

**立法會**  
**Legislative Council**

LC Paper No. CB(4)1385/14-15  
(These minutes have been seen  
by the Administration)

Ref : CB4/PL/ED

**Panel on Education**

**Minutes of meeting**  
**held on Monday, 11 May 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 Albert HO Chun-yan  
Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung  
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, 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 CHEUNG Kwok-che  
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 Helena WONG Pik-wan  
Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan, JP

**Member attending** : Hon Claudia MO

**Members absent** : Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, GBS, JP  
Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung  
Hon Christopher CHUNG Shu-kun, BBS, MH, JP

**Public Officers attending** : Agenda item III

Mr Eddie NG, SBS, JP  
Secretary for Education

Mrs HONG CHAN Tsui-wah  
Deputy Secretary for Education (4)

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

Agenda item IV

Mr Eddie NG, SBS, JP  
Secretary for Education

Dr K K CHAN  
Deputy Secretary for Education (5)

Ms Jenny CHAN  
Principal Assistant Secretary  
(Education Infrastructure)  
Education Bureau

Agenda item V

Mr Kevin YEUNG, JP  
Under Secretary for Education

Ms Wendy CHUNG  
Principal Assistant Secretary  
(Infrastructure and Research Support)  
Education Bureau

Mr KWONG Ying-wai  
Principal Education Officer  
(Special Education and Kindergarten Education)  
Education Bureau

Agenda item VI

Mr Kevin YEUNG, JP  
Under Secretary for Education

Mrs HONG CHAN Tsui-wah  
Deputy Secretary for Education (4)

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

Mr LEE Kam-kwong  
Principal Education Officer (New Territories)  
Education Bureau

Mr WOO Chun-sing  
Principal Education Officer  
(Education Commission and Planning)  
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

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**I. Information paper(s) issued since the last meeting**

(LC Paper No. CB(4)913/14-15(01) -- Letter dated 16 April 2015  
from Dr Hon Kenneth  
CHAN Ka-lok concerning

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the issues related to redevelopment and reprovisioning of primary schools in public housing estates

LC Paper No. CB(4)913/14-15(02) -- Administration's written response dated 30 April 2015 to the letter dated 16 April 2015 from Dr Hon Kenneth CHAN Ka-lok concerning the issues related to redevelopment and reprovisioning of primary schools in public housing estates)

Members noted the above papers issued since the last meeting.

**II. Items for discussion at the next meeting**

(Appendix I to LC Paper No. CB(4)925/14-15 -- List of outstanding items for discussion

Appendix II to LC Paper No. CB(4)925/14-15 -- List of follow-up actions)

2. The Chairman informed members that the Administration had proposed to discuss the following items at the next regular meeting to be held on 8 June 2015 at 4:30 pm –

- (a) progress on enhancing Chinese learning and teaching for non-Chinese speaking students; and
- (b) access to teachers' registration information.

3. Dr Helena WONG urged for early discussion of the policy on funding support provided to post-secondary institutions by the University Grants Committee (i.e. item 2 on the Panel's "List of outstanding items for discussion"). She also saw the need to arrange a public hearing.

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4. Mr Tommy CHEUNG referred to his letter to the Chairman [subsequently issued LC Paper No. CB(4)975/14-15(01)] tabled at the meeting and suggested that the Panel should discuss issues related to the use of funds under the Fee Remission/Scholarship Schemes in Direct Subsidy Scheme schools in sponsoring overseas educational visits. The Chairman said that he would first instruct the Secretariat to forward Mr CHEUNG's letter to the Administration for response after the meeting.

*(Post-meeting note: Mr Tommy CHEUNG's letter was forwarded to the Administration for response on 12 May 2015. Subsequently, the subject raised by Mr CHEUNG was included on the agenda of the next meeting to be held on 8 June 2015.)*

5. The Chairman took note of members' suggestions and views, and said that he would finalize with the Deputy Chairman the items to be discussed at the next regular meeting. Members would be notified of the arrangements in due course.

*(Post-meeting note: Upon finalization by the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman, the agenda for the meeting to be held on 8 June 2015 was issued to members vide LC Paper CB(4)1050/14-15 on 22 May 2015.)*

6. 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.

