

**Motion on “Report of the Subcommittee on Integrated Education”  
at the Legislative Council Meeting of 10 December 2014  
Progress Report**

**Purpose**

At the Legislative Council (LegCo) meeting of 10 December 2014, the motion moved by Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Integrated Education (the Subcommittee), on “Report of the Subcommittee on Integrated Education” (the Report) was passed. The wording of the motion passed is at **Annex 1**.

2. This report gives Members an overview of the follow-up actions taken by the Administration with regard to the suggestions put forward in the Report of the Subcommittee.

**Background**

3. The LegCo Panel on Education established the Subcommittee in December 2012. The Administration and the Subcommittee held numerous meetings in the 2012-13 and 2013-14 legislative sessions, listened to the views of the Members and stakeholders on the policy and implementation of integrated education (IE), and conducted thorough and in-depth discussions on improvement measures. The Subcommittee was dissolved on 30 September 2014 upon submitting the Report to the Panel on Education. The Report summarises the discussion at the meetings, and views and proposals put forward to the Administration. The LegCo noted the contents of the Report of the Subcommittee.

**(I) Early identification and early intervention for students with special educational needs**

Establishing a cross-departmental and cross-sectoral working group to review the existing mechanism

4. The Government has all along been committed to providing early identification and assessment of children with developmental disorders through the collaborated efforts of various Government departments,

including the Department of Health (DH), Hospital Authority (HA), Social Welfare Department (SWD) and Education Bureau (EDB). Efforts have been made to refer and arrange these children to receive appropriate diagnosis and rehabilitation services. The Government departments concerned perform their own functions and collaborate with each other, with a view to supporting students with SEN under their professional coverage. Regular communication mechanisms are in place for Government departments to jointly handle some relatively complicated problems which require cross-departmental collaboration.

5. In 2005, the EDB set up the Task Force on Integrated Education in Mainstream Schools. Through regular meetings, the EDB discusses with stakeholders, including representatives from various school councils, other Government departments, non-Governmental organisations (NGOs) and parent groups, etc., the development of IE and possible improvement measures. The EDB also maintains liaison with school councils, NGOs, and parent groups, etc. with a view to strengthening communication and cooperation. In short, the existing mechanism has been running smoothly with proven effectiveness. To avoid overlap of organisational structure, we do not have plans to establish a cross-departmental and cross-sectoral working group to handle matters related to IE.

#### Shortening the waiting time for assessment

6. The Child Assessment Service (CAS) of the DH provides comprehensive assessment services for children under 12 years of age with signs of developmental problems, and arrange rehabilitation services for them with regard to their individual needs and family circumstances. In the past three years, nearly all new cases were seen within three weeks while assessment for almost 90% of newly registered cases were completed within six months. As the service demand and the number of referrals to the CAS continue to rise, the Administration will therefore allocate additional resources to the DH in the 2015-16 financial year to strengthen the manpower of the multi-disciplinary healthcare teams of Child Assessment Centres (including four doctors, four clinical psychologists and two speech therapists) with a view to improving their service capacity.

7. The multi-disciplinary professional teams of the HA provide early identification, assessment and treatment services for children in need of these services. Under the triage system of the Child and Adolescent

Psychiatric Specialist Outpatient services of the HA, new appointments are arranged on the basis of individual patient's clinical conditions, with a view to determining the level of contingency and arranging appointments for treatment. New referral cases are normally classified into priority 1 (urgent), priority 2 (semi-urgent) or routine categories by psychiatric nurses with a review mechanism by psychiatrists. To ensure that patients in need of urgent medical attention are given timely treatment, it is the HA's target to maintain the median waiting time for priority 1 and priority 2 cases at within two and eight weeks respectively. On the whole, as at 31 December 2014, the above target was achieved.

8. For public sector primary and secondary students, about 80% of the cases referred to educational psychologists (EPs) are assessed within two months while about 90% are assessed within four months. The remaining cases with a longer waiting time for assessment are often due to some specific circumstances, such as cases in which the parents requested to defer the assessment and cases in which assessment had to be held up pending the students' medical treatment. The EDB is progressively extending the School-based Educational Psychology Service (SBEPS). It is expected that the waiting time for assessment will be further shortened when this comprehensive support service is extended to all public sector primary and secondary schools in the 2016/17 school year.

