

番禺會所華仁小學家長教師會

Pun U Association Wah Yan Primary School Parents Teachers Association

LC Paper No. CB(2)2127/04-05(01)

Secretariat of Working Group on Review of Medium of Instruction for Secondary Schools Room 1101, 11/F, Wu Chung House, 213 Queen's Road East, Wanchai, Hong Kong

22 June 2005

Position Paper on Government's proposal for "Review of Medium of Instruction for Secondary Schools and Secondary Schools Places Allocation"

OUR DECLARATION

On behalf of almost 2,000 parents in the Parents Teachers Association of Pun U Association Wah Yan Primary School, we wish to express **strong reservation** and **reject** the consultation document on "Review of Medium of Instruction for Secondary Schools and Secondary School Places Allocation" as proposed by Education Commission in February 2005.

OUR VIEWS

- 2. We consider that the Medium of Instruction proposals as contained in the consultation document (the Proposals) **problematic** and **piecemeal**, despite its far-reaching implications on the education system of Hong Kong. As parents, we are concerned over the well-being of our next generation, but the Proposals fail to cater for our needs and expectations. Much more, the Proposals will present a major backward move to the local human resource development at large, thus undermining the competitive edge of Hong Kong as an international city.
- 3. The Proposals have at least **nine major drawbacks** which are prone to questions and criticism. They are -
 - a) Base on **superficial analysis** and short timeframe of statistical data collection;
 - b) Result in gradual eradication of English proficiency for our next generation;

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- c) Polarise English Medium of Instruction (EMI) and Chinese Medium of Instruction (CMI) schools in terms of student capability, causing unnecessary labeling of EMI and CMI schools;
- d) Proposals in **conflict with other education policies**, e.g. "Through-train" initiatives in many schools;
- e) **Arbitrarily equate performance** in (English, Chinese and Mathematics) examinations as "ability" of a student to "be able to learn effectively through English";
- f) Unfair and confused mechanism: eligibility of P6 students to learn through English is determined by performance of their upper form in the same school;
- g) Has not addressed the issue that current EMI school places falls short in meeting the top 40% of students who are "able" to learn effectively through English;
- h) Result in potential **gender imbalance** in EMI schools, owing to early streaming at P6 on the basis of examination performance; and
- i) Pose unhealthy exercise burden onto primary school students.
- 4. A detailed deliberation of the above nine major weaknesses is at **Annex A**. All these have been presented to Mr Michael Tien, Chairman of the Working Group at our meeting with him on 23 April, and subsequently in writing. Up to now, these issues have still been left unattended.
- 5. We have also undertaken desk-top review on the consultation documents and "research" materials provided by EMB. On the effectiveness of mother-tongue teaching, we consider that the conclusive remarks made by Working Group have been faulty and biased. Our response to EMB's analysis on effectiveness of mother-tongue teaching is at **Annex B**.

OUR SURVEYS

6. We are disappointed that the Working Group had not involved major stakeholders (including parents and teachers) in formulating the Proposals.

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As a result, the Proposals fail to meet the aspiration of parents nor able to address the learning rights of our children. This has been reflected by the overwhelming response from parents of our schools over the past two months.

- 7. We have conducted **two rounds of questionnaire surveys** of outcomes at **Annex C**. For the first survey (response rate is 87% amounting to 899 Nos), about 85% on average of respondents rejected the proposed MOI mechanism, and over 80% of parents **was losing confidence on the current education reforms** launched by EMB (question 13). Interesting, the survey also revealed a diversed message from parents as to what mother tongue has referred to (question 10). Essentially, we find difficulty to follow why the Working Group has defined Cantonese as mother tongue in its consultation document.
- 8. The response rate for the second survey is similar (87% amounting to 909 Nos). The views collected have even been more concrete and consistent. 90% of parents dislike the reinforced labeling and discriminative approach towards EMI and CMI schools. 94% of parents requested Government to place more resource in primary schooling to promote the "two language-three dialects" environment. 88% wished the Government to "control" less, thereby giving more autonomy for schools to maintain/develop their visions and strengths.

