

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(4)733/14-15
(These minutes have been seen
by the Administration)

Ref : CB4/PL/ED

Panel on Education

Minutes of meeting
held on Monday, 9 February 2015, at 4:30 pm
in Conference Room 1 of the Legislative Council Complex

Members present :

- Dr Hon LAM Tai-fai, SBS, JP (Chairman)
- Hon IP Kin-yuen (Deputy Chairman)
- Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung
- Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP
- Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, GBS, JP
- Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, SBS, JP
- Hon WONG Kwok-hing, BBS, MH
- Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan, JP
- Hon Starry LEE Wai-king, JP
- Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun, SBS, JP
- Hon IP Kwok-him, GBS, JP
- Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-ye, GBS, JP
- Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung
- Hon Michael TIEN Puk-sun, BBS, JP
- Hon Steven HO Chun-yin
- Hon Gary FAN Kwok-wai
- Hon MA Fung-kwok, SBS, JP
- Hon Charles Peter MOK, JP
- Hon CHAN Chi-chuen
- Dr Hon Kenneth CHAN Ka-lok
- Hon Dennis KWOK
- Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung
- Dr Hon Helena WONG Pik-wan
- Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan, JP

Members absent : Hon Albert HO Chun-yan
Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che
Hon Christopher CHUNG Shu-kun, BBS, MH, JP

Public Officers attending : Agenda item IV

Mr Kevin YEUNG, JP
Under Secretary for Education

Mr Tony TANG
Deputy Secretary for Education (4)

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

Agenda item V

Mr Eddie NG, SBS, JP
Secretary for Education

Dr K K CHAN
Deputy Secretary for Education (5)

Mr Stephen YIP
Principal Assistant Secretary
(Curriculum Development)
Education Bureau

Mr C H LEE
Chief Curriculum Development Officer
(Personal, Social and Humanities Education)
Education Bureau

Agenda item VI

Mr Eddie NG, SBS, JP
Secretary for Education

Mr Tony TANG
Deputy Secretary for Education (4)

Ms Sophia WONG
Principal Assistant Secretary (School Development)
Education Bureau

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

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

Ms Sandy HAU
Legislative Assistant (4)4

Action

I. Confirmation of minutes

(LC Paper No. CB(4)439/14-15 -- Minutes of meeting on 8
December 2014)

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 December 2014 were confirmed.

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

(LC Paper No. CB(4)456/14-15(01) -- Information paper
provided by the Education
Bureau concerning the
progress of the
School-based Professional
Support Programmes
financed by the Education
Development Fund in the
2013-2014 school year)

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

Action

III. Items for discussion at the next meeting

(Appendix I to LC Paper No. CB(4)457/14-15 -- List of outstanding items for discussion

Appendix II to LC Paper No. CB(4)457/14-15 -- List of follow-up actions)

3. The Chairman sought members' view on whether the next regular meeting originally scheduled for 9 March 2015 should be re-scheduled, as some members including himself would be out of town and might not be able to attend the meeting. Mr WONG Kwok-hing, Dr CHIANG Lai-wan and Mr TAM Yiu-chung considered it advisable to re-schedule the meeting. Other members did not indicate any contrary view. The Chairman proposed and members agreed that the next regular meeting would be re-scheduled to be held on Monday, 16 March 2015, from 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm.

4. The Chairman informed members that the Administration had proposed to discuss the following items at the next regular meeting –

- (a) Implementation of Applied Learning in the Senior Secondary Curriculum; and
- (b) the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government Scholarship Fund and Self-financing Post-secondary Scholarship Scheme.

As the 2015-2016 Budget would be announced on 25 February 2015, the Chairman said that he would consider, in consultation with the Deputy Chairman, whether to include on the agenda of the next meeting certain education-related initiatives or issues arising from the 2015-2016 Budget. Members would be informed of the arrangements in due course. Members agreed with the Chairman's suggestion.

(Post-meeting note: Upon finalization by the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman, the agenda for the meeting to be held on 16 March 2015 was issued to members vide LC Paper CB(4)572/14-15 on 27 February 2014.)

5. Dr Priscilla LEUNG suggested to discuss issues related to the review on the Liberal Studies subject under the New Senior Secondary curriculum as soon as possible and, if practicable, to arrange a meeting to receive public views. The Chairman confirmed that this matter had been included in the

Action

Panel's "List of outstanding items for discussion" and scheduled for discussion within the current session.