#### Exploring other options for procurement of the necessary services for the children concerned

9. The EDB has been providing public sector primary and secondary schools with additional resources, professional support and teacher training to help them cater for students with special educational needs (SEN) through the Whole School Approach (WSA). Schools may flexibly deploy the resources available to hire additional manpower and outside professional services for provision of support for students having regard to their needs. Through procurement of outside services, schools may acquire the necessary expertise and strengthen their professional capacity in catering for students with SEN. At the same time, schools are required to monitor the quality of the hired service and implement corresponding strategies in daily classroom teaching. We are of the view that the existing mode of school-based support has proven to be effective and is in line with the established practice worldwide. Primary and secondary students do not have to wait for support services. Hence, the

Government has no plan to provide subsidy to parents direct for acquiring services.

#### Devising a standardised format for assessment reports

10. The EDB has provided guidelines to EPs on the key items to be covered in a typical assessment report, which include reason(s) for referral, background information / developmental history / presenting problems, behavioural observation, assessment procedures / assessment tools used and date of assessment, assessment findings / (should include analysis of the findings / interpretation of results whenever appropriate), summary and conclusion, and recommendations, etc. The EPs should write the assessment reports according to the case particulars and the professional views.

#### Establishing a centralised database for each student with SEN

11. At present, the departments concerned work closely to ensure delivery of appropriate services to users. If there is a need to transfer an individual's data (such as professional assessment reports and records) to other departments, prior consent of the person concerned will be obtained. For privacy consideration, it is not appropriate to establish a centralised database for maintaining information of students with SEN.

## **(II) Student Placement**

#### Providing appropriate support in school placement for students with different types of SEN

12. In line with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation and the Salamanca Statement, the principle of integration is enshrined in the education approaches and policy of Hong Kong. In principle, all children, with the exception of those with more severe or multiple disabilities, are admitted to ordinary schools. In fact, quite a number of research studies have shown that students with SEN can benefit in respect of language development, social skills and adaptive functioning through interactions with their able-bodied peers in ordinary schools.

13. Under the current policy of special education, the EDB will, subject to the recommendation of professionals and with parents' consent, refer students with more severe or multiple disabilities to attend special schools. Other students with SEN, including students with limited intelligence, may attend ordinary schools. We understand the challenges faced by ordinary schools in catering for students with different types of SEN and have been rendering assistance to these schools by means of additional resources, professional support and teacher training. To explore support strategies applicable to students with different types of SEN, the EDB has launched various pilot projects with a view to developing theory-driven and efficacious teaching models and materials. Details are at **Annex 2**.

#### Flexibility in the placement of students with limited intelligence to special schools or ordinary schools

14. As mentioned above, the EDB's recommendation of placing students with limited intelligence in ordinary schools is made with the students' best interests in mind, and is in line with the global trend in the development of IE. In isolated cases, the students with limited intelligence who have significant difficulties in adjusting to ordinary schooling may also suffer from other problems, such as Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) or Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (AD/HD) on top of difficulties in learning. If they do not show desirable progress in ordinary schools after receiving strengthened and additional support, specialists will further review their educational needs together with their parents and teachers. On the recommendation of the specialists and subject to the consent of parents, the EDB may arrange the students in need to attend special schools.

#### Improving the transparency of information

15. The EDB has required schools to provide details about their IE policies, resources allocated for that purpose and support measures for students with SEN in their annual reports, and upload the report to their websites for access by members of the public. To improve the transparency of information, we have provided information related to IE in school profiles, including the percentage of teachers having received special education training in individual schools. The school profiles also provide the web addresses of individual schools so that members of the public can browse the relevant information available on the school websites. Moreover, we plan

to provide in school profiles information about the barrier-free access and facilities for disabled persons in the next school year. For protection of personal privacy and avoidance of labelling effect, we consider it not appropriate to require schools to disclose the number of students with SEN they have admitted.

