

立法會

Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(4)1343/17-18

Ref : CB4/PL/ED

Report of the Panel on Education for submission to the Legislative Council

Purpose

This report gives an account of the work of the Panel on Education for the 2017-2018 Legislative Council ("LegCo") session. It will be tabled at the Council meeting of 11 July 2018 in accordance with Rule 77(14) of the Rules of Procedure of the Council.

The Panel

2. The Panel was formed by a resolution passed by the Council on 8 July 1998 and as amended on 20 December 2000, 9 October 2002, 11 July 2007 and 2 July 2008 for the purpose of monitoring and examining government policies and issues of public concern relating to education matters. The terms of reference of the Panel are in **Appendix I**.

3. The Panel comprises 33 members, with Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan and Hon IP Kin-yuen elected as its Chairman and Deputy Chairman respectively. The membership list of the Panel is in **Appendix II**.

Major work

Kindergarten education

4. The Panel was briefed on the latest development of the implementation of the new kindergarten ("KG") education policy starting from the 2017-2018 school year. While pleased to note that 70% (as compared to 5% in the 2016-2017 school year) of KGs offering whole-day ("WD")/long WD ("LWD") programmes under the Free Quality KG Education Scheme collected school fees below \$1,000 per month, members requested the Administration to give serious consideration to their calls for the provision of full subsidies and more places to WD and LWD KGs, which had been providing useful services to many families.

Members also called on the Administration to ensure that KGs of a small scale should be provided with sufficient resources to sustain their operations.

5. With a view to maintaining a quality teaching force, members closely followed up issues related to the establishment of salary scale for KG teachers. The Administration was requested to set a concrete timetable for the implementation. According to the Administration, it would base on the data of three school years from 2017-2018 to 2019-2020 to assess the implications of a salary scale for KG teachers on the stability of the teaching force, sustainable development of quality services, as well as flexibility and diversity of the KG sector. It was expected that a decision on, and the timeline if necessary for, the setting up of a salary scale for KG teachers would be made in about three years' time.

6. Members also noted that the quality of KG education was being improved through the enhancement of the Quality Assurance ("QA") Framework. The QA Framework comprised School Self-evaluation ("SSE") by KGs and Quality Review ("QR") by the Education Bureau ("EDB"). Schools would be encouraged to upload their school reports recording the self-evaluation findings onto their websites, while the QR reports would be uploaded on the EDB website for public information. Some members were worried that making the reports public might give rise to the so-called "labeling effect" among KGs. Some other members considered it difficult to ensure that SSEs were carried out effectively. There was also concern that the additional administrative workload arising from preparing schools reports and making preparation for QR visits would add to the heavy workload of KGs, in particular small KGs without sufficient supporting staff.

7. Members in general considered that KG education should provide children with appropriate support so that they might grow healthily and happily. Some members drew the Administration's attention that drilling practice existed in some KGs. To curb drilling in KGs, these members put forth various proposals, including imposing penalties on KGs which continued to drill their students, strengthening focused inspections, and making reference to some countries in establishing objectives of early childhood education by legislative means. There was also a view that parent education should be enhanced to prevent parents from excessively boosting their children's learning.

8. Members also discussed issues related to the provision of premises for KGs, KGs' collection of hefty miscellaneous fees, and support to students with special educational needs ("SEN") and non-Chinese speaking students attending KGs.

Primary 3 Territory-wide System Assessment

9. The arrangements for Primary 3 Territory-wide System Assessment ("P3 TSA") received ongoing attention by the Panel. According to the Administration, P3 TSA this year would adopt a sampling approach observing the principle of "no student names, no school names, and no collection of school reports". Only around 10% of students would be selected by random sampling. Schools who would like to obtain school-level reports to improve learning and teaching could arrange for the participation of all of their P3 students. In members' views, if schools were allowed to arrange all their P3 students to take the assessment, drilling practice would continue.

10. The Panel passed four motions, urging the Administration to, amongst others, require schools to consult parents, teachers, incorporated management committees ("IMC"), etc. on the participation of all P3 students in TSA; give students the choice to opt out P3 TSA; establish a mechanism to closely monitor the implementation of P3 TSA through, for example, conducting questionnaire surveys to gauge the views of parents and teachers; and take follow-up actions such as abolishing the full participation of P3 students if drilling persists.

Whole-day primary schooling and homework policy

11. The Panel was gravely concerned about the negative effects of excessive homework on students' physical and psychological development. Some members cautioned that excessive homework had caused formidable pressure on students. To ensure that students would not be unduly overburdened with homework, members put forward a number of views and suggestions for the consideration of the Administration. These included setting upper limits on homework load and time, requiring schools to provide tutorial sessions within school time for students to complete their homework under teachers' guidance, avoiding repetitious exercises, implementing "No Homework Day", providing teachers with training on homework design and related teaching materials, requiring schools to upload their homework policies on the websites, and drawing reference from the findings of local and overseas studies in formulating homework guidelines. Some members, however, had reservation about "zero homework" policy. They were 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. They suggested the Administration to help schools give meaningful homework to students by explaining clearly in its guidelines the Administration's stance on homework, the meaning and purpose of homework and suggested time spent on homework. The Administration should also explore means to foster schools' effective implementation of relevant homework guidelines.

