet the costs incurred.

23. AD(FCW) responded that upon harmonization, majority of the CCC operators would receive a higher level of subsidy grant under KSS than the existing 5% Subsidy Scheme. Those with an enrolment rate of 70% would still receive a higher level of subsidy, noting that the current average enrolment in existing CCCs was about 80%. That said, he acknowledged that as a result of a decline in birth rate, CCCs with unsatisfactory enrolment might have to reduce their scale of operation or close down. He added that currently a full day DN would in average charge parents around \$2,000 per month, whereas a half-day DN/KG would charge around \$1,000 per month in average. Besides, non-profit-making CCCs and KGs might apply for grants under the Lotteries Fund if they provided full-day programmes, services until 6:00 pm and during school holidays and inclement weather, as well as ancillary services such as extended hours services and occasional child care service, etc.

Staff to children/pupil ratio

24. Dr Fernando CHEUNG said that CCCs operated from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm, Monday to Friday and from 8:00 am to 1:00 pm on Saturday, inclusive of school holidays and inclement weather including Typhoon Signal No.3 or Red Rainstorm Signal. According to the Council of Non-profit Making Organisations for Pre-primary Education, the reduction of the staff-to-children ratio from 1:14 to 1:15 would adversely affect the quality of service in CCCs.

25. AD(FCW) responded that the marginal difference between a staff-to-children ratio of 1:14 and 1:15 would not constitute a significant operational problem to CCCs. Given that the number of children attending KGs was far greater than those attending CCCs, the Administration had decided to adopt the staff-to-children ratio now adopted by KGs after

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harmonisation. He added that operators could still adopt a better staffing ratio to give children more individual attention.

Impact of harmonisation on CCC operation and staff administration

26. Mr LEE Cheuk-yan said that the provision of child care services by existing CCCs operating from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm on weekdays and from 8:00 am to 1:00 pm on Saturdays, and providing a range of ancillary services was essential for small families with working parents. He asked whether the Administration had consulted CCC operators about the impact of harmonisation on the operation of KGs and CCCs, in particular whether they would continue the existing operation or shift to operate KGs on full-day basis after harmonisation. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong also asked whether harmonisation of pre-primary service would have an adverse impact on enrolment in CCCs as parents who were eligible for assistance under CCCFAS but were ineligible under the enhanced KGFRS might send their children to KGs instead of CCCs.

27. AD(FCW) responded that according to feedback from operators, most existing CCCs providing full-day child care services would continue their current mode of operation upon harmonisation. He explained that upon harmonisation, the service providers might operate KGs and CCCs on the same premises under the auspices of the Education Ordinance and the Child Care Services Ordinance. It was likely that most of the existing CCCs would transform to become KG-cum-CCCs upon harmonisation, and then operated both a KG section for children aged three to six and a CCC section for children under the age of three. The Child Care Services Ordinance would be amended to allow the same premises to be registered as a CCC and a KG without the need of delineating the specified areas for the KG section and the CCC section, thus enhancing flexibility in using the registered premises. He added that whilst service providers had the discretion to operate half-day or full-day KGs/CCCs upon harmonisation, they would provide the appropriate services based on demand for such services from parents.

28. Dr Fernando CHEUNG said that while the services provided by CCCs were more care-oriented, KGs focused more on education in the provision of pre-primary services. He requested the Administration to elaborate on the impact of harmonisation on the operation of CCCs and the provision of training to serving CCC workers.

29. AD(FCW) reiterated that the existing CCC operators could continue their current mode of operation upon transforming into KG-cum-CCC, i.e. operate from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm, Monday to Friday and from 8:00 am to 1:00 pm on Saturday inclusive of school holidays and inclement weather including Typhoon Signal No.3 or Red Rainstorm Signal, and provide ancillary services including extended hours service, occasional child care service, and integrated programme for mildly disabled children. By so doing, they would

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remain eligible to apply for grants under the Lotteries Fund for renovation and purchase of furniture and equipment. Parents would have a choice for the mode of service based on their needs.

30. DS(HWF)FW said that the Administration had made special provision to ensure adequate supply of Qualified Kindergarten Teacher (QKT) training by tertiary and vocational institutions in the past few years. The policy target of attaining 100% trained pre-primary workforce by the required professional staff establishment would be achieved by the 2004-05 school year.

31. Mr LEE Cheuk-yan expressed concern about salary administration for child care workers (CCWs) and QKTs upon harmonisation. PAS(EM)QA responded that all serving and trained CCWs and QKTs would be mutually recognised respectively as QKTs and CCWs by Education and Manpower Bureau and SWD without further qualification assessment or requirement of attending conversion courses. In general, CCWs serving in CCCs that had joined KSS would be eligible to enjoy the same recommended pay scale of QKTs, the ceiling of which was one point higher than the salary scale of CCWs.

Provision of kitchen

32. Dr Fernando CHEUNG pointed out that while DN and DCs offering full-day services at present were required to have a kitchen at the premises to provide meals for their children, KGs were allowed to provide meals supplied by licensed caterers. He pointed out that the CCC sector considered it necessary to maintain the operation of a kitchen in CCCs after harmonisation. He requested the Administration to retain the relevant provision in the Child Care Services Ordinance.

33. Senior Education Officer (Harmonisation of Pre-primary Services) responded that KG operators in general welcomed the flexibility about provision of meals to children. Many KG operators considered it more convenient and cost-effective to provide meals for children by using the service of licensed caterers. Nevertheless, KGs/CCCs with a kitchen could continue the operation of a kitchen to facilitate provision of meals for their children.

34. Mr LEE Cheuk-yan considered that the operation of a kitchen in KGs and CCCs would facilitate the provision of nutritious meals for healthy development of children. PAS(EM)QA responded that meals provided by all those licensed caterers should meet the required health and hygiene standard, and KGs and CCCs could liaise with their selected caterers for appropriate meal menus for their children.

Requirements in respect of ceiling height and floor space

35. Mr Patrick LAU asked about the changes in operational requirements

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for the operation of KGs and CCCs upon harmonisation such as aligning the ceiling height requirement between KGs and CCCs and using the same floor area requirements for premises serving children aged between two and six.

36. AD(FCW) responded that DCs and DNs providing care services to children aged between zero to two and between two to six were currently required to provide a floor space of 2.8 m² and 1.8 m² per child respectively, exclusive of the floor space of ancillary areas including any passageway, store room, kitchen, office, toilet facility or staff room. If the floor space of ancillary areas were included, DCs and DNs should provide a floor space of 3.3 m² and 2.3 m² for each child aged between zero to two and between two to six respectively. AD(FCW) pointed out that under the existing requirements, DNs with large ancillary areas which satisfied the minimum standard of 2.3 m² per child might be too congested in terms of activity areas for children. For this reason, the Administration recommended abolishing this option in the future. As a result, new premises for children aged two to six, excluding those converted from existing DNs, should follow the current requirement of 1.8 m² per child inclusive of indoor activity areas but exclusive of other ancillary areas. He added that the ceiling height for new CCCs would be increased from the existing 2.5 metre to 2.75 metre for non-purpose built premises and 3 metre for purpose built premises.

