

立法會

Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(4)1592/16-17

(These minutes have been seen
by the Administration)

Ref : CB4/PL/ED

Panel on Education

Minutes of meeting held on Monday, 10 July 2017 at 4:30 pm in Conference Room 1 of the Legislative Council Complex

Members present : Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan, JP (Chairman)
Hon IP Kin-yuen (Deputy Chairman)
Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung
Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, GBS, JP
Hon Starry LEE Wai-king, SBS, JP
Hon CHAN Kin-por, GBS, JP
Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun, SBS, JP
Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-yee, GBS, JP
Hon Paul TSE Wai-chun, JP
Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung
Hon Claudia MO
Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming, SBS, JP
Hon MA Fung-kwok, SBS, JP
Hon Charles Peter MOK, JP
Hon CHAN Chi-chuen
Hon CHAN Han-pan, JP
Hon Alice MAK Mei-kuen, BBS, JP
Hon Dennis KWOK Wing-hang
Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung
Dr Hon Helena WONG Pik-wan
Dr Hon Elizabeth QUAT, BBS, JP
Hon Martin LIAO Cheung-kong, SBS, JP
Hon Alvin YEUNG
Hon CHU Hoi-dick
Dr Hon Junius HO Kwan-yiu, JP
Hon HO Kai-ming
Hon Holden CHOW Ho-ding
Hon SHIU Ka-chun
Hon Wilson OR Chong-shing, MH
Hon Tanya CHAN
Hon CHEUNG Kwok-kwan, JP

Hon HUI Chi-fung
Hon LAU Kwok-fan, MH
Dr Hon CHENG Chung-tai
Hon Nathan LAW Kwun-chung
Dr Hon LAU Siu-lai

Members attending : Hon Steven HO Chun-yin, BBS
Hon CHAN Chun-ying

Members absent : Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, GBS, JP
Hon Michael TIEN Puk-sun, BBS, JP
Hon Christopher CHEUNG Wah-fung, SBS, JP

[According to the Judgment of the Court of First Instance of the High Court on 14 July 2017, LEUNG Kwok-hung, Nathan LAW Kwun-chung, YIU Chung-yim and LAU Siu-lai have been disqualified from assuming the office of a member of the Legislative Council, and have vacated the same since 12 October 2016, and are not entitled to act as a member of the Legislative Council.]

Public Officers attending : Agenda Item II

Mr Kevin YEUNG, JP
Secretary for Education

Mr Brian LO, JP
Deputy Secretary for Education (1)

Mrs Michelle WONG, JP
Deputy Secretary for Education (3)

Clerk in attendance : Ms Angel WONG
Chief Council Secretary (4)4

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

Miss Mandy NG
Council Secretary (4)4

Ms Sandy HAU
Legislative Assistant (4)4

Action

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

(LC Paper No. CB(4)1304/16-17(01) -- Administration's written response dated 26 June 2017 to the two letters dated 9 June 2017 from Hon IP Kin-yuen and Hon CHU Hoi-dick respectively on issues relating to the Primary One Admission System)

Members noted the above paper issued since the last meeting.

II. Priority Measures to Support Quality Education

(LC Paper No. CB(4)1366/16-17(01) -- Paper provided by the Administration)

Briefing by the Administration

2. At the Chairman's invitation, the Secretary for Education ("SED") briefed members on a package of priority measures to address pressing problems at various levels in the education system with an aim of attaining quality education, details of which were set out in the Administration's paper [LC Paper No. CB(4)1366/16-17(01)]. Subject to members' views, the Administration would submit the proposal to the Finance Committee ("FC") for approval as soon as possible to allow timely implementation in the 2017-2018 academic/school year.

3. The Chairman informed members that Mr CHEUNG Kwok-kwan had sent her a letter, requesting the funding proposal, if supported by the Panel, to be arranged for discussion at the next FC meeting and exempted from the usual six clear days' notice period. Mr CHAN Kin-por advised that he as the Chairman of FC would consider the inclusion of agenda items for which the Administration had given less than six clear days' notice. SED said that should the proposal be supported by the Panel, he would discuss with relevant colleagues whether the Administration would re-arrange the order for submitting the proposal to FC with regard to members' views.