### **(III) Resources and support for schools**

#### Enhancing the monitoring of the deployment of Learning Support Grant (LSG) and keeping the existing funding mechanism under review

16. Under the School Development and Accountability Framework, schools are required to assess the effectiveness of their support for students with SEN through self-evaluation each year so as to be accountable to their stakeholders. Apart from setting out in the Annual School Report the support given to students with SEN, schools are also required to submit a self-evaluation report to the EDB on the implementation of WSA to IE at the end of a school year. Besides, the EDB's professional staff offer schools with professional advice during regular visits to facilitate their effective deployment of resources for supporting students with SEN.

17. Starting from the 2011-12 financial year, if the schools have accumulated a surplus in excess of 30% of the 12 months provision of the LSG, their excess surplus will be clawed back. The EDB has issued a circular setting out clearly the recommendations for deployment of the LSG and the clawed-back mechanism, and has kept monitoring schools on the deployment of the LSG. Should undesirable situation be detected, we will issue letters to remind the related schools to make improvement.

18. The EDB will continue to monitor the implementation of IE and propose improvement measures when feasible and appropriate. In fact, to further enhance the support for students with SEN in ordinary schools, the EDB has raised the ceiling of the LSG for public sector primary and secondary schools from \$1 million to \$1.5 million starting from the 2013/14 school year, and increase the grant rates of the LSG by 30% in the 2014/15 school year. In subsequent school years, the grant rates and ceiling of the LSG will be adjusted annually according to the changes in the Composite Consumer Price Index.

### Improving the EP-to-schools ratio to 1:4 and extending SBEPS to pre-school education

19. The EDB understands that schools have an earnest demand for the SBEPS. In the 2014/15 school year, about 650 public sector primary and secondary schools are provided with the service, covering about 77% of all public sector schools in the territory. We plan to extend the service to cover all public sector primary and secondary schools by the 2016/17 school year. We will continue to keep the implementation of SBEPS under review, and enhance the services as appropriate.

20. Regarding pre-school children, as mentioned in paragraphs 6 to 7 above, the HA and DH are responsible for assessment and treatment of children with developmental disorders, as well as referral and provision of appropriate rehabilitation services. The SWD provides pre-school rehabilitation services for disabled children aged zero to six and renders support to families in need. The EDB provides professional training to kindergarten teachers to enhance their capacity in supporting school children with special needs. Since the SEN support services cut across different professional disciplines, service needs can be most effectively met by the collaborative efforts of the relevant professional departments. The Government has no plan to extend the SBEPS to the pre-school education sector at this moment.

### Implementing a pilot scheme on the provision of a SEN Coordinator (SENCO) post in schools

21. It has been announced in the 2015 Policy Address that the Government will invite the Community Care Fund (CCF) to consider providing a cash grant on pilot basis for ordinary schools with relatively more students with SEN and financial needs to strengthen the teaching team of the schools so that a designated teacher with relevant knowledge and experience can be deployed to lead the student support team and co-ordinate matters relating to IE. The CCF Task Force will consider and discuss the specific details.

### Reviewing on a regular basis the resources allocated for IE

22. In response to the views of different stakeholders, the EDB has implemented enhancement measures progressively over the past few years.

Such measures include the Enhanced Speech Therapy Grant for schools, structured training programmes for teachers, enhancement of the LSG, progressive expansion of the School-based Educational Psychology Service, the Enhanced Support Service for Hearing Impaired Students Attending Ordinary Schools, and strengthened support service for students with visual impairment. We have also implemented a range of support programmes to strengthen the learning effectiveness of students with SEN. For example, we have promoted the Tiered Intervention Model on the Teaching of Chinese Language in Junior Primary Schools, implemented in some primary and secondary schools the Pilot Project on Enhancement of Support Services for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders, published the “Development of Executive Skills Resource Package” for supporting students with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder and launched the Curriculum-based Language Programme. Details of these programmes are at **Annex 2**.

#### **(IV) Professional development of teachers**

Pre-service and in-service teacher professional development (including reviewing the training targets and encouraging teachers to undertake further training)

23. For the pre-service teacher training, the teacher education institutions (TEIs) have included a module on special education or catering for students with SEN in all pre-service teacher training programmes to enhance prospective teachers’ knowledge in this area.

