

**立法會**  
**Legislative Council**

LC Paper No. CB(4)45/14-15  
(The minutes have been seen  
by the Administration)

Ref : CB4/PL/ED

**Panel on Education**

**Minutes of meeting**  
**held on Wednesday, 16 July 2014, at 4:30 pm**  
**in Conference Room 3 of the Legislative Council Complex**

- Members present** : Dr Hon LAM Tai-fai, SBS, JP (Chairman)  
Hon IP Kin-yuen (Deputy Chairman)  
Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung  
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP  
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, GBS, JP  
Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun, SBS, JP  
Hon WONG Kwok-hing, BBS, MH  
Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che  
Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-ye, GBS, JP  
Hon Paul TSE Wai-chun, JP  
Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung  
Hon Claudia MO  
Hon Michael TIEN Puk-sun, BBS, JP  
Hon WU Chi-wai, MH  
Hon Charles Peter MOK, JP  
Hon CHAN Chi-chuen  
Dr Hon Kenneth CHAN Ka-lok  
Hon Dennis KWOK  
Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung  
Dr Hon Helena WONG Pik-wan  
Hon Tony TSE Wai-chuen, BBS
- Members absent** : Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, SBS, JP  
Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan, JP  
Hon Starry LEE Wai-king, JP

Hon IP Kwok-him, GBS, JP  
Hon Steven HO Chun-yin  
Hon MA Fung-kwok, SBS, JP  
Dr Hon Elizabeth QUAT, JP  
Hon Christopher CHUNG Shu-kun, BBS, MH, JP

**Public Officers** : Agenda item III  
**attending**

Mr Eddie NG, SBS, JP  
Secretary for Education

Mrs Michelle WONG  
Deputy Secretary for Education (3)

Miss Hera CHUM  
Principal Assistant Secretary (Special  
Education & Kindergarten Education)  
Education Bureau

Agenda item IV

Mr Eddie NG, SBS, JP  
Secretary for Education

Ms Jessie WONG Hok-ling  
Deputy Secretary for Education (2)

Ms IP Ling-bik  
Principal Assistant Secretary  
(Education Commission & Planning)  
Education Bureau

Ms Teresa CHAN  
Principal Education Officer  
(School Administration)  
Education Bureau

Agenda item V

Mr Kevin YEUNG, JP  
Under Secretary for Education

Mr Wallace LAU  
Acting Deputy Secretary for Education (1)/  
Principal Assistant Secretary  
(Higher Education)

Ms Pecvin YONG  
Acting Deputy Secretary for Education (1) /  
Principal Assistant Secretary  
(Further Education)

Professor TAM Kar-yan  
Chairman of the JUPAS IT Advisory Committee

Agenda item VI

Mr Kevin YEUNG, JP  
Under Secretary for Education

Dr K K CHAN  
Deputy Secretary for Education (5)

Mr Sheridan LEE  
Principal Education Officer  
(Curriculum Development) 1  
Education Bureau

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

**Staff in attendance** : Mr KWONG Kam-fai  
Senior Council Secretary (4)4

Mr Ian CHOW  
Council Secretary (4)4

Ms Sandy HAU  
Legislative Assistant (4)4

Action

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**I. Confirmation of minutes**

(LC Paper No. CB(4)911/13-14 -- Minutes of meeting on  
12 May 2014)

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 May 2014 were confirmed.

**II. Information paper(s) issued since the last meeting**

(LC Paper No. CB(4)914/13-14(01) -- Letter dated 27 June 2014  
from Dr Hon Helena  
WONG on issues  
concerning the Community  
College of City University  
(*Chinese version only*)

LC Paper No. CB(4)914/13-14(02) -- Administration's written  
response dated 8 July 2014  
to the letter dated 27 June  
2014 from Dr Hon Helena  
WONG on issues  
concerning the Community  
College of City University

LC Paper No. CB(4)915/13-14(01) -- Letter dated 8 July 2014  
from the Education Bureau  
on Secondary School Places  
Allocation System 2014 -  
Overall situation of public  
sector secondary schools  
upon release of allocation  
results 2014)

2. Members noted the above papers issued since the last meeting.

3. Before proceeding to the discussion items, the Chairman drew

members' attention to Rule 83A of the Rules of Procedure which provided that a Member shall not move any motion or amendment relating to a matter in which he had a pecuniary interest, whether direct or indirect, or speak on any such matter, except where he disclosed the nature of that interest. He reminded members to declare interests, if any, in the matter under discussion.

