

Good Morning,

My name Shakoor Nargas Sultana and I am from HK Unison.

When we talk about children's right to development and participation the key is right to equal education.

Since EDB has introduced Chinese as (CLS) Chinese language curriculum second language framework in 2014, Unison has been closely following up with concerned stakeholders on the implementation of the Chinese Language Curriculum Second Language Learning Framework ("Learning Framework") and support measures to non-Chinese speaking ("NCS") students in learning Chinese.

Teachers share with Unison that there is a lack of teaching materials and professional resources and guidance on teaching students whose mother tongue is not Chinese. Developing teaching materials and textbook should not be the responsibility of teachers. It should be the responsibility of government and Education bureau.

While teachers may set learning targets and expected learning outcomes using the Learning Framework, they feel that benchmarking on what students should know and able to do at certain stages of their school cycle is necessary. Moreover, there should be guidelines on developing a curriculum that organizes teaching methods and outlines the contents/syllabus to be taught.

As mentioned by the EDB at the Meeting Panel of Education on the Progress on supporting Chinese learning and teaching for non-Chinese speaking students' assessment tools developed by the HKU to assess the Chinese level of NCS students are used by schools which receive the enhanced funding support. Unison urges the EDB to compile assessment data obtained at beginning and end of school terms from school years 2014/15 to 2016/17 and report on the number of NCS students in each level corresponding to the Learning Framework by year. This is crucial in determining the effectiveness of the Learning Framework.

One cannot assume Chinese learning is easier to NCS students in schools with 1 to 9 NCS students. In fact, scholars have stated that submersion in mainstream classrooms without prior intense language instruction and continuous support system is not conducive to second language learning. Schools with less than 10 NCS students often find it difficult to allocate additional manpower and resources to develop effective support measures for their students. We recommend both professional and student support be made available to these schools and Government should actively promote such free services, instead of only asking schools to apply for the limited funding of \$50,000.

Although the Learning Framework has only been launched for two years, the ethnic minority community has waited more than a decade for better education support. Unison maintains that only a comprehensive policy with clear guidelines and procedures can enable ethnic minority students attain equity in education. The mastery of Chinese will open up new possibilities for intellectual and social development, educational attainment, career advancement, personal fulfilment, and cultural understanding.