



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

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

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22 December 2015

Mr Anthony CHU
Clerk to Public Accounts Committee
Legislative Council
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road, Central, Hong Kong

Dear Mr Chu,

Public Accounts Committee
Consideration of Chapter 2 of the Director of Audit's Report No.65
Reduction and recycling of food waste

With reference to your letter dated 15 December 2015, please find enclosed information pertaining to items (a) to (e) set out in your letter at **Annex**.

Yours sincerely,

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

- c.c. Secretary for the Environment (fax no. 2537 7278)
Director of Environmental Protection (fax no. 2891 2512)
Chief Executive, Hospital Authority (fax no. 2576 5050)
Commissioner of Correctional Services (fax no. 2583 9307)
Director of Housing (fax no. 2761 6700)
Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene (fax no. 2524 1977)
Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (fax no. 2147 5239)
Director of Audit (fax no. 2583 9063)

Response to Public Accounts Committee regarding Chapter 2 of the Director of Audit's Report No. 65 Reduction and recycling of food waste

- (a) measures to encourage schools to carry out assessment of their feasibility to adopt on-site meal portioning

With reference to paragraph 2.88 (c) in Chapter 2 of the Audit Report, Audit has recommended that the Secretary for the Environment and the Director of Environmental Protection, in collaboration with the Secretary for Education, should encourage schools to carry out assessments of their feasibility to adopt on-site meal portioning. In this regard, the Education Bureau (EDB) would provide necessary support to the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) to take forward the recommendation.

In this connection, EPD and EDB jointly issued a letter to all primary and secondary whole-day schools on 7 December 2015 encouraging those schools that have not yet adopted on-site meal portioning arrangement to apply to the Environment and Conservation Fund (ECF) for implementing on-site meal portioning to prepare lunch for students. For those schools with expressed interest in applying for ECF funding, they may request the ECF Secretariat to arrange for a site visit for conducting a preliminary assessment on the feasibility to adopt on-site meal portioning. Schools which are assessed to be technically not feasible to adopt on-site meal portioning will be encouraged to explore other means to reduce food waste, including using reusable lunch boxes instead of disposable ones.

EDB would continue to collaborate with EPD and explore arranging sharing sessions with schools on the successful implementation of on-site meal portioning in schools.

- (b) measures to encourage schools to provide returns on food-waste quantities

It should be noted that schools may not have the required knowledge about how to measure food-waste quantities. Subject to EPD's issuance of guidelines to schools on methodologies of measuring food-waste quantities as recommended in the Audit Report, EDB stands ready to collaborate with EPD to encourage schools to submit returns on food-waste reduction quantities to be advised by EPD.

- (c) actions that will be taken to further promote green lunch practices among schools

Through circulars and guidelines, EDB will advise schools to formulate policies and follow the principles of reducing waste and minimizing wastage at all times in meal arrangements, and to implement appropriate measures to ensure that the lunch suppliers would provide students with healthy and green lunch.

Students' conscious effort to reduce food waste is a determining factor for the effectiveness of the measures. All along, elements of environmental education have been infused in different subjects of the school curriculum to nurture in students a sense of responsibility towards the environment and encourage them to take positive initiatives in improving the environment. EDB will continue its efforts to raise students' awareness and consciousness of environmental protection including reducing food waste through development of learning and teaching resources. In collaboration with EPD, professional development programmes will also be organized for teachers to enhance their professionalism and share the good practices of schools in this regard.

- (d) progress of following up with the four new schools installed with on-site meal portioning facilities not adopting on-site meal portioning (paragraphs 2.90 and 2.92 in Chapter 2 of the Audit Report refer)

EDB issued letters to the four schools in late November 2015 to ascertain the reasons for not implementing on-site meal portioning.

While one school has already implemented on-site meal portioning since the commencement of the 2015/16 school year, site visits were paid to the remaining three schools to understand the problems encountered. One school was found to have adopted food portioning in classroom which could achieve similar effect as on-site meal portioning. For the remaining two schools, despite the difficulties in implementing on-site meal portioning, they have also taken suitable green lunch measures, such as using reusable containers and cutlery. We will further liaise with these two schools in collaboration with EPD and offer assistance to help them overcome the difficulties. Other possible means to reduce food waste such as requiring lunch suppliers to portion cooked food and pack lunch in reusable and thermal containers before delivering to schools for distribution to students will also be explored.

- (e) actions that will be taken to ensure that new schools installed with on-site meal portioning facilities will adopt on-site meal portioning

During the design and building stage of the school premises, we would inform the school sponsoring body that on-site meal portioning facilities have been included as standard facilities and require them to adopt on-site meal portioning as far as practicable. Upon handing over of the school premises to the school, school development officers of EDB will follow up the implementation plan of the school and provide necessary assistance to ensure that the school will adopt on-site meal portioning unless there are exceptional circumstances with justifiable reasons.

In the light of experience and different practices of schools in implementing on-site meal portioning, EDB also plans to review and explore viable measures to facilitate schools to adopt different modes of meal portioning taking into account the diversified circumstantial factors and school-based needs.