

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(4)1107/17-18
(These minutes have been seen
by the Administration)

Ref : CB4/PL/ED

Panel on Education

Minutes of meeting
held on Friday, 5 January 2018 at 10:45am
in Conference Room 1 of the Legislative Council Complex

Members present : Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan, JP (Chairman)
Hon IP Kin-yuen (Deputy Chairman)
Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, GBS, JP
Hon Starry LEE Wai-king, SBS, JP
Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun, SBS, JP
Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-ye, GBS, JP
Hon Claudia MO
Hon Michael TIEN Puk-sun, BBS, JP
Hon MA Fung-kwok, SBS, JP
Hon Charles Peter MOK, JP
Hon CHAN Chi-chuen
Hon CHAN Han-pan, JP
Hon LEUNG Che-cheung, SBS, MH, JP
Hon Dennis KWOK Wing-hang
Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung
Dr Hon Helena WONG Pik-wan
Dr Hon Elizabeth QUAT, BBS, JP
Hon CHU Hoi-dick
Dr Hon Junius HO Kwan-yiu, JP
Hon HO Kai-ming
Hon Holden CHOW Ho-ding
Hon SHIU Ka-chun
Hon Wilson OR Chong-shing, MH
Hon Tanya CHAN
Hon CHEUNG Kwok-kwan, JP
Hon HUI Chi-fung
Hon LAU Kwok-fan, MH
Dr Hon CHENG Chung-tai

- Member attending** : Hon WU Chi-wai, MH
- Members absent** : Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, GBS, JP
Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok, SBS, MH, JP
- Public officers attending** : Agenda item III
Dr CHOI Yuk-lin, JP
Under Secretary for Education

Mrs HONG CHAN Tsui-wah
Deputy Secretary for Education (5)
- Agenda item IV

Dr CHOI Yuk-lin, JP
Under Secretary for Education

Mrs Elina CHAN
Principal Assistant Secretary
(Infrastructure & Research Support)
Education Bureau
- Agenda item V

Mr Kevin YEUNG, JP
Secretary for Education

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

Mrs CHAN SIU Suk-fan
Principal Assistant Secretary
(Kindergarten Education)
Education Bureau
- Clerk in attendance** : Ms Angel WONG
Chief Council Secretary (4)4

Staff in attendance : Ms Mina CHAN
Senior Council Secretary (4)4

Miss Mandy NG
Council Secretary (4)4

Ms Sandy HAU
Legislative Assistant (4)4

Action

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

(LC Paper No. CB(4)398/17-18(01) -- Information paper provided by the Education Bureau concerning the progress of the School-based Professional Support Programmes financed by the Education Development Fund in the 2016-2017 school year)

Members noted the above paper issued since the last meeting.

II. Items for discussion at the next meeting

(Appendix I to LC Paper No. CB(4)427/17-18 -- List of outstanding items for discussion

Appendix II to LC Paper No. CB(4)427/17-18 -- List of follow-up actions)

2. Members agreed to discuss the following items at the next regular meeting on 2 February 2018 at 10:45 am:

- (a) 8033ED - Provision of boarding section of Hong Chi Pinehill School and re-provisioning of boarding section of Hong Chi Pinehill No. 2 School in Tai Po; and
- (b) Prevention and handling of sexual harassment in schools.

Regarding item (b), Ms Tanya CHAN requested the Administration to include sex education in schools in its discussion paper. The Chairman advised that the Administration's paper would cover the implementation of sex education in schools.

Action

III. Implementation of whole-day schooling/homework policy and School-based After-school Learning and Support Programmes

- (LC Paper No. CB(4)287/17-18(03) -- Paper provided by the Administration
- LC Paper No. CB(4)302/17-18(01) -- Submission from 香港革新教育家長同盟
- LC Paper No. CB(4)340/17-18(01) -- Wording of a motion to be moved by Hon Michael TIEN Puk-sun
- LC Paper No. CB(4)340/17-18(02) -- Wording of a motion to be moved by Hon HUI Chi-fung
- LC Paper No. CB(4)340/17-18(03) -- Wording of a motion to be moved by Hon Wilson OR Chong-shing
- LC Paper No. CB(4)340/17-18(04) -- Wording of a motion to be moved by Hon SHIU Ka-chun
- LC Paper No. CB(4)340/17-18(05) -- Wording of a motion to be moved by Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung)

3. The Chairman recapitulated that as members had not finished the discussion on this agenda item at the previous meeting, the discussion would be continued at this meeting and the five motions proposed would be dealt with after members' discussion.

