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Panel on Education

Updated background brief prepared by Legislative Council Secretariat for the meeting on 10 July 2006

Provision of education to children of ethnic minorities

Purpose

This paper provides background information on provision of education to children of ethnic minorities and summarises the discussions of the Panel on Education on the subject.

Government policy

2. According to the Education and Manpower Bureau (EMB), all eligible local children, including non-Chinese speaking children of ethnic minorities, are entitled to nine-year free and universal education. As far as EMB is concerned, children of ethnic minorities generally refer to South Asian (mainly Indian/Pakistani/Nepalese) children who are residing in Hong Kong.

3. It is the established Government policy to facilitate early integration of students of ethnic minorities into the local education system. Parents of children of ethnic minorities could apply to schools direct, or through EMB which has pledged to arrange places for these children within 21 working days. From the 2004 allocation cycle for admission to Primary one and Secondary one onwards, students of ethnic minorities may have a choice of opting for mainstream schools, or schools that traditionally admit a large number of students of ethnic minorities.

4. According to the Administration, apart from providing adaptation programmes for students of ethnic minorities before their joining local schools, EMB also offers various support services for schools admitting these students with a view to facilitating their early integration and smooth adaptation into the local education system and school life.

5. Article 39 of the Basic Law provides that the provisions of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, as well as the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, shall be implemented through the law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR).

6. The right of everyone to education is protected under Article 13 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Under Article 13, the State Parties recognise that –

- (a) primary education shall be compulsory and available free to all;
- (b) secondary education in its different forms, including technical and vocational secondary education, shall be made generally available and accessible to all by every appropriate means, and in particular by the progressive introduction of free education;
- (c) higher education shall be made equally accessible to all, on the basis of capacity, by every appropriate means, and in particular by the progressive introduction of free education;
- (d) fundamental education shall be encouraged or intensified as far as possible for those persons who have not received or completed the whole period of their primary education; and
- (e) the development of a system of schools at all levels shall be actively pursued, an adequate fellowship system shall be established, and the material conditions of teaching staff shall be continuously improved.

The States Parties also undertake “to have respect for the liberty of parents and when applicable, legal guardians to choose for their children schools, other than those established by the public authorities, which conform to such minimum educational standards as may be laid down or approved by the State and to ensure the religious and moral education of their children in conformity with their own convictions”.

7. The right to education and training of everyone, without distinction as to race, colour, or national or ethnic origin, is guaranteed under Article 5 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

8. According to the initial report of HKSAR submitted to the United Nations under the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination in late 2000 (paragraph 155 of the initial report refers), the HKSAR Government acknowledges without reservation that Article 13 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights requires

governments to provide free and compulsory primary education to all within their jurisdiction. The HKSAR Government, however, does not consider that free education is required to be provided to the specifications of particular groups.

9. According to the second report submitted by HKSAR under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in June 2003 (paragraphs 13.26 and 13.27 of the second report refer), there are nine public sector schools at that time that have admitted relatively a larger number of non-Chinese speakers. These schools have tailored their curricula to provide non-Chinese speaking children sufficient exposure to Chinese to facilitate their future integration into the wider society of Hong Kong. Block grants of HK\$2,675 per primary student and HK\$3,968 per secondary student would be provided for these schools under a School-based Support Scheme Grant (paragraph 13.30 of the second report refers). The aim is to enable schools to provide school-based support, such as tutorial classes on Chinese and/or English, adaptation programmes, special teaching materials, etc.

10. EMB had commissioned a local university to conduct a three-year longitudinal study in November 2004 to further understand the integration of students of ethnic minorities in the school community. The study will track the development and adaptation of these students newly allocated to Primary one in mainstream schools in the 2004-05 school year until they complete Primary three in the 2006-07 school year.

Deliberations of the Panel

Relevant meetings

11. The Panel discussed the education issues raised in the initial report of HKSAR in the light of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights at its meeting on 23 April 2001. The Panel also discussed the allocation of secondary school places for children of ethnic minorities at its meeting on 21 June 2004. When the Panel received a policy briefing by the Secretary for Education and Manpower on the Chief Executive's Policy Address 2005 at a special meeting on 20 January 2005, members had expressed concern about education support for children of ethnic minorities. At the meeting on 9 January 2006, the Panel received views from 15 concern organisations and the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) concerning the provision of education to children of ethnic minorities.

12. The views expressed by the 15 organisations are summarised in **Appendix I**. The discussions of the Panel at the relevant meetings are summarised in the following paragraphs.

Provision of basic education to children of ethnic minorities

13. Some members expressed concern that some children of ethnic minorities might be unable to commence their studies at primary schools because of language difficulties. They pointed out that as some parents of ethnic minorities might not be aware of the statutory requirement to send their children to schools, the Administration should promote parents' awareness of their legal obligations in respect of the provision of nine-year compulsory education to children.

14. The Administration informed the Panel that while there might be isolated cases of non-attendance at school under very exceptional circumstances, there were adequate places in the seven government or aided schools providing basic education for non-Chinese speaking (NCS) children of ethnic minorities. The Administration assured members that it would reinforce contacts with communities of ethnic minorities and collaborate with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and Consuls-General in Hong Kong to assist children of ethnic minorities to attend schools.

15. Members noted with concern the results of a survey that there were about 20 000 South Asian young people who should attend schools in Hong Kong and 40% of them had to wait for six to 12 months before they could be allocated a school place. They queried whether the HKSAR Government had failed to meet the obligations under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in respect of provision of education to ethnic minorities.

