

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(4)761/13-14
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by the Administration)

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Panel on Education

Subcommittee on Integrated Education

**Minutes of the twelfth meeting
held on Tuesday, 18 February 2014, at 10:00 am
in Conference Room 3 of the Legislative Council Complex**

Members present : Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung (Chairman)
Hon IP Kin-yuen (Deputy Chairman)
Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, GBS, JP
Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan
Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che
Dr Hon Kenneth CHAN Ka-lok
Dr Hon Elizabeth QUAT, JP

Member absent : Dr Hon Helena WONG Pik-wan

Public Officers attending : Item II & III

Mr Kevin YEUNG, JP
Under Secretary for Education

Ms Sophia WONG
Principal Education Officer (Special Education &
Kindergarten Education)

Mrs Anissa WONG
Senior Education Officer (Special Education
Support 3)

Attendance by Invitation : CNEC Lau Wing Sang Secondary School

Mr CHENG Tak-foo
Principal

S.K.H. Tin Shui Wai Ling Oi Primary School

Mr HUNG Wai-shing
Principal

ELCHK Hung Hom Lutheran Primary School

Ms CHIU Yuen-han
Vice Principal

Clerk in attendance : Miss Polly YEUNG
Chief Council Secretary (4) 4

Staff in attendance : Mr Ian CHOW
Council Secretary (4) 4

Ms Sandy HAU
Legislative Assistant (4) 3

Action

I. Confirmation of minutes

(LC Paper No. CB(4)390/13-14 -- Minutes of meeting on
13 December 2013)

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 December 2013 were confirmed.

II. Issues related to the articulation of students with special educational needs from special schools to mainstream schools and vice versa

(LC Paper No. CB(4)391/13-14(01) -- Paper provided by the Administration)

III. The role of former skills opportunity schools

(LC Paper No. CB(4)391/13-14(02) -- Paper provided by the Administration)

Papers prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat

(LC Paper No. CB(4)391/13-14(03) -- Summary of major views in previous meetings)

Other paper

Written submissions from deputations / individuals not attending the meeting

(LC Paper No. CB(4)391/13-14(05) -- Submission from Fortress Hill Methodist Secondary School (*Chinese version only*)

LC Paper No. CB(4)391/13-14(06) -- Submission from Fortress Hill Methodist Secondary School Parents Teachers Association (*Chinese version only*)

Meeting with deputations / individuals and the Administration for agenda items II and III

2. The Subcommittee deliberated (index of proceedings attached at **Annex**).

3. The Education Bureau ("EDB") was requested to take follow-up actions on the following issues –

- (a) to inform the Subcommittee, as far as practicable, of the number of cases handled under the second tier and third tier (also under the first tier, if such information is available) of the mediation mechanism for assisting schools and parents to settle their differences in the provision of services to students with special educational needs ("SEN students") over the past three years as well as the outcomes of such cases; and
- (b) to enable members to better understand the situation in ordinary schools, such as their readiness in supporting SEN students and whether they were receptive of these students, EDB was asked to –
 - (i) inform the Subcommittee of the number of ordinary schools that had not applied for the Learning Support Grant in the past three or five years, as well as those that had not sent any of their teachers to attend the Basic Course on supporting SEN students;
 - (ii) where practicable, to inform the Subcommittee of the number of ordinary primary and secondary schools which had not admitted any SEN students, and those which had admitted "one to five", "six to 15" and "16 and above" SEN students; and
 - (iii) where practicable, to provide information on the rate of transfer of schools (primary and secondary) by students with and without SEN.

IV. Any other business

- 4. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 12:15 pm.