Discussion

Homework guidelines

4. Mr CHAN Han-pan said that whole-day primary schools should provide tutorial sessions within school time for students to complete their homework under teachers' guidance so that students could have sufficient family and leisure time after school. He asked whether the Education Bureau ("EDB") had taken any concrete measures to encourage schools to do so. Under Secretary for Education ("US(Ed)") pointed out that whole-day schooling aimed at creating a favourable learning environment for enhancing students' development in various

Action

aspects. All along, EDB had communicated with schools and parents on homework matters, and emphasized in its guidelines the importance of a balanced and healthy lifestyle for students. Through school-based support services, school visits, daily contacts, etc, EDB encouraged schools to strengthen communication with parents on homework arrangement. In addition, EDB had been providing resources for schools to arrange School-based After-school Learning and Support Programmes for students.

5. Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung shared the view that students should complete all their homework at schools. He asked whether EDB had made reference to overseas countries where students completed all their assignments at schools and, if so, the stance of EDB over such practice. US(Ed) responded that EDB would make reference to the views of experts, and practices of different places, and most importantly, consult different stakeholders and take into account the actual circumstances in Hong Kong when setting requirements and developing curriculum guides. EDB had all along maintained close communication with schools and encouraged them to arrange time in the school time-table as far as possible for students to complete their homework so as to let students have sufficient rest time.

6. While recognizing the negative effects of excessive homework on students, Dr Priscilla LEUNG considered it not desirable to require schools to arrange time within lessons for students to complete all their assignments across the board. In her view, homework was a close collaboration among parents, schools and students. Students should complete homework that was more difficult at schools under teachers' guidance and complete other homework at home. To address the problem of excessive homework, schools should reduce the amount of homework and avoid exercises which focused on mechanical drilling and repeated copying. She suggested the Administration to provide teachers with more training on homework design and related teaching materials.

7. Mr Abraham SHEK was of the view that homework was an important component in the learning process which helped students to understand and consolidate what they had learnt in schools. To help schools give meaningful homework to students, EDB should explain clearly in its guidelines EDB's stance on homework, the meaning and purpose of homework and suggested time spent on homework. A survey on the homework load of primary students should also be conducted. Deputy Secretary for Education (5) responded that EDB had set out clearly the meaning and purpose of homework and even the role of parents in supporting their children to do homework in Chapter 8 "Meaningful Homework" of the "Basic Education Curriculum Guide (Primary 1-6) 2014". Nevertheless, she concurred that EDB should explore means to foster schools' effective implementation of relevant guidelines. US(Ed) concurred that homework could help students consolidate their learning, deepen understanding and demonstrate what they had learnt. It was common that students would encounter difficulties and make mistakes when doing homework. Schools

Action

should understand what difficulties students might encounter and explore how to help them to improve instead of putting undue emphasis on scores and time spent.

8. Ms Claudia MO and Dr Helena WONG were worried that excessive homework load might affect students' psychological well-being. Ms MO pointed out that according to a recent survey, every one in seven primary students in Hong Kong was suffering from depression, and excessive homework was one of the most common sources of stress. In her view, homework should encourage creativity for students' development and mechanical drills should be avoided. Dr WONG was of the view that the Administration should gain a full understanding of students' existing homework load, tighten the monitoring mechanism and tackle the problem of excessive homework load on students. The Deputy Chairman shared similar views with Dr WONG.

9. Dr Helena WONG further said that EDB removed the homework time ceilings for primary school students in the relevant curriculum guide in 2014. She enquired about the justifications for the removal, and the mechanism put in place by EDB thereafter to ensure that students would not be unduly overburdened with homework. US(Ed) explained that the homework time ceilings had been removed after consultations with different stakeholders who concurred with the view that setting quantitative indicators for homework load was neither meaningful nor conducive to learning and teaching. In 2015, EDB issued the guidelines on homework and tests to specify the guiding principles and practical measures of designing meaningful homework for enhancing learning and teaching effectiveness. Schools were reminded to upload their homework policies on school websites, explain to parents about their homework arrangement and strengthen communication with parents on homework matters. In terms of monitoring, EDB would continually look into schools' homework policies through external school reviews, focus inspections and regular contacts. Notwithstanding US(Ed)'s reply, Dr WONG considered it necessary for EDB to issue guidelines setting out maximum homework load for schools' reference.

10. Mr CHEUNG Kwok-kwan pointed out that it was not unusual for schools to assign excessive homework to students, which had a negative effect on family life and put strains on relationships at home. EDB should monitor schools to ensure effective implementation of the guidelines on homework.

11. Dr CHENG Chung-tai considered that EDB's guidelines on homework could not ease students' heavy homework load and it would be necessary for EDB to review the guidelines. He also urged the Administration to ensure schools' allocation of 100-minute resting time for students in whole-day primary schools. In addition, he considered that the findings of the questionnaire surveys commissioned by EDB in 2015 and 2016 attributing the problem of homework pressure to learner differences and practices of individual schools were not convincing (paragraph 12 of the Administration's paper). Mr HUI Chi-fung

Action

asked whether EDB was aware that many students did not have sufficient rest and family time.

