

For discussion on  
12 June 2017

## **Legislative Council Panel on Education**

### **Progress on Supporting Chinese Learning and Teaching for Non-Chinese Speaking Students**

#### **Purpose**

The 2014 Policy Address announced a series of measures to step up the support for ethnic minorities (EM). The Education Bureau (EDB) has, starting from the 2014/15 school year, implemented the “Chinese Language Curriculum Second Language Learning Framework” (“Learning Framework”) in primary and secondary schools to help non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students<sup>1</sup> overcome the difficulties of learning Chinese as a second language with a view to facilitating their effective learning of Chinese and enabling them to bridge over to mainstream Chinese Language classes. In tandem, about \$200 million per year has been allocated to facilitate schools’ implementation of the “Learning Framework” and creation of an inclusive learning environment in schools. This paper aims to follow up the deliberation at the Panel meeting held on 8 June 2015<sup>2</sup> and report the progress of the implementation of relevant support measures, including collection of data and related work based on the research framework as well as the overall deployment of funding by schools provided with the additional funding.

#### **Research Framework**

2. According to the research framework developed by EDB based on the advice from research and language experts, data has been collected and analysed since the 2014/15 school year for the purpose of evaluating the effectiveness of the support measures (including the “Learning Framework”) for NCS students and refining the measures where appropriate. Data collected

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<sup>1</sup> For the planning of educational support measures, students whose spoken language at home is not Chinese are broadly categorised as NCS students. The number of NCS students studying in public sector and Direct Subsidy Scheme schools from the 2014/15 to 2016/17 school years is as follows:

2014/15 school year: about 16 900 (including 8 700 in primary schools and 8 200 in secondary schools)

2015/16 school year: about 17 700 (including 8 900 in primary schools and 8 800 in secondary schools)

2016/17 school year: about 18 200 (including 9 200 in primary schools and 9 000 in secondary schools)

<sup>2</sup> Agenda Item V of LC Paper No. CB(4)1399/14-15.

includes quantitative data (e.g. data on the overall learning performance of NCS students in the Territory-wide System Assessment) and qualitative data (e.g. collected views through questionnaire surveys and group interviews).

## **Progress in the Implementation of Curriculum Support Measures**

### *Learning and Teaching Resources and Teacher Professional Development*

3. EDB has provided practical tools and steps by phases prior to the start of the 2014/15 school year to facilitate schools' implementation of the "Learning Framework". Reference materials for the learning and teaching of second language, which include Chinese as a Second Language Learning Packages covering the curricula at the primary and secondary levels, have been distributed to schools and students in the territory in the form of textbooks. Other resources such as the "Chinese Language Assessment Tools" ("Assessment Tools")<sup>3</sup> and teaching reference materials, including the series on picture book reading, writing, Chinese festivals, etc., have been uploaded onto EDB's webpage and will be constantly updated.

4. EDB will also continue to organise diversified and advanced teacher professional development programmes<sup>4</sup>, that include curriculum planning and the "Learning Framework", assessment for learning and second language learning and teaching strategies, to ensure that all teachers teaching NCS students are provided with adequate training opportunities for the implementation of the "Learning Framework". Besides, EDB launched in 2014 the "Professional Enhancement Grant Scheme for Chinese Teachers (Teaching Chinese as a Second Language)" under the Language Fund to encourage serving Chinese Language teachers to attend professional development programmes to enhance their professional capability in teaching Chinese Language to NCS students.

### *School-based Professional Support Services*

5. EDB has been providing diversified school-based professional support (SBPS) services for schools admitting NCS students. These include on-site support provided by EDB's professional support teams, as well as the University-School Support Programmes (USP), the Professional Development

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<sup>3</sup> The "Chinese Language Assessment Tools" was updated and enriched in August 2016 to cover the entry stage, Key Stage 1 (P1-3), Key Stage 2 (P4-6), Key Stage 3 (S1-3) and Key Stage 4 (S4-6). The assessment tasks are aligned with the learning outcomes at different levels of the Learning Framework so as to assist teachers in teaching and providing feedback for students.

<sup>4</sup> As at April 2017, 1 507 teachers from 291 primary schools and 1 335 teachers from 257 secondary schools attended seminars and workshops organised by the Curriculum Development Institute of EDB.

Schools (PDS) Scheme and the School Support Partners (Seconded Teacher) (SSP) Scheme financed by the Education Development Fund (EDF)<sup>5</sup>. The support services include offering support for kindergartens<sup>6</sup> to cater for the learning needs of ethnic minority students as well as assisting primary and secondary schools in developing or adapting their school-based curricula, designing appropriate learning materials, and adopting diversified assessment modes with reference to the “Learning Framework” and the “Assessment Tools”. Further, professional learning communities are established with a view to facilitating professional exchange among schools, enhancing teachers’ professional competence, increasing the effectiveness of learning Chinese of NCS students and helping them cope with the transition across different key stages of learning. Schools may apply for appropriate support services based on their developmental needs on a yearly basis.