### **III. Pilot scheme on promoting interflow between the Hong Kong-Mainland sister schools**

(LC Paper No. CB(4)925/14-15(01) -- Paper provided by the Administration )

#### Briefing by the Administration

7. At the invitation of the Chairman, Secretary for Education ("SED") briefed members on the implementation details of a proposed three-year pilot scheme on promoting interflow between sister schools in Hong Kong

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and the Mainland ("pilot scheme") from the 2015-2016 to 2017-2018 school years, as set out in the Administration's paper [LC Paper No. CB(4)925/14-15(01)]. The Administration proposed to provide a non-recurrent grant of \$120,000 per annum for three school years starting from the 2015-2016 school year to each public sector or Direct Subsidy Scheme primary and secondary school (including special school) participating in the pilot scheme. The estimated expenditure on the pilot scheme would amount to \$200 million. Subject to members' views, the Administration would seek the funding approval of the Finance Committee ("FC").

8. The Chairman noted that quite a number of members had raised their hands to ask questions on this agenda item. Having regard to the heavy agenda and to allow sufficient time for discussion, he decided to extend the meeting for 15 minutes beyond the appointed end-time.

Discussion

*Justifications for launching the pilot scheme*

9. Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung noted that the Administration would expect schools participating in the pilot scheme to organize sustainable activities to enhance teaching effectiveness. As teaching effectiveness might as well be enhanced through exchange activities with schools in other overseas countries, he questioned the intended objectives of the pilot scheme which only focused on forming sister schools with Mainland schools. Since sister schools activities had been organized since 2004, Dr Kenneth CHAN and Dr Helena WONG were concerned whether the Administration had assessed the effectiveness of these activities before deciding to launch the pilot scheme.

10. SED said that according to feedbacks collected by the Education Bureau ("EDB") from local schools having formed sister schools with the Mainland, participating schools were in general positive towards the sister school activities. He explained that these activities could help teachers and students acquire a better understanding about education development in the Mainland, and would facilitate Hong Kong-Mainland cultural interflow, enhance teachers' professionalism and broaden students' horizons. Compared with one-off exchange activities, sister school activities could foster a more stable and long-term partnership between local schools and their Mainland counterparts.

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11. Mr Michael TIEN referred to a local school which had arranged for its students to attend calligraphy and traditional handicraft classes when visiting its sister school in the Mainland; while the students from the Mainland sister school attended English classes when visiting the school in Hong Kong. He said that the schools had very clear objectives to achieve and students from both schools had benefited from the exchange activities. Mr TIEN considered it vital to set clear objectives for sister school activities and that schools applying for the grant under the pilot scheme should be required to specify their objectives and action plans.

12. Dr Priscilla LEUNG expressed support for sister school activities. Referring to her past experience in leading delegations to the Mainland, she said that participation in exchange activities could broaden students' exposure. To encourage more schools to participate in sister school activities, she considered that the Administration should refrain from setting overly stringent requirements on applications for grant under the pilot scheme.

13. SED advised that schools applying to join the pilot scheme should submit a proposal setting out the use of the grant and an action plan. Schools participating in the pilot scheme were expected to organize sustainable activities, conduct professional exploration and multi-facet cooperation.

14. Ms Claudia MO was of the view that to broaden students' horizons, the Administration should also promote the formation of sister schools between local schools and schools in other Asian, European or American countries, instead of confining the pairing-up arrangement to Mainland schools as provided under the pilot scheme. She queried whether the pilot scheme had been launched out of political consideration for the purpose of integrating Hong Kong with the Mainland. She was also concerned whether it was mandatory for schools and their students to participate in sister school activities under the pilot scheme.

15. Mr CHAN Chi-chuen queried that the pilot scheme might be an attempt in disguise to revive the shelved implementation of national education. While local schools participating in the pilot scheme could visit their Mainland counterparts, Mr CHAN asked whether students from the Mainland schools could also conduct visits to their sister schools in Hong Kong under the pilot scheme. Mr Gary FAN considered that to promote professional interflow, the financial support provided to schools should not be confined to sister school activities with Mainland schools. He shared the concern that the pilot scheme might become a tool to brainwash Hong Kong students.

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16. SED pointed out that so far, no designated funding for sister school exchanges had been provided for schools in Hong Kong. EDB had primarily played a liaison or coordination role in supporting the pairing up of Hong Kong and Mainland schools. Meanwhile, the number of Hong Kong-Mainland sister schools had increased from some 20 pairs in 2004 to over 400 pairs at present. In view of the benefits brought about by sister school exchanges and the growing interest of schools to participate in these activities, the Administration considered it justified to provide financial support to schools to enable them to plan and take forward these activities systematically and purposefully. SED confirmed that the participation in sister school activities and in the pilot scheme was voluntary. Regarding cases in which schools could benefit from exchange activities, SED cited the example of a local school renowned in making use of information technology in teaching pairing up with a school in Shenzhen excelling in robot technology.