12. US(Ed) restated that a "Healthy Lifestyle" had been one of the learning goals of the school curriculum since 2000. One of the concrete measures was EDB's guidelines on homework. It emphasized that schools should plan holistically so as to strike a balance between quality and quantity. Irrespective of frequency and modes of homework, student needs should be taken into consideration in the first place. Diversified modes of homework should also be designed. Setting specific amount of homework time in any forms as an indicator would mislead schools to focus on quantity and neglect students' actual needs for flexible adjustment. At the request of Dr CHENG Chung-tai, US(Ed) agreed to provide after the meeting the questionnaires, detailed findings (including the average time spent daily on homework by primary and secondary students, if any) and analysis of the surveys on homework commissioned by EDB in 2015 and 2016 as referred to in paragraph 12 of the Administration's paper.

(Post-meeting note: The Administration's written response was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(4)1048/17-18(01) on 8 May 2018.)

13. Ms Starry LEE said that many parents who were better-off would enrol their children in international schools because of their more relaxed learning atmosphere. She asked whether EDB had drawn reference from studies in other places and any local studies when drawing up the homework guidelines. US(Ed) responded that apart from drawing references from the findings and practical experiences of overseas studies, the Administration would gain understanding of overseas practices through conferences, visits and exchange activities to ensure that the education policies in Hong Kong were in line with international development. She also pointed out that it would take time to change existing culture, tradition and paradigm for pleasurable learning and quality education. Concerted efforts of different parties, including councillors, EDB, frontline school teachers and parents would be needed. The Chairman requested the Administration to provide information/studies gathered on homework guidelines, homework load and homework time in Hong Kong and overseas places.

(Post-meeting note: The Administration's written response was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(4)1048/17-18(01) on 8 May 2018.)

14. The Deputy Chairman, Mr SHIU Ka-chun and Dr Fernando CHEUNG queried the Administration's view that setting a daily maximum amount of homework load and time was "unprofessional" and urged EDB to draw reference from overseas countries which set upper limits on homework load. The Deputy Chairman considered that the whole-day primary schooling had deviated from its original purpose of offering students a favourable learning

Action

environment and EDB should look into the problem. Mr SHIU Ka-chun said that not only overseas countries had taken actions to reduce homework load, Sham Shui Po District Council had also passed a motion at its meeting in May 2017 urging for the implementation of "No Homework Day" in schools to alleviate students' homework pressure. He urged the Administration to require schools not to assign homework to students during at least one vacation to ensure school life balance for students, and expressed his willingness to discuss with the Administration how to promote "No Homework Day" in primary schools. In the light of the homework policies of overseas countries to regulate homework load, Dr Fernando CHEUNG queried the Administration's strong resistance to setting a maximum amount of homework load.

15. In the light of members' concerns over excessive homework load, the Chairman urged the Administration to explore the feasibility of reviewing students' homework load with a view to addressing the problem.

Teachers' workload

16. Mr HO Kai-ming expressed grave concern about teachers' excessive workload (64.5 hours a week as indicated by a recent survey) brought about by the overcrowded curriculum and the increase in non-teaching duties. He called on the Administration to implement support measures to alleviate teachers' workload, such as re-designing the curriculum in order to reduce homework load in the end. US(Ed) stressed that the Administration had all along attached great importance to alleviating teachers' workload. The current-term Government had increased recurrent expenditure on education by \$3.6 billion for the implementation of a package of priority measures, which covered, among others, enhancing the provision of teaching manpower resources for schools. EDB had also been providing schools with cash grants for employing additional staff to assist regular teachers in taking up non-teaching duties and providing counselling services for students.

Motions

17. The Chairman referred members to the five motions proposed respectively by Mr Michael TIEN, Mr HUI Chi-fung, Mr Wilson OR, Mr SHIU Ka-chun and Dr Fernando CHEUNG (wording of the motions in **Appendices I to V**).

18. The Chairman put the motion moved by Mr Michael TIEN to vote. All members voted for the motion. The Chairman declared that the motion was carried.

19. The Chairman put the motion moved by Mr HUI Chi-fung to vote. All members voted for the motion. The Chairman declared that the motion was carried.

Action

20. The Chairman put the motion moved by Mr Wilson OR and seconded by Mr CHEUNG Kwok-kwan to vote. All members voted for the motion. The Chairman declared that the motion was carried.

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

22. The Chairman put the motion moved by Dr Fernando CHEUNG to vote. Nine members voted for the motion, no member voted against it and four members abstained. The Chairman declared that the motion was carried.