*Applied Learning Chinese (for non-Chinese speaking students) (ApL(C))*

6. To meet NCS students’ diverse needs and expectations in the learning of Chinese, starting from the 2014/15 school year, EDB has offered ApL(C) at the senior secondary level to provide NCS students with an additional channel to obtain an alternative Chinese language qualification. ApL(C) results are reported in the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE). In addition to the HKDSE qualification, ApL(C) is also pegged at the Qualifications Framework (QF) Levels 1-3 to prepare students for further studies and work. The course is designed from the perspective of second language learners and provides a simulated language application context for students to learn Chinese through different activities. The duration of ApL(C) is 270 contact hours in total, extending over three school years at the senior secondary level.

7. The said course has been offered for three cohorts so far. Around 180 students enrolled in the first and second cohorts respectively. The number of student enrolment for the third cohort will be confirmed after the applications are processed.

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<sup>5</sup> From the 2014/15 to 2016/17 school years, about 132 schools admitting NCS students (40 kindergartens, 50 primary schools, 35 secondary schools and 7 special schools) received SBPS services per year on average.

<sup>6</sup> “Kindergartens” refer to kindergartens, kindergarten-cum-child care centres and schools with kindergarten classes.

(Background information: According to the information collected through the annual Student Enrolment Survey, in the 2016/17 school year, there are about 12 200 NCS students studying at K1 to K3 (including those studying at kindergartens run by the English Schools Foundation and other international kindergartens), of which about 5 200 are studying at KGs under the Pre-primary Education Voucher Scheme.)

8. The review and evaluation of ApL(C) cover aspects such as students' participation, learning, performance and pathways for further studies and employment. Relevant data is also collected through various means such as research studies, curriculum development visits and quality assurance visits. For the Study on Applied Learning (2015-17 Cohort) – Evaluation of ApL(C), views on ApL(C) from various stakeholders are being collected through questionnaire surveys and in-depth interviews.

9. EDB regularly conducts curriculum development visits to schools to gain a better understanding of the implementation of ApL(C). Moreover, the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications also conducts quality assurance visits to assess whether the delivery of ApL(C) meets the Applied Learning standards.

10. Around 80% of the first cohort of students who completed ApL(C) have attained QF Level 1 and QF Level 2 respectively. Information on the overall results (including the HKDSE Examination results and the final attainments recognised under QF) will be available for reference in July 2017. We will continue to collect feedback from various stakeholders, review and develop the related curriculum, and refine support measures to cater for students' diverse learning needs.

### **Questionnaire Survey for 2015 Territory-wide System Assessment – A Pilot Study: Preliminary Observation and Analysis**

11. In 2015, EDB commissioned a tertiary institution to conduct a pilot study (Pilot Study), the main objectives of which were to explore the feasibility of conducting a questionnaire survey with students, parents and schools on the basis of the Territory-wide System Assessment (TSA) results of students at Primary 3, Primary 6 and Secondary 3 levels, and to attempt to assess the data collected through the questionnaire survey, including how non-academic factors affect students' (including NCS students) learning and their performance in TSA, and how various support measures impact on NCS students' performance in the Chinese Language subject of TSA.

12. Under the Pilot Study, about 10% of the primary and secondary schools in the territory were invited to participate in the questionnaire survey on a voluntary basis, and eventually the sample came from 64 primary schools and 47 secondary schools. The target participants were schools, parents and students (Chinese-speaking and NCS students). A disproportionate stratified sampling method was adopted to ensure greater participation of NCS students in the survey. The research team received over 4 000 questionnaires from primary students and their parents, and over 5 000 questionnaires from

secondary students and their parents. The questionnaire was designed with reference to international studies of the same nature, and the questions were set to investigate issues related to the learning situation in Hong Kong. Adopting statistical methodologies, the research team made use of the data collected to develop an understanding of the overall learning performance of NCS students.

13. According to the findings of the questionnaire survey in 2015, 75% to 80% of NCS students studied at schools with the additional funding from EDB. Over 70% of these NCS students were born to parents who were both non-Chinese-speaking. On the whole, NCS students performed not as well as the Chinese-speaking students in the Chinese Language subject.

14. The Pilot Study found that the earlier the NCS students began schooling or received support in learning, the more effective their learning would be. For example, NCS students who had completed the three-year kindergarten education in Hong Kong performed significantly better in the Chinese Language subject compared to NCS students who had never attended kindergarten or had attended kindergarten for a shorter period of time. Of the students participating in the Pilot Study, 90% of the Chinese-speaking students had completed the three-year kindergarten education in Hong Kong while only 60% of the NCS students had done so. Therefore, it is of great importance to encourage NCS students to attend kindergarten.