24. For in-service teacher training, the EDB has launched training courses pitched at basic, advance and thematic levels (BAT Course) since the 2007/08 school year, and set training targets to facilitate schools in planning for their teachers to attend various courses. To support schools in arranging teachers to attend the BAT Courses in a systematic manner, regular teachers of government and aided primary, secondary and special schools are granted paid study leave for attending these courses, and supply teachers are provided to the schools concerned. The EDB sends letters to schools annually to inform them of the latest training position and remind them to release their teachers to attend the related training. As at November 2014, about 42% of public sector primary school teachers and about 20% of public sector secondary school teachers have completed 30 hours or more structured training in special education. In terms of schools,



more than 99% of public sector primary schools and about 91% of public sector secondary schools have 10% or more of their teachers who have completed special education training. About 85% of public sector primary schools have 30% or more of their teachers having completed the said training.

25. In addition to the BAT Course, the EDB also organises seminars, workshops and experience-sharing sessions on topics related to SEN for teachers to keep them abreast of the latest trend and strategies in respect of catering for students with SEN. Moreover, the EDB also organises training programmes throughout the year for school heads, school management and teaching assistants so that school personnel of different levels and posts will receive appropriate training. We have also incorporated topics on catering for student diversity and spearheading IE implementation in the Preparation for Principalship Course for Aspiring Principals and induction programme for newly appointed principals to strengthen the leadership of principals in the implementation of the WSA to IE.

26. We will continue to monitor the training for school teachers and adjust the training targets accordingly when necessary. Improvements will also be made to the modes and contents of various training programmes/activities as appropriate.

Arranging on-site teacher training at schools and collaborating with teachers to explore effective ways to support students with SEN

27. To provide schools with professional support at the teachers' level, the EDB has been organising on-site training at schools for teachers in the form of workshops and talks having regard to the needs of the schools. The EDB has been promoting and facilitating schools to provide peer coaching, such as collaborative lesson planning, collaborative teaching, lesson observation and experience sharing, for the purpose of enabling teachers and supporting staff to learn, reflect and improve through practices. We also continue to arrange different professional development or pilot programmes, such as learning circles, regional support networks and enhanced support services, to help teachers acquire the skills for teaching students with different types of SEN gradually through collaboration between teachers and supporting staff as well as advice by professionals.

28. Details of some pilot projects jointly conducted by EDB's

specialists and school teachers in recent years are at **Annex 2**.

## **(V) New Senior Secondary Curriculum and Assessment**

### New Academic Structure (NAS) Medium-term Review and strengthening support for students with SEN

29. During the NAS Medium-term Review, the EDB has given due consideration to the need to cater for learner diversity as well as the learning needs of SEN students. In fact, one of the overarching principles for the Review is to cater for learner diversity by providing core and elective options within the curriculum.

30. The EDB is going to provide schools with more guidelines on catering for the learning needs of students with SEN under the New Senior Secondary (NSS) Curriculum. The Curriculum Guides of Key Learning Areas and Secondary Education Curriculum Guide are undergoing review and the theme of catering for learner diversity, including the learning needs of SEN students, under the NSS curriculum will be further enhanced. The updating of these Guides is expected to be completed by December 2015.

### Reviewing regularly the special examination arrangements for students with SEN and promoting the application of assistive tools and information technology software for performance evaluation of students with SEN

31. The Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA) regularly seeks the views of different stakeholders and concern groups on the special examination arrangements for SEN candidates. Working groups have been established under its Committee and Task Group to review the special examination arrangements for candidates with different disability types, including a study of the feasibility and appropriateness of allowing candidates with specific learning disabilities to use speech-to-text software in public examinations. In the 2014/15 school year, the HKEAA is conducting a pilot study on the use of speech-to-text software in public examinations for the Liberal Studies subject. Regarding the scope of application of the said software (e.g. extending to subjects other than Liberal Studies), the HKEAA will gauge the views of different stakeholders and examine whether its application in different subjects will affect the assessment objectives in order to ensure that the arrangements is fair to all the candidates.

