

For discussion on
14 April 2014

**Legislative Council Panel on Education
Enhanced Chinese Learning and Teaching for
Non-Chinese Speaking Students**

Purpose

The 2014 Policy Address has announced a series of measures to step up support for ethnic minorities (EM) in education and employment. This paper aims to elaborate on how the curriculum design and teaching of the Chinese language would be enhanced from the 2014/15 school year to help non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students¹ learn Chinese and to overcome the difficulties of learning Chinese as a second language with a view to enabling them to bridge over to mainstream Chinese Language classes, and to invite Members' views on the implementation details of the complementary support measures. The objectives are to enhance the learning and teaching of NCS students and create an inclusive learning environment in schools so as to facilitate their integration into the community.

Chinese Language Curriculum

2. Capitalising on the experience in supporting NCS students (the support measures by category with elaboration at the Annex), the Education Bureau (EDB) will, starting from the 2014/15 school year, provide primary and secondary schools with the "Chinese Language Curriculum Second Language Learning Framework" ("Learning Framework") to further address the concern about NCS students' learning of "Chinese as a second language". Developed from the perspective of second language learners, the "Learning Framework" provides a systematic set of objectives and expected learning outcomes that describes the learning progress of NCS students at different learning stages. Teachers may set progressive learning targets, learning progress and expected learning outcomes using a "small-step" learning approach to enhance the learning effectiveness of NCS students. In parallel, module exemplars, assessment tools and supporting learning and teaching materials will be provided to help teachers systematically adapt the Chinese Language curriculum

¹ For the planning of educational support measures, students whose spoken language at home is not Chinese are broadly categorised as NCS students. For reference, in the 2013/14 school year, there are about 15 900 NCS students (8 300 at primary level and 7 600 at secondary level) attending public sector schools and Direct Subsidy Scheme schools, among them about 6% are Chinese, 34% Pakistani, 16% Nepalese and 14% Indian.

according to individual learner's needs in a progressive manner to help NCS students overcome the difficulties of learning Chinese as a second language. The fact that the "Learning Framework" makes the learning progress of NCS students more explicit could help teachers and NCS students jointly formulate appropriate learning targets and expected progress with a view to bridging over to mainstream Chinese Language classes.

3. Premised on having no alternative Chinese Language curriculum and public examination with pre-set simpler contents and lower standards, the "Learning Framework" applicable in the learning and teaching of Chinese at school is a "learning Chinese as a second language" curriculum. As the "Learning Framework" provides a systematic set of learning targets, learning objectives and expected learning outcomes at different learning stages according to the curriculum, it also serves as a reference for evaluation of learning effectiveness, which complements the Supplementary Guide to the Chinese Language Curriculum for NCS Students. Coupled with the complementary support measures elucidated in the ensuing paragraphs, we ensure that all NCS students have equal opportunities in learning Chinese on par with their Chinese-speaking counterparts. In parallel, we will require schools to arrange their NCS students to sit for the Territory-wide System Assessment (Chinese) with a view to collecting relevant objective data on their basic competencies for research purposes, which would in turn help review the implementation of the Learning Framework².

4. We appreciate that like all other students, NCS students are different in backgrounds and aptitudes. Their expectations, needs and aspirations in respect of learning the Chinese language also vary. We will continue to subsidise eligible NCS students to obtain other internationally recognised Chinese qualifications³. These qualifications are accepted as alternative Chinese qualifications for consideration for admission to local post-secondary institutions and universities. Besides, we will introduce an Applied Learning (Chinese) subject by phases, starting from the 2014/15 school year, as an

² From 2014 onwards, the EDB will not release to individual primary schools the number of students and school percentage of students attaining basic competency. For secondary schools, the current policy remains unchanged, i.e. a supplementary report with attainment rates which excludes the performance of NCS students, will be provided to individual secondary schools having NCS students participated in the assessment. Hence, the requirement for NCS students to sit for the Territory-wide System Assessment (Chinese) would not impose undue pressure on schools and students.