Action

Declaration of interest

4. 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. She reminded members to declare interests, if any, in the matter under discussion.

5. Mr SHIU Ka-chun declared interest as a teaching staff member of an institution funded by the University Grants Committee ("UGC"). Dr LAU Siu-lai declared interest as a teaching staff member of a self-financing post-secondary institution offering associate degree programmes. Dr Priscilla LEUNG declared interest as a teaching staff member of the City University of Hong Kong. Mr HUI Chi-fung declared interest as a kindergarten ("KG") parent who might be a beneficiary under the proposed measures.

Discussion

Non-means-tested subsidy scheme for self-financing undergraduate studies

6. Ms Tanya CHAN, Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung, Mr CHAN Chi-chuen, Mr Nathan LAW and Dr LAU Siu-lai were of the view that the non-means-tested subsidy scheme for undergraduate studies ("subsidy scheme") at 15 self-financing post-secondary institutions should be extended to cover the self-financing undergraduate programmes at UGC-funded universities (including their self-financing arms). Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung pointed out that some of the 15 self-financing post-secondary institutions had recorded a low enrolment rate of around 20%. As the Government had supported the initial start-up costs of these institutions, he queried whether the scheme was implemented to boost student numbers of these institutions so as to prevent their closing down.

7. SED explained that the role of UGC-funded institutions was mainly to offer publicly-funded programmes and conduct research. Self-financing operation was allowed for UGC-funded institutions provided that there was no cross-subsidization of UGC resources to non-UGC-funded activities. In fact, the governance and operation of self-financing post-secondary institutions under the Post Secondary Colleges Ordinance (Cap. 320) ("PSCO") and the self-financing arms of UGC-funded institutions were different. If the self-financing arms of UGC-funded institutions were also subsidized, the role of UGC-funded and self-financing post-secondary institutions would become blurred. Pending the forthcoming review on the role and positioning of self-financing post-secondary institutions, it deemed inappropriate to cover the self-financing arms of UGC-funded universities under the subsidy scheme at this stage. The Administration would not rule out the possibility of covering the self-financing arms of UGC-funded universities in the future.

Action

8. Ms Tanya CHAN, Mrs Regina IP and Dr CHENG Chung-tai asked whether the subsidy would be given to students or to self-financing post-secondary institutions. SED advised that the subsidy would be provided to the institutions according to the actual enrolment of eligible students to eligible undergraduate programmes. Eligible students enrolling in the relevant programmes would pay a tuition fee after subsidy.

9. Ms Tanya CHAN, Mr CHAN Chi-chuen, Mr SHIU Ka-chun, Mrs Regina IP and Dr LAU Siu-lai were worried that the enrolment of associate degree programmes would suffer if the subsidy scheme only covered undergraduate programmes, and asked about the stance of the Administration on the future direction of associate degree programmes. Dr LAU was of the view that the subsidy scheme turned students away from associate degree programmes which would be scrapped in the end. The Administration should consider providing education vouchers to eligible students so as not to restrict their choices of programmes. Mrs Regina IP shared Dr LAU's concerns and opined that the Administration should conduct tracking study on the pathways of graduates from associate degree and higher diploma programmes with reference to the manpower demand of the society. The Deputy Chairman said that the Administration should review the role and positioning of self-financing post-secondary institutions as soon as possible.

10. SED advised that due to limited subsidized degree programmes, some students who had attained "3322" in the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education ("HKDSE") Examination might have to pursue non-subsidized self-financing undergraduate programmes at relatively higher tuition fees. The subsidy scheme was implemented to help these students and those who had sub-degree qualifications pursuing self-financing top-up degree programmes. The Administration had no intention to extend the subsidy scheme to cover associate degree programmes at this stage. Regarding subvented higher diploma programmes, SED informed members that currently more than 80% were offered by the Vocational Training Council. Since higher diploma programmes primarily provided students with vocational and professional education and training, the target group of students was different from that of undergraduate programmes. Sub-degree was a standalone qualification between secondary education and university education. As there was concern in the society about the effectiveness of this qualification, the Administration would take this into consideration when reviewing the role and positioning of self-financing post-secondary institutions.