15. NCS students studying at kindergartens with Chinese as the medium of instruction (CMI kindergartens) performed significantly better in the Chinese Language subject compared to NCS students studying at kindergartens with English as the medium of instruction (EMI kindergartens). While 93-95% of Chinese-speaking students attended CMI kindergartens, a relatively small percentage of NCS students attended CMI kindergartens. For those Secondary 3 NCS students participating in the study, 20% of them had attended CMI kindergartens, and the corresponding percentage rose to 40% for Primary 6 NCS students and further increased to 60% for Primary 3 NCS students. This might indicate that parents of NCS students have gradually realised that studying at CMI kindergartens is more conducive to their children's future learning. With the implementation of the Free Quality Kindergarten Education Scheme from the 2017/18 school year, it is believed that the awareness of NCS parents in this area will be further enhanced.

16. NCS students born in Hong Kong performed significantly better in the Chinese Language subject than those who arrived in Hong Kong after the age of six. This indicates that it is harder for NCS students to learn Chinese Language if they start living in Hong Kong at an older age. In addition, the participation rate in different forms of support activities of NCS students at the

junior levels was relatively higher than that of NCS students at the senior levels. As such, we recommend that schools should encourage NCS students at the senior levels to take part in different forms of support activities. Stakeholders generally find summer immersion programmes particularly worth promoting, as it allows ample time for students to learn Chinese.

17. In addition, as shown in the preliminary assessment data of 2015 TSA, among all papers, NCS students performed better in general in Chinese Listening and Chinese Audio-Visual assessments. For Chinese Writing assessment, they performed better in practical writing. We will continue to follow up and analyse the performance of NCS students in the Chinese Language subject of TSA to gather more information about their learning and render support. The experience gained from the Pilot Study will serve as reference for further research. We will continuously collect relevant data for at least three years for comparison purposes to observe the trends in NCS students' performance and understand their learning<sup>7</sup>.

### **Evaluation of the Curriculum Support Measures**

18. EDB has been evaluating the effectiveness of professional development programmes intended for teachers by means of questionnaires. The results of the evaluation affirmed that participating teachers were satisfied with the seminars and workshops organised by EDB, and considered them effective in helping teachers adapt the Chinese Language curriculum with reference to the “Learning Framework” and the “Assessment Tools” and master the strategies for learning and teaching “Chinese as a second language” to enhance learning and teaching effectiveness. Moreover, based on teachers' feedback, EDB has further promoted sharing of school-based experience and exemplars of learning and teaching practices to meet teachers' needs.

19. EDB conducts evaluation of the effectiveness of SBPS services by means of questionnaires and focus group interviews every year. The evaluation results over the years consistently affirmed that schools participating in the programmes offered were satisfied with the related support services and considered them effective in enhancing learning and teaching effectiveness. Details include:

- Teachers participating in the support services reported that NCS students had become more motivated to learn Chinese (for instance, they took the

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<sup>7</sup> The P.3 Territory-wide System Assessment 2016 was conducted as part of the Tryout Study with some 50 participating schools (i.e. 10% of all primary schools in Hong Kong). Since 2015, the P.6 Territory-wide System Assessment has been implemented in odd-number years while schools may participate on a voluntary basis in even-number years. Therefore, data obtained from 2016 questionnaire survey cannot be compared with those obtained from 2015 questionnaire survey.

initiative to ask and answer questions and read Chinese books/story books). Through participating in diversified Chinese language experiential learning activities, NCS students had become more active in communicating with Chinese-speaking counterparts, thereby enhancing the mutual understanding between NCS students and Chinese-speaking students, and facilitating inclusion;

- USP projects had helped schools develop effective teaching strategies (such as learning Chinese characters through components, discerning component parts in Chinese characters, teaching writing through speaking, and story/drama teaching), and deepened teachers' understanding of the characteristics of how NCS students learn Chinese, especially their difficulties in learning Chinese (such as the conversion between spoken and written Chinese, quantifiers, etc.);
- Secondary and primary schools participating in the SBPS services had adapted their school-based curricula or developed school-based teaching materials in accordance with the "Learning Framework", taking into consideration their school context and the learning needs of NCS students. Diversified assessment modes/activities (such as tiered tasks, lesson observation, oral reports, project learning, integrated assessment activities and learning portfolios) were also adopted to enhance NCS students' interest in learning, understand their learning performance, needs and progress, and facilitate their learning in the next stage; and
- For kindergartens, the support services had helped teachers grasp the learning difficulties of NCS children, and develop diversified and appropriate learning activities and strategies (such as children reading aloud repeatedly after teachers and teachers demonstrating correct pronunciation to improve pronunciation problems; children singing stroke order songs with gestures to enhance their understanding of how to write Chinese characters) so as to enhance children's learning interest and abilities. Teachers were able to compile theme-related packages, which included the design of interesting learning activities and teaching aids. They also made use of grouping time to provide NCS children with appropriate support to cater for their diverse learning needs. Moreover, the professionals assisted the schools in developing school-based measures to build a strong interface to help NCS children bridge to the next stage of schooling.