37. Mr Patrick LAU asked whether flexibility in ceiling height would be allowed for the operation of CCCs in existing premises. Chief Social Work Officer (Family and Child Welfare)2, Social Welfare Department replied that the Administration would consider waiving the requirement of ceiling height if air ventilation within the premises was upgraded to the required standard by way of the installation of appropriate mechanical ventilation system in the premises.

38. In concluding, the Chairman said that the community expected that harmonisation of pre-primary services would bring about improvements in quality of services in the sector. PAS(EM)QA responded that from an educational viewpoint, the Administration believed that harmonisation of pre-primary services would enhance quality and continuity in the provision of pre-primary care and education services for children.

V. Review of the medium of instruction for secondary schools and secondary school places allocation

[File Ref : EMB (EC)101/55/1/C and Annex A to File Ref : EMB (EC)101/55/1/C]

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

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Opening Remark

40. At the Chairman's invitation, Mr Michael TIEN, the Chairman of the Working Group on Review of Secondary School Places Allocation and Medium of Instruction for Secondary Schools (the Working Group), briefed members on the recommendations of the Working Group as detailed in his speaking note which was circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(2)1188/04-05(01) on 1 April 2005.

Views and suggestions of deputations

41. The following 25 deputations presented their views and suggestions as summarised in the **Appendix**.

- (a) Hong Kong Professional Teachers' Union;
[LC Paper No. CB(2)1071/04-05(01)] (revised)
- (b) Hong Kong Federation of Education Workers;
[LC Paper No. CB(2)1100/04-05(01)]
- (c) Hong Kong Teachers' Association;
- (d) The Association of Hong Kong Chinese Middle School;
[LC Paper No. CB(2)1054/04-05(01)]
- (e) Hong Kong Association of English Medium Secondary Schools;
- (f) Federation of Parent Teacher Association, Tai Po District;
- (g) Federation of Parent-Teacher Associations of the Central and Western District;
[LC Paper No. CB(2)1030/04-05(03)]
- (h) The Conference of Sheng Kung Hui Secondary School Heads;
- (i) Pun U Association Wah Yan Primary School Parents Teachers Association;
[LC Paper No. CB(2)1054/04-05(02)] (revised)
- (j) The Alliance for Small-class Learning and Teaching to Promote Quality Education;
[LC Paper No. CB(2)1030/04-05(04)]
- (k) Centre for Advancement of Chinese Language Education and Research, and Support Centre for Teachers using Chinese as the Medium of Instruction;

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- (l) Federation of Parent-Teacher Associations Wong Tai Sin District Ltd;
- (m) Federation of Parent Teacher Associations in Kwun Tong District;
- (n) Tseung Kwan O Parents Association;
[LC Paper No. CB(2)1030/04-05(05)]
- (o) Chinese University of Hong Kong School Heads Alumni Association;
[LC Paper No. CB(2)1100/04-05(02)]
- (p) Hong Kong Parents Association;
[LC Paper No. CB(2)1100/04-05(03)]
- (q) Committee on Home-School Co-operation;
- (r) Hong Kong Private Schools Association;
[LC Paper Nos. CB(2)1054/04-05(03) and CB(2)1100/04-05(04)]
- (s) The Chinese Language Society of Hong Kong Ltd;
[LC Paper No. CB(2)1030/04-05(06)]
- (t) Grant Schools Council;
- (u) Joint Parent-Teacher Association of Kwai Tsing District;
[LC Paper No. CB(2)1030/04-05(07)]
- (v) The Joint Council of Parent-Teacher Associations of the Shatin District;
- (w) Hong Kong Direct Subsidy Scheme Schools Council;
- (x) Hong Kong Aided Primary School Heads Association; and
- (y) Federation of Parent Teacher Associations of Hong Kong Eastern District.

42. Members noted that the Federation of Parent Teacher Associations of the Northern District had not formulated their views at the present stage.

43. Members also noted that the Democratic Party had made a submission to the Panel [LC Paper No. CB(2)1100/04-05(05)].

The Working Group's response

44. At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr Michael TIEN, Chairman of the Working Group, said that he was glad that while deputations had different views as to how students' ability in English language could be improved, no deputations had expressed objection to using Chinese as the medium of instruction (MOI) in secondary schools. He thanked deputations for their views and suggestions on ways to improve students' ability in English language in secondary schools using Chinese as MOI (CMI schools), reduce the adverse labelling effect on CMI schools and their students as well as the mis-match of students in EMI or CMI schools in terms of their ability to learn through English, etc. He said that the Working Group had the following views/observations on these issues –

- (a) High proficiency in both Chinese and English would facilitate students' lifelong learning and maintain the competitiveness of Hong Kong as an international metropolis.
- (b) Enhancing English standards and teaching in English were two separate issues in school education, and using English as MOI was not the only or best means to enhance students' English proficiency. For the majority of students, the key to enhancing their English proficiency lay in the teaching and learning of the language, and not necessarily in using the language as MOI.
- (c) Full implementation of mother-tongue teaching was consistent with the Working Group's educational considerations. The Working Group, however, understood that public acceptance and possible impact on the community should be considered.
- (d) The Working Group understood the aspirations of some parents that children who were able to learn through English should be provided with the opportunity to do so. The Working Group therefore recommended that EMI teaching should be allowed when the three preconditions of student ability to learn through English, teacher capability to teach intelligibly through English and school support measures were met. As a corollary, any increase or decrease of the number of schools using English as their MOI (EMI schools) should depend on the number of schools which met the prescribed criteria. He also appreciated parents' concern about their children's English proficiency and drew attention to the fact that the core recommendation of the Working Group was that, while the policy of mother-tongue teaching should be continued, the importance of enhancing students' English proficiency, irrespective of the MOI schools would adopt, should also be emphasised.

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- (e) The competence of language teachers was pivotal to enhancing language learning in schools. In this connection, the Standing Committee on Language Education and Research (SCOLAR) had conducted a comprehensive review of language education in Hong Kong in 2002 and recommended, among others, the establishment of the Professional Development Incentive Grant Scheme for Language Teachers (the Scheme) to encourage serving language teachers, particularly those who had neither a degree nor any teacher training in the relevant language subject, to upgrade their professional qualification to match that required of their counterparts entering the profession in or after the 2004-05 school year. The Scheme was then set up in 2004 with an initial allocation of \$225 million from the Language Fund. Under the Scheme, each successful applicant would, upon completion of an approved programme, be eligible for a 50% remission of tuition fee up to a maximum of \$30,000. In view of the favourable response from serving language teachers, the Administration had proposed and the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council had approved a further injection of \$300 million into the Scheme. In addition, there were now professional teams to assist primary and secondary schools and teachers in the development of their pedagogies and curriculum. As a result, the quality of the teaching workforce and school education would continue to improve in the years ahead.
- (f) There were diverse views in the community on the adoption of the within-school approach which could imply adopting different MOIs for different classes/subjects with or without conditions at junior secondary levels.
- (g) For CMI schools, Government should continue the provision of additional resources for them to create an English-rich environment in the school campus for enhancing student learning. CMI schools would be allowed to allocate, on top of English Language lessons, no more than 15% of the lesson time in Secondary one to three (S1-S3) for extended learning activities such as drama and debate through English, on condition that the normal teaching and learning of the content subjects would not be adversely affected.
- (h) The current flexible MOI arrangement at senior secondary levels should be continued. CMI schools should be allowed to switch to EMI teaching for certain subjects in some classes at senior secondary levels if they met the prescribed criteria, namely student ability, teacher capacity and support measures, for using

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English as MOI.