LATEST DEVELOPMENT

9. Since our meeting with Mr Michael Tien on 23 April, we have met Mrs Fanny Law, the Permanent Secretary for Education and Manpower and clarified misunderstanding that she might have on us. We have made clear to her that our concerns have not been confined to whether "Through-train" could be timely in place in Wah Yan, or how our own children would not be affected by new policies. As similar to parents of many schools, our concerns stem from promoting the learning environment of our next generation as well as the competitive edge of Hong Kong in the use of English and Mandarin. This stance should be perceived clearly and correctly.

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10. We have also requested for a meeting with Dr Rosanna Wong, the Chairperson of Education Commission, given the Mr Tien's statement that "our concerns" were outside purview of his Working Group. Due to the busy schedule of Dr Wong, we are awaiting a more positive response from her at the meeting currently scheduled on 4 July, unfortunately after the expiry of consultation period.

OUR APPEALS

- 11. To avoid another leap backward in education system, we urge the Government to defer any further expansion of MOI policy under 1998 "Guidance" pending a professional, non-partisan and comprehensive assessment is conducted. Statistically, at least another five-year window of data for local student performance should be collected and assessed in consultation with all major stakeholders before the review findings can be regarded conclusive and rational.
- 12. In addition, we call for **five concrete steps** taken by the Government to improve learning environment for our children:
 - a) Offer parents their freedom to choose the medium of instruction that best suits their children. More resources should be invested early in primary schooling so as to promote the language learning capability well before P.6.
 - b) Allow schools to decide on the medium of instruction that suits their students best, whilst encourage schools to be more 'transparent' in students' performance and school visions for parents to choose.
 - c) Abolish all divisive language labels (EMI & CMI) on schools, which merely reinforce the discrimination against student capability in CMI schools.

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- d) **Resolve policy conflicts** between "Through-train" schooling and MOI initiatives. Due respect should be given to the strengths, traditions and visions of individual schools, thus providing wider choices for parents and students.
- e) Rectify the MOI policy by placing resources on **training** students to be genuinely biliterate and trilingual so as to sharpen the competitive edge of Hong Kong.
- 13. We are awaiting your positive response to our appeals.

(Mrs. May WOO)

Chairperson

Parents Teachers Association

Pun U Association Wah Yan Primary School

c.c. LegCo Panel on Education

Chairperson, Education Commission

Marymount Primary School PTA

La Salle Primary School PTA

St Francis Canossian Primary School PTA

Salesian English School (Primary) PTA

St Stephen's Girls' College PTA

Maryknoll Fathers School (Primary Section) PTA

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Wah Yan College, Hong Kong PTA



ANNEX A

Detailed Deliberation on Consultation Document for "Review of Medium of Instruction (MOI) for Secondary Schools"

We parents do not accept the Working Group's proposals, and neither do we believe that their purported educational objectives will be achieved, because these rest on 3 untenable working assumptions:

- 1. That despite the national language being Putonghua, mother tongue can arbitrarily and without public's consensus, be defined as Cantonese dialect.
- 2. That the "piecemeal" research cited is sound, sufficient, and conclusive enough for the public to accept it at face value.
- 3. That in the process of policy making, parents as major stakeholders can be excluded from involvement.

There are at least 9 serious defects found in the Review. These are yet to be answered by the Working Group.

- 1. Evidence cited to support the propositions is limited, anecdotal and open to different interpretation. We are yet to be convinced by research and studies which are impartial, scientific and comprehensive. Without giving full reference on the research cited, the materials and methods used, public is unable to judge for itself the claims that "mother-tongue is the best" for Hong Kong, and "mother-tongue is most effective".
- 2. Gradual eradication of one of Hong Kong's competitive advantages: English proficiency of its human capital. Limiting exposure to the international language sets a vicious cycle in motion.
- 3. Polarisation of English Medium of Instruction (EMI) schools and Chinese Medium of Instruction (CMI) schools, and the stigma of incompetence associated with CMI schools is further reinforced. The labeling of EMI and CMI is divisive, unnecessary and irrelevant in bringing about positive and practical educational outcomes.