17. Mr WONG Kwok-hing observed that some members had unleashed criticisms against the Government for launching the pilot scheme out of their own political consideration. Ms Claudia MO referred to Mr WONG's remarks and said that a Member should not impute improper motives to another Member. She asked the Chairman to consider whether Mr WONG's remarks were in violation of procedural rules. The Chairman said that he did not consider that Mr WONG's remarks had imputed improper motives to other members.

18. Mr WONG Kwok-hing expressed support for the funding proposal to promote sister school activities with Mainland schools. He considered it reasonable and legitimate for people of Hong Kong, including students, to understand their motherland. Dr CHIANG Lai-wan also supported the Administration's efforts in promoting sister school activities. In her view, students should not be deprived of the opportunities to participate in exchange activities outside Hong Kong due to the lack of means. She considered that sister school activities could be extended to schools in other jurisdictions in due course if adequate resources were available.

19. Ms Starry LEE shared her observation that some members were biased against Mainland exchange activities and often associated these activities with attempts to brainwash students. She highlighted that exchange activities had been carried out by the local education sector for many years and were by no means a new initiative. She concurred that on account of limited public resources, it was reasonable to provide support for sister school activities with schools in the Mainland first, without ruling out the possibility of extending such activities to schools in other places in future.



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20. Mr TAM Yiu-chung said that according to his understanding, schools and teachers were in general positive towards sister school activities, which had been carried out since 2004. On criticisms that sister school activities sought to brainwash students, Mr TAM considered these comments biased and unfair.

21. Mr MA Fung-kwok referred to some members' opposition to the pilot scheme and their criticisms against the Government. He said that while members might hold divergent views, they should observe the rules of the meeting and show respect for government officials and other members. Mr MA noted that the feedback of students who had participated in sister school and exchange activities was in general positive. He said that where practicable, the Administration could consider providing additional resources to schools so that they could also arrange exchange programmes with schools in other countries as well.

22. The Deputy Chairman observed that schools in the Mainland had been increasingly engaged in exchange activities with schools in Europe and America. However, the scope of the pilot scheme was confined to the pairing up of local schools with Mainland schools. To broaden students' exposure, the Deputy Chairman considered that the pilot scheme should support sister school activities with schools in the Mainland as well as with schools in other jurisdictions. Dr Kenneth CHAN and Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung opined that to broaden the exposure of students, schools should be provided with subsidy for organizing sister school activities and exchange activities with schools in different countries.

23. In this regard, SED recapitulated that currently, schools were at liberty to organize exchange activities and sister school activities with schools in the Mainland or/and other places.

*Concerns about implementation of the pilot scheme*

24. The Deputy Chairman noted that schools applying to join the pilot scheme were required to submit an application together with a proposal setting out how the funding would be used and an action plan. They would also need to review their exchange activities annually and submit a report to EDB. The Deputy Chairman was gravely concerned about the additional workload on teachers arising from the administrative work and logistical arrangements of organizing sister school activities. Mr Charles MOK shared similar concern about the additional workload on teachers. He opined that apart from promoting sister school activities, the Administration should also consider deploying more resources to improve

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the education system. Mr MA Fung-kwok considered that the Administration should simplify the administrative work required under the pilot scheme so as to reduce the workload of teachers.

25. Mr TAM Yiu-chung highlighted that in view of the benefits brought to students, schools were willing to organize sister school activities even without any subsidy from the Government. He was concerned that the proposed amount of non-recurrent grant under the pilot scheme might not be sufficient to defray all the necessary expenditure on organizing sister school activities. Mr WONG Kwok-hing shared similar concern about the adequacy of the proposed grant.

26. SED advised that schools participating in the pilot scheme and in receipt of the grant could consider outsourcing the administrative work for arranging sister school activities with a view to relieving teachers' workload.

27. Dr Helena WONG noted that according to EDB's information, the Hong Kong Federation of Education Workers ("HKFEW") was commissioned to provide support services from September 2010 to August 2015 for sister school activities with a total contract sum of about \$1.7 million. Dr WONG was concerned whether EDB would commission an agency to provide services under the pilot scheme on a competitive basis instead of continuing to appoint the same service provider, and enquired about the expenditure required for outsourcing the service. She remarked that due to the political affiliation of HKFEW as the service provider, the public might perceive the arrangement of sister school activities with Mainland schools a kind of brainwashing activity.