- (i) The three prescribed criteria for EMI schools would not put through-train schools wishing to use English as MOI in a disadvantaged position because, through professional collaboration between the primary and secondary sections, such schools in fact could have longer time to ensure their own students meet the required standard of being able to learn through English.
- (j) The concern that many students who could learn through English were allocated to CMI schools reflected the labelling effect on CMI schools which was likely a result of the community's prevailing preference for EMI teaching. Researches conducted by academics and feedback from students supported the theory that students could learn most effectively through mother-tongue teaching. In fact, since mother-tongue teaching was implemented in 1998, students in CMI schools had demonstrated an overall improved performance in acquisition of subject knowledge and higher-order thinking skills, and were now more confident and motivated in learning.
- (k) The Working Group was not aware of any objective and effective mechanism for assessing students' academic and non-academic performance comprehensively and which could be deployed as a scaling instrument for the purpose of the SSPA and MOI implementation. The Working Group thus recommended using the internal assessment conducted by primary schools at the second term of Primary five (P5) and the first and second terms of P6 as the basis of assessment, and the results of the Pre-Secondary 1 Hong Kong Attainment Test as the scaling instrument. The Working Group welcomed any suggestions from deputations on an objective, reliable and feasible way to assess the whole-person development of a student.
- (l) If students' academic result in English language at P5 and P6 was used as the only basis for assessing a student's ability to learn through English, primary schools might concentrate just on the teaching of English, resulting in a distortion of primary education. This would be in contradiction with the MOI policy building upon the results of research studies that students learnt best and develop their higher-order thinking skills in their mother tongue.
- (m) Adoption of the within-in school or school-based approach in determining the use of MOI in secondary schools might repeat the history prior to 1998, viz. that the majority of secondary

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schools continued to profess the adoption of English as MOI, while in practice mainly using Chinese in classroom teaching.

- (n) The prescribed criteria of student ability, teacher capability and support measures for adopting English as MOI was aimed to facilitate student learning effectiveness in EMI schools and to assure the quality of EMI teaching. While appreciating the concern of some schools about the switch from EMI to CMI, it was important to note that students who were able to learn through English but allocated to an EMI school that did not meet the other prescribed criteria would not be taught and could not learn as effectively as in an EMI school meeting the prescribed criteria.
- (o) The provision of a historical perspective to the development of the MOI policy might be useful backdrop to facilitate the consultation exercise.

45. In respect of point (o) above, Professor LEE Wing-on, member of the Working Group, briefed the meeting that many educational reports, dating back to 1935, repeatedly suggested the merits of mother-tongue teaching. More recent Education Commission Reports, such as Education Commission Report No. 1 in 1984 and Report No. 2 in 1986, also recommended the adoption of Chinese as MOI in secondary schools, as elaborated in Annexes 2 and 3 of the Consultation Document. He highlighted that there were many academic works from both the Chinese University of Hong Kong and the University of Hong Kong argued for the adoption of mother-tongue teaching in secondary education in past decades. Professor LEE pointed out that the Medium of Instruction Guidance for Secondary Schools was drawn up against this background. He stressed that the education policy documents in Hong Kong had all along been promoting the adoption of Chinese as the principal MOI in school education; he thus could not agree that the MOI Policy was inconsistent. He added that the Working Group anticipated that the allocation of 15% of the total lesson time in S1-3 for extended learning activities conducted through English in CMI schools would help reduce the disparity between CMI and EMI schools in respect of students' exposure to English.

Discussion

46. The Chairman asked whether the Working Group would consider extending the consultation period as suggested by some deputations and in view of the diverse views in the community on MOI in secondary schools and Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA)

47. Mrs Cherry TSE, member of the Working Group, responded that the Working Group would consider the suggestion of extending the consultation

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period. She, however, pointed out that the primary school sector anticipated that there was a general expectation that the new SSPA mechanism would be announced in mid-2005 and implemented in the 2007-08 school year, since the students who would be enrolled in Primary 5 in September 2005 would be the first cohort affected. Any extension would need to take into account the possible implications for the implementation schedule.

48. Chairman of the Working Group said that the Working Group could consider extending the consultation period in respect of MOI. The Administration, however, would have to decide the adoption of a new mechanism for determining students' allocation band based on their school assessment results for the SSPA in the 2007-08 school year. He pointed out that the validity of using Academic Aptitude Test for such purpose had been challenged for long and the problem of within-school student diversity had created problems for teaching at schools.

49. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong agreed that the decision on an appropriate scaling mechanism for SSPA should not be deferred and the issue of MOI and SSPA could be dealt with separately if possible. He, however, cautioned that MOI and SSPA might have implications on each other. The Administration should consider carefully whether the two issues could be dealt with separately. Mr WU Siu-wai of the Hong Kong Federation of Education Workers and Ms Rosalind CHEN of the Hong Kong Association of English Medium School expressed support for Mr CHEUNG's view.

50. Mr IP Kin-yuen of the Hong Kong Teachers' Association said that he had the impression that the Chairman of the Working Group had already formulated his own views on MOI and SSPA, and might perceive any other views and suggestions of deputations predominately from his own standpoint. Mr IP clarified that when he queried the rationale for using the overall academic result of a student to assess his ability to learn through English, instead of his academic results in English Language, he was concerned that it would consolidate the superior position of EMI schools. Chairman of the Working Group, however, tried to address his query by referring to the results of research studies about the benefits of learning in mother tongue. Mr IP suggested that the Working Group should adopt an open mind and examine the views and suggestions of deputation from different perspectives. Chairman of the Working Group responded that apart from his initial response made at the meeting, the Working Group would extensively consider the views and suggestions of deputations.

51. Mrs Maria CHENG of the Pun U Association Wah Yan Primary School Parents Teachers Association said that parents were the major stakeholder group in the education sector, but had been confused with the various education initiatives implemented in recent years. She considered that parents needed more time to study and more space to express their views on the proposals in

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the Consultation Document. She urged the Working Group to consider the feelings of parents who wished to send their children to EMI schools but were unsuccessful, and the provision of sufficient places in EMI schools to meet parents' demand. Mrs CHENG suggested that the Government should review the Medium of Instruction Guidance for Secondary Schools published in September 1997 in a prudent, comprehensive and fair manner, and cautioned that an education policy with good intention such as the policy on mother-tongue teaching did not necessarily bring about the anticipated benefits.

52. Ms Rosalind CHEN of the Hong Kong Association of English Medium School echoed that parents were the end-users of education services and their views should be respected. She considered that the Government should provide the 40% S1 students who were able to learn through English with sufficient places in EMI schools. Mr TONG Kai-hong of the Conference of Sheng Kung Hui Secondary School Heads said that the projected population of S1 students and KG pupils in September 2004 were 86 000 and 38 000 respectively. He expressed concern that there would be less EMI schools in many districts if schools intending to adopt English as MOI must have at least 85% of students being able to learn through English.

53. Chairman of the Working Group said that the Working Group would continue to consult stakeholders and in particular listen to the views of parents on the proposals in the Consultation Document. Mrs Cherry TSE said that the Working Group looked forward to discussing with interested deputations separately. She invited deputations to contact the Working Group for arrangement of meetings.