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- 4. Apart from having a Damocles' sword hanging over the EMI schools, schools and teachers alike are under continual pressure to cope with the constant, substantial and often contradictory and inconsistent educational policies and procedures at the expense of teaching and facilitating learning.
- 5. Performance in (English, Chinese and Mathematics) examinations is arbitrarily equated as "ability" of a student to "be able to learn effectively through English".
- 6. The absurdity and confusion of the proposed mechanism: that the opportunity of a certain group of P6 students to learn through EMI in their preferred school is determined by how another group from the upper form in the same school performs.
- 7. The Working Group's proposals do not address the critical and realistic issues of availability of resources needed (such as the number of current EMI schools falls short in meeting the 40% of students with the "ability" "to learn effectively through English"; the supply and training of qualified teachers, etc), should these proposals be implemented.
- 8. Due to early streaming based on examination performance, the potential imbalance between number of male and female students in EMI schools.
- 9. Unnecessary and unhealthy pressure and exercise burden onto primary school students.

Our demands and perspectives are based on 4 fundamental propositions:

1. The availability of choice and the right to exercise it

- Parents and students deserve more choices and opportunities to embrace diversity in talents, ability and aspirations to adapt to the needs of society and the ever-changing challenges of the future. Diversity in our education system should be enhanced, and parents and students should benefit from it through their right to choose what best meets their needs.
- The Government must integrate into its overall education policy some autonomy to schools to operate on the free market principle rather than forcing them to conform to arbitrary directives. A school must deliver results in terms of educational outcomes. Schools that perform will have a better prospect in terms of student intake and the support from parents and the public.



• The Education & Manpower Bureau (EMB)'s role is to support each and every school to further develop its strengths, its uniqueness, and to upgrade its understanding of global best practices in providing education. The EMB should however not be responsible, and should never attempt, to homogenize our schools into the same mode, chop and change education policies that lead to instability, and use totally unsubstantiated research as a means to restrict the development of schools, and hence the choice of parents.

2. The right to participate in policy making

- Parents are the major guardians and stakeholders of their children's well-being.
 They must be adequately consulted and their views given due recognition.
 Parents must have the right and the access to the making and formulation of education policy.
- We shared with you the idea of a PTA Jury System model currently in operation in Chicago, US, whereby the acceptance of education policy proposals must base upon the jurisdiction of the PTA jury, comprising elected parents representatives, child and education specialists, teaching and school management representatives, etc.

3. The right to school information

• Every child should be given an opportunity to attend a school most suitable to his or her development from the parent's view. The EMB must set up a structure to make information about secondary schools more transparent and readily available to parents through, for example, support for the organization of open days or seminars for prospective parents, production of school prospectus to include information on school curriculum, respective MOI for each subject and the public examination performance, school mission & principles, teacher-student ratio, teachers' profile, etc..

4. The right to learn

• We believe in providing high quality education to all who are willing or motivated to learn.



- We reject the notion that there is such thing as "an ability to be able to learn effectively through English" (Para. 3.2(a) Review of MOI Consultation Document), not to mention using this as an exclusion mechanism to deprive the right and opportunity of any willing student to learn through his choice of English as MOI.
- With children as young as 11 or 12 years old, examination result is one of the weakest indicators of their potential to learn by being proficient in one language or another.
- As a principle, majority of students have the ability to learn through EMI (CMI or other languages by the same token), given the opportunity to learn, and through a facilitative learning environment. The onus is on the school, and indeed is what education is about, is to believe in and to draw out the potential, and thence to inspire and to develop them responsibly and effectively.

June 2005
Parents Teachers Association
Pun U Association
Wah Yan Primary School



ANNEX B

Review of MOI & SSPA Consultation Document -- Annex 4 On "Analysis of the HKCEE Results"

It has been our contention that the Working Group (WG) has used

- 1) faulty research, and
- 2) selective bias to support its conclusions.