28. Mr IP Kwok-him declared that he was the deputy chairman of a school sponsoring body of a school which might apply to join the pilot scheme. Mr IP expressed support for the pilot scheme to promote sister school activities which would enable students to acquire a better understanding of the Mainland. He considered it unfair to query the work of HKFEW in providing support services merely because of its political affiliation.

29. Whilst expressing support in principle for exchange activities to broaden students' exposure, Ms Cyd HO asked whether the Mainland schools which had paired up with local schools were well-developed schools in large cities or those located in rural and remote areas. Ms HO referred to outsourcing of the Internet Learning Support Programme and stressed the importance of putting in place an effective and fair tendering mechanism.

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30. SED reiterated that the Administration had noted the growing interest of schools to participate in sister school activities and had therefore proposed to provide financial support for promoting interflow between sister schools in Hong Kong and the Mainland. He stressed that schools were at liberty to form sister schools in the Mainland according to their development needs and individual circumstances.

31. In response to members' concerns about commissioning HKFEW to provide support services, Deputy Secretary for Education (4) explained that EDB had followed the established procurement procedures and invited service providers to submit proposals. Several quotation exercises were involved and the same service provider had been selected on the merits of its bids in each exercise. Principal Assistant Secretary (School Development) supplemented that in carrying out sister school activities using the proposed non-recurrent grant, individual schools could make arrangements on their own, including inviting quotations/tenders for the necessary services in accordance with the procurement procedures stipulated by EDB.

32. The Chairman declared that he was the supervisor of a Direct Subsidy Scheme school which might apply to join the pilot scheme. Whilst expressing support for the pilot scheme, he concurred with some members that the proposed annual grant of \$120,000 might not be commensurate with the time and efforts put into organizing sister school activities by schools. In taking forward education-related initiatives such as sister school activities, the Chairman stressed the need to take a pragmatic approach, and highlighted that the foremost concern should be the interest of students and whether the activities could bring about the anticipated benefits, rather than striving to achieve any numerical target.

*Summing up*

33. Concluding the discussion, the Chairman asked whether members would support the submission of the financial proposal to FC. Members did not indicate any objection.

**IV. Progress of implementing the Support Scheme on e-Learning in Schools and the e-Textbook Market Development Scheme**

(LC Paper No. CB(4)925/14-15(02) -- Paper provided by the Administration

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LC Paper No. CB(4)925/14-15(03) -- Updated background brief entitled "Issues related to support for schools to implement e-learning and development of e-textbooks" prepared by the LegCo Secretariat)

34. Members noted the background brief prepared by the Secretariat [LC Paper No. CB(4)925/14-15(03)].

Briefing by the Administration

35. At the invitation of the Chairman, SED briefed members on the latest position on the implementation of the Support Scheme on e-Learning in Schools ("Support Scheme") and the e-Textbook Market Development Scheme ("EMADS") as well as the way forward on the launch of the Fourth Strategy on Information Technology in Education ("ITE4"), as set out in the Administration's paper [LC Paper No. CB(4)925/14-15(02)].

Discussion

*Implementation of e-learning in schools*

36. Noting that there were only 174 school applications to participate in the Support Scheme, Mr Albert HO enquired about the reason for the low response rate among schools. He was concerned whether the teachers were ready for implementing e-learning. Ms Cyd HO was of the view that in addition to upgrading the IT infrastructure of schools under the Support Scheme, training for teachers should also be strengthened so as to facilitate the adoption of e-learning.

37. In response, Deputy Secretary for Education (5) ("DS(Ed)5") said that schools needed to prepare applications within a short period and there was a quota for 100 schools only under the Support Scheme while the remaining 900 schools could enhance their WiFi infrastructure in the next stage which would be launched very soon. Therefore, schools were under no urgency to join the Support Scheme. SED further informed members that to enhance the capability of schools in utilizing the WiFi environment for e-learning, the Administration had provided continuous professional

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development programmes for school principals and teachers over recent years, which were attended by over 1,300 school principals and teachers every year. Besides, the 100 selected schools under the Support Scheme would also disseminate their successful experience and practices to the other schools.

38. Ms Cyd HO noted that apart from the 100 selected schools in the Support Scheme, the Administration planned to provide funding to the remaining 900 public sector schools for enhancing their WiFi infrastructure in the next three school years starting from the 2015-2016 school year. She enquired whether this enhancement plan could be expedited for completion in one to two years' time. SED replied that about 400 schools had already planned to upgrade their Wifi infrastructure in the 2015-2016 school year.

