

For Discussion on
16 July 2014

Legislative Council Panel on Education
Implementation of the "Chinese Language Curriculum Second
Language Learning Framework" and professional support

Purpose

Further to LC Paper No. CB(4)545/13-14(02) discussed at the meeting of 14 April 2014, this paper outlines for members' information the implementation details of the "Chinese Language Curriculum Second Language Learning Framework" ("Learning Framework"), including the associated professional support, to step up the support to non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students¹ learning of "Chinese as a second language".

Background

2. The 2014 Policy Address announced a series of measures to step up the support for ethnic minorities (EM) in education and employment. With regard to the curriculum design and teaching of the Chinese Language, starting from the 2014/15 school year, the Education Bureau (EDB) will provide primary and secondary schools with the "Chinese Language Curriculum Second Language Learning Framework" ("Learning Framework").

Chinese Language Curriculum Second Language Learning Framework

3. 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. The "Learning Framework" aims to help NCS students overcome the difficulties of learning Chinese as a second language with a

¹ For the planning of education 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 which about 6% are Chinese, 34% Pakistani, 16% Nepalese and 14% Indian.

view to enabling them to bridge over to mainstream Chinese Language classes, realising the objectives of creating an inclusive learning environment in schools and facilitating NCS students' integration into the community.

4. In brief, 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 leaning effectiveness.

The implementation details of the Learning Framework

Planning, learning and assessment resources

5. To facilitate schools' implementation of the “Learning Framework” and to strengthen teachers' skills in teaching Chinese Language to NCS students, the EDB has provided practical tools and steps, and second language learning reference materials by phases prior to the start of the 2014/15 school year. The assessment tools and full sets of learning materials that include learning modules, Second Language Learning Packages and exemplars for learning outcomes of the “Learning Framework” will help teachers categorically adapt the Chinese Language curriculum according to individual learner's needs in a progressive manner. The EDB has also provided planning tools for school principals, middle managers as well as the subject panel to decide on different modes of implementing the “Learning Framework”, such as grouping by levels, split class, after school tutorial, learning Chinese across the curriculum according to the learning diversity of NCS students in terms of language competencies, age and other needs. A designated webpage² collating all the supporting materials has been set up for delivering the above resources.

Professional development programmes for school leaders and teachers

6. The above support measures are complemented by a series of seminars and workshops for school leaders, middle managers and teachers respectively, the first of which have already been rolled out in June 2014. These programmes would enable every primary and secondary school

² The designated webpage for the “Learning Framework”:
<http://www.edb.gov.hk/tc/curriculum-development/kla/chi-edu/second-lang.html>

admitting NCS students to have the professional development opportunities for their teachers to understand the “Learning Framework” as well as to use the assessment tools and planning tools effectively. From the 2014/15 school year onwards, sustained and progressively advanced professional development programmes will be regularly organised to make sure that teachers will benefit from the ample training opportunities.

*“Chinese Language Curriculum Second Language Learning Framework”
Working Group*

7. Under the Curriculum Development Council Committee on Chinese Language Education, a Working Group on “Chinese Language Curriculum Second Language Learning Framework” was set up in May 2014. The working group is tasked with advising the EDB on the development of the Learning Framework and the supporting materials that aim to help NCS students to learn the Chinese Language more effectively. Two meetings were held from May to June and plenty of constructive suggestions were received for further improvement of their practicability and user-friendliness. Further meetings will be held so as to support the effective implementation of the “Learning Framework”.

School-based Professional Support

8. The EDB will continue to step up school-based professional support services for primary and secondary schools through diversified modes, including University-School Support Programmes (USP), Professional Development Schools (PDS) Scheme and School Support Partners (Secoded Teacher) Scheme financed by the Education Development Fund and intensive on-site professional support services provided by various support sections within the EDB. The foci of support for primary and secondary schools include supporting schools in adapting the school curriculum according to the “Learning Framework”; adopting the assessment tools; developing learning and teaching materials; conducting lesson observations and post-observation discussions as well as developing a platform for teachers in the support network to share their experiences and resources. For the kindergarten level, support is focused on promoting early integration and adaptation for ethnic minority children in local settings. The ultimate aim of the professional support services is to enhance the professional capacity of schools through promotion and development of learning communities and school networks. Territory-wide workshops/seminars will continue to be conducted to promote professional sharing and wider dissemination of good practices. An annual EDB

Circular Memorandum on school-based support services is issued in April every year. Schools may apply for the professional support services to meet their individual school circumstances and development needs.

Applied Learning (Chinese) for NCS Students

9. Currently, NCS students may take the core subject of Chinese Language or other internationally recognised Chinese language qualifications³ to obtain a Chinese qualification for further studies and/or work. As an alternative qualification, the EDB will introduce an Applied Learning (Chinese) [ApL(C)] subject by phases from the 2014/15 school year. ApL(C) enables NCS students' learning of the Chinese language as a second language, using authentic contexts and application, facilitating their integration into the community. To enhance recognition, ApL(C) is developed under the HKDSE and would also be pegged at Qualifications Framework (QF) Levels 1 to 3. The results would be recorded in the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE). We are actively soliciting recognition from stakeholders, e.g. post-secondary institutions, universities, employers and the Civil Service Bureau. Schools will be invited to submit applications for enrolment to ApL(C) in December 2014. The first batch of the courses will commence in February 2015 and end in early 2017.

Views of Stakeholders

10. The EDB have consulted various stakeholders and will continue to collect views from the EM communities/representatives. 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.

Advice Sought

11. Members are invited to note the implementation details and advise on the way forward.

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³Other Chinese qualifications such as General Certificate of Secondary Education Examination (GCSE), International General Certificate of Secondary Education Examination (IGCSE), General Certificate of Education Examination (GCE) Advanced Subsidiary Level and Advanced Level