11. Mrs Regina IP sought information on the locally-accredited self-financing non-local undergraduate programmes offered in Hong Kong. The Deputy Secretary for Education ("DS(Ed)") (1) advised that locally-accredited non-local undergraduate programmes were currently offered by Savannah College of Art and Design (Hong Kong) and local

Action

self-financing post-secondary institutions jointly with overseas universities. The Administration undertook to provide further details after the meeting.

(Post-meeting note: The Administration's written response was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(4)1416/16-17(01) on 14 July 2017.)

12. While expressing support for the proposed measures, Mr LAU Kwok-fan, Mrs Regina IP and Dr Helena WONG were concerned that self-financing post-secondary institutions might increase their tuition fees upon the implementation of the subsidy scheme. Mr LAU enquired whether the Administration had any gate-keeping measures to cap the tuition fees of eligible programmes. Dr WONG and Ms Claudia MO were worried that the operation of self-financing post-secondary institutions might become more commercialized and market-driven with the implementation of the subsidy scheme.

13. SED advised that to tie in with the implementation of the subsidy scheme, the Administration would enter into an agreement with the relevant institutions to ensure that the annual increase in tuition fees of eligible programmes would not be over the Composite Consumer Price Index, taking into account flexibility in allowing for justified cases. Prior approval by EDB would be required for any exceptional cases.

14. Dr Helena WONG expressed concern that some self-financing post-secondary institutions collected the first instalment of tuition fees and exorbitant non-refundable enrolment deposits at a too early stage. She was worried that the enrolment deposit would be deducted from the \$30,000 subsidy and enquired about measures, if any, to avoid students having to forfeit a large amount of deposits/tuition fees due to different admission timelines among institutions. DS(Ed)1 advised that the Administration had liaised with the relevant institutions for further alignment of their admission arrangements. Most of them had agreed to implement the new arrangements on the collection of enrolment deposit and first instalment of tuition fees.

15. Dr CHENG Chung-tai sought clarification on whether the annual subsidy was applicable to non-local students or non-local sub-degree holders. SED advised that the subsidy was only available to local students attaining "3322", and therefore non-local students would not be eligible. Dr CHENG then requested the Administration to expressly state in relevant documents that the subsidy was only applicable to Hong Kong permanent residents. SED responded that the Administration would consider stating clearly this point in its paper for submission to FC.

16. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung said that he had no objection to the provision of subsidy for eligible students who had attained "3322" in HKDSE Examination but failed to obtain a UGC-funded first-year-first-degree place. However, the

Action

Administration should increase the number of UGC-funded undergraduate places to meet the needs of these students. SED advised that currently the Administration had no plan to increase the number of places of subsidized degree programmes.

17. Dr Helena WONG opined that PSCO which governed the registration and operation of post-secondary institutions was outdated and called for a review to enhance the regulation and governance of these institutions. Mr Nathan LAW asked whether regulation on self-financing institutions would be strengthened accordingly upon the introduction of the subsidy scheme. SED advised that all institutions providing post-secondary programmes were subject to the regulation of relevant ordinances. The Administration would review the role and positioning of self-financing post-secondary institutions in the future.

18. Ms Tanya CHAN asked about the rationale behind the Administration's decision of providing a non-means-tested subsidy to students pursuing eligible undergraduate programmes in the Mainland. Mr CHAN Chi-chuen was of the view that the Administration should consider extending the scope of subsidy to cover studies outside Hong Kong. SED advised that under the Mainland University Study Subsidy Scheme, students who passed a means test would receive either a full-rate subsidy of HK\$15,000 or half-rate subsidy of HK\$7,500 per student per year, depending on their needs. The non-means-tested subsidy for studies in the Mainland was introduced along the same spirit of the scheme for studies in Hong Kong. The subsidy covered studies in the Mainland because the two Governments had entered into agreement that Hong Kong students attaining "3322" in the HKDSE Examination were eligible for pursuing undergraduate programmes in the Mainland.

