

To: panel_e@legco.gov.hk

Date: Tuesday, November 22, 2011 02:35PM

Subject: (Important) Anti Privatization of ESF

From: ALEX CHIU

Sent: Tuesday, November 15, 2011 9:30 PM

To:

Cc:

Subject: (Important) Anti Privatization of ESF

Dear Hon Starry Lee, Cyd Ho, Members (Education Panel),

The Education panel meeting on ESF subvention will be held again in Dec this year. ESF parents are critically concerned about the future subvention. Following the parent campaign in Jul11, we would like you to follow up on this issue. Kindly see the attached letter.

Thank you very much.

Dr Alex CHIU

Consultant Cardiologist, Cardiology Service-in-charge, Caritas Medical Centre
3 Children in Shatin Junior/College

15th Nov 2011

To: Legco Education Panel (Chair- Hon Starry Lee, Vice Chair- Hon Cyd Ho, ALL members)
 ESF Chair (Carlson Tong), CEO (Heather Du Quesnay), BoG
 ComPar Chair (Marc Castagnet), All PTA Chairs, BoG(Parent members)

CC: Education Bureau

ANTI- "PRIVATIZATION OF ESF"

The Legco Education Panel meeting on "Review of ESF Subvention" was held on 11thJul2011.

In the meeting, the panel members were generally supportive of continuing ESF subvention, with opinion that the academic autonomy of ESF in determining its curricula and medium of instruction should not be affected, and the uniqueness of ESF should be preserved. Members acknowledged that the mission of ESF is to provide affordable English-medium education for students who could not afford to attend international school and for children of expatriate families. NO panel members spoke against subvention, though the ESF should be subject to monitoring to ensure proper financial management.

Yet in the meeting, EDB officials expressed they would examine whether ESF would be able to migrate progressively towards eventual "self-financing". This was simply an intention to remove the subvention, forcing ESF to become private schools ("self-financing"). This was contrary to the view of panel members. In summing up of the meeting, panel Chairman said members generally agreed that Government subvention to ESF should Not be withdrawn, and called on ESF to improve financial management with view to providing affordable English-medium education to the community.

After the meeting, some Legco members have visited ESF schools with also positive comments.

ESF and EDB have been continuing the negotiation on subvention after the meeting, and should report the decision to another Legco Education panel meeting at Dec2011. That means the future subvention is still uncertain yet.

All the newly (Oct11) elected parent members of BoG have also expressed their pursuit for continued and increased in subvention.

ESF parents much appreciate the support of panel members. We plead with Legco members to protect ESF from being "privatized". We wish Legco members to closely monitor the negotiation process. A private ESF would no longer be ESF but just another elite international school, serving only rich families. The fee has to go up by ~\$20,000/yr (subvention 2.7 billion per yr/ 13,000 students) on top of the already expensive fee. This would be discriminating the English/ Non-Chinese speaking ethnic minorities, depriving of their access to the only subvented schools with English-medium education. Thousands of students would have nowhere to go. The unique/important role of ESF would vanish which is destructive to HK education system and would incur loss to HK as an international city.

We plead with ESF management to strike for continuation and increase of subvention, with backup from parents. This is to benefit existing and next generation of students. ESF definitely should NOT abandon the subvention under pressure. Otherwise this would be the biggest failure in the history (since 1967) of ESF, incurring tremendous impact to all stakeholders especially students, parents and teachers.

Dr Alex CHIU (Parent Representative at Legco PAC meeting Jan2005& Education Panel meeting Mar2007)
 Consultant Cardiologist, Caritas Medical Centre
 Three Children in Shatin Junior/College