Follow-up

54. At the Chairman's suggestion, members agreed that the Panel should discuss the issue with the Working Group at another meeting. Ms Emily LAU requested the Clerk to prepare a summary of views of the deputations for members' reference.

VI. Any other business

55. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 7:48 pm.

**Legislative Council Panel on Education
Meeting on 14 March 2005**

**Summary of deputations' views on the Consultation Document on
“Review of the medium of instruction for secondary schools and secondary school places allocation”**

Name of Deputation/ LC Paper No. of Submission(s)	Key Area	Medium of Instruction (MOI) for Secondary Schools	Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA)
1.	Hong Kong Professional Teachers' Union CB(2)1071/04-05(01)	<p>a) Both mother-tongue teaching and mastering the use of the English language are very important. While students learn best in their mother tongue, the adoption of mother-tongue teaching does not run counter to mastering the use of the English language. The MOI policy should state clearly that the choice of MOI should be based on “learning needs” and the choice must be made with the interest of students as the primary concern. Permission to use English as the MOI should be given on a school basis, creating as far as possible an immersion environment so that students may get used to the use of English. If permission to use English as the MOI is not granted on a school basis, confusion will arise in schools and students may tend to use “cocktail language” which is against the principles of teaching and learning.</p> <p>b) The Union is opposed to the recommendation of the Consultation Document that the Government should give those schools using Chinese as their MOI (CMI schools) the option of a cash grant in lieu of part or all of the additional teaching posts. The Union urges the Administration to provide support to the English teachers in CMI schools by offering a stable establishment which allows them room for professional development.</p> <p>c) Regarding the language proficiency requirements of teachers, the Consultation Document has failed to mention the recognition for relevant teacher training qualifications that</p>	<p>a) The Administration should implement a random allocation mechanism which encompasses no grading elements but is based purely on the principle of vicinity. It should materialize the vision of “no banding and no scaling” as set out in the “Reform Proposals for the Education System in Hong Kong” published by the Education Commission in September 2000 by spelling out a clear timetable, the conditions for its implementation as well as the corresponding measures required to put these conditions into practice.</p> <p>b) The Administration should conduct a study as soon as possible to formulate concrete measures to minimise within-school diversity in student ability as well as the disparity between schools, so as to achieve the long-term goal contained in paragraph 6.2 of the Consultation Document: “allowing schools and teachers to consolidate their experience in handling student diversity and focusing on enhancing the overall quality of school education. This transitional stage would help ensure effectiveness in teaching and learning and reduce diversity in standards between primary schools.”</p>

Name of Deputation/ LC Paper No. of Submission(s)	Key Area	Medium of Instruction (MOI) for Secondary Schools	Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA)
	<p>have already been recognised by teacher training institutions. The Government should clarify the status of pre-service or in-service teacher training courses operated by tertiary institutions or the Administration.</p> <p>d) With respect to teacher capability, the Consultation Document mentions “equivalent qualifications” (paragraph 3.15 of the Consultation Document). The Administration should state clearly whether qualifications obtained from overseas universities using English as the major MOI are recognized as “equivalent qualifications” or above.</p>	<p>c) The Administration should expeditiously adopt measures to alleviate the vicious competition brought by class reduction, consolidation of under-utilized schools and the labelling effect on schools etc., reduce the risks and pressure endured by students in the course of proceeding to S1, and minimize any adverse effect thus caused upon students’ learning and development.</p>	
<p>2. Hong Kong Federation of Education Workers CB(2)1100/04-05(01)</p>	<p>a) At the nine-year basic education level, all public sector schools should use mother-tongue/Chinese as the MOI, whereas at senior secondary levels, schools should be allowed to make their own decisions on the choice of MOI.</p> <p>b) The Federation regrets that the Consultation Document contains no concrete measures to “encourage” schools currently using English as the MOI to switch to mother-tongue teaching, nor are there any methods or procedures to attain the goal of implementing across-the-board mother-tongue teaching at junior secondary levels.</p> <p>c) The Federation is opposed to the adoption of within-school streaming as this will create more serious multiple labelling and undermine the self-image of students. Students may also be subject to the unsettling effects of possible switches between CMI and EMI teaching, which also means more work pressure on and increased teaching workload for teachers.</p> <p>d) If the policy of bifurcation has to be continued in the light of the practical needs of the community, the Government should state clearly that this is a transitional arrangement and</p>		

Name of Deputation/ LC Paper No. of Submission(s)	Key Area	Medium of Instruction (MOI) for Secondary Schools	Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA)
		<p>re-consider the need for establishing a mechanism for schools to switch between CMI and EMI. During the transition, the Government should offer concrete “encouragement” to those schools which, though meeting the requirements of using English as the MOI, opt to stay as CMIs or switch to CMIs. In so doing, the Government may show to the community the advantageous position of adopting mother-tongue teaching, and parents will be more inclined to accept mother-tongue teaching gradually, thereby creating the conditions for realising the ultimate goal of implementing across-the-board mother-tongue teaching at basic education level.</p> <p>e) The Government should maintain the existing flexibility and autonomy of the primary and secondary schools adopting the “through-train” model in designing their curriculum. It is unnecessary for these schools to fully fulfill the prescribed criterion of student ability in respect of EMI schools in Hong Kong.</p> <p>f) The Government should take the lead to comprehensively review the employment conditions for all grades in the civil service. There should not be any over-emphasis on the requirement of English proficiency while discriminating against the requirement of Chinese proficiency.</p> <p>g) The Government should review the policy and timetable for implementing mother-tongue teaching to facilitate the learning of Chinese by non-Chinese ethnic groups.</p> <p>h) The Government should not expect that all secondary school students are proficient in both Chinese and English; instead, as a start, all secondary students should be expected to master the mother tongue well.</p>	

Name of Deputation/ LC Paper No. of Submission(s)	Key Area	Medium of Instruction (MOI) for Secondary Schools	Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA)
<p>3.</p>	<p>Hong Kong Teachers' Association</p>	<p>a) The Association basically agrees to the broad direction of mother-tongue teaching for the sake of enhancing the effectiveness of teaching and learning.</p> <p>b) EMI-capable students should be given the chance to study in EMI schools.</p> <p>c) Elite schools have made contributions to the community and should continue to exist.</p> <p>d) The Association does not support the within-school approach and the bifurcation approach. Instead, the Government may consider allowing schools to use more English in the teaching of individual subjects.</p> <p>e) The bifurcation of schools gives rise to labelling effect, giving CMI students the impression that their English standards should not be as good as their EMI counterparts. However, some EMI students may not necessarily learn effectively through English and have to face unnecessary learning obstacles and pressure. Therefore, the compulsory adoption of the bifurcation approach may result in large number of students encountering learning failures.</p> <p>f) The recommended measures put forward by the Working Group on the determination of the MOI in secondary schools may have the effect of reinforcing the “labelling effect”, which runs contrary to the promotion of mother-tongue teaching.</p> <p>g) The Administration should not use administrative means to standardize the MOI in schools. It should respect the professional judgement of schools and let the supply and demand in the market determine the choice of MOI.</p>	