16. The Administration explained that as many parents preferred to send their children to schools in the vicinity of their residence, these children would have to wait a longer time for suitable school placement. As the seven government or aided schools had the capacity to operate 23 additional classes on demand, the HKSAR Government should not be blamed for failing to meet the international obligations on the basis of some isolated cases of non-attendance at school. The Administration was committed to providing all NCS children with a school place.

Integrated education for children of ethnic minorities

17. Members supported the provision of integrated education for NCS students. They noted two approaches, i.e. integration approach or assimilation approach, in implementation. They sought information on the difference between the two approaches.

18. The Administration explained to the Panel that under the integration approach, NCS students would be required to learn in English and study Chinese Language as an optional subject with an alternative curriculum, whereas under the assimilation approach, NCS students would be required to study both English Language and Chinese Language in school. In the past, the Administration had

adopted the integration approach. Since the 2004-05 school year, the Administration tried out the assimilation approach starting from Primary One.

Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA) arrangement for children of ethnic minorities

19. Members were concerned that under the revised SSPA arrangements which was implemented with effect from the 2004 allocation cycle (paragraph 3 above refers), it might be more difficult for children of ethnic minorities to enrol in mainstream schools adopting English as the medium of instruction, even though their parents would prefer them to learn in English rather than Chinese in secondary schools.

20. The Administration responded that for the Central Allocation stage under the revised SSPA arrangement, students of ethnic minorities were provided with a choice of 30 schools and allocated places on a school net basis. To cater for the need of primary students of ethnic minorities who had little exposure to the Chinese language, adequate Secondary one places in secondary schools which traditionally admitted a large number of students of ethnic minorities had been provided in all the school nets with these students.

21. The Administration further pointed out that at the Discretionary Places stage, Primary six students of ethnic minorities could still apply to any one participating secondary school without the restriction of school net. In the 2004-05 school year, 210 of the 451 students of ethnic minorities participated in SSPA had successfully secured a Secondary one place at the Discretionary Places stage. Of the remaining 241 students of ethnic minorities, some 37% had included mainstream secondary schools in their choice of schools, and 18% of these schools adopted Chinese as the medium of instruction.

22. Some members expressed concern about the impact of the revised SSPA arrangement on the operation of mainstream schools and schools which traditionally admitted a large number of students of ethnic minorities. They asked how these schools would adjust their operation to meet the learning and adaptation needs of a mixture of local students and students of ethnic minorities.

23. The Administration responded that an assessment tool had been provided to help primary schools with students of ethnic minorities to assess their Chinese standard so as to facilitate their parents to make suitable and informed school choices. Given that the number of students of ethnic minorities who would choose to go to mainstream schools was small and those who opted for these schools would have a keen interest to learn in Chinese, the mainstream schools should have no problem taking care of their learning and adaptation needs. In addition, EMB would encourage schools which traditionally admitted a large number of students of ethnic minorities to include Chinese Language in their curriculum so that these students could learn Chinese Language if they wished to.

24. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong expressed dissatisfaction that EMB had not consulted parents and schools which traditionally admitted a large number of students of ethnic minorities as they would be directly affected by the revised SSPA arrangement. He felt strongly that the Administration should have consulted parents and the primary school sector on the best way to implement an integration policy for children of ethnic minorities. In addition, a transition period should be provided for primary schools to adapt to the policy and students of ethnic minorities to prepare them for learning in Chinese in mainstream secondary schools. Mr Tommy CHEUNG considered that EMB should start consulting parents of the Primary one to five students of ethnic minorities on the integration policy.

25. The Administration responded that EMB had consulted the SSPA Committee as well as exchanged views with concern groups and NGOs and members of the Ethnic Minorities Forum on the revised SSPA arrangement. Their views should have included the views of the parents of the students of ethnic minorities. The Administration also explained that the revised SSPA arrangement would provide more school choices to students of ethnic minorities who would be given a choice among 30 schools comprising both mainstream schools and schools which traditionally admitted a large number students of ethnic minorities. The Administration further informed members that according to past experience, about 90% of students of ethnic minorities were enrolled in three of the 10 schools which traditionally admitted a large number of students of ethnic minorities. The competition for places in the other seven schools was very keen as these schools normally admitted band one students.

26. Members considered that EMB should provide support to mainstream schools which had admitted students of ethnic minorities and arrange students of ethnic minorities who experienced learning difficulties in mainstream schools to switch to schools which traditionally admitted more students of ethnic minorities. The Administration responded that EMB was aware of the need to strengthen the support to mainstream schools which might admit students of ethnic minorities for the first time. EMB would provide on-site school-based curriculum support to these schools. EMB would also develop a webpage to provide a platform for all language teachers to share their experiences in catering for different needs of learners at schools.

Provision of an alternative curriculum in Chinese Language

27. Some members expressed support for the provision of an alternative curriculum in Chinese Language for NCS students in primary and secondary schools to facilitate their access to vocational training and post-secondary education. They were of the view that the Institute of Vocational Education and tertiary educational institutions should consider exempting NCS students from the requirement of a qualification in Chinese Language for admission to individual sub-degree or undergraduate programmes.

28. According to the EOC, the provision of an alternative curriculum in Chinese Language for NCS students in schools would not constitute discrimination against children of ethnic minorities. However, such provision would mean a lower requirement, and NCS students studying the alternative curriculum would be regarded as less proficient than their Chinese peers in the subject. In addition, the provision might also affect the progress and extent of integration of ethnic minorities into the community.