39. Ms Cyd HO enquired whether any tracking study would be conducted on the implementation of e-learning and adoption of e-textbooks by schools. DS(Ed)5 advised that it was a major action under ITE4 in conducting ongoing research and evaluation studies for coherent and sustainable development of IT in education.

40. Mr Michael TIEN opined that in addition to upgrading WiFi infrastructure, the Administration should take steps to enhance the computer literacy of students. The Administration should also provide incentive to encourage schools to adopt e-learning and student-centred teaching methods such as the "flipped classroom". SED remarked that some schools with good experience in e-learning had already implemented "flipped classroom".

41. Dr Kenneth CHAN noted that among the 100 selected schools under the Support Scheme, 92 schools adopted the out-sourcing model for subscription of WiFi services. He was of the view that there should be multiple service providers to ensure fair competition and provide schools with choices. In this regard, he requested the Administration to inform the Panel of the service providers that had been engaged by the participating schools. The Administration agreed to provide the requested information after the meeting.

*(Post-meeting note: The Administration's written response was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(4)1157/14-15(01) on 12 June 2015.)*

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42. The Chairman noted that mobile computing devices would be widely used after the WiFi infrastructure of schools had been upgraded. To ensure the availability of timely and sustained repair and maintenance services, the Chairman reflected the view of the school sector that a permanent post of technical support staff ("TSS") should be created within the approved establishment in each school. The creation of a permanent post would provide job security and facilitate staff recruitment and retention. SED informed members that according to EDB's understanding, the creation of a permanent TSS post might not necessarily help reduce the high turnover of IT personnel as they were also much sought after in the job market.

*Issues arising from the implementation of EMADS*

43. Mr Charles MOK opined that upgrading WiFi infrastructure of schools and adoption of e-textbooks were two separate matters. He was concerned about the lack of incentives for schools to adopt e-textbooks developed under EMADS. In this regard, he enquired about the number of participating schools under the Support Scheme which had used e-textbooks developed under EMADS.

44. SED advised that the first batch of e-textbooks developed under EMADS had been launched for use by schools in the 2014-2015 school year and the WiFi infrastructure enhancement works for the 100 selected schools under the Support Scheme had been completed earlier this year. Currently, EDB had not collected information on the number of schools under the Support Scheme which adopted e-textbooks. He further said that another eight sets of e-textbooks developed under EMADS were expected to be included on the Recommended e-Textbook List ("eRTL") for use in schools in the 2016-2017 school year.

45. Ms Starry LEE recalled that the development of e-textbooks under EMADS had arisen from concerns about the need to stabilize the price of printed textbooks which had been on a rising trend in recent years. She sought clarification on whether it remained one of EMADS' objectives to bring the prices of printed textbooks to a reasonable level; and if yes, to what extent the objective had been met.

46. SED replied that to help stabilize the price of textbooks was one of the objectives in encouraging the development of e-textbooks and adoption of e-learning. These initiatives could also improve teaching and learning effectiveness, strengthen self-directed learning by students, and extend the learning process beyond classroom.

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47. Ms Cyd HO noted that e-textbooks on the eRTL developed under EMADS carried a pricing commitment of two to four years. She was concerned about any possible sharp increase in selling price of these e-textbooks after the expiry of the pricing commitment period. To bring about lower pricing on a more sustainable basis, Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung enquired whether it was feasible to extend the pricing commitment to about 10 years. Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung noted that in the past, many printed textbooks were accompanied by e-resources such as CD-ROM. He said that given the past experience of the publishers in producing e-resources, they should be able to develop e-textbooks at a lower start-up cost. Mr LEUNG considered that the e-textbooks developed under EMADS should be available at a lower price and subject to a longer pricing commitment period.

48. Dr Kenneth CHAN noted that some publishers of printed textbooks were also engaged in developing e-textbooks. He was concerned that if the e-textbook market was dominated by only a handful of publishers, there would not be any genuine market competition to help lower the price of textbooks.

49. The Chairman noted that unlike the four core subjects at senior secondary levels which were compulsory, the uptake of elective subjects by students varied. There was also a declining trend in the number of students taking certain elective subjects. He was concerned that publishers might not be interested in developing e-textbooks for elective subjects with a relatively low uptake. In his opinion, the Administration should consider providing incentives to encourage publishers to develop e-textbooks for more elective subjects.

50. SED said that the launch of EMADS aimed to encourage more non-profit-making organizations and textbook publishers to participate in the e-textbook market. In this regard, e-textbooks developed under EMADS would carry a pricing commitment of two to four years. Publishers of printed textbooks and e-textbooks might adjust the price of their textbooks having regard to relevant factors including inflation and the need of updating the contents.

