

For discussion on
7 January 2017

Legislative Council Panel on Education
Special Meeting
Follow-up Progress of the Final Report of
the Committee on Prevention of Student Suicides

Purpose

This paper informs Members about the Government's follow-up progress of the recommendations in the Final Report of the Committee on Prevention of Student Suicides (Committee).

Progress

2. In response to the spate of student suicides in the 2015/16 school year, the aforementioned Committee was set up on 30 March 2016. The Committee submitted the Final Report¹ to the Secretary for Education in November 2016, proposing various recommendations to prevent student suicides.

3. The Government accepted the recommendations in the Final Report. The Education Bureau and related bureaux and departments are in the process of formulating a number of practicable measures and follow-up actions according to the four key areas, including Promotion of Students' Mental Well-being and Health, Strengthening Support for Schools and Teachers, Reviewing Relevant Domains in the Education System, and Enhancement of Family Life and Parent Education. Details are listed in the **Appendix**.

4. Through various support services at different levels, the Government will continue to enhance students' mental well-being and health, shorten the distance between students and the "people around them" (including parents, teachers, peers, etc.), and cultivate a positive, supportive and caring learning environment, thereby building a multi-layered safety net for the students.

5. Members are invited to note the Government's follow-up actions based on the recommendations in the Final Report. The Government will continue to listen to the views of stakeholders for bringing further improvement to our work.

Education Bureau
January 2017

¹ The full English version of the Final Report is accessible at the following link:
http://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/student-parents/crisis-management/about-crisis-management/CPSS_final_report_en.pdf

Final Report of the Committee on Prevention of Student Suicides Follow-up Measures

Key Areas	Measures
Promotion of Students' Mental Well-being and Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Education Bureau (EDB) and the Department of Health (DH) are promoting the Joyful@School Campaign in primary and secondary schools in the 2016/17 school year. The EDB has uploaded the relevant information including suggested activities and teaching materials onto the EDB website, which will be regularly updated for schools' reference and use. ● The Food and Health Bureau (FHB), in collaboration with the EDB, the Hospital Authority (HA) and the Social Welfare Department (SWD), has launched a two-year pilot scheme named as "Student Mental Health Support Scheme", with 9 schools participating in the first phase. Experienced psychiatric nurses will regularly visit schools and form a multi-disciplinary team with school personnel, school social workers and educational psychologists to conduct professional deliberations on specific cases. Starting from April 2017, the scheme will be extended to the 8 schools of the second phase. ● The EDB has launched the "Education Development Fund – University Support Programme" inviting post-secondary institutions to collaborate with schools in developing mental health promotion programmes. It is planned that relevant activities will be launched in schools starting from September 2017. ● The EDB continues to encourage schools to strengthen the element of enhancing students' mental well-being in the bridging programmes for Secondary 1 and Secondary 4 students, and to conduct sharing seminars on successful practices. The EDB also encourages schools to utilise the case referral mechanism to enable needy students to receive continuous support after promoting or transferring to other schools. ● The HA will further promote the psychiatric advisory hotline, namely "Mental Health Direct", in the community so as to provide over-the-phone consultation on mental health issues and support for patients, their care-takers and other stakeholders.
Strengthening Support for Schools and Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The EDB will collaborate with the Department of Psychiatry, University of Hong Kong and the DH in organizing a seminar on supporting students with mental illness and promoting students' mental well-being in January 2017, aiming to equip secondary school teachers with relevant knowledge. ● From January 2017, the FHB will provide training for teachers and related professional staff of the 17 schools participating in the "Student Mental Health Support Scheme". ● The EDB will launch the gatekeeper training for teachers in the 2016/17 school year, which includes basic training for