Manpower in public sector primary and secondary schools

19. Mr CHEUNG Kwok-kwan said that Members of the Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong supported the priority initiatives. He considered that the increase of teacher-to-class ("T/C") ratio for primary and secondary schools by 0.1 might be insufficient and enquired whether the Administration would further enhance the ratio in future. The Deputy Chairman considered it necessary to further enhance the T/C ratio because the increase of 0.1 would not help convert all serving contract teachers into regular appointments. Mr Nathan LAW shared the Deputy Chairman's view and asked whether there was a target T/C ratio to achieve.

20. SED advised that the increase of 0.1 teacher per class would provide more than 2 300 permanent teaching posts. Instead of freezing these posts to obtain a cash grant, schools were required to fill the newly created teaching posts by surplus teachers and serving contract teachers. The education sector had in fact called for an increase of the ratio by 0.3. The Administration would

Action

continue to consult the education sector on T/C ratio but currently had no fixed timetable for further enhancement.

21. The Deputy Chairman expressed concern that the T/C ratio in some primary schools with only six classes was 0.1 less than those with over six classes. SED clarified that the current T/C ratio was 1.5 teachers per class for all public sector primary schools. It would be improved from 1.5 to 1.6 teachers per class under the new measure.

22. Noting that an additional recurrent cash grant would be disbursed to all public sector primary and secondary schools to strengthen the information technology staffing support, Mr Charles MOK asked whether measures would be put in place to monitor the use of the cash grant by schools. SED advised that schools could flexibly deploy their resources as appropriate to employ technical support personnel or subscribe IT support service from external service providers. However, schools could not use the additional cash grant for purchase of hardware or software for e-learning. In addition, Mr MOK was worried about the career prospects of IT staff because schools in general engaged only one IT staff. Besides, to facilitate the smooth implementation of e-learning, he urged the Administration to upgrade the hardware and software provided for schools.

23. While expressing support for the priority measures which would strengthen the IT staffing support in schools, Mr HO Kai-ming pointed out that some schools employing three laboratory technicians might be required to reduce one according to the new manning scale of the Administration. He enquired whether the provision of school laboratory technicians could be frozen for the time being so as to retain the surplus technicians. SED advised that EDB had adopted a more relaxed manning scale with regard to a number of factors including the promotion of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics education. The number of laboratory technicians in some schools might need to be adjusted due to the decrease in student population. As the provision of school laboratory technicians would remain frozen in the next two years, the Administration would further discuss with the school sector on the future arrangement.

Support for implementing integrated education and special education

24. Mr Dennis KWOK said that Members of the Civic Party attached great importance to special education. He enquired about the starting salary of Special Educational Needs Coordinators ("SENCOs") upon regularization of the Pilot Project on SENCOs. SED explained that the provision of SENCO is similar to the arrangement of the existing Pilot Project that the Administration would provide each public sector ordinary primary and secondary school with an additional teaching post (i.e. an Assistant Primary School Master/Mistress ("APSM") in primary schools and a Graduate Master/Mistress ("GM") in

Action

secondary schools) to facilitate the assignment of a designated teacher by schools to take up the role of SENCO.

25. As SENCO had to lead and coordinate support measures for students with special educational needs, the Deputy Chairman considered that SENCO should be pitched at ranks higher than APSM/GM. SED advised that members' views would be taken into consideration when a review was conducted.

26. Mr Dennis KWOK sought further information on the proposed extension of "Additional Support Grant for Enhancing the Support for Boarders with Medical Complexity in Aided Special Schools" ("MC Grant") to day students and day students cum boarders with medical complexity in special schools. The DS(Ed)3 advised that the salary of nurses had been taken into consideration for setting the rates of the MC Grant so that the special schools might use the grant to employ additional staff, such as nurses, teaching assistants, etc.

Support for kindergartens

27. While welcoming the priority initiatives, Mr HUI Chi-fung expressed concern that some concerns of the KG sector, such as subsidy for whole-day and long whole-day KG services, salary scale for KG teachers, were not addressed. He urged the Administration to deploy additional resources to the KG sector. The Deputy Chairman concurred with the need to establish a salary scale for KG teachers and urged the Administration to expedite the establishment.