## **V. Capital Works Projects for Schools**

- (a) A 12-classroom special school for children with mild intellectual disability near Hoi Lai Estate, Sham Shui Po

(LC Paper No. CB(4)925/14-15(04) -- Paper provided by the Administration)

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- (b) Two 24-classroom primary schools at ex-Tanner Road Police Married Quarters site at Pak Fuk Road, North Point, Hong Kong

LC Paper No. CB(4)925/14-15(05) -- Paper provided by the Administration)

51. Due to the heavy agenda and time constraint, the meeting agreed that it would not be necessary for the Administration to give a briefing on the two capital works projects. Members noted that the Administration planned to submit the funding proposal of the reprovisioning project of the Church of Christ in China Mongkok Church, Kai Oi School ("Kai Oi School"), as well as the proposed construction project of two primary schools at Pak Fuk Road in North Point for converting two bi-sessional primary schools, namely Pun U Association Wah Yan Primary School ("PUWYPS") and North Point Methodist Primary School ("NPMPS"), into whole-day primary schooling, to the Public Works Subcommittee and the Finance Committee for approval in June and July 2015 respectively.

*Policy on reprovisioning of schools operating in sub-standard premises*

52. Dr Kenneth CHAN referred to his letter dated 16 April 2015 [LC Paper No. CB(4)913/14-15(01)] concerning issues related to the redevelopment and reprovisioning of primary schools operating in the so-called "matchbox-style school premises" in public housing estates, which was listed under item I of the agenda of this meeting. He noted with concern that according to the information provided by the Administration [LC Paper No. CB(4)913/14-15(02)], there were 28 public sector primary schools still operating in this type of sub-standard premises. In this regard, he urged for early discussion of this matter by the Panel. Dr Helena WONG shared Dr CHAN's concern and sought explanation on the policy on reprovisioning of school premises that were constructed some 30 to 40 years ago.

53. Under Secretary for Education ("US(Ed)") advised that when considering the need of reprovisioning and redevelopment of schools, the Administration would take into account a number of factors, including the age and size of the existing school buildings and the quality of education provided by the schools concerned. When school sites or premises were available for reprovisioning of existing schools, EDB would conduct a school allocation exercise to consider bids from eligible schools. As for in-situ redevelopment projects, schools in general should have a site area of at least 3 000 square metres ("sq.m.") in order to make the redevelopment project technically feasible.



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54. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung expressed concern about the unsatisfactory school facilities at SAHK Ko Fook Iu Memorial School ("Ko Fook Iu School"), a special school built in 1970s. He sought information on the progress in reprovisioning the school. In reply, US(Ed) informed members that Ko Fook Iu School had been allocated with two floors in an adjacent vacant school premises. The additional floor area could provide more space for teaching/learning activities and accommodate additional facilities to support students. At this stage, EDB would not recommend the reprovisioning of the said school.

*Reprovisioning of Kai Oi School*

55. Mr Albert HO expressed support for the school projects under discussion, and opined that support of the local community was also important to the construction of special schools in the vicinity. He noted that upon completion of its new school premises, Kai Oi School would enrol children with mild intellectual disability in Kowloon and Tseung Kwan O Region. Mr HO was concerned that the special school, which would be located in Sham Shui Po, might be too far for students residing in Tseung Kwan O.

56. US(Ed) advised that school places in special schools were planned on a territory-wide basis comprising seven regions, one of which was Kowloon and Tseung Kwan O. There was an existing special school for mild intellectual disability in Tseung Kwan O. Where practicable, children with mild intellectual disability residing in Tseung Kwan O would be placed into this special school rather than Kai Oi School to minimize the daily commuting between home and school. Meanwhile, the Sham Shui Po District Council had been consulted and was supportive of the reprovisioning of Kai Oi School. Currently, there were four school buses serving Kai Oi School and the school bus service would continue after reprovisioning of the school to the new premises

57. Dr Kenneth CHAN referred to the relocation of Hong Kong Christian Service Pui Oi School, a special school for children with physical disability, to its current premises in Tuen Mun, and drew the Administration's attention to the importance of careful prior planning in order to ensure that the facilities could meet the needs of students and to avoid disputes over matters such as the school's responsibility in managing trees.

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*Construction of two primary schools at Pak Fuk Road*

58. Mr Charles MOK declared that he was an alumnus of NPMPS, and that PUWYPS was affiliated to the secondary school attended by him. While expressing support for the early implementation of the proposed capital works projects, Mr MOK expressed concern about traffic flow and road safety at Pak Fuk Road which was frequently used by buses and heavy vehicles.