29. The Administration responded that instead of designating an alternative curriculum in Chinese Language for application to all NCS students, the Administration believed that NCS students should be provided with different avenues for learning Chinese, depending on their level of proficiency. Empirical evidence showed that exposure to the Chinese language at an early age would facilitate the learning of the language by NCS students. With adequate support at junior level, individual NCS students were capable of learning the Chinese language alongside the local students and of achieving comparable standards. The Administration was stepping up efforts in encouraging NCS parents to enrol their children in kindergartens which gave sufficient exposure to the Chinese language.

30. The Administration agreed that for NCS students who were less proficient, an alternative curriculum designed for non-native speakers and leading to a recognised qualification would be useful. In this connection, three secondary schools admitting a large number of NCS students were already putting in place school-based curricula with a view to preparing students for the alternative qualification of General Certificate of Secondary Education (Chinese). The Administration would continue to assist schools in developing the supporting curricula.

31. The Administration also pointed out that with the adoption of standards-referencing for assessment of performance in Chinese Language and English Language starting from the 2007 Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination, candidates would be assessed on the basis of their abilities to speak and write Chinese at different competence levels. In this way, employers could determine and select applicants with the appropriate level of competence in Chinese to match with the requirements of the jobs offered. Ethnic minority students who could speak and understand Cantonese could join local students in attending vocational programmes conducted in Cantonese but with lecture notes being translated into English for them. As universities had full autonomy over student admission policies, ethnic minority students without the required qualification in Chinese Language but meeting the other prescribed entrance requirements could be considered on individual merits.

School distribution

32. Members were concerned about the long travelling time for ethnic minority children to attend schools, as there were only seven primary schools and three secondary schools which traditionally admitted a large number of NCS students. Members considered it necessary to have more selected or voluntary schools in each of the five electoral constituencies for enrolment of NCS students. They sought the view of the EOC on whether this was permissible under the Disability Discrimination Ordinance.

33. According to the advice of the EOC, under the Disability Discrimination Ordinance, the Administration could adopt reasonable measures to address the needs of students with a disability in schools under certain circumstances. Given the small population of NCS students and their geographical distribution in Hong Kong, it would be justified to provide integrated education for NCS students in a number of voluntary schools selected on a regional basis, in the light of the need to centralise resources for the provision of better support to the schools.

34. In the view of the Administration, it would be more cost-effective and beneficial for NCS students to learn in selected or voluntary schools with a critical mass of NCS students. Given that there were less than 500 ethnic minority children enrolled in Primary One in each school year, some 10 to 15 primary schools clustered on a regional basis would be sufficient. The Administration would identify, on top of the existing schools conventionally admitting a greater number of NCS students, one to two mainstream schools with a good foundation in supporting NCS students in each of the five electoral constituencies. The Administration would liaise with the Home Affairs Bureau and the EOC to ensure that the approach of centralising support on a regional basis was permissible under the future legislation against racial discrimination.

Education for ethnic minority children under the new academic structure

35. Some members called on the Administration to plan the provision of education for children of ethnic minorities under the new academic structure.

36. The Administration responded that the next round of consultation in respect of the new academic structure would focus on the curriculum design of career-oriented studies for students who were less inclined to academic pursuits. The provision of career-oriented studies would serve as a bridge for NCS students to access post-secondary education and vocational training in the long term.

Education support for ethnic minority children

37. Some members expressed concern about the serious problem of inter-generational poverty among families of ethnic minorities in Hong Kong.

They pointed out that families of some ethnic minorities from South-East Asian countries were mostly of low socio-economic status and most of their children could not learn through Chinese or English. A large majority of these children would discontinue their school education at junior secondary levels and some of them might go astray. The current policy on provision of integrated education to children of ethnic minorities could not improve the situation of these children as they did not have adequate family support. Given their disadvantaged position in the community, some members called on the Administration to allocate sufficient resources to assist children of ethnic minorities in pursuit of education and development of skills and abilities to lead a normal and fruitful life.

38. The Administration responded that poverty of families of ethnic minorities was a complicated problem which could only be resolved through a holistic package of policies and measures. The Administration would continue to collaborate with NGOs and educational institutions in the provision of education support services to children of ethnic minorities. In particular, the Vocational Training Council had agreed to offer career-oriented programmes suitable for children of ethnic minorities who could learn through English. The Administration considered that the results of the provision of integrated education to children of ethnic minorities should be assessed over a suitable length of time.

Questions raised at Council meetings relating to provision of education to children of ethnic minorities

39. During the current term of the Legislative Council (LegCo), three written questions regarding provision of education to ethnic minorities had been raised at the Council meetings on 6 July 2005, 23 November 2005 and 24 May 2006 respectively. These three questions and the corresponding replies are in **Appendices II, III and IV** respectively. A list of all the questions raised by Members on provision of education to children of ethnic minorities at Council meetings since the first term of LegCo is in **Appendix V**. The Official Records of Proceedings of the relevant Council meetings are available on the LegCo website at <http://www.legco.gov.hk>.

