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31 March 2017

Ms Angel WONG
Clerk to Panel
Legislative Council Panel on Education
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central
Hong Kong

Dear Ms WONG,

Panel on Education
Follow-up to the Special Meeting on 7 January 2017

I refer to your letter of 16 February 2017 requesting the Administration's written responses to the views and suggestions raised by members and deputations at the special meeting on 7 January 2017. Our response is at the **Appendix**.

Yours sincerely,

(Godwin LAI)
for Secretary for Education

Encl.

Panel on Education of the Legislative Council
Special Meeting on 7 January 2017
Education Bureau's Response to the Views Raised by the Attendees

At the special meeting of Panel on Education of the Legislative Council held on 7 January 2017, members present, group representatives, parents and students etc. provided numerous opinions on the recommendations put forward by the Committee on Prevention of Student Suicides (the Committee) in the Final Report. The Education Bureau (EDB) expressed thanks and responded as follows:

1. Request EDB to conduct an immediate and comprehensive review of the education system, and cancel the Territory-wide System Assessment (TSA)

1.1 Members of the Committee were from different sectors, professions and bureaux/departments. The Committee met with different stakeholders and organisations, conducted detailed analysis of the possible causes of student suicides, and examined the relationship between different factors and student suicides based on local and international data and circumstances.

1.2 As pointed out by the Committee, data revealed that complex factors interacted and contributed to students' suicidal behaviours. The triggers behind each case were also different, including mental health problems (e.g. early psychosis, depression, anxiety disorder), psychological concerns (e.g. negative thinking), family/peer relationship, family-/school-related adjustment difficulties and academic pressure etc. Most cases were preceded by warning signs, which was consistent with findings from international studies. We should avoid over-simplifying the cause of suicidal behaviours to a single factor (e.g. education system), and overlooking other important factors affecting the students, leading to failure to devise timely intervention and responsive measures. Subsequently, we may miss the opportunities to help the students by means of effective intervention. In addition, much past research has indicated that if media attributed suicidal behaviours to a particular cause, it was

possible for more vulnerable adolescents to identify themselves with those who attempted suicide and mistakenly considered suicide as a way to solve their problems. The comments from the Committee were objective and evidence-based.

1.3 Regarding the education system, the Final Report recommended to review the relevant domains of the education system in order to strengthen the support and protect students and young people from the risks of suicide. These include the strengthening of students' ability to handle stress, recognition of non-academic achievements in the education system as a whole and the development of students' talents and abilities in different fields.

1.4 EDB accepts the Committee's recommendations and continues to review the different domains of the education system as appropriate. In recent years, EDB has been striving to trim, enhance or update curriculum contents and assessment arrangements, clarify the breadth and depth of subject curricula; implement School-based Assessment in fewer subjects and improve its implementation, increase the flexibility in deploying lesson time to reduce teacher workload; arrange accreditation of more Applied Learning courses under the Qualifications Framework and increase opportunities for industrial attachment; encourage students interested in vocational training or joining the workforce to study up to two Applied Learning courses; provide more diversified articulation pathways for students; and encourage universities to admit students who have outstanding performance outside the academic area, etc. in order to reduce unnecessary study pressure on students. As announced in the 2017 Policy Address, there will be various measures to provide multiple pathways and further study opportunities for young people, so that they can develop according to their capabilities and interests.

1.5 In response to some individuals' concern about the problem of over-drilling for TSA, the Coordinating Committee on Basic Competency Assessment and Assessment Literacy has proposed a series of improvement measures, i.e. improving the item design, enhancing school reports, strengthening professional support measures and including a questionnaire survey to collect students' non-academic data. A tryout study at Primary 3 level was implemented in 2016 and was recommended to extend to all P.3 students in 2017, with a view to allowing more schools to participate

and collecting more comprehensive feedback, so as to continue to review and enhance the arrangements for system assessment.