20. EDB will continue to provide diversified SBPS services for schools admitting NCS students to enhance teachers' professional capabilities and the effectiveness of NCS students' learning of Chinese. The knowledge and good practices generated from the SBPS programmes, in particular the USP, will be

disseminated through different channels, including professional development programmes for teachers (e.g. district-based and territory-wide sharing sessions), publications, booklets and websites<sup>8</sup>, to benefit more schools.

## Overall deployment of additional funding by schools

21. The EDB has, starting from the 2014/15 school year, significantly increased the provision of additional funding for schools to about \$200 million per year to facilitate their implementation of the “Learning Framework” and creation of an inclusive learning environment in schools. In the 2014/15, 2015/16 and 2016/17 school years, 173 schools<sup>9</sup> (100 primary schools and 73 secondary schools), 197 schools<sup>9</sup> (112 primary schools and 85 secondary schools) and 216 schools<sup>9</sup> (118 primary schools and 98 secondary schools) respectively admitting 10 or more NCS students have been provided with the additional funding ranging from \$800,000 to \$1,500,000 per year<sup>10</sup> (referred to as “the schools concerned”). The overall deployment of the additional funding is summarized in the ensuing paragraphs, the findings of which are based on the annual school reports of the 2014/15 and 2015/16 school years and the school

<sup>8</sup> The experiences generated from school-based support services/programmes have been published and uploaded onto the EDB website:

- Kindergarten: 《照顧差異、促進共融—支援非華語兒童的經驗(2011-14)》、《少數族裔兒童之上學、樂學、會學》(2014/15) (Chinese Version only)
- Secondary and Primary: “**Learning in Action : Engaging students in the process of learning**” Seminar 2016, “*The Language Teaching Album: A Collection of School-based Practices (2014-16)*”
- USP publications: 《從無助到互助 - 教授非華語小學生中文教師手冊》, 《飛越困難 一起成功：教授非華語學生中文良方》, 《非華語學生家長手冊 2015 版》 and 《從互助到精采:中文教學實踐寶庫》(Chinese Version only)

<sup>9</sup> The schools concerned do not include special schools provided with the additional funding to support NCS students’ Chinese learning. Details of the overall deployment of the additional funding by special schools are at [Annex 1](#). As regards schools admitting a handful (i.e. 1 to 9) of NCS students, their students can benefit from the immersed Chinese language environment of the school as well as the “Learning Framework”. Starting from the 2014/15 school year, these schools may also have an additional funding of \$50,000 on a need basis to offer after-school Chinese language support programmes to consolidate what their NCS students have learnt in classes. The number of the schools in question increased from 58 (including 25 primary schools and 33 secondary schools) in the 2014/15 school year to 83 (including 34 primary schools and 49 secondary schools) in the 2015/16 school year and 175 (including 89 primary schools and 86 secondary schools) in the 2016/17 school year.

<sup>10</sup> The funding model is as follows :

Number of NCS students	Additional funding (\$ million)	2014/15 school year	2015/16 school year	2016/17 school year
10 – 25	0.80	85	98	109
26 – 50	0.95	29	34	40
51 – 75	1.10	10	13	13
76 – 90	1.25	4	2	5
91 or more	1.50	45	50	49
		173	197	216



plans for the 2016/17 school year<sup>11</sup> of the schools concerned.

22. All of the schools concerned have implemented the “Learning Framework” and assigned a dedicated teacher as the coordinator to oversee the school’s overall strategies for supporting NCS students in Chinese learning. In the 2016/17 school year, relatively more of the schools concerned (about 80%, compared with 70% in the 2014/15 and 2015/16 school years) assigned middle management (such as vice-principals, panel heads, etc.) to coordinate Chinese learning and teaching for NCS students as well as the planning and deployment of school resources and manpower (especially in allocation of additional lesson time for Chinese Language), which ensures sustainable development of the support measures. As regards the Chinese Language teachers teaching NCS students in the 2014/15 to 2016/17 school years, about 80% of them had experience in teaching NCS students. Among them, over 40% had more than 4 years’ experience in teaching NCS students. Besides, in the 2014/15 and 2015/16 school years (while the situation in the 2016/17 school year is not yet available pending submission of the respective annual school reports), more than 90% of the schools concerned enhanced their Chinese Language teachers’ capability in teaching NCS students through peer lesson observation, collaborative lesson preparation and / or professional sharing with other schools.