Relevant papers

40. A list of the relevant papers on the LegCo website is in **Appendix VI**.

**Panel on Education
Meeting on 9 January 2006**

Summary of views of deputations on education for children of ethnic minorities

Submission from deputations [LC Paper Nos.]	Key area	Integrated education for (Non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students and the new Primary One Allocation (POA) and Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA) arrangements	Curriculum, medium of instruction, and school places and locations	Support measures	Post-secondary education and others
1.	Equal Opportunities Commission [CB(2)774/05-06(01)]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Integrating NCS children into mainstream schools benefits both NCS and Chinese-speaking students in learning, including the creation of a bilingual school environment, - Cultural diversity should be respected in integrating NCS students into the mainstream education systems, - The concept of equal opportunities in education for NCS children in schools is essential for the development of values and culture against racial 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An alternative Chinese curriculum with equal accreditation as the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (HKCEE) should be developed, with reference to the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE), for NCS students, - Subject to students' capacity and availability of resources, NCS students should be given the opportunity to learn their mother languages. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adequate support should be provided in the school environment in order to provide NCS children with a level playing field, - Under the new POA and SSPA arrangements, NCS students allocated to individual schools might feel lonely and isolated, and the costs of providing accommodation and support measures are relatively high. Support measures such as language classes and counselling services within the same school net should be centralised for better rationalisation of 	

Submission from deputations [LC Paper Nos.]	Key area	Integrated education for (Non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students and the new Primary One Allocation (POA) and Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA) arrangements	Curriculum, medium of instruction, and school places and locations	Support measures	Post-secondary education and others
		<p>discrimination,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Periodic research and evaluation on the effectiveness of the new POA and SSPA arrangements and the respective support measures should be conducted and the results of which should be made public. 		<p>resources, and peer sharing and mutual support,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support should be given to cultivate a multicultural environment in schools so that children from different cultural background can enjoy a close-knit setting, - Schools with experience in serving NCS students could act as a resource point to provide support and advice to their professional counterparts, - Consultation with parents, teachers, students and concern groups on provision of support to NCS students are essential. 	

Submission from deputations [LC Paper Nos.]	Key area	Integrated education for (Non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students and the new Primary One Allocation (POA) and Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA) arrangements	Curriculum, medium of instruction, and school places and locations	Support measures	Post-secondary education and others
2.	DAB Ethnic Minorities Committee [CB(2)806/05-06(01)]		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NCS students had difficulty to learn in schools adopting Chinese as the medium of instruction (CMI schools) as well as to enrol in schools adopting English as the medium of instruction (EMI schools), and should be provided with sufficient or appropriate Chinese and English language classes in schools, especially at Primary 1 (P1) to Primary 3 (P3) levels, - Review on the adequacy and location of schools in enrolment of NCS students should be conducted with a view to reducing their travelling time to school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Government should introduce a vocational Chinese Learning Campaign similar to the vocational English Learning Campaign, with sufficient locations and incentives to encourage ethnic minorities to participate. 	

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3.	Pakistan Islamic Welfare Union Incorporated (HK) Ltd [CB(2)779/05-06(03)]	– Some Muslim parents have requested that the Islamic Kasim Tuet Memorial College sponsored by the Chinese Muslim Cultural and Fraternal Association should be included in the school list under the new SSPA arrangement for districts with Islamic families.	– One more Islamic secondary school should be established to accommodate NCS students residing in Kowloon.		– NCS students should enjoy concessionary fees in public transport as senior citizens enjoy, – Schools should review their class schedules with a view to facilitating NCS students to complete homework assignments.
4.	Society for Cultural Integration	– The new POA and SSPA arrangements provide NCS students with more choice of schools, but has not improved the quality of education provided for them.	– NCS students should be provided with alternative Chinese curriculum from primary to secondary levels with supportive learning tools and video discs so that they can participate in HKCEE and GCSE.		– Government should provide more education opportunities for NCS students at post secondary level, in particular sub-degree and associate degree programmes in English.

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5.	Christian Action [CB(2)839/05-06(01)]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The group supports the new POA and SSPA arrangements for NCS children, - A few primary schools in the five to six districts with more ethnic minority residents should be selected on a voluntary basis to enrol NCS students, - EMB should collaborate with NGOs and ethnic groups to keep parents aware of the new POA and SSPA arrangements, - A better matching of primary and secondary schools for NCS students is necessary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Education and Manpower Bureau (EMB) should design a standard Chinese (or Han-yue) curriculum for NCS students at different primary and secondary levels, - EMB should collaborate with the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority to provide an internationally recognised examination equivalent to General Certificate of Secondary Education or Advanced Supplementary levels for assessing NCS students' abilities in Chinese language. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existing initiation programme is effective for newly arrived NCS children to continue their studies in mainstream schools, - Additional resources should be provided for participating schools to design tailor-made programmes and teaching materials for NCS students, - Small class teaching of 15-25 students would benefit teaching and learning for NCS students. 	

Submission from deputations [LC Paper Nos.]	Key area	Integrated education for (Non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students and the new Primary One Allocation (POA) and Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA) arrangements	Curriculum, medium of instruction, and school places and locations	Support measures	Post-secondary education and others
6.	Hong Kong Christian Service [CB(2)797/05-06(01)]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The new POA and SSPA arrangements provide NCS students with equal opportunity to attend mainstream schools, - EMB should collaborate with NGOs and ethnic groups to promote the benefits of the new POA and SSPA arrangements as well as the education policies among the ethnic minority communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EMB should collaborate with schools to provide tailor-made curriculum and adopt appropriate pedagogies for NCS students at primary and secondary levels, in particular for the subject of Chinese Language, under the existing and the new academic structure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training for pre-service and in-service teachers under the existing and the new academic structure should include cultural characteristics and needs of NCS students, - Additional resources should be allocated to support schools in enrolment of NCS students, - The existing after-school support service in support of NCS students should continue. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EMB should review policy on provision of post-secondary education for NCS students, - EMB should improve the general awareness of ethnic minority community on education reform and policies, - NCS students should be exempted from the required qualification in Chinese Language for enrolment to tertiary educational institutions, - Tertiary educational institutions should provide programmes conducted in English for NCS students.