2. Request the Government to set up a high-power cross-sector committee to review the education system

2.1 EDB has been playing a leading role in the issues on student suicide, and all along maintaining close communication and liaison with relevant bureaux and departments, such as the Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB) and the Food and Health Bureau (FHB). Each with its specific functions, these government departments collaborate to promote and implement mental health policies and measures under their professional portfolios, so as to support students with mental health needs, including those with suicidal risks. For instance, the FHB, in collaboration with EDB, the Hospital Authority and the Social Welfare Department (SWD), has launched the pilot scheme “Student Mental Health Support Scheme” to provide services for students with mental health needs.

2.2 As the scope of the education system is extremely broad, it would be more effective for the Government to review the system in a focused manner. As suggested by the Committee, EDB should continue to review the relevant domains in the education system, duly support and address the developmental and diverse needs of students and young people. In recent years, EDB has been striving to streamline and refine the school curriculum and assessment policies, encourage schools to reduce the amount of homework and mechanical drilling in order to lower students' study pressure. We also strive to increase multiple articulation pathways for students and encourage universities to admit students with outstanding non-academic achievements. The 2017 Policy Address announced that the Government considers launching a vocational English programme for senior secondary students who aspire to pursue vocational and professional education and training (VPET) or who are prepared to work, with a view to supporting them for further studies and employment. Besides, the Government will regularise the Study Subsidy Scheme for Designated Professions/Sectors (SSSDPS) and increase the places to subsidise more students to study the designated self-financing degree programmes. EDB will continue to coordinate and review its work in the relevant areas.

3. There is a manpower shortage of professional guidance staff to provide service for students in need. Request to enhance the manpower of school social worker in secondary schools, implement “one school social worker for each school” in primary schools and enhance the educational psychology service

3.1 Under the Whole School Approach, all teaching staff collaborate with guidance personnel, school social workers, educational psychologists (EP), etc. to provide remedial, preventive and developmental guidance services for the healthy growth of all students. To enhance the professional support for primary schools, since the 2012/13 school year, EDB has provided additional Student Guidance Service Grant to public sector primary schools in accordance to the number of classes. It is noticed that the vast majority of schools can make good use of the new resources to increase manpower, arranging one or more school-based student guidance personnel.

3.2 For secondary schools, since the 2000/01 school year, the Government has implemented the policy of “one school social worker for each secondary school” through subventions provided to non-government organisations (NGOs). According to the current practice, the service is provided by NGOs under the monitoring of SWD. Starting from September 2011, SWD has injected additional recurrent resources, for providing 20% increase in manpower for school social work service to help prevent and tackle students’ drug abuse and other related problems.

3.3 In addition, the School-based Educational Psychology Service (SBEPS) covers all public sector primary and secondary schools in the 2016/17 school year. We have further enhanced the SBEPS by progressively improving the ratio of EP to school to 1:4 for public sector schools with a large number of students with special educational needs in order to support schools to implement preventive and developmental work, as well as provide comprehensive and regular case follow-up and intervention services. Moreover, starting from the 2017/18 school year, the Learning Support Grant that EDB provides for public sector schools will cover students with mental illness, so that schools can have extra resources to support students with such needs.

4. Request to increase teaching manpower as teachers do not have sufficient time to care for students due to their heavy workload

4.1 Apart from teacher-to-class ratio, the teaching manpower provided for public sector primary and secondary schools also includes additional regular teachers for implementing various specific programmes. In addition, we provide various cash grants, e.g. Capacity Enhancement Grant and Learning Support Grant, for schools to employ additional teaching and/or ancillary staff flexibly. The cash grants are mostly recurrent in nature. This is to facilitate schools' flexible deployment of teaching resources to cater for their future development and students' learning needs.

4.2 With the implementation of various measures, the overall teacher-to-student ratio for public sector primary and secondary schools has improved significantly over the past few years, from 18.0: 1 and 18.4: 1 in 2005/06 to 12.3: 1 and 14.1: 1 in 2015/16.