28. SED advised that the Administration attached great importance to KG education. The Administration would implement the free quality KG education policy from the 2017-2018 school year. The Administration's recurrent expenditure on pre-primary education was estimated to increase 2.7 billion substantially. With the implementation of the priority measures, the Administration would provide for annual adjustment of the portion on teachers' salary in the subsidies under the free quality KG education policy in line with the annual civil service pay adjustment. Besides, there would be an additional time-limited funding of about \$700 million for extending the two-year tide-over grant for three more years till the 2021-2022 school year to ensure that the relevant KGs might retain their long serving teachers with higher salaries. On the development of a salary scale for KG teachers, the Administration would need more time to review the salary arrangements for KG teachers, and explore the feasibility of putting in place a salary scale for KG teachers in consultation with the KG sector and stakeholders.

Further initiatives

29. The Chief Executive had pledged to increase annual recurrent expenditure on education by \$5 billion, however, the proposed initiatives would cost about \$3.6 billion a year. As for the \$1.4 billion remaining balance, Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung and Mr SHIU Ka-chun considered that additional measures should be introduced to cater for the educational needs of students from low income families, such as e-learning. Apart from supporting students from low income families, Mr Nathan LAW urged the Administration to take measures to address the pressure on students. Dr Priscilla LEUNG opined that the Administration should consider allocating additional resources to secondary schools with specialized programmes, enhancing teaching materials (such as audio-visual materials) and strengthening professional development for teachers. Ms Claudia MO was of the view that additional support should be provided to help non-Chinese speaking students learn Chinese and students with special educational needs.

30. Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung, Mr SHIU Ka-chun, Mr Nathan LAW and Dr Priscilla LEUNG urged the Government to consult more stakeholders, including students, parents, employers and organizations of low income families, on how to use the remaining balance. The Deputy Chairman appreciated the Administration's effort in consulting stakeholders of the education sector on how to use the funds on education. He hoped that the Administration would continue to conduct extensive public consultation on further measures to improve education.

31. SED advised that the proposed initiatives represented a general consensus among stakeholders on priority areas where the new education funding should be spent. The Administration would continue its communication with different stakeholders to consider how to deploy the \$1.4 billion remaining balance. Members' views and suggestions were noted and would be considered when the Administration conducted further reviews and deployed additional resources as required.

32. In response, Mr SHIU Ka-chun asked about the list of organizations that SED and the Chief Executive had met with in the course of working out the priority measures. SED advised that he had met with different organizations in the education sector, covering kindergarten education, primary and secondary education and post-secondary education when working on the priority measures. To his understanding, the Chief Executive had listened directly to views from stakeholders in the education sector before taking up her office. The Administration would provide for members' information the list of organizations that SED and the Chief Executive had met.

Action

33. As members expressed concerns on the use of the \$1.4 billion remaining balance, the Chairman enquired whether the Administration would revert to the Panel on how to use the money. SED advised that the Administration would consult the Legislative Council on the further initiatives in accordance with the established practice.

(Post-meeting note: The Administration's written response was issued to members vide LC Paper Nos. CB(4)1397/16-17(01) and (02) on 12 July 2017.)

Summing up

34. In concluding the discussion, the Chairman said that the Panel was supportive of the submission of the proposal to FC for approval.

(At about 6:25 pm, the Chairman informed members that the meeting would be extended by 15 minutes to 6:45 pm.)

Motions

35. The Chairman referred members to the four motions tabled at the meeting. The first motion was proposed by Mr SHIU Ka-chun, the second and third by Mr Nathan LAW and the fourth by Mrs Regina IP (wording of the motions in **Appendices I, II, III and IV respectively**).

36. At the order of the Chairman, the voting bell had been rung for five minutes to notify members of the voting.

37. The Chairman put the motion moved by Mr SHIU Ka-chun to vote. Twelve members voted for the motion, no member voted against it and one member abstained. The Chairman declared that the motion was carried.

