

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(4)1287/14-15(06)

Ref : CB4/PS/1/13

Panel on Education

Meeting on 15 July 2015

**Proposed extension of the period of work of the
Subcommittee to Study the Implementation of
Free Kindergarten Education**

Purpose

1 This paper reports on the progress of work of the Subcommittee to Study the Implementation of Free Kindergarten Education ("the Subcommittee") and invites the Panel on Education ("the Panel") to endorse the Subcommittee's proposal to extend the period of its work for six more months.

Background

2. In his 2013 Policy Address, the Chief Executive announced that the Education Bureau ("EDB") would set up a committee to examine the feasibility of free kindergarten ("KG") education and recommend specific proposals to enable all children to have access to quality KG education. In his 2014 Policy Address, the Chief Executive highlighted that the Committee on Free Kindergarten Education ("KG Committee") set up in April 2013 was studying practical ways to implement three-year free KG education. According to the Administration, providing practicable 15-year free education and better quality KG education was one of the priorities of the current-term Government.

3. At its meeting on 14 April 2014, the Panel agreed that a subcommittee should be appointed to study and review the progress, arrangements, policy and matters related to the implementation of free KG education, and make recommendations where necessary. The terms of reference of the Subcommittee and its membership are in **Annexes I** and **II** respectively.

Progress of work of the Subcommittee

4. The Subcommittee commenced work on 27 October 2014. A list of major subjects being studied by the Subcommittee is in **Annex III**. Up to early July 2015, the Subcommittee has held a total of 10 meetings. In recognition of wide public concerns over the provision of free KG education, the Subcommittee held a prolonged meeting on 17 January 2015 to receive views from about 100 deputations representing different stakeholders.

5. On 28 May 2015, the KG Committee, headed by Dr Moses CHENG, published its report ("the Report") setting out its deliberations and recommendations on a wide range of issues including the scope of free KG education, teacher professionalism and remuneration framework, funding arrangement, the demand for and different needs of whole-day KG services and provision of premises etc. Members of the public are invited to submit their views on the Report to EDB by the end of July 2015. According to the Administration, after studying the recommendations of the KG Committee and taking into account the views of stakeholders and the public, it will formulate policies and measures to foster the sustainable development of quality KG education.

6. At its meeting held on 9 June 2015, the Subcommittee exchanged views with the KG Committee and EDB on the findings and recommendations of the Report. On 4 July 2015, the Subcommittee held another prolonged meeting during which about 130 deputations including KG operators, principals, teachers, parents, academics and concern groups presented views on a wide range of issues arising from the KG Committee Report. The Administration has taken note of the views and concerns expressed by deputations and members for further consideration.

Need for continuation of work

7. As can be seen from the foregoing paragraphs, the Subcommittee has reached a very important stage of its work. It would need to study and analyze the views and concerns expressed by major stakeholders, identify the key issues which should be pursued with the Administration, as well as deliberate on the findings and recommendations of the Report with a view to formulating its own views on the way forward. The Subcommittee also considers it necessary to continue to monitor the measures which will be promulgated or introduced by the Government for implementing free KG education.

8. Rule 26(c) of the House Rules provides that a subcommittee should complete its work within 12 months of its commencement and report to the relevant Panel(s). If it is necessary for a subcommittee to work beyond 12 months, the subcommittee should, after obtaining the endorsement of the relevant Panel(s), report to the House Committee and give justifications for an extension of the 12-month period.

9. The Subcommittee held its first meeting on 27 October 2014 and should complete its work by 26 October 2015. However, having regard to the need to take forward the important stage of work set out in paragraph 7 above, the complexity and intricacy of the issues under study and the time required for the Subcommittee to conclude its work, deliberate and finalize its views and prepare its report, the Subcommittee agreed at its meeting on 4 July 2015 that approval should be sought to extend its period of work for six more months until 30 April 2016.

Advice sought

10. Members are invited to note the progress of work of the Subcommittee reported in the foregoing paragraphs and endorse the Subcommittee's proposal to extend the period of its work for six more months until 30 April 2016. Subject to members' agreement, a report will be made to the House Committee to seek its approval for the proposed extension.

Council Business Division 4
Legislative Council Secretariat
7 July 2015

Panel on Education

**Subcommittee to Study the Implementation of
Free Kindergarten Education**

Terms of reference

To study and review the progress, arrangements, policy and matters related to the implementation of free kindergarten education, and make recommendations where necessary.

Panel on Education

**Subcommittee to Study the Implementation of
Free Kindergarten Education**

Membership list

Chairman	Hon Starry LEE Wai-king, JP
Deputy Chairman	Hon IP Kin-yuen
Members	Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, GBS, JP Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, GBS, JP Hon WONG Kwok-hing, BBS, MH Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan, JP Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che Hon IP Kwok-him, GBS, JP Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-ye, GBS, JP Hon Steven HO Chun-yin, BBS Hon MA Fung-kwok, SBS, JP Hon Charles Peter MOK, JP Hon CHAN Chi-chuen Dr Hon Kenneth CHAN Ka-lok Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung Dr Hon Helena WONG Pik-wan Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan, JP (up to 5 May 2015) Hon Christopher CHUNG Shu-kun, BBS, MH, JP
	Total : 18 Members
Clerk	Miss Polly YEUNG
Legal Adviser	Miss Carrie WONG
Date	2 July 2015

List of major subjects

- (a) The policy and proposed scope of free kindergarten ("KG") education (e.g. the objectives of free KG education, the types of KGs to be covered under free KG education, the scope of services to be covered by the subsidy, the allocation of resources for taking forward free KG education etc.);
- (b) the operating needs of and services provided by half-day, whole-day and long whole-day KGs and how they should be supported under the provision of free KG education;
- (c) premises-related issues (e.g. rental subsidy, provision of premises and facilities etc.);
- (d) issues related to manpower requirement (e.g. the teacher-to-student ratio, the requirements for additional teaching and non-teaching staff etc.), teacher professionalism (e.g. the development of a qualification and salary framework for KG teachers, training, a proper career and advancement path etc.);
- (e) planning for the provision of KG places, in particular whole-day KG places, and the admission arrangements for KGs;
- (f) transition from KG to primary education;
- (g) support for non-Chinese speaking students and students with special educational needs;
- (h) quality assurance mechanism, regulation and longer-term development of the KG sector;
- (i) research on early childhood education;
- (j) issues related to parents' participation; and
- (k) tuition fees and miscellaneous fees charged by kindergartens, the Government's monitoring, the financial assistance available to children from needy families.