4.3 We continue to communicate with the school sector to explore practicable and effective measures that can provide teachers with more flexibility in catering for students' diverse needs.

5. Owing to the impact of the education system, primary and secondary school students are under tremendous pressure in order to achieve the academic and study requirements

5.1 We understand that some students may be under certain pressure due to academic performance and the pursuit for further studies. The curriculum reform over the past ten years or so has been emphasising a student-centered approach, giving clear guidelines to schools to gear to the best interest of student learning. Schools are advised to flexibly adjust and formulate their school-based curriculum as well as teaching and assessment strategies to cater for students' learning diversity and enhance their learning motivation. We continue to develop life planning education and related guidance services to help students explore their future career and life orientation based on personal interest and potential.

5.2 EDB all along strives to remove drills and unnecessary pressure on students. In October 2015, we issued the circular “Guidelines on Homework and Tests in Schools - No Drilling, Effective Learning” to schools reiterating that meaningful homework should be designed to extend and consolidate student learning. It is the quality rather than the quantity of homework that counts. There should not be over-reliance on pen-and-paper tests and related drills, or homework which focuses on mechanical drills, which may lead to students’ loss of interest and motivation in learning. We encourage schools to formulate appropriate homework and assessment policies and conduct regular reviews in accordance to the needs, abilities and interests of students and in consultation with relevant stakeholders including parents. This is to ensure that the policies are capable of facilitating student learning and alleviating unnecessary pressure on students.

5.3 Besides, life-wide learning activities provide opportunities for students with different abilities to develop long-term interests and unleash potential as well as develop career aspirations. Schools provide guidance on self-reflection, platforms and channels to showcase students’ learning outcomes and also celebrate success regarding their non-academic achievements. These could provide opportunities for students to experience success in different aspects of school life. Students would also learn how to positively cope with temporary setbacks or failures encountered in their studies and school life with mutual support from peers and teachers. Where homework is concerned, schools are advised to set under their homework policy clear, manageable targets and expected learning outcomes as well as to monitor and review the implementation of the policy as a whole and in different classes. Care should be taken to ensure that students would have sufficient time after lessons to read extensively, do physical exercises, rest, play and establish good relationships with their family members and peers. EDB continues to encourage schools to formulate an appropriate school-based assessment policy through different channels and means. Ongoing professional development programmes for teachers and support for schools are being provided to enhance their assessment literacy, and encourage schools to make good use of home-school communication channels, e.g. parent-teacher associations and parent meetings, to collect parents' views on the frequency and administration of tests and examinations for improving their assessment policies.

6. The Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) puts much pressure on secondary students because of the keen competition for admission into universities and of the lack of other exit pathways

6.1 The Government is committed to providing flexible and diversified study pathways with multiple entry and exit points. Senior secondary school students may, in accordance with their interests, aspiration and abilities, pursue various local post-secondary programmes (including undergraduate, sub-degree and other programmes) or study overseas.

6.2 At present, about 45% of our young people in the relevant cohort have access to degree-level education. Including the places in sub-degree education, about 72% of them have access to post-secondary education. In recent years, the Government has implemented a series of measures to further increase subsidised higher education opportunities, in a bid to providing school leavers with broader and more diversified articulation pathways. Currently, we are able to provide sufficient publicly-funded and self-financing first-year first-degree places for all secondary school leavers meeting minimum entrance requirements for university admission.

6.3 The Government notes that traditional academic education is not a straightjacket that fits all young people. Therefore various initiatives have been announced in recent years to strengthen the development of VPET, encouraging secondary school leavers to pursue suitable programmes in accordance with their aspiration to acquire professional knowledge and practical skills in preparation for future employment. For instance, as announced in the 2017 Policy Address, there will be various measures to provide multiple pathways and further study opportunities for young people so that they can develop according to their capacities and interests. The related measures include inviting the Standing Committee on Language Education and Research to consider implementing a vocational English programme with the support from the Language Fund for senior secondary students who aspire to pursue VPET or who are prepared to work, with a view to enhancing their English proficiency and enabling them to obtain relevant qualifications from recognised courses for further studies and employment. In addition, starting from the 2018/19 academic year, the Government will regularise the SSSDPS to subsidise students to study the designated self-financing first-degree programmes. The number of subsidized places will also be increased from about 1 000 per cohort to about 3 000. Current students of the designated programmes will also receive the subsidy to complete the degree programmes from the 2018/19

academic year. It is anticipated that about 13 000 students will be benefitted from the SSSDPS.