The captioned research which serves to conclude the "effectiveness of mother-tongue teaching" has at least the following serious defects:

1. Baseline

- a) A single year, the year 2002, is used as baseline against which the results of HKCEE 2003 and 2004 are compared. Normally, the baseline would comprise the average of results of at least 5 years so as to minimize the chance variations between one year and the next. In the absence of a proper baseline or standard for comparison, it would be premature to conclude changes in performance in 2003 and in 2004 to MOI.
- b) By the same logic, positive or negative changes in performance in HKCEE 2003 and in 2004 would not be sufficient proof that such changes are due to MOI and not the result of change variations.

2. Trend

The WG have satisfied themselves that only two consecutive years are sufficient (2003 and 2004) for a trend to be observed. In more serious and scientific studies, existence of trends is based on about 5 to 7 years.

3. Statistical tests of significance

Even though there are differences between 2002 on the one hand and 2003 and 2004 on the other, in the absence of statistical tests of significance, it would be irresponsible to attribute the differences to MOI. But this is what the WG has done.



4. Hypothesis and research design

From the information that was made available by the EMB ("HKCEE Results of CMI Schools in 2002, 2003 and 2004. Main Points for the Press Conference on 10 August 2004"), we cannot derive anything meaningful about the hypotheses being tested or the research design employed. However, it is stated very clearly in the information given to us that "THIS INFORMATION SHOULD NOT BE USED AS DEFINITIVE EVIDENCE OF THE EFFECTS OF MOI". We are therefore at a loss to follow why the Working Group has chosen to ignore this important statement. To illustrate, we have juxtaposed below the two abstracts from the same information provided to us:

• "HKCEE is just one of the many indicators of students' performance. The data may have reference value for evaluating the effectiveness of MOI policy. But, it is inappropriate to rely solely on the HKCEE results for evaluation of the policy since students' achievements in examination are affected by many factors. These may include teaching strategies, school and teacher effect, students' personal growth, their learning motivation, participation in extra-curricular activities and family background and support."

vs. Concluding Remarks

 "The HKCEE results in the past three years have revealed that mother-tongue teaching is bearing fruit. The analysis together with our other studies consistently affirm that mother-tongue teaching helps enhance students' learning effectiveness, cognitive development, motivation and active participation in learning and creativity."

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番禺會所華仁小學家長教師會有限公司

<檢討中學教學語言及中一派位機制>建議書 問卷調査結果

是次問卷調查共派出問卷 1,039 份至上下午班。收回問卷共 899 份,佔比例爲 86.53%。在此本 會再三多謝各家長的鼎力支持。

<1>	<檢討中學教學語言及中一派位機制>建議中·要求英文中學有「不少於85%中一學生,在{中一入學前測驗}之成績必須擠身全港最優異成績之四成學生,才能保持以英文中學之地位」作爲指引,你認爲是否合理?						
	〇 82 人 合理 (9.12%)	〇 747 人 不合理 (83.09%)	〇 70 人 無意見 (7.79%)				
<2>	建議書中,只抽取 2004 年度中文才 教學,你認為這種原則及精神是否	大學一項調查結果,作爲 釐 定全港 合理?	s在 2008 年開始,只有 40%小六學生適合以	英語			
	〇 22 人 合理 (2.45%)	〇 824 人 不合理 (91.66%)	〇 53 人 無意見 (5.89%)				
<3>	建議書中,以某甲學生前兩屆師 (Banding),這種「爲人作嫁衣裳」	i兄在<中一入學前測驗>之成績 之安排是否合理?	,作爲某甲學生升讀中一時所讀學校的	'組別			
	〇 24 人 合理 (2.67%)	〇 822 人 不合理 (91.43%)	〇 53 人 無意見 (5.90%)				
<4>	建議書中,就個別中學是否需要改 你認爲這樣的安排會否導致教學混	變教學語言,每四至六年檢討一 亂,家長 - 學生 - 教師無所適從	次。 ?				
	〇 754 人 會 (83.87%)	〇 55 人 不會 (6.12%)	〇 90 人 無意見 (10.01%)				
<5>	建議書中,認爲直資學校的學生初 之靈活性:而資助或補貼學校則應	中階段,仍然應以英語教學,讓 於初中階段以母語教學,高中階	學生可沈浸於英語環境中學習,保持直資 受則轉用英語授課。	學校			
	你認爲教統局以 兩種態度 對待直資	及補貼資助學校的學生,是否合E	里?				
	〇 38人 合理 (4.23%)	〇 805 人 不合理 (89.54%)	〇 56 大 無意見 (6.23%)				
<6>	建議書指出,全港約只有四成成績係	世学(以下簡稱中中)。),適合選讀英文中學(以下簡稱英中);而	其餘			
	〇 744 人 會 (82.76%)	〇 94人 不會 (10,46%)	〇 6) 人 無意見 (6.78%)				
<7>	你認爲一間中學被定性爲中中或英中	中,應該以中五會考成績,或中一	-新生入學成績,作爲釐定的依歸?				
	〇 101 人 中一 (11.36%)	〇 621 人 中五 (69.85%)	〇 167 人 無意見 (18.79%)				
<8>	你是否認爲在建議的新機制下,英中 的原意?	P為收取足夠 Band L 學生,會滅少	·從附屬小學收生的比例,直接打擊「一條	龍」			
	〇 784 人 同意 (87.20%)	〇 62 人 不同意 (6 90%)	〇 53 人 無音見 (5.000)				