Establishing funds for developing and acquiring the assistive technology necessary for assessment of students with SEN

32. From the 2008/09 school year, EDB has increased the provision and relaxed the usage of the Composite Information Technology Grant (CITG) to cope with schools' changing needs. The EDB is conducting consultation on implementing of the Fourth Strategy on Information Technology in Education (ITE4) in public sector primary and secondary schools as well as special schools. The ITE4 provides schools with appropriate IT infrastructure necessary for the teaching and learning of all students, including students with SEN. In addition, ITE4 aims to strengthen students' self-directed learning, their creativity, collaboration, problem-solving and computational thinking skills, as well as ethical use of IT, in an enhanced IT environment.

33. In January 2014, the Support Scheme on e-Learning in Schools was launched to enhance the IT infrastructure of 100 schools. These schools have been provided with WiFi access in all classrooms and sufficient mobile computing devices for using e-textbooks and e-learning resources. The EDB will consider extending the Scheme to the remaining public sector schools through ITE4.

**(VI) Higher education**

Implementing integrated education in the higher education sector

34. The Government has implemented various initiatives in recent years to enhance support to post-secondary students with SEN. The "Notes on Procedures" of the University Grants Committee (UGC) and relevant documents have included policies and measures for protection of students with SEN, which help safeguard the rights of students and staff of UGC-funded institutions. The UGC-funded institutions have already published on their websites their existing policies, services and support for SEN students. The contents will be reviewed from time to time.

35. Student admission is within the autonomy of the UGC-funded institutions. Students are admitted to the UGC-funded programmes based on their merits. In general, applicants with SEN are assessed on the same basis with other applicants, taking into account their academic performance, non-academic achievements, school principal's recommendation reports,

admission interview/test performance, etc, and students with and without SEN are subject to the same admission requirements. Students with SEN applying to the UGC-funded institutions via the Joint University Programme Admissions System (JUPAS) may indicate their specific types of disabilities in their applications, so that institutions may know their special needs when considering their applications.

36. Funding to the UGC-funded institutions is allocated in form of a Block Grant. The Block Grant system provides for a one-line allocation of resources to the institutions for a funding period without precise requirements attached as to how it should be spent. The allocation of the Block Grant between departments, divisions, or faculties, or between academic and administrative areas is entirely internal matters for the institutions. The day-to-day decisions and the operational details with regard to the Block Grant are at the discretion of the institutions. It is, therefore, up to the institutions to decide whether to set up a designated office to support students with SEN in view of the resources available.

37. The EDB has established a platform to organise workshops, seminars and sharing sessions from time to time so as to facilitate UGC-funded and self-financing institutions to share information and experience in the planning and implementation of measures in support of students with SEN .

38. To facilitate students with SEN to pursue UGC-funded programmes and adapt to campus life, the UGC had approved at its meeting held in September 2014 to provide \$20 million for the eight UGC-funded institutions to purchase the necessary aids and equipment to facilitate the study of students with SEN; strengthen training among the academic and administrative staff to enhance their awareness towards students with SEN; and support student bodies to organise events and activities to encourage integration of students with SEN into campus life. Institutions may deploy the funding to implement various measures to enhance the support for students with SEN. Funding will be allocated on a pro-rata basis according to the number of students with SEN admitted to individual institutions. The funding scheme will last for two years. We are now inviting proposals from the eight UGC-funded institutions. We expect that the grants can be disbursed to institutions within the 2014/15 academic year upon completion of the vetting of proposals.

## **(VII) Complaint-handling, home-school co-operation and public education**

Keeping the existing complaint-handling mechanism under ongoing review and enhancement, and exploring the establishment of an independent complaint-handling mechanism for dealing with complaints related to integrated education

39. In 2011, the EDB set up the Ad Hoc Committee on Complaints Handling in Schools, now renamed as the Committee on Enhancement of Complaint Management in Schools, which comprises independent persons drawn from different sectors. After widely consulting the school sector and stakeholders and having regard to local and overseas experiences, the Committee recommended that the Pilot Project on Enhancement of Complaint Management in Schools be implemented to assist schools to establish a school-based mechanism and procedures or refine those already in place for handling complaints, including IE-related complaints. Launched in the 2012/13 school year, the Pilot Project is in Phase III now, with a total of 351 participating schools. The EDB will plan for further revision to the complaint handling procedures upon review of the implementation and effectiveness of the pilot project.