6. Dr Kenneth CHAN declared that he was teaching at the Hong Kong Baptist University. He considered that the Panel should follow up issues related to the results of the University Grants Committee's Research Assessment Exercise ("RAE") 2014, which had been reported in a local newspaper notwithstanding the confidential nature of the Exercise. The Deputy Chairman concurred that the subject should be discussed by the Panel at the next meeting, if possible.

7. Mr Tommy CHEUNG declared that he was a member of the Council of the Chinese University of Hong Kong. Referring to concerns about RAE 2014, Mr CHEUNG considered that the Panel should not resort lightly to holding meetings to discuss ad-hoc issues which were mainly based on media reports rather than solid facts. The Chairman took note of Mr CHEUNG's comments, and said that under the current agenda item, he had opened the floor to members for giving views on or proposing items for discussion at future meetings.

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

IV. Class-to-teacher ratio and staff establishment in primary schools

(LC Paper No. CB(4)457/14-15(01) -- Paper provided by the Administration

LC Paper No. CB(4)486/14-15(01) -- Submission from Subsidized Primary School Council)

9. Members noted a submission from the Subsidized Primary School Council [LC Paper No. CB(4)486/14-15(01)].

Briefing by the Administration

10. At the invitation of the Chairman, Under Secretary for Education

Action

("US(Ed)") briefed members on the class-to-teacher ratio and staff establishment in public sector primary schools, as set out in the Administration's paper [LC Paper No. CB(4)457/14-15(01)].

Discussion

Teacher establishment in public sector primary schools

11. With reference to the policy on small class teaching, Mr Dennis KWOK enquired about the Administration's target, if any, on the teacher-to-student ratio in primary schools. In reply, US(Ed) advised that under the existing policy, public sector primary schools were encouraged to implement small class teaching where circumstances permitted. Whilst the Education Bureau ("EDB") had not specified any teacher-to-student ratio, primary schools implementing small class teaching were allocated 25 students per class. Meanwhile, the existing class-to-teacher ratio of whole-day primary schools was 1 to 1.5. To enable schools to optimize the flexibility in deployment of resources to cater for school-based needs, EDB had been providing cash grants on a recurrent basis to schools for appointment of staff or procurement of services to meet operational needs. The guiding principle was to enhance the quality of education.

12. The Deputy Chairman enquired about the rationale for setting the class-to-teacher ratio of primary schools at the current level of 1 to 1.5 and whether the Administration would consider improving this ratio. In this regard, US(Ed) advised that public sector primary schools had been provided with additional regular teachers under specific education initiatives. They could also recruit additional teachers by making use of various cash grants. As a result, the teacher provision prevailing at schools was above the specified ratio of 1 to 1.5.

13. The Deputy Chairman remarked that in Hong Kong, a primary school teacher had to teach about 26 to 27 lessons per week, whereas their counterparts in neighbouring regions were only required to teach about 20 lessons per week. He considered that the Administration should conduct a comprehensive review on the teacher establishment in primary schools and take measures to reduce the workload of teachers. US(Ed) advised that the demand for and provision of manpower resources in public sector primary schools were subject to ongoing monitoring and review. Suitable adjustments would be considered where appropriate.

14. Noting that the Administration would increase the ratio of graduate teacher posts in public sector primary schools by phases in three years from

Action

the current 50% to 65% in the 2017-2018 school year, Dr CHIANG Lai-wan said that the provision of manpower resources should take into account changes in student population. She urged the Administration to keep in view the demand for and supply of trained manpower and maintain close communication with teacher education institutions ("TEIs") in this regard.

15. US(Ed) advised that the approved staff establishment of a public sector primary school was computed according to the number of operating classes and the class-to-teacher ratio. Hence, additional teaching posts would be provided if the number of classes was increased to cope with a rise in primary student population. He clarified that the increase in graduate teacher ratio only referred to the number of graduate teacher posts on the approved teacher establishment of the school, and would not give rise to the need to provide additional teachers. On the supply of trained teacher, a mechanism was in place under which the University Grants Committee-funded institutions would decide on the number of places to be offered by TEIs with reference to the projected demand for teachers in the context of their triennial planning.