IV. 8012EE - Redevelopment of Island School at 20 Borrett Road, Mid-Levels

(LC Paper No. CB(4)427/17-18(01) -- Paper provided by the Administration)

23. Members noted the paper provided by the Administration on the redevelopment of Island School at 20 Borrett Road, Mid-Levels ("the project") [LC Paper No. CB(4)427/17-18(01)].

24. The Chairman drew members' attention to Rule 83A of the Rules of Procedure, which provided that a Member shall not move any motion or amendment relating to a matter in which he had a pecuniary interest, whether direct or indirect, or speak on any such matter, except where he disclosed the nature of that interest. She reminded members to declare interest, if any, in the subject under discussion.

Discussion

25. Ms Tanya CHAN recalled that the cost for constructing a standard-design public sector secondary school with 30 classrooms ranged from about \$300 million to some \$400 million over the past few years. She enquired whether the estimated Government capital subvention of \$536.3 million for the project was reasonable and whether there was any increase in the provision of facilities for a standard-design public sector secondary school over the past few years. US(Ed) explained that the capital subvention for the project, which had been calculated on the basis of the reference cost for constructing a standard-design 30-classroom public sector secondary school on a pro-rata basis with the same student population as Island School, was higher as compared with a 30-classroom project because 42 classrooms were involved in the project and the subvention also covered the costs for the demolition works and site formation works.

Action

26. In reply to Mr CHAN Chi-chuen's enquiry, US(Ed) confirmed that the Government capital subvention for the project would be capped at \$536.3 million even there was cost overrun.

27. Mr Abraham SHEK declared interest as the Chairman of the Board of Governors of the English Schools Foundation ("ESF") and appealed for members' support for the project. He explained that when ESF reached an agreement with the Government on the phasing out of subvention in 2013, it included an agreement to subsidize the redevelopment of Island School subject to the approval of Public Works Subcommittee ("PWSC") and Finance Committee ("FC"). The estimated Government subvention was considered justified because the project involved the construction of a 42-classroom school premises along the hillside. Moreover, concrete spalling from the ceilings and exterior walls of the existing school premises had posed hazards to safety. Last but not the least, ESF's school fee was the lowest among international schools.

28. Dr Helena WONG sought information on the policy of capital subvention for ESF schools and raised concerns on the appropriateness of the Administration providing capital subvention for the project if Island School was a private international school operating on a self-financing basis and making profits by charging tuition fees. US(Ed) explained that the Administration subsidized the project because of the historical reason as mentioned by Mr Abraham SHEK. The Administration had informed the Panel on the phasing-out arrangement as agreed with ESF in 2013. US(Ed) further advised that ESF schools were non-profit-making schools. Tuition fee adjustments by ESF were subject to the prior approval of EDB in accordance with the established mechanism. Factors to be considered in examining ESF's application for fee increase included, among others, explicability of the application, benefits to students, parents' affordability, sound financial planning and engagement with parents and other stakeholders in soliciting support and addressing their concern. Mr Abraham SHEK added that the Director of Audit was allowed to conduct audits of ESF.

29. The Deputy Chairman supported the project given Island School's ageing and dilapidated premises which had posed hazards to safety. However, he expressed concern about the redevelopment of schools operating in sub-standard premises. Pointing out that a secondary school in Kowloon Tong with similar physical conditions as Island School had recently applied for in-situ redevelopment but was declined by the Administration, he enquired about the reasons for the decline, the prevailing school redevelopment policy and measures to be taken by the Administration to speed up the redevelopment of sub-standard school premises. US(Ed) stressed that the Administration had been making great efforts in improving the teaching and learning environment of public sector schools through, among others, redevelopment/reprovisioning or expansion of school premises. In considering an application for in-situ redevelopment, the Administration would take into account a basket of factors,

Action

including the quality of learning and teaching of the school, whether the size of the existing premises was suitable for redevelopment, availability of decanting premises, sustainability of the school operation, etc. At the request of the Deputy Chairman, US(Ed) undertook to re-visit the aforesaid application and provide a written response to the Panel.

(Post-meeting note: The Administration's written response was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(4)543/17-18(01) on 29 January 2018.)

30. Noting that ESF would bear the renovation cost for the decanting premises, Mr CHAN Chi-chuen asked whether it was a usual practice for school sponsors to bear such renovation cost. US(Ed) explained that as Island School was not a public sector school, ESF was required to bear the renovation cost for the decanting premises.

31. Mr CHAN Chi-chuen also expressed concern on the high top-up cost (i.e. \$681.4 million) for "above-standard" facilities on the new school premises to be borne by ESF. He asked whether Island School was free to decide on its contribution for "above-standard" facilities. Principal Assistant Secretary (Infrastructure & Research Support) ("PAS(I&RS)") advised that according to the established policies, subject to EDB's approval, schools might provide "above-standard" facilities on the school premises at their own construction and maintenance costs to cater for the diversified needs of their students and to enhance learning and teaching effectiveness.