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7.	Hong Kong Human Rights Monitor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ethnic minority children should enjoy equal opportunity to education, - EMB should improve communications with ethnic minority communities by way of printed materials and the Internet on the new POA and SSPA arrangements in their languages. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use of the languages of the ethnic minorities to teach their children in school should be considered, - EMB should develop a curriculum framework on Chinese Language for schools with enrolment of NCS students to follow, - Apart from enrolment to mainstream schools of their choice, NCS children should be provided with a choice of the schools with a large enrolment of ethnic minority students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EMB should improve administrative arrangements and support for ethnic minority parents and children, - Like the allocation of funds to support the operation of English Foundation Schools, Government should consider allocation of resources for provision of education to ethnic minority children. 	

Submission from deputations [LC Paper Nos.]	Key area	Integrated education for (Non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students and the new Primary One Allocation (POA) and Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA) arrangements	Curriculum, medium of instruction, and school places and locations	Support measures	Post-secondary education and others
8.	Ethnic Minority Concern Group [CB(2)797/05-06(02)]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NCS students should learn in English as their first language and learn their ethnic languages as second languages in school education, - Government should plan the provision of bridging courses in Chinese at all levels for NCS children in order to prepare them to receive integrated education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government should review the Chinese Language curriculum for NCS students in primary and secondary schools, - As mother-tongue teaching has a discriminatory effect against NCS students in learning, an alternative language policy should be introduced for NCS students, - Government should review the subject syllabus under HKCEE and accept ethnic minority languages and Chinese language as second language for NCS students in addition to French and German. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government should provide expert support and training for teachers in teaching NCS students, - Government should provide additional resources for schools in enrolment of NCS students, - Government should provide language programmes to support NCS students in CMI schools, - Teachers and teaching assistants should be provided with training on the culture and languages of ethnic minorities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government should conduct a survey in the languages of ethnic minorities to estimate the population of NCS students and their educational needs.

Submission from deputations [LC Paper Nos.]	Key area	Integrated education for (Non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students and the new Primary One Allocation (POA) and Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA) arrangements	Curriculum, medium of instruction, and school places and locations	Support measures	Post-secondary education and others
9.	Unison Hong Kong [CB(2)839/05-06(02)]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Group supports integrated education as it provides NCS students with access to mainstream schools and opportunity to study Chinese Language, - NCS children and their parents cannot speak Cantonese and find it difficult to communicate with teachers and local Chinese students, - In implementing integrated education, teachers in mainstream schools are required to teach NCS and students with special educational needs. They work under extreme pressure, - Teachers in mainstream schools should learn the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NCS students find it difficult to learn in Cantonese, - Government should develop a “Chinese as a second language” policy and assist schools in the development of their school-based curriculum of Chinese Language for NCS students, - NCS students should be provided with an alternative Chinese curriculum, in particular under the “3+3+4” new academic structure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Many parents are hesitated to send their children to mainstream primary schools because of insufficient support in these schools, - Schools in enrolment of NCS students should be provided with additional resources, - After-school tutorials for NCS students should continue, - Native-speaking teaching assistants of different ethnic languages should be employed to assist teachers in teaching NCS students and communicating with their parents, - Teachers should be 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NCS students have little opportunity to pursue further studies after secondary school because of the requirement of five passes in HKCEE including a pass in Chinese Language, - IVE should provide programmes conducted in English to meet the diverse learning interests of NCS students, - IVE should review its requirements for enrolment and abolish the Chinese language requirement, - Government should provide Spring Board Programmes in English for NCS youths to attain a qualification equivalent

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		cultural characteristics of different ethnic minorities.		trained on specific skills and knowledge for teaching NCS students, – Small class teaching should be adopted for teaching NCS students.	to five passes in HKCEE.
10. Hong Kong Integrated Nepalese Society [CB(2)806/05-06(02)]	– The Group supports integrated education and integration of ethnic minority communities into the mainstream community, – NCS children regardless of their race, colour, ethnicity and religion enjoy the same right to education.	– Sufficient EMI primary and secondary schools should be provided for children of ethnic minorities in different districts, in particular in Yuen Long where there is a Nepalese population of more than 4 000.	– Government should provide sufficient resources for the promotion of different culture and religion in the community, – Government should support the operation of schools admitting NCS students in the same way as it supports the operation of English Foundation Schools.	– As ethnic minority students studying in educational institutions in the Mainland are treated as foreign students, Government should help relay the request of the Society to the Mainland Authorities that ethnic minority students from Hong Kong should be charged with the same level of tuition and accommodation fees for Chinese students from Hong Kong.	

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11.	Hong Kong SKH Lady MacLehose Centre [CB(2)821/05-06(01)]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government should decide whether to adopt an integration or an assimilation approach for implementing integrated education for NCS students, - An integration approach in Language would require NCS students to learn in English and learn Chinese as an optional second language with an alternative curriculum in schools, and their access to tertiary education would not be blocked by a requirement of Chinese Language, - An assimilative approach in Language would require NCS students to learn both English and Chinese at comparable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An alternative Chinese curriculum for NCS students should be provided for NCS students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government should provide sufficient support for NCS students in CMI schools such as the provision of after-school tutorial classes. 	