59. Noting that there was a bus terminus at Pak Fuk Road near the project site, Dr Kenneth CHAN expressed concern about heavy traffic flow in the vicinity of the project site and enquired about mitigating measures, if any. Dr CHAN also considered that the Administration should address parents' concern about the change in the supply of primary school places in the school nets concerned after relocation of PUWYPS from Wan Chai to the Eastern District.

60. US(Ed) advised that to ease the anticipated traffic flow at Pak Fuk Road when the two schools came into operation, a common area would be designated within the project site which included an internal road to accommodate the traffic generated by the two schools and one existing school adjacent to the project site. On-site road testing had also been conducted and the outcome was satisfactory.

61. In response to Mr Charles MOK's enquiry about the area of the new premises of the two schools, US(Ed) advised that the new premises of the two schools would have a site area of about 12 300 sq.m., including a common area of about 3 300 sq.m. The area of the new premises of NPMPS would be slightly below the prevailing planning standard. However, all standard facilities of the two schools would be provided according to the latest standard.

*Summing up*

62. Concluding the discussion, the Chairman said that members were supportive of the proposed capital works projects.

**VI. Issues related to cross-boundary students and establishing schools in Shenzhen for children born in Hong Kong**

(LC Paper No. CB(4)925/14-15(06) -- Paper provided by the Administration

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LC Paper No. CB(4)925/14-15 (07) -- Background brief entitled "Issues related to education for cross-boundary students" prepared by the LegCo Secretariat)

63. Members noted the background brief prepared by the Secretariat [LC Paper No. CB(4)925/14-15(07)]. They also noted a submission from International Social Service Hong Kong Branch [subsequently issued vide LC Paper No. CB(4)974/14-15(01)] tabled at the meeting.

Briefing by the Administration

64. At the invitation of the Chairman, US(Ed) briefed members on issues related to cross-boundary students ("CBS") and establishing publicly-funded primary schools in Shenzhen for children born in Hong Kong, as set out in the Administration's paper [LC Paper No. CB(4)925/14-15(06)].

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

Discussion

*School places and support measures for CBS*

65. Dr Kenneth CHAN noted that there were currently thousands of CBS attending kindergartens, primary schools and secondary schools in districts near the border, such as the North District, Yuen Long and Tuen Mun. He anticipated that the keen demand for school places from CBS in these districts would continue in the next few years, and considered that the Administration should explore ways to provide sufficient school places for CBS and appropriate support services for these students, their parents and the schools admitting them, such as school bus services. Dr Helena WONG expressed similar concern about the provision of secondary school places to meet the projected demand for places in districts like the North District, Yuen Long and Tuen Mun in the coming years. She enquired whether the Administration had collected information on whether CBS attending kindergartens would continue to pursue primary and secondary education in Hong Kong.

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66. US(Ed) advised that it was difficult to make an accurate projection on the supply of and demand for school places at district level due to various factors such as population mobility and parental choice of schools. The Administration expected that CBS currently attending kindergartens in Hong Kong would most likely continue their primary and secondary education in Hong Kong. US(Ed) also confirmed that the Administration had maintained close communication with stakeholders regarding the provision of support services.

67. Mr TAM Yiu-chung noted with concern that the recent change of the multiple entry permit ("一簽多行") arrangement for Shenzhen residents to one visit per week ("一週一行") might affect some parents who were Shenzhen residents accompanying their children to cross the border daily to attend schools in Hong Kong. Dr Kenneth CHAN was concerned about the impact, if any, of the recent restriction imposed on the holders of multiple entry permits on cross-boundary school bus services.

68. US(Ed) advised that Shenzhen residents might apply for a specified type of entry permit with the Mainland authorities if they had to visit Hong Kong frequently for special reasons, such as taking their children to school. If necessary, local schools would provide supporting documents to the parents of CBS. The Administration would also study the impact, if any, on cross-boundary school bus services and would consider providing support as appropriate.

69. The Deputy Chairman expressed concern about the adverse impact on the learning and school life of CBS arising from the long time taken to commute daily to and from schools. In response, US(Ed) advised that in arranging teaching and school activities, schools admitting CBS would make appropriate arrangements to accommodate the needs of CBS and facilitate their participation.