23. The schools concerned have adopted the “Assessment Tools” as required to adjust the learning targets and teaching strategies with reference to the learning progress so described in the “Learning Framework” as well as the learning performance and progress of their NCS students. In tandem, EDB has, starting from the 2013/14 school year (i.e. before the implementation of the “Learning Framework”), commissioned a tertiary institution to conduct analysis on NCS students’ overall learning performance in the Chinese language annually based on their performance in Chinese reading and writing under the “Assessment Tools” and to further refine the “Assessment Tools” in accordance with the implementation of the “Learning Framework”.

24. With the implementation of the “Learning Framework” for two school years, in the annual questionnaire survey for major stakeholders in the 2016/17 school year, we have randomly selected about 400 Chinese Language teachers teaching NCS students (i.e. about 25% of the total Chinese Language teachers concerned) for further views. About 80% of them expected EDB to facilitate the development of a series of systematic “textbooks” to tie in with the “Learning Framework”, coupled with sharing of effective strategies on teaching

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<sup>11</sup> The schools concerned are required to submit the annual school reports for the 2016/17 school year by the end of November 2017.

the Chinese language to NCS students. In parallel, according to the findings of the analysis of sample scripts under the “Assessment Tools”<sup>12</sup> from the 2014/15 to 2016/17 school years, Levels 2 and 3 are considered the most critical stages in NCS students’ learning of the Chinese language. NCS students in general would be more capable of achieving a performance comparable with their Chinese-speaking counterparts should more appropriate support be provided, notwithstanding their different starting points in learning the Chinese language. As such, we are actively preparing for engaging a tertiary institution to, in collaboration with primary schools, develop a series of textbooks pegged at Levels 2 and 3 of the “Learning Framework” with the objective of issuing the first textbook to all schools and NCS students within this year.

### *Intensive Learning and Teaching Modes*

25. The additional funding is of the specific purpose of facilitating schools’ implementation of the “Learning Framework” to help NCS students bridge over to mainstream Chinese Language classes as early as possible. In this regard, in the 2014/15, 2015/16 and 2016/17 school years, the schools concerned mainly deployed the additional funding for appointing additional teaching staff (about 70% of the schools concerned appointed three or more additional teachers / teaching assistants) to implement diversified modes of intensive learning and teaching, including pull-out learning, split-class / group learning, after-school consolidation, etc.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> The sample scripts required from the schools concerned under the “Assessment Tools” increased from 5% of the total or not less than 6 scripts in the 2013/14 to 2015/16 school years to 8% of the total or not less than 6 scripts in the 2016/17 school year. According to the sampling, marked scripts, broadly categorised as high, medium and low in terms of NCS students’ performance by individual schools based on school-based standard, should be collected to enable meaningful analysis of the overall learning performance of NCS students. The relevant analyses are at [Annex 2](#).

<sup>13</sup> Generally speaking, the major intensive learning and teaching modes adopted by schools in the 2014/15 to 2016/17 school years include:

Intensive learning and teaching modes adopted	Number of primary schools			Number of secondary schools			Total number of schools		
	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Pull-out learning	61	67	81	41	54	76	102	121	157
Split-class/group learning	24	36	30	29	35	36	53	71	66
After-school consolidation	91	107	110	63	67	78	154	174	188
Increasing Chinese Language lesson time	25	30	39	13	18	28	38	48	67
Learning Chinese across the curriculum	11	15	19	8	8	20	19	23	39
Co-teaching with 2 or more teachers / teaching assistants to provide in-class support	31	51	70	5	19	34	36	70	104

26. Based on the feedback collected from major stakeholders through questionnaires<sup>14</sup> in the 2014/15, 2015/16 and 2016/17 school years, most of the Chinese Language teachers teaching NCS students (about 90%) found pull-out teaching, split-class / group learning and after-school consolidation relatively more effective in helping NCS students learn Chinese. Most of the NCS students (about 90%) also agreed that small group learning and learning with Chinese-speaking peers were conducive to their learning of Chinese. As observed from the annual reports of the schools concerned, schools implemented diversified modes of intensive learning and teaching with due regard to the learning progress and needs of their NCS students. The number of schools adopting two or more modes has increased from 80% in the first school year (2014/15) to 90% in the 2015/16 and 2016/17 school years.