6.4 Despite that, EDB has written 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 HKDSE results, 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. EDB also encourages the University Grants Committee-funded universities to take into account both academic and non-academic achievements in their undergraduate admission.

7. EDB should actively promote life education and mental health

7.1 EDB attaches great importance to nurturing students' positive values and strengthening their ability to cope with adversity and respect for life. In Hong Kong schools, a holistic curriculum, comprising knowledge, skills and attitudes, is adopted in the promotion of life education. The content of life education, such as "understand life", "cherish life", "respect life" and "explore life", has already been incorporated into different learning themes under the comprehensive school curriculum. Important priority values, including perseverance and care for others, are being nurtured in students for their whole-person development so that they can exercise proper judgment when they come across challenges and difficulties arising from their different phases of life. Updated learning and teaching resources on values education, including teacher notes, student worksheets, thematic webpages and short films are produced and disseminated to schools for supporting teachers to help students develop positive values and attitudes towards life.

7.2 In fact, EDB pays much attention to the risk factors and protective factors of student suicide behaviours. Therefore, regarding suicide preventive work, we continue to strengthen students' protective factors to shield them from the influence of suicide risks. For example, we should enhance students' ability to cope with stress and their resilience, develop their potentials in non-academic areas and recognise their talents and abilities in different fields. In the 2016/17 school year, EDB has enriched our support to schools, teachers and students through various programmes, activities, talks and resources, to enhance students' mental health and assist schools in the early identification and support of students with suicide risks.

7.3 In addition, EDB in collaboration with the Department of Health (DH) has launched the Joyful@School Campaign (Campaign) in the 2016/17 school year in all secondary and primary schools in Hong Kong to enhance students' knowledge and understanding about mental health, reduce stigmatisation of help-seeking behaviour and enhance their competency in handling challenging situations. Schools can make use of the relevant resources provided by the Campaign to organise activities such as promotion of mental health, good mood in starting the new school year, meeting challenges positively and relax in preparing for examination during school assemblies and/or other school functions. Schools can also consider more relaxed learning activities with objectives of giving students and teachers a break from busy schedule so as to create time and space for rest and reflection. In parallel, EDB has produced a set of Television/Radio Announcements in the Public Interest and a poster on "Think on a broader plane. Unwind and relax" to promote a message on positive thinking and positive life attitude among students and the general public.

Conclusion

After the release of the Final Report, EDB and other bureaux and departments, including FHB, DH, the Home Affairs Bureau, and SWD are formulating feasible measures and carrying out the work to follow up on the recommendations of the Final Report in accordance with the four key areas, including (i) Promotion of Students' Mental Well-being and Health, (ii) Strengthening Support for Schools and Teachers, (iii) Reviewing Relevant Domains in the Education System, and (iv) Enhancement of Family Life and Parent Education, so as to strengthen support for schools, teachers, parents and students. Relevant progress of work is set out in the Annex.

According to the Final Report of the Committee, multi-sectoral collaboration is of critical importance in the prevention of student suicide. Currently the education, health and social welfare sectors are collaborating closely to organize and promote measures to prevent student suicide, such as enhancing the public's mental health awareness, developing gatekeeper training and parent education, and publicising anti-stigma activities. EDB continues joining hands with other stakeholders to prevent student suicide comprehensively, create a tightly knitted support network and build up an accepting and caring culture, in order to strengthen students' adjustment

skills and resilience, and foster their mental well-being in facing the challenges of personal growth.