*Views on establishing publicly-funded primary schools in Shenzhen for children born in Hong Kong*

70. Mr MA Fung-kwok recalled that the suggestion of establishing publicly-funded primary schools in Shenzhen had been raised several years ago in the light of an increasing demand for educational services from Hong Kong children residing in the Mainland. Nevertheless, according to the Administration, as a result of the implementation of the "zero delivery quota" policy since early 2013 for expectant Mainland mothers whose husbands were not Hong Kong residents, the demand for school places from CBS was expected to decline in a few years' time. Mr

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MA remarked that if the Administration had taken appropriate action to address the issue earlier, it might not become too late at this juncture to consider the feasibility of establishing publicly-funded primary schools in Shenzhen for children born in Hong Kong. The Deputy Chairman also considered that the Administration should have explored the suggestion at an earlier time.

71. Mr IP Kwok-him noted with regret the Education Bureau's view that setting up publicly-funded primary schools in Shenzhen for children born in Hong Kong was neither a viable nor desirable option. He stressed that the rights of these children to receive education should be properly addressed. He pointed out that some school sponsoring bodies in Hong Kong were still prepared to explore operating schools/classes in Shenzhen to meet the educational needs of CBS.

72. US(Ed) stressed that as a result of the implementation of the "zero delivery quota" policy since 2013, the upsurge in CBS' demand for primary school places was only transient. The projected demand for Primary One school places would reach its peak in the coming few years and then progressively drop to a stable level. As such, the Administration had come to the view that the setting up of publicly-funded primary schools in Shenzhen was neither a viable nor desirable option.

73. Mr Michael TIEN recalled that two years ago, he wrote to the Mainland authorities suggesting to set up publicly-funded schools in Shenzhen for children of Hong Kong families residing in Shenzhen. At that time, the Mainland authorities were positive towards his suggestion, and had agreed to explore the feasibility of the suggestion with the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. Mr TIEN opined that the Administration should collect information from the parents of CBS on whether they would prefer to study in Shenzhen if their children could be offered places in publicly-funded schools which taught the Hong Kong curriculum.

74. Noting that the minban (民辦) primary schools operating under the Scheme of Classes for Hong Kong Students were self-financing, Mr TAM Yiu-chung enquired whether the Administration would consider providing subsidy for Hong Kong children residing in Shenzhen to pursue primary schooling in these schools. He considered that the provision of subsidy to these children might be an incentive for them to study in Shenzhen, thereby easing the demand for primary school places from CBS. Mr MA Fung-kwok was also concerned about measures, if any, to address the educational needs of Hong Kong children if they chose to reside in Shenzhen.

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75. In reply, US(Ed) advised that according to the feedback collected from the parents of CBS, the main reason for enrolling their children in Hong Kong schools was the more favourable learning and teaching environment in Hong Kong, rather than the opportunities to receive subsidized education. At present, the Government had no plan to provide subsidy to students studying in schools/classes operating under the Scheme of Classes for Hong Kong Students. However, professional support would continue to be strengthened to enhance the capacity of the teachers of minban primary schools to teach the Hong Kong curriculum effectively. It should also be noted that the provision of classes and places of these schools could be adjusted yearly subject to the actual demand.

**VII. Any other business**

Proposal on an overseas duty visit

(LC Paper No. CB(4)771/14-15(01) -- Letter dated 11 April 2015 from Hon IP Kin-yuen on the proposal to conduct an overseas duty visit to study vocational education in Germany and Switzerland)

76. The Deputy Chairman referred to his letter dated 11 April 2015 [LC Paper No. CB(4)771/14-15(01)] proposing to conduct an overseas duty visit to Germany and Switzerland in September 2015 to study their vocational education systems, and invited members' views on his proposal.

77. While expressing support for the Deputy Chairman's proposal, Dr Helena WONG requested that further information on the proposed visit be provided in due course to facilitate members' consideration. She said that as she was aware, some other committee(s) also had plans to conduct overseas duty visits during the summer recess. As Members might be engaged in activities related to District Council elections scheduled to be held on 22 November 2015, Dr WONG suggested that the Deputy Chairman might wish to consider whether it was practicable to conduct the visit sometime in early December 2015.

78. Dr Kenneth CHAN remarked that to enable Members to gain first-hand understanding into the implementation of vocational education,

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the proposed overseas duty visit should not take place at a time when the relevant institutions were on summer vacation.

79. Members noted and raised no objection to the Deputy Chairman's proposal. The Deputy Chairman asked the Secretariat to follow up and prepare further information for members' consideration.

*(Post-meeting note: A paper providing further information on the proposed visit was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(4)1059/14-15(01) on 26 May 2015.)*

80. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 7:04 pm.

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