16. Mr WONG Kwok-hing noted with concern that in some primary schools, over 50% of the serving teachers already possessed degree qualifications. As there were insufficient graduate teacher posts, some of them could only take up the posts of certificated masters/mistresses. He enquired whether the Administration would allow schools to increase the ratio of graduate teacher posts to 65% at a faster pace with the ultimate goal that sufficient graduate teacher posts would be available for teachers with degree qualifications. He also sought information on the number of serving primary school teachers holding degrees but taking up the posts of certificated masters/mistresses.

17. In this regard, Deputy Secretary for Education (4) ("DS(Ed)4") advised that at present, over 90% of the teachers in public sector primary schools possessed degree qualifications. However, only some 87% of graduate teacher posts on the approved staff establishment were filled. The Administration considered it necessary to be prudent in implementing the increase in the ratio of graduate teacher posts in primary schools.

18. The Chairman said that as reflected by the primary school sector, the Administration had overlooked their needs for a long time. Whilst noting that EDB would progressively increase the ratio of graduate teacher posts in public sector primary schools from the current 50% to 65% in the 2017/2018 school year, he enquired on the plan, if any, to increase the said ratio to 85%, on par with that for public sector secondary schools. In this connection, US(Ed) advised that it was a long term goal of the Administration to enhance

Action

the ratio of graduate teacher posts in both primary schools and secondary schools to 100%.

19. Mr WONG Kwok-hing enquired about the timetable, if any, for bringing the ratio of graduate teacher posts in primary schools to 100%. The Chairman was of the view that the Administration should provide a clear timeframe for implementation so that prospective and serving teachers could plan ahead for their career development.

20. US(Ed) said that the Administration had set the next target of enhancing the ratio of graduate teacher posts to 65% in the 2017-2018 school year. For the time being, there was no immediate plan or timetable to further increase the ratio, but it was the Administration's long-term target to raise the said ratio to 100%. The Chairman considered the absence of any implementation plan to achieve the long-term target very demoralizing to the primary school sector.

Salary scale of primary school principals

21. The Chairman noted that the salary scale for principals of public sector secondary schools compared much more favourably than that for principals of primary schools. Given that the requisite qualifications and level of responsibilities for the school principal posts in primary schools and secondary schools were comparable, the Chairman queried the wide difference in their respective salary scales. He sought explanation on measures, if any, to address the difference with a view to bringing about more equal treatment to the primary school sector.

22. US(Ed) said that the Administration was aware of the concerns of the primary school sector. However, whether the salary scale of primary school principals should be aligned with that of their secondary school counterparts would require careful study because the duties and responsibilities performed by school heads of primary schools and secondary schools might not be identical.

Use of cumulative surplus by aided primary schools

23. Members noted from paragraph 12 of the Administration's paper that based on the audited accounts of aided primary schools in the 2012 -2013 school year, about 47% of aided primary schools had a cumulative surplus amounting to five or more months of their average monthly expenditure in the Operating Expenses Block Grant/Expanded Operating Expenses Block Grant accounts and 5% of primary schools had a cumulative surplus of over 10

Action

months of their average monthly expenditure. Mr Dennis KWOK and Dr CHIANG Lai-wan were concerned how individual schools had utilized the available resources to meet the increasing demand on quality education. Mr KWOK also enquired whether schools could make use of their surplus to employ additional teachers or raise the teachers' salary.

24. US(Ed) advised that schools with cumulative surplus could flexibly deploy their resources for appointment of staff or procurement of services to cater for school-based needs. However, as teachers employed under the approved staff establishment were paid according to a fixed salary scale, individual schools did not have the discretion to raise their teachers' salary. DS(Ed)4 explained that in accordance with the usual practice, EDB would follow up with those primary schools which had not fully utilized their recurrent funding through school visits during which advice on financial planning and management of resources to enhance learning and teaching would be provided to the schools concerned.

25. Given that under the prevailing policy, public sector primary schools were allowed to retain a cumulative surplus up to 12 months of their provision, Dr Kenneth CHAN considered it fair for schools to accumulate a certain level of surplus for contingency purposes such as repair and maintenance of school premises and facilities, employment of supply teachers etc. The Deputy Chairman pointed out that the cumulative surplus would only enable primary schools to employ teaching staff on a temporary basis. The Chairman remarked that paragraph 12 of the Administration's paper, as currently written, might be misleading as it appeared to suggest that many aided primary schools had a large cumulative surplus which had been under-utilized.