不同意

(6.90%)

無意見 (5.90%)

	〇 840 人 同意 (94.60%)	〇 不同意			-	O 無意見	24 人 (2.70%)	
<10>	你認爲「母語教學」應以「廣州話」			,	•	111/05/0	(2.70%)	
120		_						
註:此題有	〇 404 人 廣州話 (44.15%) f家長選取多過一個答案・既選廣州記	〇 普通話 5、亦選普通話。		99 人 (89%)	○ 無意見			
<11>	你認爲誰人最瞭解或最能代表學生的	的利益?(可作多	5項選	翠)				
註:此題目	〇 748 人 父母 (83.20%) 以收回問卷數目 899 份來計算百分比	〇 535 人 教師 (59,51%)			431 人 【47.94%			
<12>	你認爲今次<檢討中學教學語言及中	一派位機制>建議	善,	只得三個月的	勺諮詢期,	這期限是	否合理?	
	〇 60 人 合理 (6.72%)	〇 不 合理		19 人 40%)	-		124 人 (13.88%)	
<13>	就<檢討中學教學語言及中一派位機	制>這項教育改革	政策	听持的理念,	· 你對現時	教育政策	的信心是:	: -
	〇 732 人 減少 (82.62%)	○ 增加	17 (1.9	人)2%)) 無改變	137 人 (15.46%)	
<14>	由一九九八年的一百間「英文中學」 三、四」改革、「通識教育」、「才	到 「目標爲本 〈學不是求分數」	」、「 ,作 f	一條龍 」、「 爲家長的你・	直資學校 對現時的	」到「殺 教育政策	校縮班 」 的看法及愿	去年的「三、 慈想是:
		197人 〇 (22.01%) 還可		32 人 (3.58%)			○ 無意見	21 人 (2.34%)
<15>	邁向全球一體化,作爲國際大都會的言教育我們的下一代,以增加他的競]香港一份子,你 (争 力?	認爲组	戈們是否應該	₹沖出單 - f	可語教學	模式・以製	語或多國語
	〇 815 人 同意 (91,99%)	〇 不同意	29 (3.2) ŧ意見	42 人 (4.74%)	
<16>	你認爲那一種小六評核試的機制較爲	合理及公平?						
	〇 418 人 升中試 (50.85%)	〇 149 學能測驗 (18.1			i 前測驗 (1		〇 其他	(13.62%)
<17>	你認爲最能影響學生學習成效的因素 (請填上數字・依次最重要 5-4-3-2-1 f							
						重要性		
ſ	老師質素		, 	5	4	3	2	1
	學生的自覺性		-	344	220	154	100	34
	教學的方法(例如: 如何啓迪學生的	願		334	140	189	136	115
	教學的語言	/ ADD TJ /	^`	159	222 138	123 159	90	75
	家長及家庭的支持及配合		1	179	40	72.	160	201

數

你是否認爲教育語言一改再改,會否製造教學生上混亂?