Submission from deputations [LC Paper Nos.]	Key area	Integrated education for (Non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students and the new Primary One Allocation (POA) and Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA) arrangements	Curriculum, medium of instruction, and school places and locations	Support measures	Post-secondary education and others
		levels with their Chinese peers in school, and access to tertiary education incorporates a requirement in both English and Chinese language.			
12. Minhaj-Ul-Quran [CB(2)806/05-06(03)]	– Government should provide education opportunities for children and adults of ethnic minorities in need.	– Government should provide English and Cantonese classes for children of ethnic minorities to prepare themselves for enrolment in public sector schools.	–	– Government should provide English and Cantonese classes for ethnic minority adults in community centres or schools after school hours at nominal fees.	
13. Islamic Kasim Tuet Memorial College [CB(2)806/05-06(04) and (05)]	– The provision of integrated education for NCS students is correct, but a set of supporting policies and strategies to facilitate implementation is needed.	– EMB should develop an alternative Chinese curriculum from pre-school to secondary education for NCS students with a recognised assessment mechanism, – NCS students residing in	– Schools in enrolment of NCS students should be provided with additional resources and support.	– The requirement of a qualification in Chinese Language for NCS students to access tertiary education should be reviewed, – Pre-vocational training and programmes for NCS students should be	

Submission from deputations [LC Paper Nos.]	Key area	Integrated education for (Non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students and the new Primary One Allocation (POA) and Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA) arrangements	Curriculum, medium of instruction, and school places and locations	Support measures	Post-secondary education and others
			<p>different districts should be provided with choice in CMI and EMI schools,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Islamic Kasim Tuet Memorial College should be opened to all Muslim students under SSPA, - Like NCS students with different religious beliefs, Muslim students should have more school choice. 		<p>conducted in English.</p>
14.	Yang Memorial Methodist Social Service				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government should provide NCS students with more opportunities to receive vocational training and pursue tertiary education, - Children of ethnic minorities, in particular those from South Asian countries, have difficulties to pursue

Submission from deputations [LC Paper Nos.]	Key area	Integrated education for (Non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students and the new Primary One Allocation (POA) and Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA) arrangements	Curriculum, medium of instruction, and school places and locations	Support measures	Post-secondary education and others
					further education and employment after completion of secondary education.
15. Federation of Minority Schools [CB(2)806/05-06(06)] (revised)				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government should provide subsidy for the Federation to help needy ethnic minorities, - Government should consult registered minority organisations and formulate affirmative action programmes to support ethnic minorities in education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government should exempt members of the Federation from certain statutory requirements the implementation of which require substantial financial outlay.
16. Khals Diwan (Sikh Temple)			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children of ethnic minorities in Hong Kong are able to learn to speak and listen in Cantonese and Government should provide Chinese writing courses for them. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NCS students should be provided with more opportunities in vocational training and pathways to higher education. Many NCS youths are attracted by jobs with a monthly

Submission from deputations [LC Paper Nos.]	Key area	Integrated education for (Non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students and the new Primary One Allocation (POA) and Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA) arrangements	Curriculum, medium of instruction, and school places and locations	Support measures	Post-secondary education and others
					salary of around \$5000 to \$6000 after secondary school. Government should consider providing a cash subsidy of around \$2500 to encourage them to pursue further studies after completion of secondary education.

LEGCO QUESTION No. 16

(Written Reply)

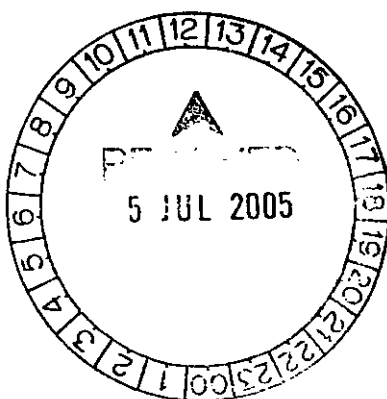
Asked by: Hon Cheung Man-kwongDate of Sitting: 6 July 2005Replied by: Secretary for Education
and ManpowerQuestion:

Regarding education for the ethnic minorities, will the Government inform this Council of the following:

- (a) the estimated number of school-age ethnic minorities in each of the coming five years, with a breakdown by age groups;
- (b) the respective numbers, in each of the past three years, of ethnic minorities attending schools (with a breakdown by learning stages), having completed a learning stage and having dropped out of school, and their respective percentages in the ethnic minority population of the relevant ages;
- (c) the channels through which the Administration releases information about school enrolment to the ethnic minorities; and
- (d) whether children of the ethnic minorities are eligible for assistance under the Kindergarten Fee Remission Scheme and Child Care Centre Fee Assistance Scheme; if so, of the relevant numbers of applications in the past three years and the amounts of assistance involved; if not, whether the Government will include these children in the Schemes to encourage them to receive pre-primary education?

Reply:

Madam President,



First of all, I would like to point out that people in the community may have different ideas as to who should be regarded as "ethnic minorities". For the Education and Manpower Bureau (EMB), ethnic minority children generally refer to South Asian (mainly Indian/Pakistani/Nepalese) children who are residing in Hong Kong. The replies should be read in this context.