26. In response, US(Ed) explained that paragraph 12 of the Administration's paper aimed to highlight the availability of resources for deployment by aided primary schools and the importance of the effective use and management of resources. Whilst any surplus in excess of 12 months' provision had to be clawed back to the Government, individual schools could flexibly use their cumulative surplus to meet their school-based needs such as recruiting additional teachers or teaching assistants.

27. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung expressed his concern on the assistance, if any, provided to those primary schools that lacked resources to recruit additional teachers. In reply, US(Ed) advised that in addition to computing the teaching staff establishment with reference to the class-to-teacher ratio, EDB had been providing public sector primary schools with additional regular teachers under various initiatives as set out in paragraph 5 of the Administration's paper. Schools could flexibly make use of various resources

Action

to enhance the quality of teaching and learning by recruiting additional teachers or procuring services.

V. Chinese History Education

(LC Paper No. CB(4)457/14-15(02) -- Paper provided by the Administration

LC Paper No. CB(4)457/14-15(03) -- Background brief entitled "Issues related to Chinese History Education" prepared by the LegCo Secretariat)

28. Members noted the background brief prepared by the Secretariat [LC Paper No. CB(4)457/14-15(03)]. They also noted a paper prepared by the Deputy Chairman [subsequently issued vide LC Paper No. CB(4)496/14-15(01)] tabled at the meeting.

Briefing by the Administration

29. At the invitation of the Chairman, Secretary for Education ("SED") briefed members on the implementation of the Chinese History curriculum in primary and secondary schools in Hong Kong, as well as the review on the junior secondary Chinese History and History curricula currently conducted by the Ad Hoc Committee under the Curriculum Development Council ("CDC"), details of which were set out in the Administration's paper [LC Paper No. CB(4)457/14-15(02)].

Discussion

Curriculum modes adopted at the junior secondary level

30. Mr Michael TIEN noted from the Administration's reply to a question raised by Mrs Regina IP at the Council meeting of 29 October 2014 that 350 secondary schools (i.e. about 78% of all secondary schools) taught Chinese History as an independent subject throughout the junior secondary level (i.e. Secondary One to Three) and 40 secondary schools (i.e. about 9% of all secondary schools) taught Chinese History as an independent subject in any one or two years of the junior secondary level. He was concerned whether an increasing number of secondary schools would teach Chinese History as an independent subject for one or two years only instead of throughout the junior

Action

secondary level. Mr TIEN and Mrs Regina IP were of the view that Chinese History should be taught as an independent subject throughout the junior secondary level. Dr Priscilla LEUNG considered that Chinese history and world history should be taught as two independent subjects. Ms Starry LEE was of the view that to provide students with a thorough understanding of historical events over the centuries, Chinese History should be taught as an independent subject at junior secondary level. She enquired whether any timetable had been drawn up that all secondary schools should teach Chinese history as an independent subject at the junior secondary level.

31. Ms Cyd HO considered that reference should be made to world history in the teaching and learning of Chinese history. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung opined that learning history should be driven by students' interest and therefore Chinese History should not be made a compulsory subject. On some members' view that Chinese History should be made an independent subject at the junior secondary level, the Deputy Chairman said that schools in the Mainland and Taiwan did not teach Chinese history as an independent subject. Instead, the contents of the History subject comprised Chinese history and world history. In his view, the effectiveness of various curriculum modes should be assessed before considering whether Chinese History should be made an independent subject at the junior secondary level.

32. SED and Chief Curriculum Development Officer (Personal, Social and Humanities Education) ("CCDO(PSHE)") advised that currently, about 88% of secondary schools offered Chinese History as an independent subject at junior secondary level while the other 12% of secondary schools adopted other curriculum modes, notably the curriculum mode of linking Chinese history and world history and the integrated curriculum mode which organized the contents of Chinese history with reference to various themes. To enliven the teaching and learning of Chinese history, EDB saw merits in the different curriculum modes adopted by schools to address their students' needs and school contexts. The Administration did not have any plan to combine Chinese history and world history to form a single subject.

33. Referring to paragraph 5 of the Administration's paper regarding the percentages of secondary schools adopting different curriculum modes at the junior secondary level, Mrs Regina IP requested the Administration to provide information on the secondary schools in respect of each of the curriculum modes adopted; and among those secondary schools which adopted the independent subject mode, the respective number and names of schools that taught Chinese History as an independent subject throughout Secondary One to Three, and those that only taught the subject for one or two years at the junior secondary level.