### **III. Progress of work of the Committee on Free Kindergarten Education**

(LC Paper No. CB(4)913/13-14(01) -- Paper provided by the Administration

LC Paper No. CB(4)913/13-14(02) -- Updated background brief on issues related to the kindergarten sector and the provision of 15-year free education prepared by the LegCo Secretariat)

4. Members noted the updated background brief prepared by the Secretariat on the subject [LC Paper No. CB(4)913/13-14(02)].

#### Briefing by the Administration

5. At the invitation of the Chairman, Secretary for Education ("SED") briefed members on the progress of work of the Committee on Free Kindergarten Education ("the Committee") as set out in the Administration's paper [LC Paper No. CB(4)913/13-14(01)]. He highlighted the initial views/proposals of the Committee on the framework of free kindergarten education and other major issues. On the proposed scope of free kindergarten education, the Committee considered that the basic provision should cover expenses directly related to the teaching and learning activities, school operation and provision of the education services of the schools. In line with the existing practice, local non-profit-making ("NPM") kindergartens should be covered under the free kindergarten education policy while non-local kindergartens would not. The Committee would continue to conduct focus group meetings to gauge the views of relevant stakeholder groups and would keep the Panel and the public informed of its work from time to time. SED said that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee were unable to attend this meeting due to other official engagements. However, the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee would approach members of the Panel shortly with a view to arranging meetings with them.

## Discussion

### *Consultation by the Committee*

6. Noting from SED that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee would arrange to meet with members of the Panel, Mr WONG Kwok-hing considered it more appropriate for them to attend meetings of the Panel to exchange views with Panel members. In response, SED said that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee would look forward to more in-depth exchange of views when meeting with members of the Panel separately.

7. The Chairman recalled that the Panel had, on several occasions, invited the Committee to attend its meetings to discuss issues of mutual concern. However, representatives of the Committee had not attended Panel meetings in response to the Panel's invitation. The Chairman said that he would appreciate it if he could be informed before this meeting of the Committee's intention to meet with Panel members separately. He also reminded the Administration to pay attention to the detailed arrangements such as the timing of the meetings and the grouping of Panel members to meet with members of the Committee. Dr Kenneth CHAN expressed his view that the Committee should maintain close dialogue with the subcommittee appointed by this Panel to study free kindergarten education.

8. The Deputy Chairman and Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che were of the view that apart from arranging focus group meetings with stakeholders and discussion with Panel members, the Committee should also conduct public consultation before finalizing its report in mid-2015. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung opined that the Administration should issue consultation documents to facilitate more informed public discussion. SED advised that the Committee and its five subcommittees would continue to solicit views from stakeholders on various themes/topics.

9. The Deputy Chairman noted from paragraph 4 of the Administration's paper that there was huge diversity among kindergartens in various aspects such as the operating scale, school fees charged, monthly salaries of teachers and student enrolment, etc. To facilitate informed discussion, he considered that the Administration should provide members with more detailed information, such as the average school fees charged. Mrs Regina IP also sought further information, such as the number and proportion of half-day and whole-day kindergartens, etc. In response, SED said that the Administration would provide further information to members for reference after the meeting.

*(Post-meeting note: The Administration's written response was circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(4)1074/13-14(01) on 24 September 2014.)*

*Progress of work of the Committee*

10. Mr WONG Kwok-hing and Dr Fernando CHEUNG enquired about the timetable for the completion of the Committee's work and the implementation of free kindergarten education. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung opined that the crux of the matter was the Chief Executive's commitment to implement free kindergarten education as pledged in his election manifesto.

11. Dr Kenneth CHAN said that according to the findings of a survey on free kindergarten education policy conducted by him recently, about 80% of the respondents considered that free kindergarten education should be implemented immediately. Some 60% to 70% of respondents were of the view that the Administration should make reference to the prevailing policy and arrangements applicable to public sector primary and secondary schools when considering details of free kindergarten education, including the allocation of kindergarten places, formulation of curriculum guidelines, provision of school premises, etc. Dr CHAN sought confirmation from SED whether free kindergarten education could be implemented within this term of Government, i.e. by mid-2017.

12. SED stressed that providing practicable 15-year free education was a top priority of the current-term Government. Due to the intricacy of the issues involved, the Committee would need time to complete its study. Meanwhile, the Committee's plan to submit its report to the Government in mid-2015 had remained unchanged. After receipt of the Committee's report, the Administration would study the recommendations carefully.