**Proceedings of the meeting of the
Subcommittee on Integrated Education
on Tuesday, 18 February 2014, at 10:00 am
in Conference Room 3 of the Legislative Council Complex**

Time marker	Speaker(s)	Subject(s)	Action required
<i>Agenda Item I – Confirmation of minutes</i>			
000055 - 000312	Chairman	Minutes of meeting on 13 December 2013 were confirmed	
<i>Agenda Item II – Issues related to the articulation of students with special educational needs from special schools to mainstream schools and vice versa</i>			
<i>Agenda Item III – The role of former skills opportunity schools</i>			
000313 - 000515	Chairman	Opening remarks	
000516 - 001055	CNEC Lau Wing Sang Secondary School ("CNEC") Chairman	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(4)391/13-14(04)]	
001056 - 001500	S.K.H. Tin Shui Wai Ling Oi Primary School ("SKH") Chairman	Presentation of views	
001501 - 002107	ELCHK Hung Hom Lutheran Primary School ("ELCHK") Chairman	Presentation of views	
002108 - 003114	Chairman Education Bureau ("EDB")	<p>EDB advised that under the existing policy on integrated education ("IE"), schools could not refuse students' applications for admission on the grounds of their special educational needs ("SEN"). Parents could approach EDB for assistance if their children were refused admission because of their SEN or were not provided with adequate support by the school concerned. While schools had been provided with reference materials on handling SEN students, EDB would consider the suggestion of reaffirming that schools had taken all the necessary steps to support SEN students before the students considered transferring to other schools.</p> <p>EDB explained the current mediation mechanism to assist schools and parents to settle disputes, and to safeguard equal opportunities in education for SEN students –</p> <p>(i) School-based complaint handling procedure: parents and schools would initially resolve a dispute through discussions at school level;</p>	

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		<p>(ii) Mediation by EDB: if the parents and schools failed to reach a settlement, the case could be referred to the corresponding Regional Education Office ("REO") of EDB. The REO officers would collect information from the school and the parent, study the case in detail and where necessary, arrange a mediation meeting to resolve the issue; and</p> <p>(iii) Case study group: if the dispute could not be resolved through the mediation meeting, EDB would form a case study group, which would consult the views of professionals and the persons concerned, review the case in an objective and fair manner, and put forward a mediation proposal to EDB.</p> <p>EDB had published leaflets on the mediation mechanism. Over the past years, most of the cases had been settled through negotiation between the parents and schools through the school-based compliant handling procedure.</p> <p>The Chairman requested EDB to inform the Subcommittee, as far as practicable, of the number of cases handled under the above mediation mechanism over the past three years and the outcomes of such cases. EDB took note of the request, and indicated that information on cases resolved at the school-based level might not be available as it was kept by individual schools.</p> <p>On the suggestion of creating a functional post in each school to serve as coordinator for SEN students ("SENCO"), EDB advised that it had been encouraging schools to designate their vice-principals or senior teachers as the responsible staff for leading and coordinating the support for SEN students. In fact, in the 2008-2009 school year when EDB created the deputy headship post in primary schools, one of the major duties of the post-holder was to lead and coordinate the implementation of IE.</p> <p>The Chairman urged EDB to set up the post of SENCO as early as practicable. EDB took note of the suggestion for consideration.</p>	<p>EDB was requested to provide the information as stated in paragraph 3(a) of the minutes.</p>
003115 - 004434	Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che EDB Chairman	<p>Mr CHEUNG asked –</p> <p>(a) whether EDB would designate some ordinary schools as "characteristic schools" to admit students with particular types of SEN; and</p> <p>(b) EDB to inform the Subcommittee of the number of ordinary schools that had not applied for the Learning Support Grant ("LSG") in the past</p>	<p>EDB was requested to provide the information as</p>