- (a) Our planning for schools is premised on our projection of the overall student population. Moreover, a child's racial origin/nationality does not affect his/her eligibility for school admission. The Administration therefore, does not keep separate statistics on the number of school-age ethnic minority children for the coming five years.
- (b) For the same reason as stated in (a), EMB does not keep the statistics referred to in part (b) of the question;
- (c) The EMB, in collaboration with the Home Affairs Bureau (HAB), publishes leaflets in English and several ethnic minority languages on various education and support services available for ethnic minority children. The ethnic minorities may obtain such information leaflets from relevant non-governmental organisations, the EMB's Regional Education Offices and the Public Enquiry Service Centres of the Home Affairs Department. The HAB would also disseminate such information direct to the ethnic minority groups. In addition, information on education and placement services is available on the EMB's website for parents' easy access.

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For the arrangements for admission to Primary One and Secondary One, the EMB organizes briefings and provides relevant materials in several ethnic minority languages to help ethnic minority parents better understand the allocation arrangements and the application procedures.

- (d) Under the existing Kindergarten Fee Remission Scheme and Child Care Centre Fee Assistance Scheme, all eligible applicants, including ethnic minority children, may apply for assistance. Since the racial origin/nationality does not affect the eligibility of the applicants, the Administration does not keep separate statistics on the applications from and the amounts of assistance for ethnic minority children.

LEGCO QUESTION No. 19
(Written Reply)

Asked by: Hon Emily LAU

Date of Sitting: 23 November 2005

Replied by: Secretary for Education
and Manpower

Question:

Regarding the education of students of the ethnic minorities, will the Executive Authorities inform this Council:

- (a) in each of the past ten years, of the number of students of the ethnic minorities who:
- (i) sat for the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination, together with their passing rates for Chinese Language, English Language and Mathematics; and
 - (ii) furthered their studies in matriculation courses; and
- (b) whether specific measures are in place to help students of the ethnic minorities to learn Chinese; if so, of the effectiveness of such measures; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

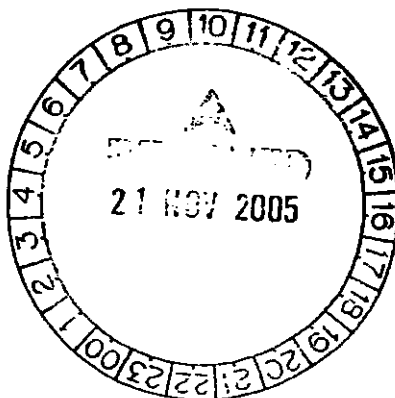
Madam President,

Our response to the questions raised regarding the education of students of the ethnic minorities is presented below :

- (a) Applicants registering for the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (HKCEE) are not required to submit information on their racial origin/nationality. The EMB, therefore, does not have statistics on the number of students of the ethnic minorities taking part in the HKCEE and their passing rates for Chinese Language, English Language and Mathematics. Nor do we have information on the number of these students furthering their studies in matriculation courses, as a student's racial origin/nationality does not affect his/her eligibility for such courses.
- (b) The EMB collaborates with teachers and provides schools with a wide range of supporting services to help students of ethnic minorities to learn Chinese. Some specific measures include: (1) To assist schools in developing school-based learning materials and adjusting the teaching and learning progress so as to increase students' learning motivation and build up their confidence; (2) To promote professional development of teachers, help them understand the difficulties faced by these students so that they can develop flexible teaching strategies, introduce continuous assessment which could provide positive feedback to students' learning; (3) To assist schools to build up a school network and organize activities for teachers to share their successful teaching experience and teaching resources.

The above measures have effectively helped students of ethnic minorities learn Chinese. With better understanding about the learning needs of these students, schools can better design the curriculum and develop appropriate learning materials for them. Schools can also arrange different programmes, such as pull-out programme on vocabulary building and Chinese Language tutorials to cater for the learning diversity of students and improve their language ability. Some schools also create

language-rich environment through organising peer support activities (e.g. Big Brother and Big Sister Scheme, Reading Ambassadors). These programmes do not only help enhance the speaking and listening abilities of these students, build up their repertoire of Chinese words and accelerate the speed at which they learn new words, but also enhance their learning motivation and confidence. As observed from school visits, students of ethnic minorities participated actively and spoke proactively in classes. Some even showed that they loved learning Chinese and had participated actively in language learning activities. Cultural integration within schools was also fostered.



Appendix IV

LEGCO QUESTION NO. 14

(Written Reply)

Asked by: Hon Emily LAUDate of Sitting: 24 May 2006Replied by: Secretary for Education
and Manpower**Question:**

Regarding education for non-Chinese speaking ("NCS") students, will the Executive Authorities inform this Council:

- (a) as the authorities have indicated that the three secondary schools which conventionally admit a larger number of NCS students have already put in place school-based curricula to assist their students in attaining the qualification of General Certificate of Secondary Education (Chinese), of the details of these curricula;
- (b) as the authorities have indicated that they will identify one or two schools in each of the five electoral constituencies to offer better support for NCS students, of the details of the work to identify such schools; and
- (c) of the details of the vocational training programmes in English offered by the authorities to NCS students?

Reply:

Madam President,

- (a) In order to facilitate integration of non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students into the local community and their long-term development in Hong Kong, the three secondary schools which traditionally admit a larger number of NCS students have in recent years started to develop their school-based Chinese Language curricula progressively at each grade level. The

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development takes into account the diverse needs and abilities of their students and their specific school context. One of the objectives of such curricula is to enable the students concerned to acquire, upon completion of secondary education, a suitable qualification in Chinese Language mainly for NCS persons, such as the General Certificate of Secondary Education (Chinese), according to their abilities. The Chinese Language curriculum puts emphasis on developing the basic language skills of students (reading, writing, listening and speaking); enriching their knowledge about the Chinese culture and literature; developing thinking and independent learning skills; and cultivating positive moral values. The school-based curricula developed by the three schools are also following this broad framework with adaptation according to the Chinese proficiency of the relevant cohorts of NCS students. Currently, the curriculum in one of the secondary schools concerned has been developed up to the Secondary 4 level while those in the other two schools are being implemented at the junior secondary level.