Education Bureau
March 2017

**Final Report of the Committee on Prevention of Student Suicides
Follow-up Measures (up to 28 February 2017)**

Key Areas	Measures
Promotion of Students' Mental Well-being and Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="427 453 2080 743">● 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 Joyful@HK Run was held on December 11, 2016, with 42 participating teams. To facilitate schools to conduct school-based activities for the Campaign, for instance, promoting mental health, starting the new school year in a good mood, meeting challenges positively and relaxing in preparing for examination, EDB has uploaded relevant information including suggested activities and teaching materials on its website, and will update them regularly for schools' reference and use. EDB and the DH are now running the video competition "Your Joyful Record", aiming to enrich the public and students' understanding of mental health through the event. Schools are encouraged to participate in the competition and the deadline for application is May 10. <li data-bbox="427 778 2080 959">● The Food and Health Bureau (FHB), in collaboration with EDB, the Hospital Authority (HA) and the Social Welfare Department (SWD), has launched a two-year pilot scheme "Student Mental Health Support Scheme", with 9 schools participating in the first phase. Experienced psychiatric nurses pay regular visits to schools and form a multi-disciplinary team with designated teacher(s), school social workers and educational psychologists to conduct professional deliberations on specific cases. Starting from September 2017, the scheme will be extended to the 8 schools of the second phase. <li data-bbox="427 994 2080 1098">● EDB has invited post-secondary institutions to collaborate with schools in developing mental health promotion programmes through the "Education Development Fund – University Support Programme". It is planned that relevant activities will be launched in schools from September 2017. <li data-bbox="427 1133 2080 1353">● 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 seminars on sharing of successful practices. EDB conducted a seminar for secondary school teachers in February 2017 to share good practices on S1 bridging programmes as well as assessment and intervention strategies for suicidal risks. About 200 school principals and teachers attended the seminar. We will continue encouraging schools to make use of the case referral mechanism to enable students in need to receive continuous support after promoting or transferring to other schools.

Key Areas	Measures
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● HA further promotes 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. ● EDB has produced TV/Radio APIs and poster on “Think on a Broader Plane: Unwind and Relax” to promote the message of positive thinking in face of challenges in life. ● EDB sent letters to principals of all primary and secondary schools in February 2017 to call on schools to promote mental well-being and health to students and to recommend relevant resources again.
Strengthening Support for Schools and Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In collaboration with the Department of Psychiatry, University of Hong Kong and DH, EDB organised a seminar on supporting students with mental illness and promoting students’ mental health in January 2017 to strengthen the understanding of secondary school teachers about relevant knowledge. About 300 school principals and teachers attended the seminar. ● FHB has entrusted the Hong Kong College of Psychiatrists to provide training for teachers of the 17 schools participating in the “Student Mental Health Support Scheme” and related professional and support staff, starting from end February 2017. ● EDB will launch the gatekeeper training for teachers, which includes elementary training for teachers at large and in-depth training for designated teachers. It is planned that the training will commence in September 2017. ● EDB will release refined screening tools and materials in March and August 2017 to help schools in identifying, supporting and referring students in need. ● Starting from the 2017/18 school year, the Learning Support Grant for public sector ordinary primary and secondary schools will cover students with mental illness, so that schools would have additional resources to provide support to these students. ● EDB and relevant bureaux/departments (including 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

Key Areas	Measures
	<p>Adolescent Health Programme, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● EDB has written to post-secondary institutions, encouraging 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. ● EDB continues 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"> ● EDB continues to review the relevant domains in the education system, which as a whole should give due recognition to non-academic achievements in order to duly support and address the developmental and diverse needs of students and young people. ● EDB continues 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 students. Measures include: 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, etc. ● EDB has written 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 of the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education, they are encouraged to also recognise students' other learning experiences in sports, music, or social services etc., in order to make the admission system more flexible. 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, arts and/or community services, with effect from the 2015/16 academic year.