Name of Deputation/ LC Paper No. of Submission(s)	Key Area	Medium of Instruction (MOI) for Secondary Schools	Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA)
<p>4.</p>	<p>The Association of Hong Kong Chinese Middle School CB(2)1054/04-05(01)</p>	<p>a) The Association maintains that mother-tongue teaching is the best tool to achieve the goals of teaching and whole-person education. Mother-tongue teaching works best at enhancing teaching and learning effectiveness. The mother tongue is the most suitable MOI for whole-person development of students and instilling in them correct values.</p> <p>b) The Association does not advocate the use of English as the MOI at junior secondary levels because there are relatively few S1 students who are capable of learning through English.</p> <p>c) The merits of mother-tongue teaching at junior secondary levels include—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the learning attitude of students are more positive, and they show more interest and higher efficiency in learning; – teachers may focus on teaching subject knowledge rather than explaining the English terms used; – it reduces “learning through rote memorization”; – more lively classroom atmosphere; – more amicable teacher-student relationship; and – enhanced learning effectiveness. <p>d) To prevent CMI schools from being labelled second-rate, junior secondary classes in all mainstream secondary schools in Hong Kong should adopt mother-tongue teaching. Thus, the issue of EMI schools switching to operate as CMI schools or vice versa will not arise.</p> <p>e) The number of EMI schools should be limited to avoid dampening students’ learning interest by language barriers. Teachers in EMI schools must be able to communicate their subject contents to students intelligibly and their use of English</p>	

Name of Deputation/ LC Paper No. of Submission(s)	Key Area	Medium of Instruction (MOI) for Secondary Schools	Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA)
	<p>should have no adverse effect on students' learning. At least 90% of students in EMI schools should be able to learn through English.</p> <p>f) The subject of English should be taught in small groups at junior secondary levels in CMI schools across-the-board. To enhance CMI students' English competency, the resources allocated to CMI schools for the teaching of English should be increased.</p> <p>g) The Association does not agree to the adoption of within-school streaming by classes or by subjects.</p>		
<p>5. Hong Kong Association of English Medium Secondary Schools</p>	<p>a) To maintain a competitive edge in international trade, the overall English standard of Hong Kong should be maintained at a relatively high level.</p> <p>b) Students who are able to learn through English must be provided with the chance to do so. Hence, there is a need for EMI schools to exist so as to train up biliterate and trilingual students.</p> <p>c) The Association does not support within-school streaming.</p> <p>d) Since research findings show that 40% of S1 students had the ability to learn through English, the Administration should increase the number of EMI schools accordingly.</p>	<p>a) The problem of student mismatch is caused by the existing SSPA mechanism which should be improved.</p>	
<p>6. Federation of Parent Teacher Association, Tai Po District</p>	<p>a) The Federation is not opposed to mother-tongue teaching which can indeed facilitate learning, and students can comprehend texts more easily.</p> <p>b) The English proficiency of students in CMI schools depends on the attitudes of students in learning and teachers in teaching.</p>		

Name of Deputation/ LC Paper No. of Submission(s)	Key Area	Medium of Instruction (MOI) for Secondary Schools	Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA)
	<p>Parents should not judge their children’s learning outcomes merely by the results they attained in language and other subjects. Also, teachers should not attribute the overall decline in teaching effectiveness to the education system.</p> <p>c) The education system should provide flexibility to cater for the individual learning needs of students. For example, alongside with the provision of nine-year free education for all, the Administration should consider providing 10-year or 11-year free education according to diversity in student learning ability.</p>		
<p>7. Federation of Parent-Teacher Associations of the Central and Western District CB(2)1030/04-05(03)</p>	<p>a) The Federation is opposed to mother-tongue teaching for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – it eliminates students’ chance to learn English and their exposure to English, resulting in lower overall English proficiency among students. This will affect students’ employability, competitiveness with their overseas counterparts and motivation for lifelong learning; – lower English standard in the community will make it difficult for Hong Kong to integrate with the international community as a cosmopolitan city; – using Cantonese rather than Putonghua as the mother tongue in teaching is not conducive to enhancing the Chinese proficiency of students or training them to communicate with Mainlanders in Putonghua; – if students’ standards in both English and Putonghua compare less favourably with those of the Mainland students, the economic status of Hong Kong as a window of China to international trade will be undermined; and – students like mother-tongue teaching because the mother tongue is easier to understand. The English curriculum 	<p>a) The Federation is opposed to the proposed SSPA mechanism, but suggests streaming students into EMI or CMI schools based on the old system in which students are required to sit for an examination. The Federation maintains that no mechanism is problem-free and any change in the mechanism may bring about more unnecessary pressure. The new mechanism may not necessarily be effective and may well be unfair. Further consultation should be conducted.</p> <p>b) The new SSPA mechanism should use students’ academic performance in the internal assessment of their schools as standards for allocation purposes to reduce competition for enrolment in elite schools, while a small number of schools virtually receive no enrolment. The Government should make sure that through-train schools will not be affected, so that students in these schools will not have to switch schools and parents will not have to face a dilemma.</p>	

Name of Deputation/ LC Paper No. of Submission(s)	Key Area	Medium of Instruction (MOI) for Secondary Schools	Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA)
		<p>provided by CMI schools, however, can help only a few students who are interested in English. The curriculum cannot maintain the overall English standard of Hong Kong, nor can it help sustain Hong Kong's competitiveness.</p> <p>b) The Federation suggests that the Administration should consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – using Putonghua as the MOI in mother-tongue teaching; – encouraging schools to enhance English teaching and give equal emphasis on Chinese and English; – allowing schools or school sponsoring bodies to determine their MOI; – enhancing teacher capability in teaching through English; – encouraging schools to use Putonghua as the MOI so that most students can speak fluent Putonghua; and – starting to use English as the MOI in primary education so that primary students may be exposed to English learning environment. 	
<p>8. The Conference of Sheng Kung Hui Secondary School Heads</p>		<p>a) At present, there are about 1.5 billion people using English as their daily means of communication over the world, and the number is expected to rise to 2 billion after 25 years. If the overall level of English competency in Hong Kong takes a downturn, it can no longer keep a competitive edge as a metropolitan city in the light of a knowledge-based global economy.</p> <p>b) The drop in the level of English competency among students in Hong Kong has adversely affected the ability of students to pursue lifelong learning. In most developed countries (such as the UK and the US), the developments in new technology and new knowledge are written in English. Students who are</p>	

Name of Deputation/ LC Paper No. of Submission(s)	Key Area	Medium of Instruction (MOI) for Secondary Schools	Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA)
		<p>less competent in English will not be able to keep abreast of these new developments.</p> <p>c) The education systems in most countries put emphasis on the teaching of both the mother tongue and the English language. Hong Kong should also value the teaching of both Chinese and English. Training on the Chinese language should be strengthened in EMI schools while training on English should be strengthened in CMI schools.</p> <p>d) In line with the spirit of school-based management, schools/school sponsoring bodies should be given discretion as to their MOI at junior secondary levels. The Education and Manpower Bureau (“EMB”) should play a monitoring role to ensure the use of appropriate MOI based on the needs of students.</p> <p>e) The lack of emphasis on the English language will erode the upward mobility of children from low-income families in the long run.</p> <p>f) Mother-tongue teaching polarizes the community and runs against the spirit of re-orientating the community with concerted efforts as advocated by the Government.</p>	
<p>9. Pun U Association Wah Yan Primary School Parents Teachers Association CB(2)1054/04-05(02) (revised)</p>		<p>The Association is not opposed to mother-tongue teaching but has the following views -</p> <p>a) the Consultation Paper is not a “Review” of the MOI, as the title suggests, but the continuation of the policy to expand the use of Chinese as MOI at the expense of English;</p> <p>b) the Government is openly discriminating EMI schools by pouring in resources to “reward” CMI schools for their</p>	