³ The EDB will continue to subsidise eligible NCS students to take the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) (Chinese) Examination, and the Chinese Language examinations of the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE), General Certificate of Education (GCE) AS-Level or GCE A-Level for acquiring internationally recognised Chinese qualifications, which are accepted as alternative Chinese qualifications for consideration for admission to local post-secondary institutions and universities.

alternative qualification for NCS students to opt for at senior secondary levels. The contents of the subject would be pegged at the Qualifications Framework (QF) Levels 1 to 3 with the results recorded in the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE). We are collaborating with relevant stakeholders to ensure that the qualifications concerned would be recognised for further studies and employment under the multiple pathways. In short, NCS students may choose to sit for the HKDSE (Chinese Language) Examination or study the Applied Learning (Chinese) subject and/or attain other internationally recognised Chinese qualifications subject to their learning performance and aspirations. NCS school leavers will also benefit from the development of Vocational Chinese Language courses recognised under the QF to enhance their employability.

Complementary Support Measures

5. To facilitate schools' implementation of the "Learning Framework", we will step up the support measures in 3 major areas: (a) enhanced teachers' professional development in teaching Chinese as a second language for Chinese Language teachers; (b) enhanced funding support to schools for providing intensive learning of Chinese for NCS students and creating an inclusive environment in schools (including strengthening communication with NCS parents so that they would encourage their children to learn Chinese for better integration into the community); and (c) enhanced professional support for schools.

(a) Teachers' Professional Development

6. The EDB has launched the Professional Enhancement Grant Scheme under the Language Fund in the first quarter of 2014 to enhance Chinese Language teachers' professional capability in teaching Chinese as a second language. In tandem, we will enhance teachers' professional development with more training courses and experience sharing opportunities on teaching Chinese as a second language for Chinese Language teachers irrespective of the number of NCS students admitted in school. We will also organise different thematic seminars and workshops to facilitate teachers' understanding of the underpinning philosophies and mastery of the pedagogy in teaching NCS students, including interpretation of the "Learning Framework" and use of assessment tools, professional knowledge on teaching Chinese as a second language, relevant learning and teaching strategies, etc. Besides, opportunities for professional exchange for teachers of NCS students would be provided to ensure that teachers are well-versed with the "Learning Framework" and assessment tools before the commencement of the 2014/15 school year.

(b) *Enhanced Additional Recurrent Funding to Schools*

New Funding Model

7. As announced in the 2014 Policy Address, the additional recurrent funding to schools will be significantly increased to about \$200 million a year starting from the 2014/15 school year to facilitate schools' implementation of the "Learning Framework" and creation of an inclusive environment in schools. It is worth to note that the EDB abolished in the 2013/14 school year the so-called "designated schools" system⁴ (i.e. confining the provision of additional recurrent funding to a certain number of schools admitting NCS students) with a view to removing the misconception arising from the "designated school" label which is in fact a misnomer and to raising schools' awareness to support NCS students' learning of the Chinese language. Instead, all schools admitting 10 or more NCS students have been provided with an additional recurrent funding ranging from \$300,000 to \$600,000 per annum⁵. We have, on one hand, made it explicit that schools should be accountable for meeting the needs of their NCS students by formulating school-based learning and teaching strategies to support their NCS students' effective learning of Chinese through optimal use of the additional funding so as to facilitate their academic and career pursuits as well as integration into the community. On the other hand, we have been encouraging NCS parents to send their children to mainstream schools. Revising the funding arrangement will hopefully widen NCS parents' school choice.

8. Capitalising on the experience in the implementation of the afore-mentioned revised funding support to schools in the 2013/14 school year, we will require schools implementing the "Learning Framework" from the 2014/15 school year to adopt the Chinese Language Assessment Tools in conjunction with the "Learning Framework" to differentiate the learning performance of their NCS students. Schools should then follow the

⁴ From the 2006/07 to 2012/13 school years, schools admitting a critical mass of NCS students, having experience in taking care of NCS students, ready to partner with the EDB to develop school-based support measures and share experiences with other schools were provided with an annual additional funding ranging from \$300,000 to \$600,000 depending on the number of NCS students admitted, and professional support services for these schools to develop specific school-based support programmes and Chinese Language learning and teaching materials, and share with other schools admitting NCS students through the school support network that the EDB had formed, so that all NCS students would benefit. These schools were generally referred to as the so-called "designated schools".