### *Bridging Over to Mainstream Chinese Language Classes*

27. Based on the annual school reports submitted by the schools concerned (173 in total) for the 2014/15 school year, after implementing the “Learning Framework” for a school year, a total of 1 475 (about 9.5%) NCS students (1 070 in primary schools and 405 in secondary schools) had bridged over to mainstream Chinese Language classes (i.e. having a performance comparable with their Chinese-speaking peers based on the school-based assessments in Chinese Language and the “Assessment Tools”). Another 1 056 (about 6.8%) NCS students (804 in primary schools and 252 in secondary schools) were expected by the schools concerned to be able to bridge over to mainstream Chinese Language classes in one to two years if no other major changes popped up in their learning journey. As regards the 2015/16 school year, based on the school reports of the 197 schools concerned, a total of 2 204 (about 13.3%) NCS students (1 643 in primary schools and 561 in secondary schools) had bridged over to mainstream Chinese Language classes. Another 353 (about 2.1%) NCS students (291 in primary schools and 62 in secondary schools) were expected to be able to bridge over to mainstream Chinese Language classes in one to two years. The above-mentioned schools had not ceased their support measures when these NCS students had bridged over to mainstream Chinese Language classes. On the other hand, the schools revised their intensive learning and teaching modes accordingly. For example, it is noted that more of the schools concerned (about 20% and 40% in the 2014/15 and 2015/16 school years respectively) arranged co-teaching with two or more teachers / teaching

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<sup>14</sup> Starting from the 2015/16 school year, the questionnaire surveys have been extended to cover also the principals and the coordinators of the schools concerned, as well as the non-governmental organisations (NGOs) (when commissioned by the schools concerned). Except for the principals and the coordinators, other major stakeholders (including Chinese Language teachers teaching NCS students, NCS students and their parents), were randomly selected at a ratio of 25%, 5% and 5% respectively. For NGOs, schools would invite them, if applicable, to complete the questionnaires.

assistants to render in-class support to help NCS students learn in mainstream Chinese Language classes.

28. Pending availability of the findings about NCS students' bridging over to mainstream Chinese Language classes in the 2016/17 school year<sup>15</sup>, we will consider conducting case studies to trace and analyse the overall situation of the NCS students having bridged over to mainstream Chinese Language classes. The purpose is to better understand their changes and different needs, if any, with a view to devising corresponding support strategies for NCS students.

### *Changes in Attitude of NCS Students and their Parents*

29. Alongside the implementation of the "Learning Framework" in primary and secondary schools, the awareness of NCS students and their parents in respect of the importance of learning Chinese for integration into the community has been raised. According to relevant data in the annual school plans of the schools concerned, the number of parents of NCS students who sent their children to study in local kindergartens is on the rise. In the primary schools concerned, the number of NCS students who had studied in local kindergartens increased from about 70% in the 2014/15 and 2015/16 school years to about 80% in the 2016/17 school year. A similar increase from about 30% in the past two school years to about 40% in the 2016/17 school year was recorded in the secondary schools concerned. Among these NCS students, about 90% indicated that they had started learning Chinese in kindergartens. In verifying the aforementioned findings vis-à-vis the feedback from the coordinators of the schools concerned, over 80% (an increase when compared with about 70% in the 2015/16 school year) considered that the NCS students having studied in local kindergartens had developed better listening and speaking skills and were more capable of expressing their feelings and ideas. Almost 70% (an increase when compared with about 60% in the 2015/16 school year) of the teachers concerned also considered that these NCS students recognised and read more vocabulary and comprehended in general the content of the reading materials. The situation was similar to the analysis mentioned in paragraph 14.

30. Some parents of NCS students also rescheduled their children's activities, including returning to home countries, so that they would have more opportunities to learn Chinese. According to the annual school reports submitted by the schools concerned for the 2015/16 school years, a total of about 650 NCS students had taken relatively long leave (for more than two weeks). The situation had improved when compared with that (about 1 000

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<sup>15</sup> See footnote 11.

NCS students) in the 2014/15 school year. On the other hand, NCS students' motivation in learning Chinese had increased correspondingly. We have collected specifically feedback on participation in after-school Chinese learning activities from about 5% of the NCS students (about 850) randomly selected in the questionnaire survey for major stakeholders in the 2016/17 school year. Based on the returns received (about 940), about 90% pointed out that they had studied Chinese outside classroom (e.g. joining after-school extended Chinese learning programmes, revisions, reading Chinese books, etc.) with over 30% of them indicating that learning of this kind exceeded two hours per week.

31. Some stakeholders have concerns if parents of NCS students are familiar with schools' support for their children in learning Chinese and their children's performance. In the questionnaire survey for major stakeholders in the 2016/17 school year, we have collected feedback specifically on whether parents were informed by schools of the support for their children on Chinese learning from parents of NCS students selected by random (a total of 850, accounting for 5% of NCS students of the schools concerned). Based on the returns received (about 730), the majority (over 90%) indicated that they were aware of the support and obtained relevant information through various channels (including communication with teachers). On the other hand, the number of the schools concerned that have deployed the additional funding to strengthen / improve communication with parents of NCS students had slightly increased from about 80% in the 2014/15 school year to 85% in the 2016/17 school year. To further support parents of NCS students in getting more information about schools' support for NCS students in learning Chinese, we have approached the schools concerned on how they disseminated the related information and are following up with individual schools about their views and concerns.

### *Creation of Inclusive Learning Environment in Schools*

32. The schools concerned generally deployed about 10% of the additional funding for appointing EM assistants and / or procurement of translation services to strengthen communication with parents of NCS students and organising multi-cultural activities. In the 2016/17 school year, over 20% of the schools concerned appointed a total of about 80 EM assistants, constituting an increase when compared with the past two school years (54 and 64 EM assistants appointed in the 2014/15 and 2015/16 school years respectively). Other schools used various means (such as procurement of translation services, soliciting support from EM parents, approaching the Centre for Harmony and Enhancement of Ethnic Minority Residents funded by the Home Affairs Department for translation services in EM languages) to strengthen communication with parents of NCS students.

33. In the 2014/15, 2015/16 and 2016/17 school years, to raise the cultural sensitivity of teachers and Chinese-speaking students for promotion of respect for cultural diversity in schools, about 80% of the schools concerned had arranged their teachers to participate in the sharing session organised by EDB in collaboration with the Equal Opportunities Commission, and / or organised relevant seminars and cultural-exchange programmes, etc. In tandem, about 50% of the schools concerned collaborated with non-governmental organisations in various activities to facilitate NCS students' integration into the local community. Besides, in the 2016/17 school year, more of the schools concerned (over 90% as compared with about 80% in the past two school years), having engaged their NCS students in community services (such as volunteer work) and uniformed groups, actively encouraged their NCS students to get exposed to Chinese by interacting with their Chinese-speaking peers, which is conducive to their learning of the Chinese language.

### **Way Forward**

34. The enhanced support measures for NCS students' learning of the Chinese language need time to take root. EDB will continue to monitor closely the implementation of the "Learning Framework" and relevant support measures, and to maintain communication with stakeholders with a view to facilitating NCS students' learning of the Chinese language.

Education Bureau  
June 2017

## Overall Deployment of Additional Funding by Special Schools

In the 2014/15, 2015/16 and 2016/17 school years, 23, 25 and 24 special schools respectively were provided with the additional funding<sup>1</sup> to support their NCS students' learning of the Chinese language. Special schools offering the ordinary school curriculum make reference to the "Chinese Language Curriculum Second Language Learning Framework" ("Learning Framework"), and the remaining the piloting "Chinese Language Curriculum Second Language Adapted Learning Framework (for NCS Students with Intellectual Disabilities)" ("Adapted Framework"). The Education Bureau is collecting feedback from various stakeholders and it is expected to finalise the "Adapted Framework" in the fourth quarter of 2017.

2. Special schools provided with the additional funding are required to submit school plans and school reports annually. The following findings are based on the annual school reports of the 2014/15 and 2015/16 school years as well as the school plans for the 2016/17 school year<sup>2</sup> submitted by the schools provided with the additional funding:

- About 80% of the schools concerned assigned middle management (such as vice-principals, panel heads, etc.) to coordinate the planning and deployment of school resources and manpower including arranging teachers to participate in the training programmes relating to the "Learning Framework" / "Adapted Framework", and to ensure sustainable development of the support measures.
- The schools concerned used most of the funding for appointing additional teaching staff (the number of schools appointing two or more additional teachers / teaching assistants increased from 60% in the 2014/15 school year

<sup>1</sup> Special schools offering an ordinary school curriculum and admitting 6 to 9 NCS students, and special schools offering an adapted curriculum and admitting 6 or more NCS students are both provided with an additional funding of \$650,000. The funding model for special schools offering an ordinary school curriculum and admitting 10 or more NCS students is the same as that for ordinary schools. The number of special schools provided with the additional funding in the 2014/15, 2015/16 and 2016/17 school years is as follows :

<u>Curriculum</u>	<u>Number of NCS students</u>	<u>Additional funding (\$ million)</u>	<u>Number of special schools concerned</u>		
			<u>2014/15 s.y.</u>	<u>2015/16 s.y.</u>	<u>2016/17 s.y.</u>
Adapted	6 or above	0.65	16	19	18
Ordinary	6 – 9	0.65	4	2	2
	10 – 25	0.80	3	4	4
			23	25	24

Besides, special schools admitting a handful (i.e. 1 to 5) of NCS students may have an additional funding of \$50,000 on a need basis to offer after-school Chinese language support programmes. From the 2014/15 to 2016/17 school years, 8, 9 and 14 special schools were provided with the funding concerned respectively.

<sup>2</sup> The schools concerned are required to submit the annual school reports for the 2016/17 school year by the end of November 2017.

to over 80% in the 2015/16 and 2016/17 school years) to support their NCS students by pull-out learning, split-class / group learning, after-school consolidation, etc. Schools adopting two or more intensive learning and teaching modes have increased from 80% in the first school year to 90% in the 2015/16 and 2016/17 school years. Besides, about 60% of the schools concerned implemented the support to tie in with the “Individual Education Plans” to strengthen the support for their NCS students.

- The schools concerned generally deployed about 10% of the additional funding for appointing EM assistants and / or procurement of translation services to strengthen communication with parents of NCS students and organising multi-cultural activities. About 10% of the schools concerned appointed EM assistants in the 2014/15 to 2015/16 school years and about 20% in the 2016/17 school year.
- In sum, the schools concerned have made optimal use of the additional funding according to the specified purpose.

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## **Learning Performance of Non-Chinese Speaking Students in the Chinese Language**

EDB has, starting from the 2013/14 school year (i.e. before the implementation of the “Learning Framework”), commissioned a tertiary institution to conduct analysis on NCS students’ overall learning performance in the Chinese language<sup>1</sup> by making reference to their performance in Chinese reading and writing under the “Assessment Tools”, and to further refine the “Assessment Tools” in accordance with the implementation of the “Learning Framework”. Generally speaking, in comparison with the previous two years (i.e. the 2014/15 and 2015/16 school years), the reading performance of junior primary students remained steady while students at senior primary levels made good progress. In secondary schools, the performance of NCS students at junior secondary levels showed improvement when compared with the past two school years. Though students in Secondary 3 and 4 performed relatively better, the overall performance of NCS students at senior secondary levels was yet to be satisfactory. On writing, the performance of NCS students in primary schools was similar to that in the past two school years. While NCS students at junior secondary levels made some progress, there was no significant improvement in respect of NCS students at senior secondary levels. Elaborations of the analyses and observations are in the ensuing paragraphs.

### Reading

2. The performance of NCS students studying at the same grade level varied considerably as their duration of and pace in learning Chinese were different. At junior primary levels, NCS students with relatively higher ability were generally able to identify dictions that carry feelings, grasp the relationship of time, place and people of the text, understand the main ideas of the paragraphs and the text, analyse the theme of the text and extract key messages in practical writing (broadly at Level 2 to Level 3 of the “Learning Framework” (Reading)). The major difference between NCS students with relatively higher ability and Chinese-speaking students on reading comprehension was about the length of the texts, diction used and involvement of cultural elements. At senior primary levels, NCS students with relatively higher ability could grasp the characters of the people involved with reference to their behaviour, understand the main ideas in the paragraphs, point out the main theme of the text and extract key

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<sup>1</sup> Schools provided with an additional funding ranging from \$0.8 million to \$1.5 million per year are required to provide sample scripts under the “Assessment Tools” with the number of scripts collected increasing from 5% of the total or not less than 6 scripts in the 2013/14 to 2015/16 school years to 8% of the total or not less than 6 scripts in the 2016/17 school year. According to the sampling, marked scripts, broadly categorised as high, medium and low in terms of NCS students’ performance by individual schools based on school-based standard, should be collected to enable meaningful analysis of the overall learning performance of NCS students.

information in practical writing (broadly at Level 3 to Level 4 of the “Learning Framework” (Reading)). They had improvement in terms of the ability in comprehension, analysis and generalisation of texts, though they were not yet able to grasp the implicit meaning of texts. Nonetheless, NCS students generally read texts of about 280 to 440 words while Chinese-speaking students at senior primary levels could read texts of about 600 to 1 000 words.

3. At secondary levels, NCS students could read texts of about 550 to 600 words while their Chinese-speaking counterparts were able to read at least 1 200 words. NCS students with relatively higher ability could sense the explicit feelings expressed in the text, sum up the contents, grasp the main ideas of the paragraphs and main theme of the text, review the contents of the text and behaviour of characters based on the theme and understand the functions of practical writing (broadly at Level 3 to Level 4 of the “Learning Framework” (Reading)). However, they had genuine difficulties in understanding classical texts.

#### Writing

4. On writing (referring to composition in general and practical writing), NCS students generally performed better in practical writing. For composition in general, NCS students having relatively higher ability at junior primary levels were able to write short articles on events familiar to them with proper presentation in paragraphs (broadly at Level 2 of the “Learning Framework” (Writing)). At senior primary levels, they mastered basic competency in practical writing and were able to identify target audience, use appropriate format and diction in simple practical writing (such as simple letters) (broadly at Level 3 of the “Learning Framework” (Writing)). Should the number of words of a composition be taken as an indicator, NCS students with relatively higher ability could write about 200 words on average at senior primary levels while their Chinese-speaking counterparts were able to write about 450 words.

5. At secondary levels, NCS students with relatively higher ability were able to cite evidence, select contents related to the main theme with complete ideas, write fluently and express the meaning of the text clearly. They were also able to integrate writing skills for narration, description and expression of feelings (broadly at Level 3 to Level 4 of the “Learning Framework” (Writing)). In terms of the number of words in writing, NCS students with relatively higher ability could generally write 250 to 300 words while their Chinese-speaking counterparts were generally able to write about 600 to 800 words.

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