<9>

教统局的領導

其他

第 18 題	第18題回答人	總人數之百分
你對今次教統局建議書的內容有以下意見:	數之百份比	比
(1) 灰心、混亂不安、不滿、反對、失信心、失望 朝令夕改、無所適從。	37.9% (139)	(除第1條外)
(2)校本政策,由家長/學校自行決定教學語言,增力學校自由度和家長選擇。	ho 13.4% (49)	21.5%
(3) 家長未被充份諮詢,不了解/未能達到家長的期望 或意願。	全 11.2% (41)	18.0%
(4) 與一條龍政策相矛盾,與其他教育政策不連貫 或未能互相融合。	, 6.8% (25)	11.0%
(5) 分化學生/學校,英中、中中兩極化造成更大偏見;只有高能力(成績或家庭經濟能力)的學生才能更有效地學好英語。	6.3% (23)	10.1%
(6) 影響學生學習、晉升及將來的前途,甚至影響者 港作為國際大都會之能力和價值。	5.4% (20)	8.8%
(7)學校及老師需要穩定的環境來培養學生;改革力多太急,令校方(包括老師)未能專心工作或適應		8.8%
(8) 有代師弟從軍的感覺。中一入學試作訂定英中資格及師弟(尤其一條龍學校)入讀英中機會不公平。	§ 4.4% (16)	7.0%
(9) 中立/覺得家長與當局各有道理。	0.3% (1)	0.4%
(10) 其他:	9% (33)	14.5%

- 加重學生壓力 (7)
- 應小班教學/減低師生比例 (5)
- 是次改革有政治動機 (2)
- 應延遲擴大推行母語教育直至有更多實質數據或研究說明母語教學更具效用 (4)
- 應投放更多資源改善/提高幼兒園及小學的英語質素 (4)
- 相反地,應提升各間中學的英語水平/建立更多英中/更重視英語教學 (3)
- 應沿多國語言方向前進,而不是倒退至單元母語教學 (2)
- 贊成升中試/精英教育 (2)
- 應統一所有中學教學語言 (2)
- 改革似有目的地要迫使英中變直資學校 (1)
- 應改善中、英文課本質素 (1)

番禺會所華仁小學家長教師會教育政策關注小組

《檢討中學教學語言及中一派位機制》諮詢文件

第二	次問卷調	查 共派出問卷 1,039	份至上下4	F班。收回問卷共 909 份	,佔比例爲	87.49%。在此本會再
三多	謝各家長	的鼎力支持。				
()	認爲應記 立專業的	该停止擴大推行九八 內改革委員會,當中包 首心理學家、語言學	年<中學教 包括英中/中	証明母語/廣州話教學是 育語言指引>之母語教中/補助/直資校長會、教 士,參與檢討政策之得	學政策。我 (師代表、全	之們認爲政府應成立獨 注港十八區家教會之代
	A.贊成	808 人	B.不贊成	18 人	C.無意見	83 人
		(88.89 %)		(1.98 %)		(9.13 %)
(=)	文件內之	之建議,因此我們認為	爲應該延長	深遠的影響,故家長及諮詢期至九月二日或以行12 人(1.32 %)	後 。你是否	
(≓)	11 :初 母 區		1 叶 / 建二十五六	·	ここままた バンカンギ	
()				標籤制度,避免進一步無		
	A. 質叹	817人	B. 个質风	28 人	C.無意見	
		(89.88 %)		(3.08 %)		(7.04 %)
(四)	我們認為	爲應該提高學校資訊的	的透明度,	以幫助家長和學生選擇會	合適的學校	升讀。你是否贊成?
	A.贊成	868 人	B.不贊成	6人	C.無意見	35 人
		(95.49 %)		(0.66 %)		(3.85 %)
(五)	養,因此力。你是			也們的語文潛質及能力類 音源於小學及學前教育階。 7 人		及提升學生之語文能
		(94.06 %)	D. 貝/人	(0.77 %)	O.無思元	(5.17 %)
	在 2000 們認為 和優勢, A.贊成	年後十年內,教統局	籌局的角色	大小小300多次的改革, 1,給予學校及老師更多 念。你是否贊成?		了「警察」的角色,我 他們發揮自己的特色
(七)	其他意見	ļ:				