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		above" SEN students. This would help members to better understand the admission of SEN students by ordinary schools.	3(b)(ii) of the minutes.
004435 - 011011	Deputy Chairman EDB Chairman	<p>The Deputy Chairman opined that EDB –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) should enhance support and monitoring on the implementation of IE in ordinary schools; (b) should establish a proper mechanism to gauge the reasons for transfer of schools by SEN students; (c) should strengthen the capacity of teachers in catering for SEN students and seriously consider creating the functional post of SENCO in each school; and (d) should provide SEN students with professional advice when they contemplate transferring schools, and should proactively assist parents and schools to resolve their differences before the cases escalated into complaints. <p>In response, EDB advised that –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) EDB had all along been providing additional resources on top of the regular subvention to help schools cater for their SEN students ; (b) subject to professional assessments and parental consent, placement of SEN students between special schools and ordinary schools were arranged. As for the transfer of SEN students among ordinary schools, reasons varied and some might be due to preference of parents; and (c) under the existing practice, all schools should update EDB with their student enrolment status once students were admitted or left schools. The most common reason for the transfer of schools might be removal. <p>The Chairman requested EDB to provide, where practicable, information on the rate of transfer of schools (primary and secondary) by students with and without SEN so as to enable members to better understand whether ordinary schools were receptive of SEN students.</p> <p>EDB took note of the request and explained that –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) parents of SEN students would usually request to transfer to schools that they considered more suitable for their children; (b) the transfers of SEN students might not necessarily be due to the lack of support provided by the previous schools; and 	EDB was requested to provide the information as stated in paragraph 3(b)(iii) of the minutes.

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		<p>(c) EDB would explore if the information as requested by the Chairman was readily available.</p> <p>The Deputy Chairman considered that EDB should seriously consider collecting and analyzing the data, such as –</p> <p>(a) comparing the trends of transfers of schools by students with and without SEN; and</p> <p>(b) comparing the distribution of SEN students in ordinary schools from Primary One to Six to ascertain whether only a cluster of schools had admitted SEN students as they progressed to higher grades, as this might be indicative that some ordinary schools were not receptive of SEN students.</p> <p>The Deputy Chairman and the Chairman remarked that EDB should actively consider conducting on its own, or commissioning scholars or educational institutions to conduct the research in (b) above. EDB took note of the suggestion.</p> <p>The Deputy Chairman commented that according to his knowledge, some Direct Subsidy Scheme ("DSS") schools admitted quite a number of SEN students while some admitted none. He asked whether EDB would consider allocating SEN-related resources only to those DSS schools that had admitted SEN students. EDB responded that there had been discussion between EDB and DSS schools on the relevant funding arrangements.</p>	
011012 - 012030	Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung EDB Chairman	<p>Mr LEUNG said that according to his observation, many SEN students changed schools either because the schools they attended were not receptive of them, or they did not like the schools. In his view, this was indicative that the implementation of IE was a failure.</p> <p>Mr LEUNG suggested that EDB should make reference to the practice adopted in Taiwan and introduce legislation on IE. The Chairman recalled that with the agreement of the Subcommittee, the Research Office of the Information Services Division of the Secretariat had been invited to research on the legislation on IE in selected jurisdictions, namely, the United Kingdom, the United States and Taiwan.</p> <p>EDB explained that –</p> <p>(a) EDB would see to it that schools would not refuse to admit students on grounds of their</p>	

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		<p>disabilities;</p> <p>(b) all schools would provide appropriate support to cater for the needs of their SEN students;</p> <p>(c) DDO, which prohibited discrimination on the grounds of a person's disabilities, could safeguard the rights of education of SEN students; and</p> <p>(d) while the Administration noted the Subcommittee's request for legislating on IE, EDB considered the current priority should be focused on exploring how various support measures could be enhanced so that SEN students could be better catered for.</p>	
012031 - 013009	Chairman EDB	<p>The Chairman asked whether EDB would consider –</p> <p>(a) exercising greater flexibility in handling the requests for transfer from mainstream schools to special schools for students with limited intelligence, i.e. intelligence quotient ("IQ") between 70 and 79. He was aware of cases in which the parents could not send their children with limited intelligence to special schools even if educational psychologists and other professionals had recommended that the students would benefit from education in special schools;</p> <p>(b) allowing student with limited intelligence who had experienced severe adjustment difficulties in ordinary schools to take part in short-term attachment programmes run by Special Schools cum Resource Centres ("SSRCs") for intensive support which were currently only offered to ordinary school students with intellectual disability, i.e. IQ below 70; and</p> <p>(c) giving weighting to the admission of SEN students, as far as resource allocation to ordinary schools was concerned, so that ordinary schools facing the problem of school closure due to low student enrolment would be more willing to admit SEN students in order to boost their student intake.</p> <p>In response, EDB advised that –</p> <p>(a) in considering requests for transfer of schools from students with limited intelligence, the learning needs of the students would be the most important consideration. If situation warranted, EDB would handle individual cases with flexibility and with due consideration to specialists' recommendation; and</p>	