Action

Admin

34. In this regard, SED explained that school visits were conducted by EDB to understand various aspects of school operation including the implementation of different curriculum modes for Chinese history education. If members were interested, EDB could make arrangements for them to meet with different secondary schools to share their experience. The Administration would provide the information requested by Mrs Regina IP as far as practicable.

35. Mrs Regina IP and the Chairman expressed their concern that some secondary schools operating a 6-day-cycle timetable might not be able to fulfil the requirement of allocating not less than two periods per week for each Form for teaching Chinese history. SED advised that schools had to allocate on average about 5% of the lesson hours (i.e. about two periods per week) to teach Chinese history at the junior secondary level regardless of the curriculum modes adopted. Schools were allowed to organize the curriculum flexibly during various junior secondary levels.

Review on the curriculum of Chinese History

36. Noting that currently, ancient history and modern history counted for two-thirds and one-third respectively in the junior secondary Chinese History curriculum, Dr CHIANG Lai-wan supported the Ad Hoc Committee's recommendation to adjust the ratio of ancient and modern history to equal halves as modern history was more relevant to students' life experience. Mr WONG Kwok-hing considered it important to enrich the curriculum contents of modern Chinese history in particular the period after the Opium War, which would enable students to have a better understanding of Hong Kong's colonial history and its return to Chinese sovereignty. Dr Priscilla LEUNG shared her observation that many young people in Hong Kong were not conversant with the history of Hong Kong, including the unequal treaties which had made Hong Kong a colony.

37. Dr Kenneth CHAN considered it appropriate to conduct a review on the curriculum of Chinese History and explore how its contents could be enriched, such as increasing the coverage of the 1911 Revolution and the June Fourth Incident. Dr Helena WONG opined that the history of Hong Kong should be included in the curriculum contents of Chinese History.

38. Mrs Regina IP and Mr Michael TIEN were of the view that as ancient Chinese history had straddled centuries, it was reasonable for contents of ancient history to form a greater portion in the curriculum.

Action

39. The Deputy Chairman said that according to the findings of a survey recently conducted by him, as set out in a paper [LC Paper No. CB(4)496/14-15(01)] tabled at the meeting, there was no consensus among teachers on whether the ratio of ancient and modern history should be adjusted to equal halves in the junior secondary Chinese History curriculum. He urged that the Ad Hoc Committee's review would be conducted in a professional manner.

40. Mr CHAN Chi-chuen disagreed that the ratio of ancient and modern history should be adjusted to account for equal halves of the Chinese History curriculum. In his view, modern Chinese history covered a number of controversial events and junior secondary students might have difficulty to comprehend and analyze the issues involved. He noted the Deputy Chairman's survey findings and considered it necessary to further study the matter before deciding on any adjustment to the curriculum contents.

41. In this regard, SED advised that the review would be conducted in an objective and comprehensive manner as the Ad Hoc Committee under CDC set up in May 2014 comprised academics of the tertiary education sector, practising teachers and professionals from relevant fields etc. Principal Assistant Secretary (Curriculum Development) ("PAS(CD)") supplemented that since the majority of secondary schools had adopted the independent subject mode at the junior secondary level, the Ad Hoc Committee would give priority to refining the curriculum of the Chinese History subject. Meanwhile, EDB would continue to provide teaching and learning resources to enliven the teaching of Chinese History and enhance students' interest in the subject.

42. CCDO(PSHE) advised that the contemporary developments of China had been shaped by events that had taken place in the last century and recent decades. Hence, study of modern Chinese history would enable students to better understand the background leading to the current developments in the Mainland. EDB had also understood from secondary schools that very often, there was insufficient time to cover modern history after completing the curriculum relating to ancient history. It was against this background that the Ad Hoc Committee had made the short-term recommendation to adjust the ratio of ancient and modern history in the curriculum to equal halves.

43. The Chairman and Mrs Regina IP sought clarification on whether the Ad Hoc Committee's short-term recommendation would be formally implemented in September 2015, as indicated in paragraph 13 of the Administration's paper. The Deputy Chairman was concerned about the readiness of the secondary school sector in making relevant arrangements

Action

such as revising the teaching materials if the short-term recommendation was to be implemented in September 2015. Dr Priscilla LEUNG highlighted the need for prior consultation with different stakeholders before making a decision to implement the adjustment.