Key Area Name of Deputation/ LC Paper No. of Submission(s)	Medium of Instruction (MOI) for Secondary Schools	Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA)
	<p>co-operation. According to the research cited by the Working Group, only the top (Band-1) students are qualified for EMI teaching. The stigmatization deepens that mother-tongue teaching or CMI schools are for the less competent. This creates unhealthy and unnecessary pressures on parents and students. The constantly changing methods to fix a criterion of student ability (40%) and the arbitrary figure (85%) of student intake are confusing and frustrating parents who feel helpless;</p> <p>c) the Working Group uses the ability of a school's intakes (S1) instead of performance of its graduates in Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination as a criterion of the school's eligibility to operate as EMI. Requiring such schools to conform to the notion of student ability as a criterion of eligibility for doing what they are already doing well is an unnecessary interference in a school's established good practices;</p> <p>d) the Medium of Instruction Guidance for Secondary Schools ("the Guidance") should be reviewed and any policy seeking to further expand the mother tongue as the MOI should be deferred. It has been six years since the Guidance was implemented. Parents are at a loss to understand why the Government has not done a comprehensive and impartial review of its effects but instead has chosen to further expand the use of Chinese as the MOI. The urgency of a comprehensive and impartial review of the effects of implementing the Guidance since 1998 is more important and more urgent than the implementation of the proposals in the Consultation Document;</p> <p>e) the Government must integrate into its education policy some autonomy for schools to operate rather than forcing them to</p>	

Name of Deputation/ LC Paper No. of Submission(s)	Key Area	Medium of Instruction (MOI) for Secondary Schools	Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA)
		<p>conform to arbitrary directives. A school must deliver results in terms of educational outcomes;</p> <p>f) the consultation period should be extended by at least four months to allow more time for parents, schools, higher institutions, the business community, and ethnic minorities to understand and comment on the proposals; and</p> <p>g) the Association agrees to the need of improving the quality of teachers, but considers that the document fails to fully address other issues such as teacher capability and how to attract, train and retain talents in the profession.</p>	
<p>10. The Alliance for Small-class Learning and Teaching to Promote Quality Education CB(2)1030/04-05(04)</p>		<p>a) The Alliance acknowledges the effectiveness of mother-tongue teaching and requests the full implementation of mother-tongue teaching at the level of basic education. It also requests that biliterate and trilingual training should be enhanced on the basis of mother-tongue teaching. The Alliance expresses disappointment and regrets about the Consultation Document which, albeit stating the objectives of promoting mother-tongue teaching, has not only failed to propose any concrete options to promote and support mother-tongue teaching, but has perpetuated the policies that label CMI schools as second-rate schools and hinder the development of mother-tongue teaching.</p> <p>b) The Government should enhance biliterate and trilingual learning through small class teaching. Small class teaching is an essential condition for effective language learning. The MOI policy should be formulated on the basis of the interest of students and mother-tongue teaching should be implemented in the provision of basic education. Language learning should be promoted by way of small class teaching, which should be</p>	

Name of Deputation/ LC Paper No. of Submission(s)	Key Area	Medium of Instruction (MOI) for Secondary Schools	Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA)
		<p>fully implemented for the two language subjects at the basic education level, with a view to strengthening the language proficiency of students.</p> <p>c) Unnecessary qualification evaluation of teachers should be stopped, so that teachers might devote their attention to teaching. This is also beneficial to protecting the dignity of the teaching profession.</p>	
<p>11. Centre for Advancement of Chinese Language Education and Research, and Support Centre for Teachers using Chinese as the Medium of Instruction</p>		<p>a) The Centres support mother-tongue teaching and hold the view that student ability and developmental needs should be the main concerns in the choice of the MOI. Teaching through English at S1 level will create great barriers to learning. The Centres agree that EMI schools must meet certain pre-conditions, while the details of which may continue to be discussed.</p> <p>b) The Government should allocate more resources to CMI schools to assist them in providing remedial support and enhancing English training for their students so as to narrow the gap between CMI students and their EMI counterparts in terms of their overall quality and English proficiency.</p> <p>c) The Government should use mother-tongue teaching as a foundation in pursuit of the long-term goal of developing bilingual education. In line with the Administration's policy of providing biliterate and trilingual training for students, both CMI and EMI schools should focus on the provision of training on English, Cantonese and Putonghua. In this connection, CMI schools should use no more than 15% of the total lesson time to enhance English training for S1 to S3 students. EMI schools should also use no more than 15% of the total lesson time to provide mother-tongue teaching for S1</p>	

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		<p>students to provide an adaptation period for P6 students who have to switch from learning through the mother tongue to learning through English.</p>	
<p>12. Federation of Parent-Teacher Associations Wong Tai Sin District Ltd</p>	<p>a) The existing language policy is unable to training students who could be biliterate and trilingual. The Administration should be guided by the interest of students and strives to improve its MOI policy.</p> <p>b) A review cycle of six years should not be applied to CMI and EMI schools to decide whether they should continue or change the MOI. The Administration should gradually alleviate the labelling effect of bifurcation and encourage all schools to attach importance to biliteracy and trilingualism.</p> <p>c) The Federation agrees that CMI schools should be provided with additional resources to implement mother-tongue teaching. Students in EMI schools should also be provided with the chance to learn the Chinese Language.</p> <p>d) The existing 112 EMI schools should be allowed to decide their MOI. EMI schools should not be forced to switch to CMI on the ground of diversity in student ability.</p> <p>e) The Federation agrees that it is essential for language teachers to have passed the relevant language benchmark tests. It holds the view that the overall quality and commitment of language teachers are vital to enhancing biliteracy and trilingualism among students. Schools should provide an environment that is conducive to language learning. Language teachers should teach language subjects in the specific languages. All primary and secondary schools should employ from the Mainland five teachers who are able to</p>	<p>a) The Review of the MOI for Secondary Schools and the review of the SSPA mechanism should be conducted separately and independently to avoid reinforcing the disparity between CMI schools and EMI schools as this will affect the room of development for both CMI and EMI schools and hinder the linking of primary and secondary schools to form “through-train” schools.</p> <p>b) The Federation agrees that the Discretionary Places (DP) quota should be increased from 20% to 30%, and suggests that the percentage be increased by 20% per annum up to 80% to contain within-school student diversity and realise school-based education policies.</p> <p>c) The number of schools that parents are allowed to apply to at the DP stage should be increased to three and their choices should not be subject to restriction on school net. The results of admission by schools at the DP stage should be announced earlier.</p> <p>d) The assessment of the results of students for the purpose of SSPA should be scaled by the performance of the current cohort of students instead of the performance of students of the previous cohort.</p>	

