



中華人民共和國香港特別行政區政府總部教育局
Education Bureau
Government Secretariat, The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
The People's Republic of China

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6 September 2018

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

Dear Ms WONG,

Panel on Education
Follow-up to the meeting on 1 June 2018

I refer to your letter of 5 June 2018 requesting the Administration to provide a written response to the motion passed under the agenda item of "Setting up of the Student Activities Support Fund". The Education Bureau's response is enclosed at Appendix for the reference of Members.

Yours sincerely,

(Joe KS NG)
For Secretary for Education

Encl.

Panel on Education Meeting on 1 June 2018
Motion Passed Under the Agenda Item
“Setting Up of the Student Activities Support Fund”

Response from the Education Bureau

Wording of the Motion

This Panel proposes that the application threshold of the Student Activities Support Fund should be relaxed to extend the scope of beneficiaries to cover all primary and secondary students receiving Comprehensive Social Security Assistance and those receiving full or half grant under the School Textbook Assistance Scheme. This Panel also proposes that the Administration should raise the subsidy rates, formulate measures to increase the opportunities for eligible students to successfully participate in funded activities, and frequently review the effectiveness of the additional resource provision.

(Moved by Hon IP Kin-yuen and amended by Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-yee and Hon CHEUNG Kwok-kwan)

Response

Since the Hong Kong Jockey Club Life-wide Learning Fund (JCLWL Fund) will lapse at the close of the 2018/19 school year, the Government proposes to set up the Student Activities Support Fund (SAS Fund) to generate investment income for allocating to schools a Student Activities Support Grant (SAS Grant) as a long-term commitment to continue the support for students with financial needs to participate in life-wide learning (LWL) activities organised or recognised by the schools (but not for tutorial service) for whole-person development. Generally, the annual expenditure of the SAS Grant should be met by the investment income of the SAS Fund. We will determine the implementation details of the SAS Grant in accordance with the principle of fiscal prudence by considering factors such as the estimated annual usable funding and schools' utilisation of the JCLWL Fund in recent years.

Under the ongoing renewal of the school curriculum, LWL is a strategy embedded in the Hong Kong school curriculum aiming to extend student learning from the classroom to other authentic contexts and enable students to gain learning experiences that are difficult to acquire in ordinary classroom settings. The SAS Grant aims at subsidising students to participate in LWL activities organised or recognised by the schools to meet the objectives of the

curriculum and to promote whole-person development. Making reference to the JCLWL Fund, the SAS Grant would support students receiving the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance or full grant under the School Textbook Assistance Scheme. To provide flexibility for schools in their use of the SAS Grant, schools would also be given the discretion in setting school-based criteria to include other financially needy students such as those receiving half grant under the School Textbook Assistance Scheme or students experiencing sudden changes in the family economic status, but the deployed amount should not exceed 25% of the allocation. If the cap is exceeded, schools may contact the Education Bureau for special consideration on individual merits.

We adopt a prudent approach in launching the measure and will set up a review mechanism. The unit subsidy rates are proposed to be \$350 and \$650 per eligible primary and secondary student respectively, which are higher¹ than those of the existing JCLWL Fund. To streamline school administration, it is proposed that different rates be adopted based on the school levels (i.e. primary and secondary) instead of the four key stages. We will review the utilisation of the Grant and adjust the subsidy rates and other operating parameters of the Grant on an actual need basis. The review will take into consideration the performance of the SAS Fund, the utilisation of the SAS Grant, feedback from the participating schools, etc. We will consult the school sector at a later stage.

As for the present urge for the Administration to formulate measures to increase the opportunities for eligible students to participate in subsidised activities, there might have been misunderstanding about the utilisation of the subsidies. In fact, the opportunities for eligible students to take part in any subsidised learning activities are independent of the operation of the Fund proposed. Schools have been organising various LWL activities taking into consideration their own school context, and the places available for popular activities may not be able to meet the demand. Whether a student can successfully enrol in a particular activity is not necessarily related to the economic status of the student.

¹The subsidy rates of the current JCLWL Fund for each eligible student in different key stages are \$180 (Primary 1 to 3), \$300 (Primary 4 to 6), \$315 (Secondary 1 to 3) and \$525 (Secondary 4 to 6). Schools with the utilisation rates of the allocated fund reaching a specified threshold in the preceding school year are eligible to apply for additional funding.