40. According to the prevailing complaint-handling mechanism, schools are required to establish a school-based mechanism and procedures for handling complaints. Through the school-based mechanism and procedures, schools and parents can work together to resolve the problem through consultation.

41. With regard to complaints about disability discrimination, if schools and complainants cannot reach a settlement, both parties can refer the case to the respective Regional Education Office for arrangement for a mediation meeting to work out a solution. If the above procedures fail to settle the matter, the EDB will seek the opinion of outsiders through a Case Study Group<sup>1</sup>. The Group will study the case and make settlement proposals to the EDB.

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<sup>1</sup> Members of the Case Study Group are appointed by the EDB. With the exception of the Chairperson, all members are non-EDB members, including parents, representatives from the education sector and other professionals such as representatives from the medical or legal sector, educational psychologist, and the field of social work.

42. We consider that the above mechanism can effectively deal with all types of complaints, including IE-related complaints.

Promoting home-school co-operation and stepping up public education

43. The EDB is fully aware of the importance of home-school cooperation and public education in promoting IE. In recent years, the EDB has been arranging promotional activities systematically through different modes and channels, including Education TV, public activities such as Learning and Teaching Expo, newspapers/ print media promotion, radio programmes, announcements of public interest, inter-school competitions/ promotional activities, etc., with a view to enhancing the general public's understanding of IE so as to cultivate a caring and inclusive community.

Urging Equal Opportunities Commission to monitor and where necessary, review the implementation of Disability Discrimination Ordinance and the Code of Practice on Education

44. The Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) has noted the recommendation of the Subcommittee. Their response is as follows: the EOC is an independent statutory body with an established organisation, and has put in place a regular monitoring and review mechanism. All along, the EOC, when dealing with and implementing work related to the Disability Discrimination Ordinance (DDO) and the Code of Practice on Education, will maintain good communication and collaboration with the EDB. For example, in 2012, the EOC reviewed the implementation of the DDO and the Code of Practice on Education through conducting the Study on Equal Learning Opportunities for Students with Disabilities under the Integrated Education System. After the release of the report, the EOC maintained communication with the EDB and took follow-up actions on the implementation progress of the recommendations. The EOC would continue to review the existing practice and propose for improvement/refinement if and when necessary.

**(VIII) The way forward for supporting students with SEN**

Making reference to the experience of overseas jurisdictions in implementing legislation on inclusive education, and considering the legislation in Hong Kong

45. In accordance with the DDO and Code of Practice on Education, it is an offence for educational establishments to discriminate against a disabled person. As such, all educational establishments are obliged to provide equal educational opportunities for eligible students, including those with SEN. In other words, the existing legal framework in Hong Kong can basically serve as an effective safeguard for the rights of students with SEN.

46. We are aware that different countries or regions have different arrangements. In view of the difference in education systems, contexts and culture and the fact that different systems may give rise to different problems, we consider it more appropriate to focus, at this stage, on exploring how support measures for implementing IE can be further strengthened so that students concerned are provided with more appropriate services. From an educational perspective, it will be more effective for schools to implement IE through the WSA to improve their culture, policy and measures so as to enhance the effectiveness of support for students with SEN. We do not support introducing new legislation at this stage.

#### Setting long-term goal for formulating individual education plans for all students with SEN

47. Making reference to evidence-based research findings and reviewing the practices in different countries/ places, the EDB is of the view that whether a SEN student is in need of an individual education plan (IEP) is subject to the student's support need, which is a professional judgment and decision of the school concerned. The EDB does not advise schools to formulate IEPs for all students with SEN as a rule regardless of the circumstances of the students. Under EDB's promotion, schools in Hong Kong have generally developed a good grasp of the operation of the 3-Tier Intervention Model<sup>2</sup> to support students with SEN. They are also able to formulate and implement IEPs for students who have the needs. Schools review the progress of the students regularly and adjust the support level for individual students as and when necessary, and arrange for appropriate and systematic support so that students with different needs can receive the most appropriate resources and services.