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		<p>(b) short-term attachment programmes were offered by special schools that served as SSRCs for students with intellectual disability who had experienced severe adjustment difficulties in ordinary schools. Through these programmes, ordinary schools can acquire the knowledge and skills to cater for the SEN of the students in question, and parents of students with intellectual disability could reconsider whether their children could benefit more from education at special schools.</p> <p>EDB noted the Chairman's view that greater flexibility should be exercised in allowing students with limited intelligence to take part in the short-term attachment programmes.</p>	
013010 - 014651	Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che CNEC ELCHK SKH EDB Chairman	<p>Mr CHEUNG expressed the following views –</p> <p>(a) special schools should be allowed to admit students with limited intelligence to their short-term attachment programmes on "social grounds";</p> <p>(b) it appeared that newly established mainstream schools, such as those with less than 10 or 15 years' history, were more forthcoming in admitting SEN students; and</p> <p>(c) EDB should conduct a thorough review on the implementation of IE and provide greater support to ordinary schools in teacher manpower support.</p> <p>The Principal of CNEC said that being a secondary resource school under EDB's School Partnership Scheme, his school had worked closely and shared experience with 120 ordinary secondary schools. His observation was that in general, schools were supportive of IE and were receptive of SEN students.</p> <p>The Vice-Principal of ELCHK, a primary resource school with over 50 years of history, shared her view that long-established schools were also receptive of SEN students, and that the implementation of IE in ordinary primary schools was progressing in the right direction. She stressed the need for concerted effort of all stakeholders including parents, teachers, schools and EDB.</p> <p>Echoing the Vice-Principal of ELCHK's view, the Principal of SKH said that the implementation of IE in ordinary primary schools were in the right direction and should not be viewed as a failure. EDB had been providing adequate support to ordinary schools in this regard. He also expressed support for</p>	

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		<p>exploring the introduction of legislation on IE in the long run.</p> <p>Noting the three deputations' views and observations, EDB reiterated that the majority of schools were supportive to the implementation of IE.</p>	
014652 - 015218	Hon TAM Yiu-chung EDB Chairman	<p>Mr TAM highlighted the practical difficulties faced by teachers when one or a few SEN students were present in the class. He considered it necessary to provide teachers with greater support, such as organizing more experience sharing sessions etc. He opined that legislation alone might not solve all the problems arising from the implementation of IE, and stressed the need for diversified support measures. EDB took note of Mr TAM's views.</p> <p>The Chairman said that a full-time, functional post of SENCO in each school would facilitate the effective implementation of IE in schools.</p>	
015219 - 015509	Hon Abraham SHEK Chairman	<p>Mr SHEK referred to the successful experience of schools under the English Schools Foundation ("ESF") in implementing IE. He urged EDB to allocate more resources to ordinary schools in this regard.</p> <p>The Chairman recalled that EDB had been requested to provide information on ESF's arrangements and resources for supporting SEN students in their schools, and EDB's reply was still awaited.</p>	
015510-020918	Deputy Chairman Chairman CNEC ELCHK SKH EDB	<p>Noting Mr Abraham SHEK's view, the Deputy Chairman urged EDB to allocate more resources to ordinary schools so that these schools, similar to their counterparts under ESF, would be able to practise small class teaching with additional teacher manpower. These would be conducive to catering for the needs of SEN students.</p> <p>The Deputy Chairman sought the deputations' views on the creation of a functional post of SENCO in every ordinary school to coordinate the support for SEN students.</p> <p>The Principal of CNEC said that although there was no dedicated SENCO post, CNEC had set up a dedicated team of personnel to coordinate support for SEN students, which consisted of a Senior Graduate Master/Mistress taking up the additional responsibilities of an IE officer, several teachers and a social worker. To his knowledge, many ordinary schools had set up similar teams for implementing IE.</p>	