32. The Deputy Chairman suggested the Administration to explore how to improve the facilities of public sector schools to enhance teaching and learning by drawing reference to Island School's provision of non-standard facilities for the new school premises.

33. In response to Mr CHAN Chi-chuen's enquiry about the ownership of the school premises upon redevelopment, PAS(I&RS) explained that Island School's existing lot had been granted to ESF by private treaty in the early years. ESF had agreed to sign with the Administration a Service Agreement setting out the use of Government subvention (including the construction cost) and the operating standard of its schools. If non-compliance was identified, the Administration would be entitled to recover its subvention granted to ESF.

34. The Chairman concluded that the Panel supported the Administration's submission of the funding proposal to PWSC and FC.

Action

V. Implementation of Free Quality Kindergarten Education

(LC Paper No. CB(4)427/17-18(02) -- Paper provided by the Administration

LC Paper No. CB(4)427/17-18(03) -- Background brief on free quality kindergarten education policy prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat)

35. At the invitation of the Chairman, Secretary for Education ("SED") briefed members on the latest development in respect of the implementation of the new kindergarten ("KG") education policy starting from the 2017-2018 school year, details of which were set out in the Administration's paper [LC Paper No. CB(4)427/17-18(02)].

36. Members noted the background brief prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat for this agenda item at LC Paper No. CB(4)427/17-18(03).

Discussion

Kindergarten services

37. Ms Tanya CHAN was pleased to learn that a lot more whole-day ("WD") and long whole-day ("LWD") KGs had collected school fees below \$1,000 per month with the implementation of the Free Quality KG Education Scheme ("the Scheme"). In her opinion, a firm policy should be formulated to extend the Scheme to cover WD and LWD KGs. She asked whether the Administration had any plan to do so. SED responded that the Administration was aware of the demand of the community for the provision of full subsidies to WD and LWD KGs. However, as WD and LWD KG services were not considered essential from an educational perspective, the Administration had no plan to provide full subsidies to these KGs at this stage. Notwithstanding, the Administration recognized the role of the services provided by WD and LWD KGs in unleashing the potential of the local labour force. Hence, additional subsidies were provided for WD and LWD services on a co-payment basis between the Government and parents to enable those parents in need of such services to have access to them at a more affordable cost. The Administration would keep in view of the developments to meet the needs of the society.

38. Mr HUI Chi-fung did not subscribe to the view that working parents should bear part of the additional costs of WD and LWD KG services. He opined that the Administration was obliged to provide free KG education to all children, irrespective of their family backgrounds, with the implementation of 15-year of free education.

Action

39. While appreciating the Administration's efforts in achieving the goal of free KG education, Ms Starry LEE enquired whether the numbers of WD and LWD KG places had been increased under the Scheme, and whether the Administration had revised the existing planning standards for provision of more WD and LWD KG places. Mr HO Kai-ming considered it necessary to increase the numbers of WD and LWD KG places to facilitate more women to join the workforce and meet the growing demand for such places.

40. SED responded that EDB was working in the final stage with the Planning Department to revise the current planning standards for provision of KG places from 730 HD and 250 WD KG places to 500 HD and 500 WD KG places for every 1 000 children in the age group of three to under six. The proposal had been circulated to Bureaux/Departments concerned. Upon endorsement, the revised standard would be applied to new public housing estates and large-scale private development projects for developing new KGs as appropriate, and the provision of KG places, in particular WD places, would increase. SED assured members that the Administration would continue its effort in this regard. He undertook to provide after the meeting the respective numbers of WD and LWD places in the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 school year.

(Post-meeting note: The Administration's written response was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(4)713/17-18(01) on 9 March 2018.)

41. Ms Starry LEE was worried that small scale KGs might face operating difficulties under the Scheme because the subsidy level was based on the number of students, and enquired whether survival was a grave problem among these KGs. SED responded that the Scheme had just been implemented from the 2017-2018 school year, the Administration did not see such a phenomenon for the time being. As both large and small-scale KGs would share with EDB their experiences and concerns under the Scheme, EDB would keep in view of the situation and review the implementation of the Scheme in three years' time.

School fees and miscellaneous charges

42. Mr HO Kai-ming called on the Administration to reserve more premises for KG use in new public housing estates so that KGs would not have to charge high school fees to defray expenses on rent. While welcoming the implementation of the Scheme, Dr Helena WONG expressed concern that not all KGs joining the Scheme ("Scheme-KGs") were free. She enquired about the number of Scheme-KGs collecting school fees and among them, the number of KGs charging school fees at the ceilings set by EDB (i.e. \$9,960 and \$25,890 per student annum for half-day ("HD") KGs and WD/LWD KGs respectively). SED advised that in the 2017-2018 school year, about 90% of HD Scheme-KGs were free and about 70% of WD/LWD Scheme-KGs collected school fees below \$1,000 per month. SED agreed to provide after the meeting information on the

Action

range of school fees collected by the remaining 10% of HD KGs and the number of KGs in each range.

