

Legislative Council Panel on Education

Secondary School Places Allocation System (SSPA) 2013 Overall Situation of Public Sector Secondary Schools upon Release of Allocation Results

Purpose

This paper outlines the overall situation of public sector secondary schools upon the release of the SSPA 2013 results today (9 July 2013).

Situation of Public Sector Secondary Schools

2. The overall satisfaction rate of the SSPA this year is 89%¹, which is comparable to that of last year (86%). The temporary decline in the number of Secondary One (S1) students will unavoidably affect the number of S1 classes to be operated by public sector secondary schools. To stabilise the teaching force and sustain the development of schools during the transient period, the EDB announced last year a basket of relief measures² with a view to maintaining the stability and strengths of the schools as well as the teaching force.

3. In light that the actual number of S1 students of schools is subject to student movement during the summer holiday, it is not the practice of the Education Bureau (EDB) to announce the overall situation of public sector secondary schools upon the release of SSPA results to avoid unnecessary speculations or even flawed perceptions of individual schools, which may affect student admission of individual schools and hence outcome of the September

¹ It refers to the total number of students allocated a discretionary place and/or first three choices through the central allocation in SSPA 2013.

² The relief measures include :

- relaxing the “not less than three S1 classes” requirement;
- on the basis of the relaxation of the criterion for approving S1 classes to 25 students per class, secondary schools are allowed to operate two S1 classes with a minimum intake of 26 students, i.e. 13 students per class on average;
- allowing schools operating only one S1 class to continue operation through various school development options;
- allowing schools operating two S1 classes or less to participate in the following SSPA cycle with a cap of three S1 classes;
- extending the retention period for surplus teachers arising from any packing of S1 classes from one year to three years; and
- adopting a district-/school-based approach to adjust the number of students to be allocated to each S1 class from SSPA 2013 to SSPA 2015 to cater for the differences among districts and schools, as well as the demand and supply of different districts.

headcount conducted around mid-September each year. Worse still, it may lead to reduction of S1 class(es) in individual schools, and even affect the sustainable development of schools.

4. The LC Paper No. CB(4)852/12-13(09) on “Secondary School Places Allocation System: Challenges Arising from Fluctuation in Secondary One Student Population” was uploaded onto the Legislative Council website on 4 July 2013. Notwithstanding our clear explanation that the number of classes to be reduced and schools to be affected should not be worked out simply by dividing the estimated decrease in the number of students and/or the number of surplus places by the number of students to be allocated to each class (please refer to paragraphs 6 and 7 of the Paper for details), some stakeholders still referred to 3 200 surplus places in SSPA 2013 and came up with a rough estimation of a maximum reduction of 100 S1 classes with 170 surplus teachers. We are obliged to clarify the above misconception lest they will mislead the public and affect the stability of public sector secondary schools.

5. Some students may seek admission to S1 in individual schools for various reasons during the summer holiday. Hence, the actual number of students and impact of the S1 student population drop on schools will not be available until the mid-September headcount of the 2013/14 school year. In other words, the overall situation of public sector secondary schools upon the release of SSPA results as presented below is **strictly for reference only**:

- (a) With the synergy brought about by the various relief measures, upon the release of SSPA results on 9 July 2013, among the 382 public sector secondary schools for general allocation for students, 6 will immediately have one S1 class reduced; 5 may operate one S1 class in the 2013/14 school year and need to apply for a school development option to sustain their development if they fail to admit sufficient students (i.e. a minimum intake of 26 students) during the summer holiday.
- (b) Based on the number of students allocated to schools, another 16 schools (subject to the outcome of the mid-September headcount) are able to sustain their development upon the relaxation of the “not less than 3 classes” requirement; if they fail to admit sufficient students (i.e. a minimum intake of 51 students) during the summer holiday, they would have to reduce one S1 class each in the 2013/14 school year.

- (c) Based on the above (i.e. the number of students allocated to schools), the number of S1 classes to be reduced is 30³ instead of the rough estimate of 100 as derived from the simple division by some stakeholders. The actual number of S1 classes to be reduced will only be available after the mid-September headcount.
- (d) The number of surplus places in the public sector secondary schools in SSPA 2013 with a breakdown of the aforementioned 27 schools by district is at Annex.
- (e) The basket of relief measures aim for stabilising the overall situation of public sector secondary schools. These measures cannot guarantee that individual schools will not be affected amidst the S1 student population drop as the effect of respective relief measures on individual schools varies due to school-based circumstances. Take for instance the new relief measure of “allowing schools operating two S1 classes or less to participate in the following SSPA cycle with a cap of three S1 classes”. The measure benefited a school in a district in this cycle with the school being able to operate three S1 classes based on the number of students allocated (subject to the outcome of the mid-September headcount). On the contrary, another school in the same district is not able to operate three S1 classes based on the number of students allocated (subject to the outcome of the mid-September headcount) notwithstanding the fact that it is operating three S1 classes in the 2012/13 school year and has participated in SSPA 2013 with three S1 classes.
6. We anticipate that, during the period from the release of SSPA results (9 July 2013) till the mid-September headcount of 2013/14, the basket of relief measures will bring out various desired effects and help stabilise the overall situation and some individual schools in particular.

Education Bureau
9 July 2013

³ In comparison with the number of approved S1 classes of the schools concerned in the current school year (2012/13).

**Overall Situation of Public Sector Secondary Schools
under SSPA 2013**

District	Surplus* (mid-June 2013) (a)	No. of School Places# (b)	Percentage of surplus places and no. of school places (a) / (b)	Distribution of the 27 schools by district
Central & Western	50	1 297	4%	
Wan Chai	50	1 610	3%	
Eastern	400	3 406	12%	4
Southern	400	1 561	26%	4
Yau Tsim Mong	150	1 927	8%	1
Sham Shui Po	50	2 330	2%	
Kowloon City	100	4 074	2%	1
Wong Tai Sin	250	2 881	9%	2
Kwun Tong	50	3 549	1%	
Kwai Tsing	50	3 872	1%	
Tsuen Wan	0	1 684	0%	
Tuen Mun	650	4 368	15%	8
Yuen Long	100	4 393	2%	
North	0	2 409	0%	
Tai Po	200	2 144	9%	1
Sha Tin	300	4 754	6%	2
Sai Kung	300	2 420	12%	3
Islands	100	869	12%	1
Total	3 200	49 548	6%	27

* The figures are rounded to the nearest 50.

Excluding the 6 former Skills Opportunity Schools/Practical Schools. Given that the Islands District comprises different areas/islands, the total number of surplus places and supply of school places of the district are for reference only.