

## **Legislative Council Panel on Education**

### **Special Provision of Capacity Enhancement Grant to Relieve Teachers' Workload**

#### **PURPOSE**

This paper seeks Members' views on a special provision of the Capacity Enhancement Grant (CEG) for government and subvented schools<sup>1</sup> for three years starting from the 2005/06 school year to further relieve teachers' workload.

#### **BACKGROUND**

2. The CEG was first introduced in the 2000/01 school year to relieve teachers' workload and improve student learning. Schools may use the grant to hire additional staff and/or procure services according to their needs and priorities. The CEG has been well-received by the education sector since its introduction. The findings of the review on the effectiveness of the CEG have also affirmed that the grant has been successful in reducing teachers' workload and improving student learning.

3. In the 2000/01 school year, the CEG rates were initially set at \$550,000 and \$300,000 respectively for primary and secondary schools with 19 or more classes. For schools with less than 19 classes, the rates were \$450,000 and \$250,000 respectively. In the 2001/02 school year, the CEG rates for secondary schools were increased by 50% in order to further enhance the capacity of secondary school teachers to cope with the changes in the education system. In the 2003/04 school year, based on the recommendation of the Audit Commission, the CEG funding levels were rationalized and the concept of basic provision and per-class rate were introduced.

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<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of disbursement of CEG, "subvented schools" means aided schools, caput schools and schools under the Direct Subsidy Scheme and schools running the full-time initiation programme for newly arrived children.

## PROPOSAL

4. We propose adding a special provision to the existing CEG rates for government and subvented schools, by 150% for secondary schools, and 100% for primary and special schools, for a period of 3 years from the 2005/06 school year to the 2007/08 school year. The proposal aims to further reduce teachers' workload, with focus to facilitate the implementation of the new initiatives relating to assessment for learning and to cope with the diverse learning needs of students. With the progressive introduction of the Territory-wide System Assessment (TSA)<sup>2</sup> at P3, P6 and S3, and the introduction of school-based assessment (SBA)<sup>3</sup> in respect of the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (HKCEE) Chinese and English Languages, that are using standards-referenced assessment for the first time in 2007, teachers' workload will be heavier in the initial years of implementation of these new measures.

5. The existing rates for CEG are as follows:

	<b>Existing CEG Rates for the 2005/06 school year</b>		
	<b>Basic rate for threshold number of operating classes or below in respective schools</b>	<b>Per-class rate for classes exceeding the threshold number</b>	<b>Flat rate</b>
Secondary Schools	\$235,181 (first 12 classes)	\$15,535	\$421,601 (24 or more classes)
Primary Schools	\$148,514 (first 6 classes)	\$20,377	\$515,300 (24 or more classes)
Special Schools	\$148,514 (first 5 classes)	\$26,199	\$515,300 (19 or more classes)

6. The CEG rates after adding the special provision for the 2005/06 school year are proposed as follows:

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<sup>2</sup> The TSA mainly is to assess if students have attained the basic competencies at the end of the three key stages of study (i.e. P3, P6 and S3). It has been introduced to the P3 level in 2004, the P6 level in 2005, and for the S3 level, to be introduced in 2006.

<sup>3</sup> SBA enables teachers to assess students' performance in specific areas. SBA emphasizes the assessment of a wide range of abilities of students and strengthens the tie between assessment and teaching. It also helps reduce the pressure of "one-off examination" on students.

	<b>Proposed CEG Rates for the 2005/06 school year after adding the special provision</b>		
	<b>Basic rate for threshold number of operating classes or below in respective schools</b>	<b>Per-class rate for classes exceeding the threshold number</b>	<b>Flat rate</b>
Secondary Schools	\$587,953 (first 12 classes)	\$38,838	\$1,054,009 (24 or more classes)
Primary Schools	\$297,028 (first 6 classes)	\$40,754	\$1,030,600 (24 or more classes)
Special Schools	\$297,028 (first 5 classes)	\$52,398	\$1,030,600 (19 or more classes)

7. As at present, the amount of grant will be calculated on the basis of the number of operating classes of the school in the year concerned. The actual grant provided to schools each year will be adjusted according to the Composite Consumer Price Index (CCPI) movement and the changes in the number of operating classes in the school.

8. The existing mechanism under which the CEG is operated and monitored will continue to apply after the adding the special provision.

## **JUSTIFICATIONS**

9. The disbursement of special provision is to further reduce teachers' workload, and create more space for facilitating the progressive implementation of the initiatives relating to assessment for learning as well as coping with the diverse learning needs of students. The TSA was first introduced in P3 in 2004. It will extend, by stages, up to S3 in 2006. There are cohorts of students who do not reach the competency levels and schools have been taking forward different practices to deal with their learning diversity. This non-recurrent source of funding would provide the much needed resources for teachers to relieve their heavier workload arising from the progressive introduction of the TSA. In addition, it will help to enhance the capacity of teachers in developing the most effective strategies with a view to improving the students' learning outcomes and addressing their learning diversity.

10. The introduction of SBA in the HKCEE Chinese and English Language subjects in 2007 also requires additional efforts of schools to establish

a sustainable framework, in terms of workflow, procedures and logistical arrangements, for conducting SBA. This proposed additional funding would facilitate secondary schools in relieving the workload of relevant teachers to take forward this task.

11. The proposed special provision of the CEG will be time-limited for three school years. With schools better equipped for TSA follow-up work and a sustainable framework for SBA institutionalized, schools are expected to make full use of the existing recurrent subvention from Government for supporting these initiatives after the three-year period. The CEG rates would then be reverted back to the existing levels, save for the usual price adjustment.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATONS**

12. Based on the CEG last disbursed to schools in August 2005, we estimate that the special provision of the CEG for government and subvented schools will lead to an additional expenditure of about \$550 million a year starting from the 2005/06 school year (i.e. a total additional expenditure of about \$1,650 million over the three-year period).

13. We plan to seek the approval of the Finance Committee (FC) for the proposed special provision. Subject to FC's approval, we will disburse CEG with the special provision within the current school year.

## **CONSULTATION**

14. We have consulted major schools councils, school sponsoring bodies, education organizations and school heads associations on the above proposal. Their representatives are in support of the proposal. We expect that teachers will also welcome the proposal.

## **ADVICE SOUGHT**

15. Members are invited to comment on the proposal at paragraphs 4 to 8 above.

Education and Manpower Bureau  
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