38. The Chairman put the motion moved by Mr Nathan LAW to vote. Twelve members voted for the motion, no member voted against it and one member abstained. The Chairman declared that the motion was carried.

39. The Chairman put another motion moved by Mr Nathan LAW to vote. All members voted for the motion. The Chairman declared that the motion was passed unanimously.

40. The Chairman put the motion moved by Mrs Regina IP to vote. All members voted for the motion. The Chairman declared that the motion was passed unanimously.

Action

(*Post-meeting note:* The Administration's written response to the motions was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(4)1416/16-17(01) on 14 July 2017.)

III. Any other business

41. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 6:42 pm.

Council Business Division 4
Legislative Council Secretariat
19 September 2017

就議程項目"支持優質教育的優先措施"通過的議案

**Motion passed under the agenda item
"Priority Measures to Support Quality Education"**

議案措辭

現時基層學童家中電腦老舊的情況普遍，部分學童缺乏基本的上網學習條件，無法應付現時的教育需要。而政府現時有關資訊科技的支援並未能照顧基層學童的需要。本委員會促請政府為基層兒童設立購買電腦及上網費用津貼，並且採用實報實銷的形式，從而直接讓約 33 萬的基層學生受惠，而這也屬優質教育的優先措施。

(邵家臻議員動議)

Wording of the Motion

(Translation)

As the home-use computers of grass-roots students are usually old and outdated at present, some students are deprived of the basic conditions for online learning and are therefore unable to cope with the prevailing educational needs. Moreover, the current information technology support provided by the Government cannot cater for the needs of grass-roots students. This Panel urges the Government to provide, on a reimbursement basis, subsidies to grass-roots children for purchase of computers and payment of Internet access charges, so as to bring direct benefits to about 330 000 grass-roots students, which is also a priority measure for the provision of quality education.

(Moved by Hon SHIU Ka-chun)

就議程項目"支持優質教育的優先措施"通過的議案

**Motion passed under the agenda item
"Priority Measures to Support Quality Education"**

議案措辭

本事務委員會促請政府在計劃如何使用餘下的教育經常性開支時，應進行更廣大的公眾諮詢，以聆聽學生和家長的意見，從而制訂能直接幫助學生的教育計劃。

(羅冠聰議員動議)

Wording of the Motion

(Translation)

This Panel urges the Government to conduct more extensive public consultation to listen to the views of students and parents when planning the use of the remaining recurrent expenditure on education so as to formulate education plans which can be of direct help to students.

(Moved by Hon Nathan LAW Kwun-chung)

就議程項目"支持優質教育的優先措施"通過的議案

**Motion passed under the agenda item
"Priority Measures to Support Quality Education"**

議案措辭

本事務委員會促請政府應致力發展不同的升學和就業階梯，包括增加應用學習科目之認受性、完善職訓教育系統、增加大學資助學位、檢討教資會資助院校和自資院校之教育定位等等，使教育制度能夠協助學生能夠按照不同才能和興趣發展，實現多元出路。

(羅冠聰議員動議)

Wording of the Motion

(Translation)

This Panel urges that the Government should endeavour to explore different articulation and career pathways, including enhancing the recognition of Applied Learning subjects, improving the vocational training and education system, increasing the number of subsidized university places, reviewing the positioning of UGC-funded institutions and self-financing institutions in education, etc., so that the education system may help students develop according to their different talents and interests, thereby achieving the provision of multiple pathways.

(Moved by Hon Nathan LAW Kwun-chung)

就議程項目"支持優質教育的優先措施"通過的議案

**Motion passed under the agenda item
"Priority Measures to Support Quality Education"**

議案措辭

本委員會建議「自資學士免入息審查資助計劃」考慮涵蓋高級文憑及副學士課程。

(葉劉淑儀議員動議)

Wording of the Motion

(Translation)

This Panel proposes that consideration should be given to extending the scope of the "Non-means-Tested Subsidy Scheme for Self-financing Undergraduate Studies" to cover Higher Diploma and Associate Degree programmes.

(Moved by Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-yee)