(Post-meeting note: The Administration's written response was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(4)713/17-18(01) on 9 March 2018.)

43. Mr HO Kai-ming, Dr Helena WONG and Mr SHIU Ka-chun expressed grave concern over the hefty miscellaneous fees charged by KGs. Mr HO urged the Administration to provide assistance to children from needy families to pay for expenses on school uniforms, tea and snacks, etc. Dr WONG asked whether these school-related expenses had been included in the school fees collected by KGs and whether these expenses were subject to a specified ceiling in each school year. Pointing out that some KGs collected miscellaneous fees of more than \$7,000, Mr SHIU was concerned about the possibility of over-charging and whether suitable regulatory measures had been taken by the Administration.

44. SED explained that it was a common practice for KGs to conduct trading operation as miscellaneous charges for school items such as textbooks, exercise books, school uniforms, etc. He agreed with the need for the Government to step up monitoring over such trading operation. In this connection, EDB had required Scheme-KGs to observe the guiding principles, including that no profit should be made from the sale of textbooks, and all profit generated from sale of other items must be ploughed back into the KGs for use in school operation and provision of KG education services. Although the Administration had not set a ceiling on the charges of certain items, KGs were required to set out the miscellaneous charges and the list of items on their school websites and in the "Profile of Kindergartens and Kindergarten-cum-Child Care Centres" ("the Profile") to help parents understand the situation. At the request of Dr Helena WONG, SED undertook to provide after the meeting information on the range of miscellaneous fees (with a breakdown by major school items, such as school uniforms) charged by Scheme-KGs.

(Post-meeting note: The Administration's written response was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(4)713/17-18(01) on 9 March 2018.)

45. The Chairman asked the Administration to consider listing out clearly the basic and optional fee items for better regulation of miscellaneous fees charged by KGs and drawing up specific guidelines with a cap on the miscellaneous charges collected by KGs with a view to alleviating the financial burden on low-income families. SED responded that it might not be feasible to list out the basic and optional items as the practices varied widely among KGs. For example, some KGs did not conduct trading operation on school uniforms.

Action

Salary scale for and professional development of KG teachers

46. Members were pleased to note that the Administration would explore the feasibility of putting in place a salary scale for KG teachers. Ms Tanya CHAN enquired about the action plans for the review and whether a decision on the establishment of a salary scale would be made during the review. Mr CHEUNG Kwok-kwan enquired whether the Administration had set a concrete timetable on establishing a salary scale for KG teachers. As the establishment of a salary scale was in line with the Chief Executive's pledge to introduce measures to maintain the stability of teaching force, Mr SHIU Ka-chun called for early implementation of the salary scale for KG teachers.

47. SED advised that the Administration was discussing with the KG sector the operational issues that might arise from the establishment of a salary scale, such as allocation of KG places and rigid number of teachers in each KG. In the coming two to three school years, the Administration would collect relevant data, for example, the latest information on KG teachers' salaries, for the purpose of assessing the implications of a salary scale for KG teachers on the future development of the KG sector. It was expected that, in about three years' time, the Administration would come up with a decision on, and the timeline if necessary for, the setting up of a salary scale for KG teachers.

48. The Deputy Chairman noted that EDB had set a soft target of 60 hours of continuous professional development ("CPD") activities in a three-year cycle for KG principals and teachers. He was worried that the soft target might impose an additional burden on KG teachers if they were required to take up CPD activities after long working hours. To his understanding, KG teachers in Mainland China took up the required 360 hours of CPD activities within school hours.

(At about 12:40 pm, the Chairman directed that the meeting be extended by 15 minutes to allow sufficient time for discussion.)

Quality assurance and school governance

49. Dr CHENG Chung-tai was concerned that the refined performance indicators ("PIs") for conducting quality review ("QR") of Scheme-KGs starting from the 2018-2019 school year embraced national education elements, such as having a knowledge of the national flag and anthem. He asked whether the refined PIs were also applicable to non-Scheme-KGs and whether the QR reports would be made public. He also suggested EDB to brief the Panel on the refined PIs in a future meeting to facilitate members in knowing more details about the refined PIs. SED advised that the refined PIs were applicable to all KGs. QR visits were conducted on a six-year cycle basis for Scheme-KGs and the new cycle would start in the 2018-2019 school year. EDB would continue to upload QR reports onto its websites for public information. Starting from the new QR cycle, the English version of the QR reports would also be uploaded in

Action

light of the requests from parents of non-Chinese speaking ("NCS") students. SED further advised that "having knowledge of the national flag and anthem" mentioned by Dr CHENG was an example provided for the developmental characteristic generally shown by children at specified age, but it was not suggested outcome that children should attained. That said, it was only reasonable to let students be aware of their own country. As usual, the Administration was willing to discuss various subject matters with members where necessary.