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	<p>teach in fluent Putonghua, and employ from overseas places five native speakers of English who are able to teach in fluent English, so as to enrich the environment for biliterate and trilingual training.</p> <p>f) The Administration should enhance parent education to prevent parents from over-emphasising the importance of teaching through English.</p>		
<p>13. Federation of Parent Teacher Associations in Kwun Tong District</p>	<p>a) Parents generally hope that their children may enter EMI schools. The Federation supports the within-school approach to allow schools to determine their MOI according to student ability.</p> <p>b) The number of EMI schools should be increased to minimise the labelling effect on CMI schools/EMI schools.</p> <p>c) Parents' aspirations to send their children to EMI schools exert pressure on children, which has indirectly generated the demand for Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS) schools.</p>	<p>a) DP quota should be increased to narrow within-school student diversity, thereby reducing the pressure on teachers.</p>	
<p>14. Tseung Kwan O Parents Association CB(2)1030/04-05(05)</p>	<p>a) The Association agrees that the bifurcation policy should be abolished to eliminate the labelling effect on CMI and EMI schools.</p> <p>b) The Association supports the within-school approach so that school sponsoring bodies may put into practice the concept of "teaching according to students' abilities" in the light of the availability of school resources and their environment. In doing so, schools may provide class combinations that use English as the MOI for EMI-capable S1 students. By adoption of the policy on specialized teaching, teachers using English as the MOI and teachers using Chinese as the MOI would not have to prepare two sets of teaching materials.</p>		

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15. Chinese University of Hong Kong School Heads Alumni Association CB(2)1100/04-05(02)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The Association agrees that students learn best in their mother tongue, and maintains that all students in Hong Kong should be highly proficient in both Chinese and English. b) The Association does not support the continuation of the existing bifurcation approach whereby schools are streamed into CMI/EMI schools as this will differentiate Hong Kong schools and students into first-rate and second-rate ones - EMI schools as first-rate schools and CMI schools as second-rate ones. c) The Association suggests that bilingual education should be implemented. While all secondary schools should use Chinese as the MOI at junior secondary levels, schools may, in a gradual and orderly manner, decide to teach certain subjects in English for particular classes or organize extended activities in English across subjects. The lesson time for these activities should not take up more than 35% of the total lesson time for S1 students, and 40% for S2 students, 50% for S3 students. d) Teachers using English as the MOI must satisfy a basic requirement, that is, they should be able to communicate the subject content to students intelligibly and their use of English should have no adverse impact on students' acquisition of the English language. e) The determination of the MOI for DSS schools should be based on the same principle. 	a) The Association supports most of the proposals about the SSPA mechanism as set out in the Consultation Document, except the proposals on the mechanism for scaling student results. It suggests that the current Basic Competency Assessment results may be refined for the purpose of scaling the internal assessment results of the coming cohort of P6 students proceeding to S1.	
16. Hong Kong Parents Association CB(2)1100/04-05(03)	a) The objective of our language policy is to equip our students with basic proficiency in English, Chinese and Putonghua. To train students to be highly proficient in these languages, they have to be exposed to biliterate and trilingual environment since they are young. Thus, the Association does not concur	a) The Association holds that the MOI for secondary schools and the SSPA mechanism should not be linked and should not be dealt with at the same time.	

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	<p>with and have reservations about the proposals put forward in the Consultation Document.</p> <p>b) It is hoped that the consultation period may be extended so that the results of candidates taking the 2005 Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination in Chinese may be considered.</p>		
<p>17. Committee on Home-School Co-operation</p>	<p>The Committee has organized two briefings on the Consultation Document in Kowloon and Hong Kong respectively. The results of the consultation are as follows:</p> <p>a) parents in general consider that mother-tongue teaching can enhance students' performance in creative thinking and learning. They agree that our students should be proficient in both Chinese and English to tie in with the need for Hong Kong to sustain its development into an international metropolis.</p> <p>b) parents in general think that the Government should allocate more resources to develop students' language abilities in both Chinese and English to better prepare them for senior secondary education.</p> <p>c) parents in general think that the bifurcation approach will inevitably generate labelling effect.</p> <p>d) some parents are worried that the three basic requirements for a school to become an EMI school may have an impact on the MOI of those primary and secondary schools that have been linked to form through-train schools.</p> <p>e) some parents are worried that the policy of mother-tongue teaching will generate more DSS schools and parents will have to afford exorbitant school fees.</p>	<p>a) Most parents agree that the number of schools that students may apply to at the DP stage should be increased. However, if schools do not consider the second choices made by parents at all, the relevant recommendation will not provide much help to parents.</p> <p>b) Some parents are concerned about the rights of students with special learning needs to join SSPA under integrated education.</p>	

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		<p>f) all CMI/EMI schools should inject more resources to enhance students' proficiency in English to meet the manpower needs for Hong Kong to sustain its development into a cosmopolitan city.</p>	
<p>18. Hong Kong Private Schools Association CB(2)1054/04-05(03) CB(2)1100/04-05(04)</p>	<p>a) A basic consideration in the formulation of the MOI policy, i.e. respecting parents' desire to strive for every opportunity to let their children learn English as well as taking into account Hong Kong's needs for talents who are able to communicate in English in order to maintain its status as a cosmopolitan city.</p> <p>b) Education is "student-oriented" and the most effective teaching strategy hinges on teachers' selection of appropriate teaching materials and teaching methods that cater to the different aptitude, interest and ability of individual students. Such choices, if centrally-controlled in the absence of sufficient information rather than made by front-line teachers, will certainly cause discrepancies, resulting in losses on the part of both the students and the community.</p> <p>c) The suggested policies are meant to solve educational problems by administrative means. Centrally-controlled rather than school-based choices not only contradict the administrative concepts in the education sector, but also undermine the display of initiatives by the sector.</p> <p>d) The bifurcation approach gives rise to two types of mismatched students, wastes talents and sacrifices the rights of minority students. This measure lacks educational or legal grounds.</p> <p>e) The bifurcation approach results in the continuation of "collective labelling effect" in the community and has a negative impact on students.</p>		

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	<p>f) Suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the three criteria for EMI schools should be maintained; – school-based streaming should be allowed to solve the problem of “mismatch”, cater for the learning needs and abilities of minority students and eliminate the negative effects of “labelling”; – the maximum percentage of lesson time for school-based extended learning activities conducted through English should be increased to 25%; and – schools should be provided with additional resources to offer additional lesson time for English. 		
<p>19. The Chinese Language Society of Hong Kong CB(2)1030/04-05(06) Ltd</p>	<p>a) The Society firmly believes that to achieve the objectives of basic education, the mother tongue is an effective MOI. Given that students who can adapt themselves to learning through English will certainly learn even better with Chinese as the MOI, the Society is strongly opposed to the compromise approach as advocated in the Consultation Document whereby schools fulfilling the three criteria are allowed to operate as EMI schools, and a mechanism for a review cycle of six years to decide on the CMI/EMI switch is proposed.</p> <p>b) The Society maintains that, for the sake of ensuring the healthy development of the new generation and the long-term benefits of the community, the Government should require all publicly-funded government schools and subsidized schools to fully implement mother-tongue (Cantonese or Putonghua) teaching throughout the nine-year compulsory education.</p> <p>c) The Society firmly believes that mother-tongue teaching will not hinder the learning of the English language. However, since Hong Kong has been subscribing to elitist education with English as the MOI for a long time, many students have to go</p>		