13. Dr Kenneth CHAN submitted a copy of his survey report on free kindergarten education policy to the Chairman, and requested that a copy should also be forwarded to the Administration and members for reference.

*(Post-meeting note: With the concurrence of the Chairman, a copy of Dr Kenneth CHAN's report on free kindergarten education policy was forwarded to the Secretary for Education on 17 July 2014 and issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(4)948/13-14 on 18 July 2014.)*

*Issues related to whole-day kindergartens*

14. Dr Kenneth CHAN expressed his concern about the supply of places in whole-day kindergartens, particularly those kindergartens operating long hours ("long whole-day kindergartens"), and the financial support for these long whole-day kindergartens upon implementation of free kindergarten education. The Deputy Chairman and Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che were of the view that the Administration should formulate a clear policy on long whole-day kindergartens in the light of the high demand for places in these kindergartens.

15. Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung observed that kindergartens operating half-day sessions (i.e. morning session and afternoon session) would be able to admit more students and generate greater school fee income than kindergartens operating on a whole-day basis. In some districts such as Sham Shui Po and Kwai Chung, there were insufficient whole-day kindergarten places to meet the keen demand for places from children of grassroot families. In this regard, Mr LEUNG enquired whether the Administration would introduce any immediate measure to meet the demand.

16. SED advised that about 84 000 and 43 400 students were attending half-day kindergartens and whole-day kindergartens respectively under the Pre-primary Education Voucher Scheme ("PEVS"). Among those attending whole-day kindergartens, more than 21 000 students were enrolled in long whole-day kindergartens. He highlighted that half-day and whole-day kindergartens could provide greater choice to cater for the different needs of parents. SED said that the Committee would examine ways to meet the demand for whole-day and long whole-day kindergarten places while ensuring the quality of education.

17. Noting that all kindergartens under PEVS were subject to the same rate of subsidy irrespective of whether they were operating half-day or whole-day sessions, Dr Fernando CHEUNG considered that pending completion of the Committee's study, the Administration should formulate ways to address the concerns about the high operating costs of whole-day and long whole-day kindergartens.

18. SED highlighted that the voucher subsidy of PEVS would be increased by \$2,500 per student per year in the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years. This would benefit both half-day kindergartens and whole-day kindergartens. Furthermore, needy families might apply for additional financial assistance under the Kindergarten and Child Care Centre Fee Remission Scheme administered by Student Financial Assistance Agency.



*Other support for pre-school children*

19. Dr Fernando CHEUNG said that according to his understanding, over 1 700 applicants were on the waiting list for places of integrated programmes ("IP") run by kindergarten-cum-child care centres to provide rehabilitation services for children with mild disabilities aged two to six. Since pre-school rehabilitation services were currently administered by the Social Welfare Department, he was concerned whether IP would be included in the ambit of free kindergarten education. Noting that the number of places for IP in kindergarten-cum-child care centres had not been increased in the past few years, Dr CHEUNG enquired whether the Government would increase the number of IP places to meet the demand.

20. In this regard, SED informed members that the Education Bureau ("EDB") had been working in close collaboration with other bureaux/departments, including the Labour and Welfare Bureau and Department of Health, to provide appropriate services and support to children with disabilities and special educational needs.

21. Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che was concerned whether the Administration would formulate a policy to facilitate the integration of non-Chinese speaking ("NCS") students into local kindergartens and their transition to primary schools. SED advised that issues related to the support for NCS students would be examined by the Committee.

*Premises of kindergartens*

22. Dr Helena WONG expressed her concern about premises-related issues and urged the Administration to proactively explore the feasibility of co-location of kindergartens and primary schools. She considered that the Administration should consult school sponsoring bodies on whether they were interested in operating kindergarten and primary school at the same premises.

23. Pending completion of the Committee's study, Dr Kenneth CHAN and Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung called on the Administration to take immediate action to address the kindergarten sector's need for school premises. A case in point was the recent incident of Topkids Anglo-Chinese Kindergarten's failure to secure a renewal of the lease of its premises. Mrs Regina IP said that some middle-class families in Northeast New Territories had highlighted the need to provide suitable premises in the districts concerned for the operation of additional kindergartens to meet the demand for places.

24. SED advised that currently, all kindergartens were privately run and there was considerable variation in their accommodation arrangements. They could be located in public housing estates or privately owned premises, or operating in premises owned by the school sponsoring body. The Committee was in the course of looking into the feasibility of various options such as providing rental subsidy with a ceiling and co-location of kindergarten and primary school.