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		<p>The Vice-Principal of ELCHK said that in addition to her teaching and administrative duties, she acted as a coordinator for SEN students and was assisted by another teacher at the rank of Assistant Primary School Master/Mistress. To her knowledge, the school personnel assigned with the responsibilities to coordinate implementation of IE varied among schools.</p> <p>The Principal of SKH expressed support for the creation of a full-time, permanent SENCO post with promotion prospect in each school so as to relieve the workload of the vice-principals.</p> <p>EDB noted of the views of members and deputations on the creation of a SENCO post in each ordinary school.</p> <p>The Chairman raised the following issues –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the Chief Executive had announced in the 2014 Policy Address that EDB would increase the rates of LSG by 30% in the 2014-2015 school year. However, the ceiling of LSG for each school remained unchanged at \$1.5 million per annum; he asked whether the Administration would consider lifting this ceiling; and (b) to support the ordinary schools operating Intensive Remedial Teaching Programme ("IRTP") under mixed mode, EDB would allocate to each of them an additional teacher and a maximum amount of subsidy of \$350,000 per annum; he asked whether more resources would be allocated to these ordinary schools. <p>The Chairman informed members that due to other engagements, he had to leave the meeting at 12 noon. The Deputy Chairman took over the chair in the absence of the Chairman and extended the meeting for 15 minutes.</p> <p>Regarding resources allocated to ordinary schools, EDB explained that –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) prior to the 2003-2004 school year, IRTP was the major programme implemented in ordinary schools to support SEN students through the provision of additional teachers; (b) the new funding mode ("NFM") was introduced since the 2003-2004 school year which allowed a greater flexibility in the use of resources in supporting students. Under NFM, EDB offered schools a cash grant, i.e. LSG, so that schools might pool and deploy flexibly LSG and other resources for employing additional teachers, teaching assistants or hiring professional 	

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		<p>services (such as speech therapy and other specialist services) to cater for SEN students and academically low achievers;</p> <p>(c) subsequently, EDB had been encouraging schools on IRTP to migrate to NFM, i.e. LSG, to enjoy the flexibility in the use of resources. For schools requiring some time for preparation of migration, a 6-year transitional period was allowed, during which, on top of the provision of additional teacher, the funding ceiling was \$600,000 per annum; and</p> <p>(d) schools choosing to remain in IRTP might operate under a mixed mode, and they would be provided with LSG with a ceiling of \$350,000 per annum on top of the IRTP provision of additional teacher.</p>	
020919 - 021630	Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung EDB Deputy Chairman	<p>Mr LEUNG and the Deputy Chairman asked whether EDB would consider encouraging ordinary schools to admit SEN students by giving weighting to the enrolment of SEN students for resources allocation, such that individual schools would not be confronted with the problem of under-enrolment which might eventually lead to school closure.</p> <p>EDB advised that currently, there was no policy to close a school due to under-enrolment of students. Support measures for SEN students should not be introduced for the sake of relieving schools from the problems of under-enrolment and school closure. The Administration's priority would be on how the effectiveness of the support for SEN students could be enhanced.</p> <p>Mr LEUNG also asked whether EDB would consider establishing a designated school for students with Specific Learning Difficulties in Reading and Writing ("SpLD").</p> <p>EDB informed members that, to support students with SpLD, a five-year project on the Tiered Intervention Model on the Learning and Teaching of Chinese Language in Primary Schools was launched in the 2011-2012 school year. It aimed to –</p> <p>(a) help boost the abilities and performance of students with SpLD in learning Chinese;</p> <p>(b) enable teachers to cater for the learning needs of students with SpLD ; and</p> <p>(c) facilitate students with SpLD to learn and grow up with non-disabled peers.</p> <p>Over 120 ordinary primary schools had joined the project and EDB hoped to extend its coverage to</p>	

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		more primary schools.	
<i>Agenda Item IV – Any other business</i>			
021631-021643	Deputy Chairman	Closing remarks	

Council Business Division 4
Legislative Council Secretariat
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