⁵ In the 2013/14 school year, the number of schools concerned is 151 (63 secondary schools and 88 primary schools). Another 430 schools have admitted a handful of NCS students (200 secondary schools and 230 primary schools).

progressive “small-step” learning approach and module exemplars at different levels of learning as set out in the “Learning Framework”, make use of the supporting learning and teaching materials, and adopt diversified intensive learning modes as appropriate (including pull-out learning, split-class/group learning, increasing Chinese lesson time, co-teaching, learning Chinese across the curriculum, after-school consolidation, etc.) with a view to helping NCS students, especially those at junior levels, learn Chinese systematically and bridge over to mainstream Chinese Language classes as early as possible. In other words, schools will not be allowed to adopt an across-the-board Chinese Language curriculum with pre-set simpler contents and lower standards for their NCS students.

9. Based on the funding model⁶ in the 2013/14 school year, we propose to increase the additional recurrent funding to schools admitting 10 or more NCS students starting from the 2014/15 school year to enable schools to meet the following requirements:

- (a) Assign a dedicated teacher to coordinate the implementation of the “Learning Framework” to facilitate NCS students’ learning of Chinese, including adoption of the Chinese Language Assessment Tools to assess and then peg the learning performance of NCS students against the “Learning Framework” and based on the results, to set learning targets and draw up appropriate teaching strategies; selection of appropriate learning and teaching materials; and compilation of related school plan as well as progress and evaluation reports. The coordinator will also be responsible for arranging additional teaching staff for implementing intensive learning modes as appropriate (see paragraph 8 above);
- (b) Promote the awareness of supporting NCS students and create an inclusive environment in schools through appointment of additional EM assistants or procurement of translation services as appropriate to strengthen communication with NCS parents, whereby NCS students’ Chinese learning would be better supported through home-school cooperation; and
- (c) Appoint additional teaching staff for implementing different intensive learning modes (see paragraph 8 above) with a view to enabling NCS students to bridge over to mainstream Chinese Language classes as early as possible.

⁶ The funding model in the 2013/14 school year for schools admitting 10 or more NCS students is as follows:

<u>Number of NCS students</u>	<u>Additional recurrent funding</u>
10-30	\$300,000
31-60	\$400,000
61-90	\$500,000
91 or more	\$600,000

10. Besides, we, drawing reference to the prevailing class size of most primary schools (i.e. 25 students), propose to reduce the number of students for each funding tier under the existing funding model and provide schools with additional resources according to the number of NCS students admitted. This is to enable schools to adopt diversified intensive learning modes with regard to NCS students' learning targets and strategies and/or strengthen "enrichment and remedial" when implementing the "Learning Framework". For the revised funding mode under consideration, the amount of funding for the first tier under the new funding model is proposed to be \$800,000. The amount of funding for each subsequent funding tier will then be increased according to the number of NCS students admitted as afore-mentioned with the ceiling of the additional recurrent funding capped at \$1.5 million. Details are as follows:

<u>Number of NCS students</u>	<u>Additional Recurrent Funding (\$ million)</u>
10 - 25	0.80
26 - 50	0.95
51 - 75	1.10
76 - 90	1.25
91 or more	1.50

11. To discourage over-concentration of NCS students in individual schools so as to provide an immersed Chinese language environment for NCS students, we propose to maintain the ceiling of "91 NCS students or more" of the funding model of the 2013/14 school year. In other words, all schools admitting 91 or more NCS students will be provided with the maximum additional recurrent funding (i.e. the afore-mentioned ceiling of \$1.5 million). Based on past experience of these schools, given that their student profile is relatively homogeneous, with an additional recurrent funding of about \$1.5 million, these schools are able to provide diversified intensive learning modes to cater for NCS students with different learning performance, and enhance their learning of Chinese through "enrichment and remedial".

12. With the proposed additional recurrent funding, schools may flexibly deploy the resources to support NCS students in learning Chinese during lessons and/or after school to meet their individual needs. In other words, the Project of After-school Extended Chinese Learning for NCS Students currently funded by the Language Fund will be regularised and subsumed in the additional recurrent funding for eligible schools from the 2014/15 school year.