44. In reply, SED clarified that the Ad Hoc Committee was discussing to adjust the ratio of ancient and modern history to equal halves. It was hoped that this short-term recommendation could be formally implemented in September this year. However, at this juncture, no decision on implementation had been made yet. SED supplemented that the Ad Hoc Committee would also consider other issues in its curriculum review exercise and would start consultation with schools and stakeholders in mid-2015. The entire review was expected to be completed within two years.

The teaching and learning of Chinese History

45. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung opined that professional training for teachers was important to bring about effectiveness in the learning and teaching of Chinese history. The Deputy Chairman sought information on the proportion of teachers currently teaching Chinese History who had taken this subject as their major in their undergraduate studies. SED informed members that the majority of graduate teachers currently teaching Chinese history had majored in this subject. He further said that the Ad Hoc Committee would explore ways to strengthen the training and support for teachers as well as enhance the interest of students.

46. Dr Priscilla LEUNG considered that some television programmes featuring historical events could serve as interesting teaching materials. She observed that some schools in the Mainland had enlivened the teaching and learning of Chinese history with the aid of technology. Dr LEUNG stressed that textbooks and teaching materials for the Chinese History subject should cover historical events in an impartial and truthful manner while providing views from multiple perspectives. Dr CHIANG Lai-wan concurred with the importance to understand controversial historical events from multiple perspectives. She also considered that more diversified teaching strategies should be used by teachers so as to enhance students' interest in learning Chinese history.

47. SED highlighted that EDB would continue to provide relevant learning and teaching resources to support teachers and enhance students' interest in learning Chinese history. PAS(CD) supplemented that EDB would arrange more sharing on pedagogies among Chinese History teachers and strengthen professional dialogues.

Action

48. Ms Cyd HO stressed the importance of truthfulness and objectivity in accounting for historical events, in particular controversial ones. Noting that publishers were currently required to submit textbooks to EDB for review, she urged that the development of school-based teaching materials should be free from interference. Ms HO also opined that in assessing students' knowledge in Chinese History, more emphasis should be placed on students' ability to analyze, rather than to memorize, the contents. In this regard, Deputy Secretary for Education (5) advised that under prevailing arrangements, textbooks were published according to the relevant Curriculum Guides issued by CDC and were reviewed by more than one expert from CDC in the relevant subjects.

49. Ms Starry LEE was concerned about the significant decline in the number of students taking Chinese History and History as elective subjects under the New Senior Secondary curriculum. She considered it necessary to enhance students' interest to take history subjects at the senior secondary level. In this regard, SED advised that about 10% of the candidates of the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education ("HKDSE") Examination sat for the examination on Chinese History in recent years. The ratio was comparable to that of the Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination in the past. He further said that the performance of candidates in the HKDSE Examination on Chinese History was generally better than that in other humanities subjects.

Objective of Chinese history education

50. Mr CHAN Chi-chuen noted from item 6 in Appendix IV to the Administration's paper that only students with adequate understanding of the recent historical development of our nation could be able to have a shared memory, feeling and passion with their compatriots. Mr CHAN opined that studying Chinese history should not serve the purpose of developing a shared memory and feeling; otherwise, Chinese history education would become a tool to brainwash students. Dr Helena WONG was gravely concerned that Chinese history education would be implemented to indoctrinate students to develop a passion for the motherland. Dr CHIANG Lai-wan considered that a better understanding of the historical developments of the motherland would facilitate students to formulate their own views on historical events.

51. SED advised that Chinese history education was not the only way to enable students to acquire adequate understanding of the historical events and culture of the motherland and nurture national identity. Other subjects and activities such as participation in Mainland exchanges could also help students understand the developments and current affairs of the Mainland. Students were also encouraged to develop critical thinking and multiple

Action

perspectives in understanding and analyzing issues and events.

52. The Chairman sought the Administration's view on whether it was satisfied with the current implementation of Chinese history education. As national education had not been introduced so far, he asked whether Chinese history education had effectively helped students to understand their motherland and nurture national identity.