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<sup>2</sup> Tier-1 support refers to quality teaching in the regular classrooms to provide early support to students with mild or transient learning difficulties. Tier-2 support refers to "add-on" support for students with persistent learning difficulties, such as pull-out or after-school remedial programmes and hire of professional services. Tier-3 support refers to intensive individualised support, including formulation of IEPs, for students with persistent and severe learning difficulties.

48. Making reference to the experience of some countries/places that have legislations stipulating the formulation of IEPs for all/some students with SEN, we notice that there are many problems in the course of implementation. There are comments that such requirement can merely ensure that students are provided with a written document but cannot guarantee that they are given the support services most appropriate to their needs. The requirement has strained teachers to handle numerous documents at the expense of teaching quality. Some teachers have adopted computer-programmed IEPs which fail to meet the individual needs of their students. Some teachers have even gone to the length of devising and applying one IEP for all students with SEN in a class. These cases, which have aroused discontent among parents and prolonged legal actions in some places, are a waste of social resources.

#### Strengthening the support for students with mental derangement under the existing IE system

49. The professional teams of the HA provide a range of treatment and training for students diagnosed to have mental derangement (MD) to enhance their verbal communication, socialization, emotion management, problem-solving, learning and life skills. Training will be given to parents and carers of the students to enhance their understanding of the symptoms and treatment needs of the students. While medical professionals are responsible for treatment, schools and teachers should play a complementary role by helping these students re-enter school and adapt to school life after treatment, in tandem with the medical treatment and rehabilitation requirements. Professionals in schools, including guidance and counselling teachers, school social workers and EPs, can take care of students with different needs in their respective professions. In addition, schools will arrange multi-disciplinary case conferences when necessary for psychiatrists, medical social workers, EPs and school personnel to jointly discuss support measures for the students with emotional, social integration and learning problems.

50. To strengthen the child and adolescent psychiatric service, the HA expanded its multi-disciplinary teams in 2011-12 to provide early identification, assessment and treatment services for 3 000 new cases every year. The HA has been implementing the psychiatric specialist out-patient (SOP) referral and triage system to ensure patients with different severity and urgency are given appropriate support and timely treatment. The HA



has further expanded its child and adolescent psychiatric service in the Kowloon West Cluster and the New Territories East Cluster in 2014-15, and will continue to review and monitor the service provision to meet patients' needs.

51. The EDB has been working closely with the HA to review and discuss ways to strengthen the existing notification and support mechanism to ensure effective cross-disciplinary collaboration and communication. In order to strengthen the arrangement for referring the students concerned to the Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Service under the HA for assessment, the school or EP will obtain parental consent for making the referral and psychiatric evaluation, as well as parental consent for the HA to pass the psychiatric report to the school or EP for follow-up actions after the assessment. This is to ensure timely and appropriate treatment and support for students with MD. The EDB and HA have also been organising collaboratively talks for professionals, school guidance teachers/personnel to enhance their identification, assessment and support for students with MD. From the 2011/12 to 2013/14 school years, the EDB and HA jointly organised a number of district-based thematic seminars on psychosis for primary, secondary and special schools. In June 2014, the EDB and HA jointly held a talk on Supporting Students with Depression for secondary schools.

52. The EDB will continue to work with the HA for the appropriate coordination, review and enhancement of the existing support services when necessary.

#### Improving support for students with hearing impairment (such as sign bilingualism)

53. Under the existing policy of special education, for students with hearing impairment (HI) attending ordinary schools, with the aid of amplification devices, they are able to learn and communicate with people orally. Teachers will use oral language, supplemented with visual strategies, contextual cues, body language, written text, and gestures, etc., when teaching and communicating with the students with regard to their abilities and needs. For students with severe or profound hearing loss or those who cannot construct knowledge because of inadequate speech abilities (that is, those students who may need to use sign language for communication and learning), they will be admitted to special schools for children with HI.