Key Areas	Measures
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● EDB continues to endeavour 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. EDB in collaboration with schools and stakeholders continue to step up publicity about alternative pathways, job-tasting programmes and the Qualifications Framework. For example, information on various articulation opportunities is 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 can learn about related industries and progression pathways under the Qualifications Framework, thereby assisting them in their planning of further studies and career development. Moreover, 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. ● The 2017 Policy Address announced various measures to provide multiple pathways and further study opportunities for young people so that they can develop according to their capacities and interests. The related measures include launching a vocational English programme with the support from the Language Fund for senior secondary students who aspire to pursue vocational and professional education and training or who are prepared to work, with a view to enhancing their English proficiency and enabling them to obtain relevant qualifications from recognised courses for further studies and employment. Besides, the Government decides to regularise the Study Subsidy Scheme for Designated Professions/Sectors from the 2018/19 academic year onwards and to increase the number of subsidised places. Current students of the designated programmes will also receive the subsidy to complete the self-financing first degree programme from the 2018/19 academic year.
Enhancement of Family Life and Parent Education	<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. EDB also actively encourages the Federations of Parent-Teacher Associations of different districts and schools’ parent-teacher associations to organise activities based on the content of the Charter to enhance students’ mental health and well-being.

Key Areas	Measures
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● DH continues to further promote the parenting programmes run by the Maternal and Child Health Centres. ● SWD continues 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 “gatekeeping” in their family life and parent education. SWD also promotes and publicises the intensive counselling and support services provided by the IFSCs, ISCs and Integrated Community Centres for Mental Wellness, in order to facilitate the families in need to receive timely service. ● SWD has produced TV/Radio APIs and poster on “Consider different perspectives. Take a positive view” and also launched a publicity campaign on "Strengthening Families and Combating Violence". Through the radio programme on harmonious communication in a family, topics such as coping with adversities or failures, supporting children to acquire stress management skills, and strengthening children’s ability to cope with adversities were explored. ● The Family Council and Radio Television Hong Kong collaborated to launch territory-wide campaigns that encouraged families to strengthen communication among members and build up supportive and trustful relationships through the promotion of themes on “transgenerational harmony and communication” and “mutual help and support among family and friends”. ● In the meetings of the Committee on Integrated Family Service Centres held in December 2016 and February 2017 respectively, SWD reminded and urged the Assistant District Social Welfare Officers supervising the IFSCs of various districts, Service Directors/Service Coordinators/Service Supervisors of NGO’s running IFSCs and representatives of the Hong Kong Council of Social Service who participated in the meetings to encourage their units to continue to strengthen family life and parent education, promote and publicise IFSCs and their intensive counselling and support services through district service platforms, such that families in need could receive timely assistance. SWD also briefed the Committee about the “Student Mental Health Support Scheme”, encouraging relevant units to provide support to students in need and their parents through multidisciplinary collaboration. ● In the year of 2016-17 (up to December 2016), the IFSCs have conducted 502 groups related to parent-child relationships and 1 227 activities related to parenting. They have also conducted 3 groups on emotional management and 4 activities related to cherishing life. These activities aim to enhance parents’ sensitivity towards their teenaged children’s emotions and stress conditions, understanding of emotional health and improvement of parent-child relationships, so as to allow the

Key Areas	Measures
	<p>caring of people around as well as to learn to love oneself.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the period from January to December 2016, 22 SWD-funded Independent Family Life Education Units have conducted 1380 family life education activities. The number of participating youth, expectant parents and parents was 42 956. Among these educational activities, 889 of them focused on improving personal knowledge and skills in order to cope with the ever-changing roles and needs in life and to improve family relationships. The total number of participating children, youth and parents in these activities reached 32 770. • SWD has outsourced an online interactive service to the Samaritan Befrienders Hong Kong to provide information and support service to people with suicidal thoughts/ behaviour through a thematic website.