(Post-meeting note: Dr CHENG Chung-tai's letter dated 14 February 2018 expressing concerns over the refined PIs and the Administration's written response were issued to members vide LC Paper Nos. CB(4)723/17-18(01) and (2) respectively on 12 March 2018.)

50. The Deputy Chairman said that it might not be appropriate to apply the practice of setting up an Incorporated Management Committee in aided primary and secondary schools to KGs. Given the small scale of KGs with only ten odd teachers in a KG, teachers would be overburdened with additional administrative work arising from the establishment of a school management committee ("SMC"). Furthermore, as an SMC only required a minimum of three school managers, he queried the need for Scheme-KGs to set up an SMC. He suggested the Administration to conduct extensive consultation with the KG sector and take into consideration KGs' specific characteristics before putting forward initiatives under the Scheme. Sharing a similar concern, Mr WU Chi-wai enquired about the role and functions of SMC in Scheme-KGs. SED explained that the Administration aimed to introduce a more participatory governance framework comprising, apart from the sponsoring body, representatives from different KG stakeholders as appropriate, such as parents, teachers, alumni and independent members, to enhance transparency in the operation of Scheme-KGs.

(At about 12:50 pm, with the consent of all members present, the Chairman further extended the meeting for 15 minutes to finish the discussion of this agenda item.)

Support to students with special needs

51. Dr Fernando CHEUNG enquired about the timetable for increasing the number of service places to 7 000 in phases under the regularized scheme on On-site Pre-primary Rehabilitation Services. SED undertook to provide a written response in this regard after the meeting.

(Post-meeting note: The Administration's written response was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(4)713/17-18(01) on 9 March 2018.)

Action

52. Mr WU Chi-wai asked whether there was any assessment to early identify KG students with special educational needs so as to provide appropriate services to cater for the specific needs of individual students. SED advised that the pilot scheme on On-site Pre-primary Rehabilitation Services was launched by the Social Welfare Department ("SWD"), with multi-disciplinary service teams from NGOs offering outreaching services to participating KGs and KG-cum-child care centres with a view to providing timely and appropriate support to children with special needs. SWD was conducting a comprehensive review on the pilot scheme in order to formulate the mode of operation when the scheme was regularized.

Support to NCS students

53. Dr Fernando CHEUNG asked whether the Administration would require Scheme-KGs receiving additional NCS grant to list out how they used the grant in the Profile for parents' reference, and how the Administration would evaluate the effectiveness of the provision of grant. SED responded that EDB would encourage KGs to provide such information in the Profile and review in a year or two.

54. Dr Fernando CHEUNG sought information on the Basic Course attended by the teachers of Scheme-KGs receiving the NCS grant, and asked whether multi-cultural training would be provided for KG teachers so as to strengthen support to NCS students. Deputy Secretary for Education (3) ("DS(Ed)3") advised that the Basic Course on support to NCS students in KGs was jointly organized by EDB and The University of Hong Kong. SED undertook to provide detailed information on the Basic Course after the meeting.

(Post-meeting note: The Administration's written response was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(4)713/17-18(01) on 9 March 2018.)

55. To facilitate inclusion, Mr WU Chi-wai urged the Administration to explore measures to avoid concentration of NCS students in certain KGs and primary schools. DS(Ed)3 responded that EDB had all along encouraged schools to admit local as well as NCS students. As KGs admitting eight or more NCS students were provided with a single-tier additional grant, it was not necessary for KGs to admit more NCS students only to have more resources. Moreover, according to EDB's statistics, NCS students were widely distributed among KGs in different districts.

Action

VI. Any other business

56. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 1:10 pm.