Teachers in special schools for children with HI will use the most appropriate mode (such as oral language, sign language, and total communication, etc.) when teaching and communicating with students with HI. Whether in ordinary schools or special schools for children with HI, the teachers and school-based speech therapists would help students with HI to use their residual hearing to enhance their listening and oral communication abilities. Furthermore, under the Enhanced Support Service for Hearing Impaired Students Attending Ordinary Schools (ESS) commissioned by the EDB, special schools for children with HI will provide support for students with HI in ordinary schools to enhance their learning and communication effectiveness. Resource teachers under the ESS will use sign language to assist the learning of students where necessary, and to share their experience on the use of sign language to assist teaching with teachers of students' home schools. The EDB has been encouraging schools to pool and deploy various school-based resources flexibly for supporting students with SEN (including HI).

54. The EDB is very concerned about the effectiveness of the learning of students with SEN (including HI) and that of the schools' learning and teaching. We hope that with the development of theory-driven and evidence-based teaching models, the support for students with SEN (including HI) could be enhanced. International researches have been investigating the effectiveness of teaching modes of students with HI for years. Research results indicated that the development of students with HI is affected by a conglomerate of factors, rather than solely the support or communication mode. These factors include school-based support, language environment, involvement of parents, school culture, and home-school collaboration, etc. Overseas and local researches are yet to prove that "sign bilingualism" or "bilingual-bicultural" is the only effective mode in supporting students with HI. In view that there is no one particular teaching/support mode that is suitable for all students with HI, most countries are providing students with HI with different support having regard to their own circumstances in their respective education systems.

55. The EDB would continue to keep in view local and international researches and development in relation to teaching modes for students with HI, gauge views from stakeholders, and keep collaborating with tertiary institutions, professional organisations and schools to explore ways to strengthen the support strategies for students with different types of SEN and to develop theory-driven and evidence-based teaching models for the

continuous improvement of the support services for students with SEN (including HI).

**Education Bureau**  
**Food and Health Bureau**  
**Labour and Welfare Bureau**  
**Hospital Authority**  
**Department of Health**  
**Social Welfare Department**

**February 2015**

**Annex 1**

**Motion on  
“Report of the Subcommittee on Integrated Education”  
moved by Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG  
at the Council meeting of 10 December 2014**

**Wording of the Motion**

That this Council notes the Report of the Subcommittee on Integrated Education.

**Pilot/Experimental Support Programmes Collaborated by  
the Specialists of EDB and Teachers**

1. From the 2011/12 school year, we have launched a 5-year programme, to provide support for some 40 primary schools which join the “Tiered Intervention Model on the Teaching of Chinese Language in Primary Schools” every year. Support is provided by EDB professional staff in a 3-year cycle in the form of preparatory meetings with teachers, school-based lesson planning meetings and review meetings, lesson observations and regular training workshops to assist schools in implementing the tiered intervention model and enhancing the support for students with specific learning difficulties.
2. The Pilot Project on Enhancement of Support Services for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) was launched in the 2011/12 school year to provide on-top training for students with ASD and enhance the capacity of teachers and other school personnel in catering for these students. Building on the achievements of the Pilot Project and to sustain its development, the EDB has extended that Project from the 2014/15 to 2016/17 school years, under which the Comprehensive School Support Model will be developed and tried out at the senior primary and junior secondary levels, with a view to facilitating more schools to master evidence-based support model and strategies for the support of the students with ASD.
3. On the support for students with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (AD/HD), the EDB published the Development of Executive Skills Resource Package in the 2009/10 school year to strengthen students’ executive skills and self-management through school-based group training programme in primary schools. For secondary schools, the EDB developed in the 2013/14 school year the Coaching Programme on Executive Skills. Under the programme, schools will enhance the self-management of the students concerned through setting of personal goals and regular coaching.

4. Implemented in secondary schools since the 2010/11 school year, the Curriculum-based Language Support Programme enables teachers to provide support for students with language learning difficulties by integrating language learning strategies in their daily teaching through collaborative lesson planning, lesson observation and experience sharing activities, etc.
5. To support students with language learning difficulties by enhancing their ability in discourse comprehension, a pilot discourse comprehension strategies scheme was launched in primary and secondary schools from the 2011/12 to 2013/14 school years, and a resource package on Discourse Comprehension Strategies was developed for use by teachers and speech therapists.