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		<p>through waves of failures in their school years. This has resulted in severe polarization in our society today. The Administration must be vigilant of it in formulating its policies.</p> <p>d) The policy of adopting a review cycle of six years will cause all meritorious CMI schools to change their MOI one by one. When that occurs, a disastrous collapse of CMI schools will result! Subsequently, there will be disastrous polarization in Hong Kong's education sector.</p> <p>e) The Society supports the proposals in the Consultation Document that, at junior secondary levels, schools may keep a certain percentage of their lesson time for the teaching of certain subjects through English, so that students may refer to learning materials in English while benefiting from mother-tongue teaching. Schools may attempt to conduct learning activities through English, for the purpose of achieving life-wide learning.</p> <p>f) The Society maintains an open attitude towards the choice of MOI at the new senior secondary levels. It agrees that schools may decide on the choice of MOI at senior secondary levels, having regard to the effectiveness of the schools in providing English training at junior secondary levels in the previous three years, the proficiency levels of their students in languages and the schools' missions and goals.</p> <p>g) The title of the booklet published by EMB entitled "Learning can be like this - Mother-tongue Teaching resulting in proficiency in both Chinese and English" (in Chinese version only) should be changed to "Learning can be like this - Teaching through Putonghua or Cantonese resulting in biliteracy and trilingualism".</p>	

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20.	Grant Schools Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Schools and teachers know best about their students' learning abilities, progress and needs, but they have no say whatsoever on the MOI. This contradicts the spirit of school-based management. b) The Consultation Document should recommend a mechanism and a set of standards to assess the language proficiency of P6 students. c) The Council does not agree that a school cannot use English as the MOI when the English proficiency level of some of its students cannot meet the required standard. The Administration should consider the performance of students in past public examinations. d) The language proficiency requirements in Chinese and English for new and in-service teachers must be clearly stated. e) The policy of bifurcation between CMI/EMI schools starting from 1998 was a mistake. The Consultation Document should recommend a proposal to rectify the mistaken policy. f) The policy of through-train schools (primary and secondary), which was first advocated by the Government, should not be affected by the policy of mother-tongue teaching. 	
21.	Joint Parent-Teacher Association of Kwai Tsing District CB(2)1030/04-05(07)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The Consultation Document should provide detailed information on the historical background of mother-tongue teaching. b) The Consultation Document should spell out the required qualifications for Chinese Language teachers. c) The within-school approach is more flexible than the bifurcation approach because the former can provide more 	a) Since the number of allocation bands was changed from five to three, within-school diversity in student ability has widened, and teachers are invariably under greater pressure in teaching. The Association suggests that the number of allocation bands should be changed from three to four or restored to five, in order to improve the situation.

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		<p>autonomy to schools and caters better to the needs of different schools. Still, conditions must be laid down to minimise its negative impacts.</p>	<p>b) Primary school principals may be worried about the proposal of using the “pre-Secondary 1 Hong Kong Attainment Test” (pre-S1 HKAT) as a scaling instrument because that will directly affect the number of their students in certain allocation bands. The Administration should prudently handle this proposal.</p> <p>c) A suitable number of examinations can serve the purpose of enhancing the competitive edge of local students against overseas students. Parents agree that the ability of their children can be truly reflected in the SSPA mechanism.</p>
<p>22. The Joint Council of Parent-Teacher Associations of the Shatin District</p>	<p>a) The Council is concerned about the negative labelling effect of the bifurcation approach on CMI schools and their students.</p> <p>b) The Council hopes that the choice of MOI can be a school-based decision. Schools should be allowed to provide learning opportunities in both English and Chinese, having regard to the diversity of their students in language proficiency.</p> <p>c) EMB should issue clear guidelines to assist parents in making decisions on whether they should send their children to a CMI or an EMI school.</p>		
<p>23. Hong Kong Direct Subsidy Scheme Schools Council</p>	<p>a) The Council cautiously welcomes the proposals about the determination of the MOI in DSS schools in the Consultation Document, which have honoured the terms and conditions in the service agreements between EMB and DSS schools.</p> <p>b) The enrolment of students by DSS schools is subject to the supply and demand in the market. Therefore, DSS schools will</p>		

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	<p>choose an MOI that best fits the language proficiency of their students. EMB will also monitor the performance of DSS schools. If a DSS school chooses the wrong MOI, EMB will suggest the school concerned to change its MOI.</p> <p>c) The Council supports the view that DSS schools have to make suitable arrangements regarding student ability, teacher capability and support measures if they are to adopt English as the MOI in order to guarantee education quality.</p>		
<p>24. Hong Kong Aided Primary School Heads Association</p>	<p>a) Mother-tongue teaching is a move in the right direction.</p>	<p>a) The assessment mechanism adopted under the present transitional arrangement cannot accurately reflect the level of academic achievements of P6 students, not to mention coping with the progress of education reform measures. The Administration should set up as soon as possible a credible allocation mechanism that can accurately reflect student ability.</p> <p>b) The Association agrees that the DP quota should be capped at 30%.</p> <p>c) The Association does not agree that a single attainment test should be used to assess the performance of students. Assessment should be made on all aspects of development of the students.</p> <p>d) The Association agrees that the provision of the “rank order list” to secondary schools should cease.</p> <p>e) The Association agrees that the 3-band system should be maintained, but suggests that the</p>	

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			<p>Government should provide extra resources to help improve student diversity.</p> <p>f) The Association is opposed to the use of past Academic Aptitude Test results as a scaling mechanism and does not agree to the use of pre-S1 HKAT results as a scaling mechanism.</p> <p>g) The Association agrees to the application of the new SSPA arrangement to students entering S1 in September 2007.</p> <p>h) The Association has not come to a consensus regarding the proposal that the number of secondary schools which each student may apply to at the DP stage be increased from one to two.</p>
25.	Federation of Parent Teacher Associations of Hong Kong Eastern District	<p>a) The Federation agrees that the mother tongue is the best MOI, as it may enhance the interest and motivation in learning.</p> <p>b) Parents are generally concerned about the quality of English language education which is essential for students to pursue life-long learning.</p> <p>c) The Federation suggests that schools should use bilingual textbooks and the mother tongue to facilitate teaching and learning in the classroom, and hence provide students with a choice to learn in either Chinese or English or both.</p> <p>d) Language proficiency among students is bound to differ. Therefore, schools should arrange students with higher proficiency in Chinese to pair up with students with higher proficiency in English, and let them learn from the strengths of each other through project assignments. This arrangement allows students to complement each other.</p>	

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26.	Democratic Party CB(2)1100/04-05(05)	a) Students' interest should be the primary concern in the formulation of the MOI policy. Undeniably, education effectiveness is enhanced when students choose to learn in a language that is most suitable to them. In Hong Kong, an international metropolis, the commercial and industrial sectors attach particular importance to the ability of communicating in English; therefore, the learning of the English language merits particular emphasis. The adoption of mother-tongue teaching and the enhancement of English standard do not contradict each other and both aim at enabling students to achieve a certain proficiency level in English and Chinese after nine years of free education, so as to maintain our students' competitive edge. b) It is suggested that the education authority should review the existing curriculum design and pedagogies as soon as possible to make the contents of textbooks and the learning environment close to real-life situations and more practical. Students should be exposed to a language environment which is similar to that of native-speaking English students. c) It is believed that small class teaching not only enhances the quality of teaching and learning but also helps greatly in language learning. In small class teaching, teachers can teach more effectively using the activity approach, while small classes may help establish closer teacher-student relationship.	