



中華人民共和國香港特別行政區政府總部教育局  
Education Bureau

Government Secretariat, The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region  
The People's Republic of China

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8 July 2014

Clerk to Panel  
Legislative Council Panel on Education  
Legislative Council Complex  
1 Legislative Council Road  
Central, Hong Kong  
(Attn: Ms Polly YEUNG)

Dear Ms YEUNG,

**Secondary School Places Allocation System (SSPA) 2014**  
**Overall situation of public sector secondary schools**  
**upon release of allocation results 2014**

Transient drop in the number of Secondary One (S1) students is expected to continue in SSPA 2013 and the coming few years. To stabilise the overall situation of public sector secondary schools, the Education Bureau (EDB) announced in 2012 the implementation of a series of relief measures in the transitional period (from 2013 to 2015) when the S1 population declines temporarily with a view to maintaining the stability and strengths of the schools as well as the teaching force<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> The relief measures include :

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

2. In the light that the actual number of S1 students of schools is subject to student movement during the summer holiday, it is not the practice of the EDB to publicise the situation of public sector secondary schools upon the release of SSPA results for public consumption. This is to avoid unnecessary speculations or even flawed perceptions of individual schools, which may in turn affect student admission of individual schools and hence outcome of the September headcount conducted around mid-September each year. Worse still, it may subsequently lead to reduction of S1 class(es) in individual schools and even affect the sustainable development of schools.

3. The temporary decline in the number of S1 students will unavoidably affect the number of S1 classes to be operated in public sector secondary schools. There were speculations on the number of S1 classes to be reduced and number of surplus teachers so arisen. To avoid any misconceptions lest they would mislead the public and affect the stability of public sector secondary schools, we informed the Panel of Education of the situation of public sector secondary schools by district upon the release of the SSPA 2013 results, i.e. the first year of the implementation of the series of relief measures, through LC Paper No. CB(4)888/12-13(01) when LC Paper No. CB(4)852/12-13(09) was discussed on 9 July 2013. As a follow up, this letter aims to inform Members of the overall situation upon the release of the SSPA 2014 results.

#### *Situation of the 2013/14 School Year*

4. After admission of students during the summer holiday in 2013, a total of 12 S1 classes were reduced in the 2013/14 school year (i.e. about 60% of the 30 classes affected based on the S1 allocation results released in July 2013), leading to about 17 surplus teachers (calculated based on the teaching staff establishment of the schools concerned in the 2013/14 school year).

#### *SSPA 2014*

5. The results of SSPA 2014 are announced today (8 July 2014). The overall satisfaction rate of S1 allocation this year is 91%<sup>2</sup>. Taking

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<sup>2</sup> It refers to the total number of students allocated a discretionary place and/or first three choices through the central allocation in SSPA 2014.

into account the experience of last year including schools' concerns, we set out the overall situation of public sector secondary schools upon the release of allocation results in the ensuing paragraphs. It is worth to note that as mentioned above, the actual number of students and impact of the S1 student population drop on schools will not be available until the mid-September headcount of the 2014/15 school year. In other words, the following information is strictly for reference only:

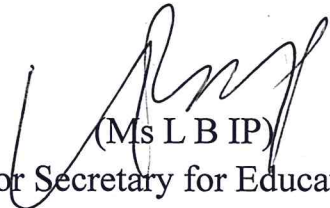
- (a) With the synergy brought about by various relief measures, upon the release of SSPA results on 8 July 2014, among the 382 public sector secondary schools for general allocation, 10 will immediately have one S1 class reduced; 9 may operate one S1 class in the 2014/15 school year with a school development option plan on sustaining their development if they fail to admit sufficient students (i.e. a minimum intake of 26 students) during the summer holiday.
- (b) Based on the number of students allocated to schools, another 23 schools (subject to the outcome of the mid-September headcount) are able to sustain their development upon the relaxation of the "not less than 3 classes" requirement; if they fail to admit sufficient students (i.e. a minimum intake of 51 students) during the summer holiday, they would have to reduce one S1 class each in the 2014/15 school year.
- (c) Based on the above (i.e. the number of students allocated to schools), the number of S1 classes to be reduced is 47<sup>3</sup>. The actual number of S1 classes to be reduced will only be available after the mid-September headcount. While the series of relief measures have effectively stabilised the overall situation of public sector secondary schools, these measures are not aiming to guarantee that the number of S1 classes of individual schools concerned is the same as that prior to the transient population decline. Besides, the effect of individual relief measures on individual schools may vary due to school-based circumstances.

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<sup>3</sup> In comparison with the number of approved S1 classes of the schools concerned in the current school year (2013/14).

6. We anticipate that, during the period from the release of SSPA results (8 July 2014) till the mid-September headcount, the series of relief measures will bring out various desired effects and help stabilise the overall situation and some individual schools in particular.

Yours sincerely,

  
(Ms L B IP)  
for Secretary for Education