Key Areas	Measures
	<p>regular teachers and advanced training for designated teachers. The EDB will also provide gatekeeper training for students through schools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The EDB will launch refined screening tools and materials in the 2016/17 school year to help schools in identifying, supporting and referring students in need. ● The EDB is considering providing schools with additional resources to enhance their support for students with mental illness. ● The EDB and relevant bureaux/departments (including the DH) are working on strengthening and consolidating the school-based programmes and work related to students' mental well-being and health, such as the Understanding Adolescent Project, Personal Growth/Life Education, Enhanced Smart Teen Project, Life Education Interactive Learning Materials, and Adolescent Health Programme, etc. ● The EDB will write to post-secondary institutions to encourage them to consider allocating more resources to enhance their promotion of mental health and well-being, screening services, gatekeeper training and follow-up support for students at risk. ● The EDB will continue to encourage schools to review the implementation of their school-based homework and assessment policies in accordance with students' learning needs.
<p>Reviewing Relevant Domains in the Education System</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The EDB will continue to encourage and support schools in implementing the suggestions made in the review of the New Academic Structure, so as to support the diverse learning needs of schools and students. Measures include the following: increasing the flexibility in deploying lesson time, trimming, enhancing or updating curriculum contents and assessment arrangements, clarifying the breadth and depth of subject curricula; implementing School-based Assessment in fewer subjects and improving its implementation to reduce student and teacher workload, arranging accreditation of more Applied Learning courses under the Qualifications Framework and increasing opportunities for Industrial Attachment, and encouraging students interested in vocational training or joining the workforce to study two Applied Learning courses. ● The EDB will write to the Vocational Training Council (VTC) and self-financing post-secondary institutions to encourage them to follow up on the recommendations of the Committee. Apart from results from the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education, they are encouraged to also recognize students' other learning experiences in sports, music, or social services etc., in order to make the admission system more flexible. The EDB will also encourage the University Grants Committee-funded universities to take into account both academic and non-academic achievements in their undergraduate admission. ● To foster a culture of multi-faceted excellence, the Government has set up the Multi-faceted Excellence Scholarship to support universities and tertiary institutions in admitting about 20 local undergraduate students a year who excel in sports,

Key Areas	Measures
	<p>arts and/or community services, with effect from the 2015/16 academic year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The EDB will continue to endeavor to develop life planning education so that students can understand their own interests, abilities and aspirations, develop positive attitudes and values as well as gain knowledge about different industries and articulation pathways through career exploration activities. The EDB in collaboration with schools and stakeholders will continue to step up publicity about alternative pathways, job-tasting programmes and the Qualifications Framework. For example, information on various articulation opportunities will be further promoted among secondary school graduates through the annual Information Expo on Multiple Pathways. Through the INFO Day held by VTC's member institutes, students can learn more about the provision of multiple pathways in the professional education and training programmes. Also, through a variety of activities such as talks, workshops and fieldtrip activities, secondary school students will learn about related industries and progression pathways under the Qualifications Framework, thereby assisting them in their planning of further studies and career development. Moreover, the EDB will disseminate updated information on multiple pathways to various stakeholders through different channels, including the EDB website, parent talks, focus group meetings and publications, etc.
<p>Enhancement of Family Life and Parent Education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Committee on Home-School Cooperation (CHSC) takes an active role in promoting the “Happy Kids Charter” for schools and parents. The CHSC’s work foci in the 2016/17 school year include enhancing parents’ efficacy in nurturing their children, assisting them in early identifying their children’s emotional problems and fostering positive thinking in their children. The CHSC will organise various activities to promote the Charter and continue to conduct talks on various themes for parents of primary and secondary school students, including topics on communication, emotional management skills and parents’ role in children’s life planning, etc. The EDB also actively encourages the Federations of Parent-Teacher Associations of different districts to organise activities based on the content of the Charter to enhance students’ mental health and well-being. In schools, the EDB will encourage their parent-teacher associations to organise relevant activities in response to the Charter. ● The DH will further promote the parenting programmes run by the Maternal and Child Health Centres. ● The SWD will continue to encourage service platforms including the Integrated Family Service Centres (IFSCs), Integrated Services Centres (ISCs), Working Group on Family Life Education Resource Development and relevant non-government organisations, etc., to strengthen the element of “gatekeeper” in their family life and parent education. The SWD will also promote and publicise the intensive counselling and support services provided by the IFSCs, ISCs and Integrated Community Centres for Mental Wellness, in order to facilitate the needy families to receive timely service.