

立法會 *Legislative Council*

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Panel on Education

Background brief prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat for the special meeting on 16 November 2006

Gifted Education

Purpose

This paper sets out the existing policy on gifted education and summarises the concerns of Members.

Existing policy

2. Since 2000, the Administration has adopted a three-tier operation mode in implementing the policy of gifted education. At Level 1, support is given within classes. At Level 2, pull-out programmes are provided within the school. At Level 3, off-site programmes are provided for the exceptionally gifted in collaboration with tertiary institutions and professional bodies.

School-based programmes

3. At the first two levels, schools are encouraged to start whole class and pull-out school-based programmes to nurture and develop the critical thinking skills, creativity and personal-social skills of students with relatively higher abilities. Support measures provided by the Administration in relation to gifted education at the first two levels include -

- (a) providing support to schools through the "Cluster School Gifted Project" and the "Seed Project" in implementing school-based gifted programmes to promote gifted education;
- (b) organising teacher training in gifted education;

- (c) providing teacher training packages for schools' reference;
- (d) developing web-based curriculum resources for schools' reference; and
- (e) providing enrichment programmes to gifted students with learning, behavioural and emotional problems already enrolled at the Fung Hon Chu Gifted Education Centre.

Off-site development programmes

4. At the third level of the three-tier framework, off-site support outside schools is provided for the exceptionally gifted students. Through the Support Measures for the Exceptionally Gifted Students Scheme, the Administration works in partnership with tertiary institutions and educational bodies to offer tailor-made educational provisions in various domains for further developing gifted students' talents. The enhancement programmes organised under the Scheme include university-based credit-bearing courses, university-based study projects, thematic Olympiad training programmes, expert/mentoring programmes, leadership training cum social services, etc.

Members' concerns

5. Since the introduction of the three-tier framework in 2000, Members had raised questions about gifted education at Council meetings and during the scrutiny of the annual Estimates of Expenditure of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administration Region. The concerns of Members are summarised in the following paragraphs.

Assessment of gifted students

6. Members had sought information on the criteria for assessing gifted students and their percentage in all children of school age in the territory. According to the Administration, the Education and Manpower Bureau does not provide specific service specifically to assess a student's giftedness. The Psychological Services Section of the former Education Department adopted the standardised intelligence quotient (IQ) tests and made referrals of gifted students who were assessed to have IQ over 130 and concurrently also exhibited learning, behavioural or emotional problems to the Fung Hon Chu Gifted Education Centre where centre-based enrichment programmes were offered. With the introduction of the gifted education policy in 2000, the aforementioned referral practice had ceased to operate.

7. The Administration further explained that the education sector had generally adopted a broad definition of giftedness, using multiple criteria. The Administration therefore abandoned the Psychological Services Section's unitary approach to assessing only the students' intellectual abilities, in favour of identification of multiple

intelligence through multiple methods, such as student performance, behavioural checklists, teacher/parent/peer/self nomination, student portfolios, and standardised tests. Under this definition, the proportion of students with superior performance in specific areas might constitute 2% to 4% of the students in schools.

Fung Hon Chu Gifted Education Centre

8. Members noted that the Fung Hon Chu Gifted Education Centre, which was established in 1995 to provide organised centre-based enrichment programmes for gifted students, had ceased to enrol gifted students following the implementation of the three-tier gifted education framework in 2000. They were concerned how the educational needs of students who had completed the enrichment programmes in the Centre could be catered for.

9. The Administration explained that under the new arrangement, the main tasks of the Centre were to co-ordinate various gifted education related activities and to develop resources packages on teaching and curriculum planning in support of school-based provision. In addition, the Centre provided training for teachers and parents to assist them in identifying the needs of gifted students and helping the students in schools. To further support gifted students, the Administration had been liaising with universities to encourage them to design suitable programmes for gifted students and to offer them more credit-bearing university courses.

Expenditure on gifted education

10. Members were concerned about the funding for gifted education over the past few years. According to the Administration, the funding was \$28 million in 2002-2003, \$23 million in 2003-2004 and \$29 million in both 2004-2005 and 2005-2006.

2006-2007 Policy Address

11. In his 2006-2007 Policy Address, the Chief Executive proposes to establish an Academy for Gifted Education (the Academy), which will target at students aged 10 to 18 who are either excellent academic achievers or distinguished performers in specific areas. The mission of the Academy is to expand the pool of talents in terms of both numbers and diversity by providing learning opportunities and specialist services. Whilst the Academy will cater primarily for the needs of local gifted students, the Government intends to develop it in the long run into a knowledge hub to serve gifted students in the Mainland and the Asia-Pacific region as well.

12. The direct services of the Academy will cover the following -

- (a) *for students* - the direct service mainly comprises off-site service for the exceptionally gifted students whose needs cannot be met by

school-based programmes. Learning opportunities aim for "enrichment" (i.e. knowledge not normally encountered in schools such as film, art, astronomy, marine science) and "acceleration" (such as programmes set at the undergraduate level or beyond);

- (b) *for teachers* - it provides an arena for teachers and specialists to exchange experiences, collaborate and enhance the overall capacity in supporting gifted education;
- (c) *for parents* - it provides advice on parenting the gifted at home to better cater for their cognitive and emotional needs; and
- (d) *for academics and professionals* - building on strengths and local experience, it should aspire to tap into and contribute to the development of gifted education both locally and worldwide as a long-term goal.

Relevant papers

13. A list of the relevant papers on the Legislative Council website is in the **Appendix**.

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
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Panel on Education
Relevant papers on gifted education

Meeting	Date of meeting	Minutes/Paper/Questions
Finance Committee	23.3.2001	Minutes of meeting, Chapter XIII : Education and Manpower
		Supplementary question raised by Hon LO Wing-lok, Reply Serial No. S-EMB014
Finance Committee	2000-2001	Questions raised by Hon YEUNG Yiu-chung, Reply Serial Nos. EMB068 and EMB070
		Question raised by Hon Jasper TSANG Yok-sing, Reply Serial No. EMB117
Legislative Council	30.1.2002	Written question on "Education of Gifted Students" raised by Hon YEUNG Yiu-chung Official Record of Proceedings Pages 74 - 76
Legislative Council	25.6.2003	Written question on "Education for Gifted Students" raised by Hon Frederick FUNG Official Record of Proceedings Pages 83 - 87
Finance Committee	2003-2004	Question raised by Hon YEUNG Yiu-chung, Reply Serial No. EMB034
		Question raised by Hon MA Fung-kwok, Reply Serial No. EMB077
Finance Committee	2004-2005	Question raised by Hon EU Yuet-mee, Audrey, Reply Serial No. EMB011
		Questions raised by Hon MA Lik, Reply Serial Nos. EMB019 and EMB023
Finance Committee	2005-2006	Question raised by Hon YEUNG Sum, Reply Serial No. EMB091
Panel on Education	19.10.2006	Administration's paper entitled "Policy Initiatives on Education in the 2006-07 Policy Address" [LC Paper No. CB(2)28/06-07(01)]