Provision for Special Schools

13. We propose extending the coverage of the additional recurrent funding to special schools. While we are examining the needs and circumstances of NCS students' learning of Chinese in special schools specifically on how the "Learning Framework" should be implemented or adapted as appropriate, we propose providing an additional recurrent funding to special schools admitting 6 or more NCS students under the new funding model, having due consideration to the circumstances in special schools. The funding model proposed in paragraph 10 above will be applicable to those special schools offering the ordinary curriculum and admitting 10 or more NCS students (i.e. the amount of funding to be determined according to the number of NCS students admitted). For special schools which do not offer the ordinary curriculum and have admitted 6 or more NCS students, and those which offer the ordinary curriculum but have admitted only 6 to 9 NCS students, an additional recurrent funding of about \$650,000 will be provided to facilitate enhanced support for their NCS students in learning Chinese and creation of an inclusive environment in schools.

Optimal Use of the Additional Recurrent Funding

14. To ensure schools' optimal use of the additional recurrent funding, the funding will be solely used to support NCS students in learning Chinese. The EDB will confine the funding concerned as purpose-specific. Moreover, schools will be required to submit an annual plan on support to their NCS students. The plan should cover, among others, NCS students' learning performance as revealed in the assessment through using the Chinese Language Assessment Tools, teaching strategies to be adopted with regard to their NCS students' learning performance and progress and the expenditure involved, overall summative assessment results of all NCS students at the end of a school year specifically the number of NCS students who are expected to bridge over to mainstream Chinese Language classes (in the case of secondary schools, it should include data on the anticipated progression of students under the multiple pathways as appropriate), and other complementary support measures with a breakdown on the expenditure. Should a school allow Chinese-speaking students to participate in individual support measures for NCS students (including split-class/group teaching, pull-out learning, etc.), it should specify the details in its plan including the percentage of NCS and Chinese-speaking students, allocation of resources and justifications. The EDB will set up a dedicated team for implementation and monitoring of the enhanced funding support for schools.

15. Schools may make use of the additional funding to adopt various intensive learning modes to cater for the needs of their NCS students in Chinese learning. They may also provide other support related to the learning of Chinese such as collaboration with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to provide after-school support to consolidate what their NCS students have learnt in Chinese Language lessons and/or to conduct activities to promote an inclusive learning environment, procurement of learning and teaching materials, development of self-learning materials, enhancing teachers' capability in supporting NCS students, etc. In other words, we propose allowing flexibility for schools to deploy the resources to meet school-based needs provided that the additional funding is to be used solely for supporting NCS students' learning of Chinese.

Schools Admitting More NCS students

16. Under the current arrangements of the Primary One Admission System, in addition to choosing public sector schools in their residing school nets in the same manner as their local counterparts at the Central Allocation stage, NCS students may also choose the 8 primary schools traditionally admitting more NCS students. There are views from some stakeholders that this additional choice of picking schools from the 8-school list should be removed. In this regard, we are open-minded and are prepared to review the current practice subject to the views of the EM communities and stakeholders concerned, and having due consideration to the worries and needs of NCS students and parents. Besides, some stakeholders have proposed capping the number of NCS students admitted to a school and/or setting a ratio of NCS and Chinese-speaking students. In light of the practical difficulties and the needs of some EM parents and concerns of some schools, we propose to provide more opportunities to expose the NCS students concerned to an immersed Chinese language environment in the following paragraph.

17. To enable NCS students studying in schools with a relatively high concentration of NCS students to learn and grow together with Chinese-speaking students, we will actively encourage the schools concerned to form learning circles for Chinese learning activities (such as buddy reading programmes) in collaboration with schools admitting a larger number of Chinese-speaking students, and/or apply for funding under the Quality Education Fund to launch programmes for promoting awareness of cultural diversity (for example, engaging NCS students in community services) with a view to exposing NCS students more to Chinese through learning activities outside school and interaction with their Chinese-speaking peers. Besides, we will propose to the Standing Committee on Language Education and Research to

consider extending the existing district-based Chinese programmes for NCS children aged 3 to 9 to cover NCS primary and secondary students with a view to further motivating them to learn Chinese through learning experiences outside schools. We will also explore having the Chinese Language Learning Support Centre commissioned to a university to set up centres in these schools to facilitate the NCS students concerned to gain easy access to the after-school Chinese learning activities.

Support to Schools Admitting a Handful of NCS Students

18. As regards schools admitting a handful of NCS students (i.e. 1 to 9 for mainstream schools and less than 6 for special schools), past experience has revealed that most NCS students can benefit from the immersed Chinese language environment in schools. These schools normally complement their NCS students' learning of Chinese after school or during holidays as appropriate. As such, these schools have not been provided with any additional resources. To strengthen support for NCS students in these schools, in particular helping them overcome the difficulties of learning Chinese as a second language, we propose providing a formal platform for these schools to apply for additional funding to support their NCS students after school starting from the 2014/15 school year. Based on the experience of the prevailing time-limited Project of After-school Extended Chinese Learning for NCS Students funded by the Language Fund and implemented since the 2010/11 school year, it is proposed that each successful applicant school be provided with an additional funding⁷ for organising diversified after-school activities to support NCS students in learning Chinese, such as training of the Chinese learning skills in learning Chinese, Chinese learning groups, guided story reading, Chinese culture appreciation, etc., to consolidate what they have learnt in Chinese Language classes. We will continue to encourage these schools to optimise the use of their immersed Chinese language environment and deploy other resources flexibly with holistic planning according to their school-based circumstances to support their NCS students' mastery of the Chinese language as appropriate.

(c) School-based Professional Support

19. Starting from the 2014/15 school year, the EDB will step up school-based professional support services through diversified modes to support schools in adapting the school curriculum according to the "Learning Framework" coupled with the use of assessment tools and supporting materials; exploring various intensive learning modes; and encouraging sharing among

⁷ Under the Project of After-school Extended Chinese Learning for NCS Students, schools with 15 to 19 participating NCS students are provided an additional funding of about \$50,000 per annum.

schools and development of learning communities, etc. In addition to the services offered by the EDB's school-based support teams, support will also be rendered through the University-School Support Programmes, Professional Development Schools Scheme and School Support Partners (Seconded Teacher) Scheme. Schools may apply for the support services according to their circumstances and development needs.

Promotion of Early Integration

20. NCS students' early exposure to, and learning of, Chinese in daily life and at school is critical to their bridging over to mainstream Chinese Language classes, the earlier the better. We will continue to invite NGOs, through the Language Fund, to organise district-based programmes for NCS children aged 3 to 9 to motivate them to learn Chinese through fun activities such as games and creative arts. Separately, feedback from participants of the refined Summer Bridging Programme in 2013 was promising: participating NCS parents were more prepared to collaborate with schools in supporting their children's learning of Chinese. We will continue to encourage more NCS parents to participate in the Summer Bridging Programme.

21. We encourage NCS parents to send their children to kindergartens offering a local curriculum. Apart from inviting all kindergartens to participate in the school-based professional support services provided by the EDB on an annual basis, we will continue to enhance the school-based professional support and professional development of kindergarten teachers through the University-School Support Programme and the Quality Education Fund projects.

Monitoring and Evaluation

22. In addition to the dedicated team to be set up in the EDB to ensure schools' implementation of the "Learning Framework" and monitoring of the enhanced additional recurrent funding for schools to support NCS students mentioned in paragraph 14 above, we are inviting research and language experts to formulate a research framework to facilitate the evaluation of the effectiveness of various support measures for NCS students in Chinese learning to ensure the quality of the support services and refine individual measures where appropriate. We will continue to engage stakeholders (including NGOs) and report to the Legislative Council Panel on Education the progress of the implementation of support measures as appropriate.

Views of Stakeholders

23. We have consulted stakeholders on the above proposed implementation details, including the Special Needs Groups Task Force under the Commission on Poverty, relevant school sponsoring bodies, school councils, schools, and relevant NGOs, and will continue to collect views from EM communities/representatives. We have also briefed the Equal Opportunities Commission the major proposed measures subsequent to the announcement of the 2014 Policy Address. Stakeholders and the community are generally positive to the proposals and find them in right direction whereby enhanced measures should be implemented in a prudent manner with evaluation to be conducted.

Advice Sought

24. Members are invited to comment on the above proposals. We will announce the finalised implementation details in May this year for schools to prepare for implementation in the 2014/15 school year.

Education Bureau
April 2014

Educational Support Measures for Non-Chinese Speaking Students Implemented in Recent Years

Educational support measures provided for non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students by the Education Bureau (EDB) since the 2006/07 school year by category are set out as follows:

(1) Provision of additional resources for schools admitting NCS students

- From the 2006/07 to 2012/13 school years, schools admitting a critical mass of NCS students, having experience in taking care of NCS students, ready to partner with the EDB to develop school-based support measures and share experiences with other schools were provided with an annual additional funding ranging from \$300,000 to \$600,000 depending on the number of NCS students admitted, and professional support services for these schools to develop specific school-based support programmes and Chinese Language learning and teaching materials. These schools needed to share their experience with other schools admitting NCS students through the school support network that the EDB had formed, so that all NCS students would benefit. These schools were generally referred to as the so-called “designated schools”.
- The EDB abolished in the 2013/14 school year the so-called “designated schools” system afore-mentioned with a view to removing the misconception arising from the “designated school” label which is in fact a misnomer and to raising schools’ awareness to support NCS students’ learning of the Chinese language. Instead, all schools admitting 10 or more NCS students have been provided with an additional recurrent funding ranging from \$300,000 to \$600,000 per annum. We have made it explicit that schools should be accountable for meeting the needs of their NCS students by formulating school-based learning and teaching strategies to support their NCS students’ effective learning of Chinese through optimal use of the additional funding so as to facilitate their academic and career pursuits as well as integration into the community.

(2) Chinese Language Curriculum, Teachers’ Professional Development and School-based Professional Support

- Issue of the Supplementary Guide to the Chinese Language Curriculum

for NCS Students to help teachers adapt the Chinese Language Curriculum.

- Provision of professional development programmes for Chinese Language teachers teaching NCS students and school-based professional support to schools.

(3) After-school Support in Chinese Learning

- Operation of the Chinese Language Learning Support Centres to offer remedial programmes after school and during holidays for those NCS students who have a late start in learning Chinese, develop teaching resources, and organise workshops for experience sharing with teachers.
- Implementation of the time-limited Project of After-school Extended Chinese Learning for NCS Students starting from the 2010/11 school year to provide funding to schools other than those with school-based support programmes specifically arranged for NCS students to put in place diversified extended Chinese learning programmes under the Language Fund. Starting from the 2013/14 school year, all schools may apply for the funding.

(4) Summer Bridging Programme

- Offering Summer Bridging Programme to NCS Primary 1 entrants and students proceeding to Primary 2, Primary 3 and Primary 4 to help them consolidate that they have learnt at Key Stage 1 and prepare for their transition to Key Stage 2.
- Starting from 2013, the programme has been refined to allow NCS parents accompanying their children with a view to enhancing their exposure to, and use of, Chinese and support for their children.

(5) Alternative Chinese Qualifications

- Starting from 2008, the University Grants Committee-funded institutions have accepted alternative Chinese Language qualifications including the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE), International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) and General Certificate of Education (GCE) of eligible NCS students for consideration for admission under the Joint University Programmes Admissions System.
- Subsidising eligible school candidates sitting for the GCSE (Chinese) Examination since 2010 to the effect that the fee level of the

examination payable by the subsidised school candidates is on par with the Chinese Language paper in the defunct Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination and Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination.

- Starting from 2013, the examination subsidy coverage has been expanded to include other non-local Chinese examinations such as the IGCSE, GCE Advanced Subsidiary Level and GCE Advanced Level.

(6) Promotion of Early Integration

- Provision of support for kindergartens admitting NCS students, including University-School Support Programme projects financed by the Education Development Fund in respect of the learning and teaching of Chinese for NCS children implemented for 3 years since the 2012/13 school year; and school-based professional support services.
- District-based programmes in collaboration with non-governmental organisations since the 2012/13 school year to motivate NCS children to learn Chinese through fun activities such as games and creative art, etc. under the Language Fund.