Council Business Division 4
Legislative Council Secretariat
17 May 2018

教育事務委員會
Panel on Education

在2018年1月5日的會議上
就議程項目"小學全日制／家課政策及校本課後學習及支援計劃的推行"
通過的議案

Motion passed under the agenda item
"Implementation of whole-day schooling/homework policy and School-based
After-school Learning and Support Programmes"
at the meeting on 5 January 2018

議案措辭

《香港教育制度改革建議》鼓勵學校訂立明確的政策和採取適切的措施，照顧學生的多元能力和不同學習需要。現時部份學校的家課政策未能有效照顧不同學生的學習差異，而不少家長亦不懂得如何照顧孩子的學習需要。就此，本委員會促請政府當局，就學校和家長處理學習差異的責任，對雙方作出具體指引，以免雙方無所適從。

(田北辰議員動議)

Wording of the Motion

(Translation)

The Reform Proposals for the Education System in Hong Kong encourages schools to formulate clear policies and adopt appropriate measures to develop students' multiple abilities and meet their diverse needs. The existing homework policies of some schools fail to cater for learning diversity among different students in an effective way, and quite a lot of parents do not know how to fulfill the learning needs of their children. In this connection, this Panel urges the Administration to draw up concrete guidelines on the responsibilities of schools and parents in handling learning diversity, so that the two parties will not be thrown into confusion.

(Moved by Hon Michael TIEN Puk-sun)

教育事務委員會
Panel on Education

在2018年1月5日的會議上
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at the meeting on 5 January 2018

議案措辭

本會促請政府正視小學生及家長的家課壓力問題，及研究於局方向學校發出的指引中制定更具體及合理的家課量指標，及確保學校跟隨於校內的休息時間指引。

(許智峯議員動議)

Wording of the Motion

(Translation)

This Panel urges the Government to face up to the problem of homework pressure on primary students and their parents, study the formulation of a more specific and reasonable indicator for homework load in the guidelines issued by the Education Bureau to schools, and ensure that schools will follow the guidelines on rest time in schools.

(Moved by Hon HUI Chi-fung)

教育事務委員會
Panel on Education

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議案措辭

鑒於本港近年發生多宗學童因為學習壓力而輕生的不幸事件，有父母亦反映香港學童的功課量太多，每日放學後要耗用大量時間才能完成，導致缺乏合理的遊戲時間；更有甚者，部份學童連休息和睡眠的時間亦不足夠。

就此，本委員會促請政府盡快全面審視現行本港教育制度下的中／小學學童功課量；同時率先在全港小一至小三級別推行自願參加性質的"回家零功課"研究計劃，要求參與計劃的學校讓學童在上課時間內完成全部功課，回家後不用再埋頭苦幹，以減輕學童壓力。

(柯創盛議員動議，張國鈞議員附議)

Wording of the Motion

(Translation)

A spate of unfortunate incidents of students committing suicide due to study pressure has occurred in Hong Kong in recent years. Some parents have also relayed that the homework load of Hong Kong students is too heavy. Every day, students have to devote a lot of time to finish their homework after school. Consequently, they lack a reasonable amount of time to play. Moreover, some students do not even have enough time to rest and sleep.

In this connection, this Panel urges the Government to expeditiously conduct a comprehensive review of the homework load of primary/secondary students under the existing education system of Hong Kong. In parallel, the Government should take the lead to implement in Primary One to Primary Three classes over the territory a voluntary "zero

homework" study programme by requesting participating schools to let students finish all their homework during school hours, so as to alleviate the pressure on students as they no longer need to work strenuously at home after school.

(Moved by Hon Wilson OR Chong-shing and seconded by Hon CHEUNG Kwok-kwan)

教育事務委員會
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議案措辭

本會促請教育局需重訂"功課指引"，並積極考慮制訂：

- (1) 最高功課時間；
- (2) 限制學校於星期五給予學生的功課量應與平日上課日子一樣；
及
- (3) 學校需釋出最少一個長假期不給予任何功課，讓學生擁有
"真假期"。

(邵家臻議員動議)

Wording of the Motion

(Translation)

This Panel urges the Education Bureau to revise the "homework guidelines" and actively consider :

- (1) setting maximum homework time;
- (2) requiring schools to assign same amount of homework on Fridays and other school days;
- (3) requiring schools to arrange at least one long vacation homework-free so as to allow students to have a "genuine vacation".

(Moved by Hon SHIU Ka-chun)

教育事務委員會
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議案措辭

有國際研究顯示，全球46個國家及地區中，香港的功課時間第二高，研究亦發現，功課時間愈短，學生閱讀能力愈高。近年有很多學生及兒童亦表示功課壓力過重，應予以限制。本委員會促請教育局應為全港幼兒及小學生訂下最高功課量和時間的上限指引，並主動監察此等指引是否得以落實，還兒童健康成長的空間。

(張超雄議員動議)

Wording of the Motion

(Translation)

According to an international study covering 46 countries and regions, Hong Kong school children spend the second-longest time on homework. The study also found that students who spend less time doing homework are better readers. In recent years, many students and children have also indicated that their homework burden is excessively heavy and the amount of homework should be limited. This Panel urges the Education Bureau to formulate guidelines to cap the homework load and homework hours of small children and primary students of Hong Kong as well as to actively monitor the implementation of such guidelines, so as to give back to children a healthy environment to grow up.

(Moved by Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung)