

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

**Submission from the Equal Opportunities Commission**

**Purpose of the Paper**

Ensuring equal opportunities in education for non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students is a top priority for the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC). A key factor determining education opportunities for NCS students is their ability to learn Chinese as it impacts the kind of school they get into, their grades in all subjects and most importantly their ability to pursue tertiary education and finally employment opportunities. The EOC has previously presented its recommendations on education of ethnic minority (EM) children to the Legislative Council's Subcommittee on Rights of Ethnic Minorities in November and December 2016 (listed in the **Annex I**). A motion was passed by the Subcommittee based on the EOC's and other stakeholders' recommendations urging the Education Bureau (EDB) to take certain steps. This paper sets out to reiterate those points and others regarding education for EM children, specifically, Chinese language learning.

## **Protection under the Race Discrimination Ordinance**

2. Under the Race Discrimination Ordinance (RDO), it is unlawful for educational establishments to discriminate against anyone because of his/her race. Given that language used by people is often associated with their race, unfair treatment based on language may constitute indirect discrimination against EMs. While using language as an admission criterion in an educational establishment where it cannot be justified might be indirect race discrimination, the EOC is also concerned whether EM children get fair access to educational support for learning Chinese language in kindergartens, primary and secondary schools so as to allow them equal opportunities for quality and higher education. Another matter of concern for the EOC is the high concentration of EM students in some schools which may be brought about by the language policies in the current system that inhibits real choice for EM students and parents.

## **EOC's Work on Chinese language learning for EMs**

3. In July 2010, the EOC set up a Working Group on Education for Ethnic Minorities (WG) comprising essentially stakeholders with extensive experience in public policy and teaching EM students. Recommendations with regard to Chinese curriculum and qualification were included in the report made to the Education Bureau (EDB) in March 2011. It is believed that these recommendations as well as those of other stakeholders contributed to the introduction of the Chinese Language Curriculum Second Language Learning Framework (“Learning Framework”) and Applied Learning (Chinese) Subjects though their effectiveness are yet to be

measured. The other recommendation of providing support for Chinese language learning at the pre-school stage has also been taken in the upcoming implementation of the Free Quality Kindergarten Education Policy and we look forward to more efforts from kindergartens to help EM students learn the language in preparation for primary school.

4. To monitor the implementation of the Learning Framework, the EOC has written to the EDB asking for success indicators to measure its effectiveness, update on students' achievement and provision of more teaching and learning materials for NCS students. The EOC has also been meeting different stakeholder groups, including school principals, teachers, students, parents, scholars and NGOs to collect feedback about the progress of the measures.

5. Based on the information and feedback we collected, the EOC has made two submissions to the Legislative Council's Subcommittee on Rights of Ethnic Minorities in November and December 2016 on the subject of EM education, with specific reference to their Chinese language learning. Our recommendations in these submissions are listed in the **Annex I**.

### **EOC's Recommendations**

6. The EOC requests follow up on the motion passed by the above-mentioned Subcommittee on 12 December 2016 that comprises three main points listed in the **Annex II**.

7. We would like to reiterate the need for a certain percentage of teachers in every school to have undergone formal training to teach Chinese to non-Chinese students similar to the developed system for teachers of students with special educational needs.

8. The EOC once again requests the EDB to make public the number of teachers that have availed of the “Professional Enhancement Grant Scheme for Chinese Teachers (Teaching Chinese as a Second Language)” funded by the Language Fund and/or attended the five-week “Certificate in Professional Development Programme on the Teaching of Chinese Language for NCS Students” run by the Education University of Hong Kong.

9. While mainstream schools are being encouraged and incentivised to take in more NCS students and the label of “designated” schools no longer exists, it has been brought to the EOC’s attention that schools with close to 90 percent concentration of EM students continue to exist and attract more EM students. As this practice prevents interaction and integration among NCS and Chinese students, it also impedes Chinese language acquisition. The EOC believes that the difficulties of learning Chinese in mainstream schools may be the prime reason for parents to choose these schools and recommends that the EDB seriously consider investigating the causes behind this phenomenon and take the necessary steps to correct it.

10. The EOC and other stakeholders have also been asking the EDB to release data on the number of EM students in individual schools both in absolute terms as

well as a percentage of the total number of students in that school. This is a first step towards understanding the trend of NCS concentration in schools.

11. We strongly believe that education of a child is a collaborative process between schools, home and society. In order for this collaboration to work effectively, openness and sharing of information is vital. The EOC urges the EDB to make public important information such as those relating to the Learning Framework, teacher training, EM student population per school etc. so that all interested parties can contribute towards finding the best solution that works towards improving the future of this pool of Hong Kong's human resources.

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Equal Opportunities Commission

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**Equal Opportunities Commission's Recommendations to the  
Subcommittee on Rights of Ethnic Minorities  
On Education for Children of Ethnic Minorities**

The Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) has made two submissions on 23 November 2016 and 12 December 2016 respectively to urge the Education Bureau (EDB) to:

A. **On Curriculum:**

- a. Make clear the performance targets of the Chinese Language Curriculum Second Language Learning Framework (“Learning Framework”) for evaluating its effectiveness, such as number of non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students who have successfully bridged over to mainstream classes, etc.;
- b. Spell out what additional second language learning strategies, beyond the “small-step” approach, the teachers should use to teach NCS students who linger at the beginner level. (Suggestions from some experts in Chinese education the EOC has met include teaching Cantonese pronunciation as the first step, grammar lessons on Chinese language structure, etc.); and
- c. Review whether NCS learners can cope with the Chinese literature part of the DSE Chinese Examination involving classical or ancient text given that it assumes a strong cultural context which may not be naturally accessible to non-native Chinese students, and explore alternative examination options.

**B. On Teaching Support:**

- a. Undertake the development and publishing of more appropriate teaching materials for NCS learners, for example textbooks, so that quality, quantity and adherence to the needs of the syllabus and curriculum can be ensured (rather than leaving to private publishers as is the current practice); and
- b. Set clear targets to ensure that schools have a certain percentage of their teachers equipped with the necessary skills through formal training to cater to NCS students' needs.

**C. On Planning & Central Coordination:**

- a. Collect and release data of number as well as ratio of EM student population in schools with high EM concentration and to keep track of reverse migration from mainstream to previously designated schools; and
- b. Set up a dedicated unit looking into all education issues of NCS students in a comprehensive and holistic manner. (Other concerns beyond Chinese learning include shortage of school placement for NCS students with SEN, difficulties in coping with Liberal Studies, etc.)

## 平等機會委員會就少數族裔兒童教育問題 向少數族裔權益事宜小組委員會作出的建議

平等機會委員會（平機會）於 2016 年 11 月 23 日及 12 月 16 日向少數族裔權益事宜小組委員會提交了兩份有關少數族裔兒童教育問題的意見書，促請教育局採取下列的措施：

### 甲. 課程方面：

- 一. 為「中國語文課程第二語言學習架構」（「學習架構」）制定清晰的表現指標，以評估其成效，例如：已成功過渡到主流課堂的非華語學生及比例等；
- 二. 除了提出「小步子」方式外，也需清楚訂明教師宜採用那些額外第二語言教學策略，教導只停留在初學者階段的非華語學生（平機會曾與一些教授中國語文的專家會面，他們提出的建議包括首先教授廣東話發音、中文筆劃結構和文法等）；以及
- 三. 檢視非華語學生是否有能力應付中學文憑試中文科卷一有關中國文學部分（該部份涵蓋經典文學作品及古文，需要應考學生具備深厚的文化根柢），並探討可否讓這方面處於弱勢的非華語學生有其他選擇。

### 乙. 教學支援方面：

- 一. 負責為非華語學生編寫和出版合適的教材例如教科書，以確保教材質素和數量均符合課程綱要的要求（主流課程一般會交由私營出版商編寫課本）；以及

- 二. 訂立清晰目標，以確保學校有一定比例的教師曾接受正規訓練，以切合非華語學生的需要。

丙. 計劃及中央統籌方面：

- 一. 收集和發放有關少數族裔學生分佈和流動的數據，特別是非華語學生高度集中的學校收生人數和種族比例，以及追蹤學生轉校入讀此類學校的人數及情況；以及
- 二. 開設專責組別整體研究和跟進所有與非華語學生有關的教育事宜（非華語學生所遇到的教育困難不限於學習中文的問題，亦包括有特殊學習需要的少數族裔學生面對學位不足的情況、以及通識科為非華語學生所帶來的困難等等）。

## **Subcommittee on Rights of Ethnic Minorities**

Main points of motion passed under agenda item I "Education for children of ethnic minorities – implementation progress of the 'Chinese language as the second language' curriculum, placement of ethnic minority students and support measures to these students and to schools admitting them" at the meeting on 12 December 2016:

- Formulate a set of clear and objective indicators for monitoring the effectiveness of the Framework and provide improvement plans
- In respect of the Framework, provide teachers with more unified and suitable teaching materials and guidelines
- Collect and make public the data relating to NCS students in various primary and secondary schools to ensure follow up studies by various stakeholders

### **少數族裔權益事宜小組委員會**

在 2016 年 12 月 12 日會議上就議程第 I 項"少數族裔兒童的教育-'中文作為第二語言'課程的推行進展、少數族裔學生的入學情況，以及為該等學生和取錄該等學生的學校提供的支援措施"通過的議案的要點：

- 就「中國語文課程第二語言學習架構」（「學習架構」）制定客觀清晰的衡工量值指標，以監察其成效並提供改善方案
- 為老師提供更多統一而合適的「學習架構」教材及指引
- 收集及公開各中小學的非華語學生數據，以便不同持份者作跟進研究