25. In response to Mrs Regina IP's enquiry about the difference between profit-making kindergartens and non-profit-making kindergartens, SED advised that only non-profit-making kindergartens could participate in PEVS and these kindergartens were exempt from taxes under section 88 of the Inland Revenue Ordinance (Cap. 112).

#### *The teaching force*

26. The Deputy Chairman expressed his concern about the progress, if any, in the Committee's study on the establishment of a salary framework for kindergarten teachers, and enquired about the views of the Committee on this matter. Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che said that a clear career advancement path and competitive remuneration were pre-requisites for a stable teaching force. Mr CHEUNG further said that if it was contemplated that the existing teacher-to-student ratio of 1:15 would be improved, the Administration must plan ahead to ensure the supply of trained teachers to meet the increased demand for manpower.

27. SED noted members' views and advised that issues related to the qualification and remuneration framework of kindergarten teachers were being studied by the Committee.

#### **IV. Follow-up to policy on small class teaching in primary schools and issues related to increasing the number of students allocated to each Primary One class**

(LC Paper No. CB(4)913/13-14(03) -- Paper provided by the Administration

LC Paper No. CB(4)802/13-14(01) -- Letter dated 9 June 2014 from Hon IP Kin-yuen to the Chairman of Panel on Education (*Chinese version only*)

28. Members noted a letter dated 9 June 2014 from the Deputy Chairman [LC Paper No. CB(4)802/13-14(01)].

#### Briefing by the Administration

29. At the invitation of the Chairman, SED briefed members of the recent discussion between the Administration and the school sector after the release of the results of the Central Allocation ("CA") stage of Primary One Admission ("POA") 2014, as set out in the Administration's paper [LC Paper No. CB(4)913/13-14(03)]. He highlighted that in order to meet the projected transient increase in demand for Primary One ("P1") places in the coming few years, the school sector had agreed, for the purpose of planning for POA 2015, to continue to adopt flexible measures, including allocating more students to each P1 class. According to SED, EDB had assured the school sector that the existing policy for public sector primary schools to progressively implement small class teaching ("SCT") where circumstances permitted would remain unchanged, and that EDB would continue to adopt 25 students per class as the planning parameter for the provision of public sector school places. While allocating more students to each P1 class would be a contingency measure out of necessity, EDB had undertaken to further explore, based on prioritization of public resources utilization and relevant existing arrangements, to provide the schools concerned with supplementary support to help them continue SCT in a professionally pedagogical manner without compromising the quality of learning and teaching.

#### Discussion

##### *Policy on implementing SCT*

30. Dr Kenneth CHAN referred to the EDB circular No. 19/2008 regarding the implementation of SCT in public sector primary schools [circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(4)662/13-14(01)] and noted that schools implementing SCT would be allocated 25 students per class under the POA System while other schools would be allocated 30 students per class. According to the circular, schools implementing SCT should maintain a class size of 25 students. Dr CHAN was of the view that this class size should be upheld in all future POA cycles.

31. The Deputy Chairman stressed that it was important to uphold the policy on SCT. Dr Fernando CHEUNG considered that the temporary arrangement to allocate more students to each P1 class in schools implementing SCT had deviated from the prevailing policy on SCT. He remarked that the temporary measures adopted by the Administration to cope

with the anticipated fluctuation of student population reflected a lack of proper planning on the part of the Administration.

32. SED advised that there was no change to the existing policy on SCT. The temporary arrangement to increase the supply of P1 places had been adopted having due regard to the general feedback of the schools. Since the projected fluctuation of student population would be transient, the contingency arrangements would be temporary.

33. Deputy Secretary for Education (2) ("DS(Ed)2") referred to paragraph 9 of the aforementioned EDB circular and clarified that if the actual demand in any POA cycle of any school net exceeded the supply of classrooms in the school net, EDB might need to slightly increase the number of students allocated to each P1 class in the school net concerned for that particular school year, as a temporary arrangement. Such need was anticipated when EDB issued the circular on the implementation of SCT. She highlighted that when there was a need to increase the supply of P1 places, the Administration would explore the feasibility of different options, including borrowing school places from neighbouring school nets, making use of remaining classrooms and changing the use of other rooms into additional classrooms, and recycling vacant school premises. Allocating more students to each P1 class was the last resort.

*Temporary arrangement to increase school places*

34. Dr Helena WONG said that Members of the Democratic Party opposed to the arrangement of increasing the number of students to be allocated to each P1 class in schools implementing SCT from 25 to 30 students in five school nets under POA 2014. She recalled that at the Panel meeting held on 12 May 2014, some deputations had pointed out that vacant classrooms were available in Kwun Tong for operating additional P1 classes. She asked whether this option had been explored before the Administration decided to allocate more students to each P1 class in the school net concerned.

35. DS(Ed)2 explained that as very few vacant classrooms were available in Kwun Tong, the additional places provided could not fully meet the estimated demand for P1 places in the district. Besides, to avoid any possible labelling on schools arising from adoption of different class sizes, it was decided to resort to the arrangement of allocating more students to each P1 class in all schools implementing SCT in Kwun Tong when announcing the provisional number of places for CA for parents' reference in making school choice. It was worth noting that the actual student intake of individual

schools, and eventually, the class size would be subject to student movement during the summer holiday. As such, the actual number of P1 students and the class size of individual schools would only be available after the September headcount of the 2014-2015 school year.

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36. In response to Dr Helena WONG's request, the Administration agreed to provide information on the enrolment situation of public sector primary schools in the five school nets of the three districts concerned after the headcount in September 2014.

37. Mr TAM Yiu-chung noted that according to the Administration's paper, EDB had reviewed the process of the POA System and was exploring with the school sector on the feasibility of postponing the "school choice making" of the CA stage from mid-January to early February. He enquired whether this proposed postponement would have any impact on the operation of schools, in particular in their preparation for P1 admission.

38. DS(Ed)2 advised that to respond actively and positively to the school sector's concern, EDB proposed to postpone the "school choice making" of the CA stage from mid-January to early February so as to allow more time for EDB and the school sector to discuss the necessary flexible arrangements to increase the supply of P1 places before finalizing the "provisional number of places for the CA" for issue of the Choice of Schools List by School Net for the CA.

39. Mr WONG Kwok-hing noted that the Administration had recently launched a school allocation exercise to recycle two vacant school premises in Kwun Tong for school extension or operation of a new school for a limited period. He said that if practicable, the Administration should identify additional vacant school premises for school allocation so as to increase the supply of school places in districts like Tai Po, Yuen Long and Kwun Tong.

40. Mr TAM Yiu-chung was concerned whether school sponsoring bodies ("SSB") would be interested in bidding for the two vacant premises in Kwun Tong because the primary schools operating at these vacant premises might need to cease operation in a few years' time and the teachers recruited might also lose their jobs.

41. DS(Ed)2 advised that when inviting applications for allocation of the two vacant school premises in Kwun Tong, SSBs had been clearly informed that the prospective schools were expected to operate at the premises for nine school years from the 2015-2016 school year to meet the projected transient increase in demand for P1 places in Kwun Tong.

*Provision of additional resources to schools*

42. Mr WONG Kwok-hing enquired whether measures would be put in place to strengthen the support for schools and alleviate teachers' workload arising from the increase in P1 student intake. Dr Fernando CHEUNG considered that schools implementing SCT should be provided with additional resources and support when additional students were allocated to each P1 class so as to maintain the quality of teaching and learning on par with other schools implementing SCT not required to admit additional P1 students.

43. DS(Ed)2 advised that the Administration would maintain close communication with the school sector on the flexible measures to increase the supply of school places. In accordance with the prevailing arrangement, schools implementing SCT would be provided with additional teaching resources when 30 students were allocated to each P1 class so as not to compromise the learning effectiveness of the students.

44. The Deputy Chairman pointed out that when additional students were allocated to each P1 class of schools implementing SCT under the current temporary arrangement, additional resources would be provided to these schools on the basis of 30 students per P1 class instead of 25 students per P1 class. Notwithstanding the provision of additional resources, he was concerned about the adverse impact of an enlarged class size on teaching and learning effectiveness. The Deputy Chairman considered that the Administration should conduct a comprehensive review on the temporary arrangement and the provision of additional resources to the schools concerned.

45. Dr Fernando CHEUNG said that while the schools concerned could recruit additional teachers to cope with the anticipated increase in P1 student intake under the temporary arrangement, the uncertainty in the actual demand for P1 places and the number of approved P1 classes would make it very difficult for schools to plan for their teaching manpower.

46. DS(Ed)2 explained that the actual demand for P1 places in individual districts or school nets would vary in each allocation cycle due to various factors such as parents' choice, the numbers of cross-boundary students and students newly-arrived in Hong Kong, etc. DS(Ed)2 pointed out that EDB approved the number of P1 classes to be operated by each school in March/April according to the criteria made known to the school sector so as to facilitate schools' manpower planning.

*Consultation with the school sector*

47. The Deputy Chairman recalled that at the meeting held on 12 May 2014, the Panel had passed a motion urging the Administration to re-negotiate with the school sector issues relating to the allocation of more students to each P1 class. According to his understanding, the re-negotiation had not been very fruitful. He further said that as reflected by the school sector, the Administration had over-estimated the increase in demand for school places in certain districts in POA 2014. Hence, upon the release of allocation results, there were surplus places in individual schools in some districts.

48. DS(Ed)2 said that after the release of POA results in June 2014, EDB had met the Subsidized Primary School Council ("SPSC") and the Hong Kong Aided Primary School Heads Association ("HKAPSHA"). The school sector, premised on the consensus that any new school projects had to tie in with the sustainable development of the districts concerned including the existing schools, had agreed to adopt the temporary arrangements in question for POA 2014, including the allocation of additional students to each P1 class in five school nets of three districts and the provision of complementary support to the schools concerned. It was also agreed that planning for POA 2015 including discussion on the complementary support measures should commence as early as possible.

49. The Deputy Chairman asked DS(Ed)2 whether she had been involved in the discussions with the school sector and whether any consensus had been reached between the school sector and EDB on the temporary arrangements adopted in POA 2014 regarding the allocation of additional students to each P1 class and the provision of additional teaching resources to the schools concerned; and if yes, whether such consensus had been documented in writing.

50. In response, DS(Ed)2 confirmed that she had personally met the representatives from SPSC and HKAPSHA, as well as the representatives from a district where the temporary arrangements had been implemented. Subsequent to the meeting with SPSC and HKAPSHA, there was exchange of correspondences to confirm the relevant arrangements as agreed.

51. In response to the Deputy Chairman's request for a copy of the correspondence(s) in question, DS(Ed)2 said that subject to the agreement of the two organizations concerned, the Administration stood ready to provide a copy of the correspondence(s) to the Panel for reference.

*(Post-meeting note: The Administration's written response was circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(4)12/14-15(01) on 8 October 2014.)*

**V. Electronic application platforms for candidates of Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination to pursue multiple pathways**

(LC Paper No. CB(4)913/13-14(04) -- Paper provided by the Administration )

Briefing by the Administration

52. At the invitation of the Chairman, Under Secretary for Education ("US(Ed)") briefed members on the various electronic application platforms for candidates of the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education ("HKDSE") Examination to pursue further studies under multiple pathways as set out in the Administration's paper [LC Paper No. CB(4)913/13-14(04)]. These included the Joint University Programmes Admissions System ("JUPAS"), the Electronic Advance Application System for Post-secondary Programmes ("E-APP"), the Web-based Application System for the Yi Jin Diploma ("YJD") Programme, and the online system for the Scheme for Admission of Hong Kong Students to Mainland Higher Education Institutions ("the Mainland Admission Scheme").

Discussion

*Use of various electronic application platforms*

53. The Deputy Chairman enquired about the feasibility of linking or consolidating the various electronic application platforms to facilitate the use by HKDSE candidates. In response, US(Ed) said that the online application system for the Mainland Admission Scheme was administered by the Ministry of Education and was not linked to the local electronic application platforms. He further advised that the existing platforms had been designed with a view to facilitating HKDSE candidates to lodge applications –

- (a) JUPAS was a unified platform and the sole channel for students applying for admission to publicly-funded undergraduate and sub-degree programmes on the strength of their HKDSE Examination results. Each candidate could apply up to 20 programmes in order of preference. The computer system



would process the applications and perform a selection function whereby a successful applicant would be given one single offer of the highest priority on his/her programme choice list for which he/she had the required rating; and

- (b) under E-APP, applicants were only required to complete one online application form for applying to more than one institution for different post-secondary programmes not covered by JUPAS. For those applicants who wished to apply concurrently for the YJD Programme, subject to their consent, E-APP was equipped with the function to transfer information contained in the applicants' account under E-APP (such as personal particulars and academic results) to the Application System of the YJD Programme.

54. Dr Helena WONG noted that the Finance Committee had given funding approval for EDB to implement the Study Subsidy Scheme for Designated Professions/Sectors starting from the 2015-2016 academic year to subsidize up to 1 000 students per cohort to pursue designated full-time locally-accredited self-financing undergraduate programmes in selected disciplines. She asked whether details of these 1 000 government-subsidized places would be made known to HKDSE candidates through any of the electronic application platforms. In reply, US(Ed) said that application for these 1 000 places would be processed through JUPAS.

#### *Issues related to the Mainland Admission Scheme*

55. The Chairman expressed support for the Mainland Admission Scheme as it provided an additional choice to HKDSE candidates who wished to pursue further studies. He also sought information on the arrangements for selection interviews conducted by these institutions, and how information on individual institutions participating in the Mainland Admission Scheme was disseminated to local applicants for reference.

56. Acting Deputy Secretary for Education(1)/Principal Assistant Secretary (Higher Education)("Acting DS(Ed)(1)/PAS(HE)") advised that some of the Mainland higher education institutions did not require applicants to attend selection interviews, while some had conducted video interviews with local candidates. Regarding information on Mainland higher education institutions, US(Ed) said that EDB had launched the annual Mainland Higher Education Expo in which local students were able to obtain information direct from the participating Mainland higher education institutions. A brief description on the participating institutions of the Mainland Admission

Scheme, including relevant information such as the general entrance requirements of the programmes offered, were also posted on EDB's website. Acting DS(Ed)(1)/PAS(HE) supplemented that quite a number of participating institutions of the Mainland Admission Scheme maintained close liaison with local secondary schools and held talks on further studies for the students. Meanwhile, delegations had been organized for school personnel including principals and career masters to visit Mainland higher education institutions and some local government secondary schools had also organized visits to institutions which were of interest to them. The Chairman requested EDB to provide further information on the liaison between local secondary schools and Mainland higher education institutions participating in the Mainland Admission Scheme, such as the Mainland institutions and the activities involved, etc.

Admin

## **VI. Implementation of the "Chinese Language Curriculum Second Language Learning Framework" and professional support**

(LC Paper No. CB(4)913/13-14(05) -- Paper provided by the Administration

LC Paper No. CB(4)934/13-14(01) Submission from Hong Kong Unison Limited  
(*English version only*)

57. Members noted a submission from the Hong Kong Unison Limited [LC Paper No. CB(4)934/12-13(01)].

### Briefing by the Administration

58. At the invitation of the Chairman, US(Ed) briefed members on the implementation details of the "Chinese Language Curriculum Second Language Learning Framework" ("Learning Framework") to step up the support to NCS students' learning of "Chinese as a second language", as set out in the Administration's paper [LC Paper No. CB(4)913/13-14(05)]. Principal Education Officer (Curriculum Development) ("PEO(CD)") gave a PowerPoint presentation to introduce the details of the Learning Framework.

(*Post-meeting note: A set of PowerPoint presentation material [LC Paper No. CB(4)953/13-14(01)] was circulated to member by e-mail on 18 July 2014.*)

## Discussion

### *The Learning Framework*

59. The Deputy Chairman remarked that since the subject matter was of concern to the NCS community, the presentation material, which had been prepared in Chinese, should also be made available in English. The Deputy Chairman remarked that according to the presentation, the "small-step" learning approach under the Learning Framework sought to set incremental learning targets, which was in fact a pedagogical approach to cater for students with weaker learning abilities. He considered that the Learning Framework should take into account the difference in cultural background between students of ethnic minorities and local students.

60. Deputy Secretary for Education (5) ("DS(Ed)5") said that the teaching method and teaching materials under the Learning Framework had made reference to the cultural background of the NCS students. PEO(CD) confirmed that relevant information on the Learning Framework currently available in Chinese would also be made available in English to facilitate understanding by the NCS community.

61. Mr Abraham SHEK enquired about the difference between the Learning Framework and the Chinese Language curriculum and teaching method currently adopted by international schools in Hong Kong.

62. DS(Ed)5 advised that the Administration had made reference to the practice adopted by international schools in teaching Chinese Language. Some international schools had made use of e-learning aids and teaching materials to arouse the interest of NCS students in learning Chinese Language. PEO(CD) supplemented that very often, the Chinese Language curriculum adopted by international schools was practically oriented. It focused mainly on day-to-day oral communication and preparation for certain non-local examinations in Chinese Language. The Learning Framework however aimed at facilitating NCS students to bridge over to mainstream Chinese Language classes and sit for HKDSE Examination.

63. Referring to his experience of learning foreign languages, Dr Kenneth CHAN was of the view that a second language curriculum for NCS students might not necessarily be pegged to the mainstream Chinese Language curriculum. Noting that the Learning Framework had been developed for primary and secondary schools, Dr CHAN suggested that the needs of pre-school NCS children in learning Chinese Language should also be addressed, given that these children could benefit from early exposure to the

Chinese Language.

*Professional support for implementing the Learning Framework*

64. Mr Michael TIEN declared that he was the supervisor of a Direct Subsidy Scheme school which had admitted NCS students up to about 20-30% of its total student body. According to his understanding, teachers were concerned about the associated professional support and training to equip them to teach NCS students Chinese Language under the Learning Framework. Given the wide difference in Chinese proficiency among NCS students, Dr Helena WONG was concerned about the support available for teachers in catering for both NCS students and local students in the same class after implementation of the Learning Framework.

65. PEO(CD) said that workshops/seminars would be conducted for school leaders and teachers to understand the Learning Framework and strengthen teachers' skills in teaching Chinese Language to NCS students. EDB would also provide planning tools, learning materials and assessment tools for schools to implement the Learning Framework.

*Alternative Chinese Language curriculum and assessment*

66. Noting the Administration's plan to introduce an Applied Learning (Chinese) subject ("ApL(C) subject") by phases from the 2014-2015 school year, Dr Fernando CHEUNG expressed his concern about the recognition of the attainment in the ApL(C) subject.

67. Mr Michael TIEN said that as a Member from the Geographical Constituency of New Territories West ("NTW"), he was aware of the concern of the ethnic minorities in NTW about their integration into the community. In this regard, Mr TIEN considered that the recognition of the ApL(C) subject or other appropriate qualifications of Chinese Language by employers and universities would be crucial.

68. DS(Ed)5 advised that the number of NCS students taking the HKDSE Examination was expected to increase. The development of the Learning Framework and the introduction of the ApL(C) subject would enable them to obtain a Chinese qualification for further studies and/or employment. To enhance recognition, the ApL(C) subject would be developed under HKDSE and would also be pegged at Qualifications Framework ("QF") Levels 1 to 3. EDB was actively seeking recognition of the qualification from stakeholders, including post-secondary institutions, the Civil Service Bureau and employers. DS(Ed)5 further said that the Working Group on "Chinese

Language Curriculum Second Language Learning Framework" set up under the Curriculum Development Council also maintained close communication with employers.

69. Dr Kenneth CHAN noted that only some 50% of candidates had attained level 3 or above in Chinese Language in the 2014 HKDSE Examination. He remarked that this level of attainment might suggest that even local students had difficulties in mastering the subject of Chinese Language. Hence, he was concerned whether the Learning Framework could effectively support NCS students in learning Chinese.

70. Given the diverse cultural and family background of NCS students, Mr Abraham SHEK considered that NCS students learning Chinese Language as a second language should not be expected to attain a level of Chinese proficiency comparable to that of local students.

71. Dr Fernando CHEUNG commented that the general requirement on all students to attain a specified level in the HKDSE Chinese Language Examination for admission to undergraduate programmes was unfair to NCS students. He referred to the HKDSE English Language Examination and highlighted that in English Language Paper 1 (Reading), candidates might choose either the easier section or the more difficult section. Candidates attempting the difficult section would be able to attain the full range of possible levels on the merits of their answers, while Level 4 would be the highest level that could be awarded to candidates attempting the easier section. He noted that in the past, the curriculum and assessment of Syllabus A and Syllabus B in English Language of the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination ("HKCEE") had enabled students to be examined under the relevant Syllabus according to their language abilities. Dr CHEUNG was of the view that similar approach could be adopted in the HKDSE Chinese Language Examination. Mr Michael TIEN concurred that it was worthwhile to consider the feasibility of introducing an alternative Chinese Language curriculum with simpler contents and lower standards for NCS students.

72. DS(Ed)5 said that EDB was seeking recognition from universities regarding the attainment in the ApL(C) subject as part of the general entrance requirements for local undergraduate programmes. It was expected that the arrangements could be finalized by the end of 2014. Regarding an alternative Chinese Language curriculum and public examination with pre-set simpler contents and lower standards, DS(Ed)5 advised that according to the experience of the past English Language Examination of HKCEE, the qualification of an alternative curriculum and assessment did not receive

wide recognition.

Admin

73. At the request of members, the Administration agreed to provide a written response to the issues raised in the submission from Hong Kong Unison Limited.

**VII. Any other business**

74. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 7:03 pm.

Council Business Division 4  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
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