- (b) Recently, the Education and Manpower Bureau (EMB) has had preliminary discussion with non-government organizations and ethnic minority concern groups on how to select the "resource schools" concerned. The relevant arrangements will take into consideration the number of NCS students in individual electoral constituencies, the distribution of the selected primary and secondary schools in the electoral constituencies, the experience and performance of these schools in supporting NCS students, the number of NCS students they have admitted, etc. Currently, the EMB is identifying suitable schools in each of the electoral constituencies, and will conduct detailed discussion with the schools concerned on the school-based support measures that may be required. The purpose is to assist these "resource schools" in developing their strengths and centralizing resources to provide even

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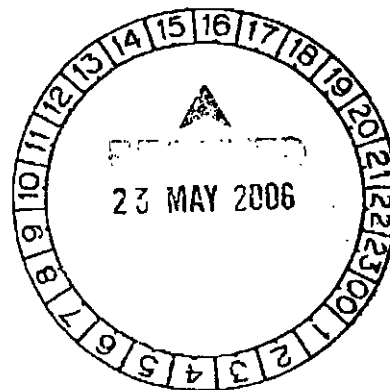
better support for their NCS students, and to facilitate their professional sharing with other schools. If everything goes smoothly, the relevant arrangements may start to be implemented within the 2006/07 school year at the earliest.

- (c) The Vocational Training Council (VTC) has provided NCS school leavers with a number of professional training courses conducted in English. In the 2005/06 school year, a one-year fundamental diploma course on tourism has been provided for 36 Secondary 5 NCS school leavers. The VTC plans to increase the number of such learning modules and school places in the 2006/07 school year. A series of long- and short-term courses covering beauty care, catering, construction services and computer animation will be provided for NCS school leavers at different academic levels. In addition, the Construction Industry Training Authority has also offered vocational training courses conducted in English.

For Career-oriented Curriculum (COC) piloting in secondary schools and the future Career-oriented Studies under the new senior secondary curriculum, some courses may be offered in English subject to demand. Under the COC pilot scheme for the 2005/07 school years, six courses could have been offered in English but were not run eventually due to a lack of demand from the schools concerned. As regards the 34 piloting courses for the 2006/08 school years, two courses will be offered in English only whereas 12 courses can be offered in English subject to demand. So far four secondary schools have nominated some of their NCS students to take the COC courses, including those to be conducted in English. In addition, to further widen the choices of courses for NCS students who have little problem communicating in Chinese orally but are only relatively weaker in reading/writing the language, we have

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requested the relevant institutions to consider supplementing the courses conducted primarily in Chinese with English reading materials/assessment.



Panel on Education

**List of questions raised at Council meetings relating to
provision of education to children of ethnic minorities
since the first term of the Legislative Council**

Meeting Date	Question/Motion
14.6.2000	Hon CHEUNG Man-kwong raised a written question on “Schooling of Ethnic Nepalese Children and Youths Residing in Hong Kong”.
15.11.2000	Hon CHEUNG Man-kwong raised a written question on “Education for Non-Chinese Asian Children and Youths”.
7.3.2001	Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip raised a written question on “Protection of Rights and Benefits of Ethnic Minorities”.
5.12.2001	Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing raised a written question on “Education for Non-Chinese Speaking Children”.
6.7.2005	Hon CHEUNG Man-kwong raised a written question on “Education for Ethnic Minorities”.
23.11.2005	Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing raised a written question on “Education for the ethnic minorities”.
24.5.2006	Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing raised a written question on “Education for non-Chinese speaking students”.

Relevant papers on the provision of education to children of ethnic minorities

Date of meeting	Meeting	Minutes/Paper	LC Paper No.
23.4.2001	Panel on Education	Minutes of meeting	CB(2)1829/00-01
		Administration's paper on "School education for children of ethnic minorities"	CB(2)46/01-02(01)
		Extract of the submission from the Equal Opportunities Commission	CB(2)1317/00-01(01)
		Extract of the submission from the Hong Kong Human Rights Monitor	CB(2)1317/00-01(02)
21.6.2004	Panel on Education	Minutes of meeting	CB(2)3324/03-04
		Administration's paper on "Secondary school places allocation arrangement for children for ethnic minorities"	CB(2)2786/03-04(02)
		Administration's paper on "Results of secondary school places allocation 2004 ethnic minority children"	CB(2)3156/03-04(01)
20.1.2005	Panel on Education	Minutes of meeting	CB(2)1630/04-05
		Administration's paper on "education support for ethnic minority children"	CB(2)2305/04-05(01)

Date of meeting	Meeting	Minutes/Paper	LC Paper No.
9.1.2006	Panel on Education	Minutes of meeting	CB(2)1044/05-06
		Administration's paper on "Education for Children of Ethnic Minorities"	CB(2)779/05-06(01)
		Submission from the Equal Opportunities Commission	CB(2)774/05-06(01)
		Administration's response to members' consensus at the meeting	CB(2)1536/05-06(01)

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
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