53. In response, SED said that there was room for improvement in the existing Chinese history education. CDC had therefore set up the Ad Hoc Committee to review the curricula of the junior secondary Chinese History and History. He stressed that no single subject alone could enable students to develop a good understanding of their motherland and nurture national identity. As regards national education, he said that while the curriculum guide for implementing the Moral and National Education subject had been shelved, schools were at liberty to implement national education according to school-based needs.

54. To allow sufficient time for completing the discussion, the Chairman decided to extend the meeting for 15 minutes to 6:45 pm.

(The Chairman left the meeting at this juncture and the Deputy Chairman took over the chair.)

VI. Progress report on implementation of Life Planning Education

(LC Paper No. CB(4)457/14-15(04) -- Paper provided by the Administration)

Briefing by the Administration

55. At the invitation of the Deputy Chairman, SED briefed members on the key measures to promote life planning education for secondary school students and the progress since the commencement of the 2014-2015 school year, as set out in the Administration's paper [LC Paper No. CB(4)457/14-15(04)].

Discussion

Implementation of life planning education

56. Mrs Regina IP noted that under the New Senior Secondary ("NSS")

Action

curriculum, students at senior secondary levels would choose two/three elective subjects having regard to the admission requirements of their preferred undergraduate programmes. Meanwhile, senior secondary students would also need to prepare themselves for employment if they would not pursue post-secondary education. In this regard, Mrs IP remarked that the need for providing life planning education might have arisen from the implementation of the NSS curriculum.

57. SED advised that quality life planning education aimed at enabling students to understand their own career and academic aspirations and make informed decisions in their study and employment in accordance with their interests, abilities and orientations. It was not implemented for the purpose of assisting secondary students to choose their elective subjects in preparation for their admission to undergraduate programmes. In fact, not all students were required to confirm the decision on their major subjects during the first year of undergraduate study.

58. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung opined that instead of implementing life planning education as a separate initiative, the education system should provide secondary students with diversified articulation pathways with flexible entry and exit between the pursuit of general academic education and vocational education, similar to the case of Germany. The Deputy Chairman shared Mr LEUNG's view that it would be more important for the education system itself to provide diversified and flexible articulation for students.

Provision of resources for life planning education

59. Members noted that pursuant to the 2014 Policy Address, EDB had provided each public sector school operating classes at senior secondary levels with a recurrent Career and Life Planning ("CLP") Grant at about \$500,000 per annum starting from the 2014-2015 school year, i.e. a total of over \$200 million per annum, to strengthen the life planning education. Dr CHIANG Lai-wan was concerned about the cost-effectiveness of the CLP Grant. Dr Kenneth CHAN expressed concern about the effective deployment of resources by schools to promote life planning education.

60. SED advised that life planning education helped students understand their own career and academic aspirations and enhance their ability to make informed decisions in education or career development. With the provision of the recurrent CLP Grant, it was expected that life planning education would form part of a school's strategic planning under which work plans with clear objectives and strategies as well as effectiveness evaluation mechanism were put in place. It was noted from school visits that the majority of schools

Action

had included major learning elements of life planning education in their school-based guidance programmes and a variety of evaluation tools and methods had been adopted for assessing the contents of the programmes.

61. Mrs Regina IP noted that as announced by the Hong Kong Jockey Club ("HKJC"), it would spearhead a brand new Career and Life Planning Programme with a funding of HK\$500 million. She asked why such an initiative had not been launched by EDB instead. SED advised that EDB would continue to render support to schools and teachers in promoting life planning education through various means such as providing professional support to teachers and exploring the feasibility of conducting different modes of business-school partnership activities under the Business-School Partnership Programme. Regarding the programme launched by HKJC, it was understood that the programme would be conducted on a pilot basis with participation by a certain number of schools upon invitation.

Professional support for teachers

62. Dr CHIANG Lai-wan noted that the number of structured training places on life planning education for teachers had been increased from the previous 80 places to 240 places per annum from the 2014-2015 school year onwards. She opined that the objective of having at least two teachers of the career team of each school having completed the certificate course or equivalent in the next three years could hardly be achieved if only 240 training places were available. In this regard, DS(Ed)4 advised that a number of teachers had received structured training in career guidance or life planning education as certificate courses on career guidance had been offered for teachers of the career team of secondary schools since the 1990s. The increase in training places would enhance the professional capabilities of teachers in supporting students in life planning.

VII. Any other business

63. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 6:45 pm.