12. Members pointed out that the time spent daily on homework varied among students had illustrated students' individual differences in learning. They called on the Administration to allocate more resources to cater for students' learning diversity. The need for catering learning diversity among students was underlined in a motion passed by the Panel which urged the Administration to, amongst others, draw up concrete guidelines on the responsibilities of schools and parents in catering for learner diversity.

"One social worker for each school" in primary schools

13. The Panel deliberated on the policy on "one social worker for each school" to enhance the current provision of student guidance services in public sector ordinary primary schools starting from the 2018-2019 school year so that each primary school would be ultimately served by at least one school-based registered graduate social worker.

14. The Panel noted with grave concern the panic among Student Guidance Teachers ("SGT")/student guidance personnel ("SGP") over their career prospects under the new initiative. Members sought the Administration's confirmation that the initiative would not affect the existing SGTs/SGP. According to the Administration, schools currently choosing to employ an SGT could continue with the current arrangements including the appointment of SGTs, the regrading of existing non-graduate SGTs and transfer of existing SGTs under the same sponsoring body. For schools which had already signed contracts with duration more than one year with SGP or social work service providers, a three-year transitional period would be provided for these schools to switch to the new initiative. To ease the worries of SGTs/SGP, EDB assured members that it would make clarification with schools on the relevant arrangements as soon as practicable.

15. Members pointed out that some SGTs/SGP were not graduate social workers, but holding psychology or counselling degrees. Some members suggested the Administration to consider recognizing SGTs/SGP with psychology or counselling degrees as graduate social workers under the new initiative. Some members were of the view that student guidance and social work services were complementary to each other. They strongly called on the Administration to adopt a "one social worker plus one SGT/SGP" service mode in each primary school for the benefit of students. According to EDB, it would review the mode of collaboration between student guidance and social work services, and explore with the education sector various feasible proposals so as to identify the best way to support students through the provision of social work and guidance services.

Moral and civic education

16. The Panel was briefed on the implementation and strategies adopted for the promotion of moral and civic education (values education) ("MCE") in schools. According to the Administration, it was the main goal of the school education in Hong Kong to nurture positive values in students through MCE, which had been one of the four key tasks in the school curriculum since the curriculum reform in 2001. Members fully recognized the importance of cultivating students' positive values and attitudes through learning of various subjects and diverse learning experiences. They considered it necessary to nurture in students different values, viz. "respect for others", "responsibility", "national identity", and "care for others", etc. Some members suggested the Administration to improve the learning and teaching materials to facilitate effective implementation of MCE in schools.

17. Members also discussed the Sister School Scheme which had been launched to provide a platform for strengthening exchange between students of Hong Kong and the Mainland. While some members agreed that the Scheme could enhance students' understanding of the nation's development in education, others opined that to widen students' learning space and horizons, support for sister school activities should not be limited to schools in the Mainland.

Sex education

18. The Panel was briefed on the general implementation of sex education, the measures for preventing sexual harassment in schools and the procedures for handling such cases by schools. Members noted with concern that "Guidelines on Sex Education in Schools" was last revised 21 years ago, in 1997. Some members were of the view that the outdated sex education in Hong Kong had resulted in multifarious social problems, such as teenage pregnancy, compensated dating, etc. As sex education was not an independent subject, some members were worried that schools might not be willing to spend much time on sex education given the loaded curriculum. They urged the Administration to critically review sex education and map out a constructive way forward for the implementation of sex education in different learning stages. There were suggestions that sex education should be made a compulsory subject; surveys on the implementation of sex education in schools should be conducted; teachers teaching sex education should be provided with the necessary training to enhance their professional capability in fostering students' positive values and attitudes; assistance should be sought from relevant experts in developing sex education teaching materials; sex education should be implemented in kindergarten stage, with focus on teaching KG students to identify good and bad touch so as to raise their awareness of self-protection; and support should be given to parents to facilitate them in delivering sex education to their children.

19. On handling sexual harassment cases in schools, the Administration was requested to maintain statistics on sexual harassment complaints handled by schools. Some members called on the Administration to formulate a policy for preventing sexual harassment in KGs and put in place stringent appointment procedures for teachers and other personnel in close contact with children, with a view to reducing sexual harassment in schools.

Assistance to needy students

Subsidy for purchasing mobile computer devices

20. Members welcomed the Administration's proposal to seek funding from the Community Care Fund for provision of subsidy to needy primary and secondary students in public sector schools to purchase mobile devices for three years starting from 2018-2019. Members suggested that the coverage of the assistance programme should not be limited to needy students studying in schools adopting "Bring Your Own Device" policy as proposed by the Administration. To provide students with continuous support, members called on the Administration to make the assistance programme an on-going initiative. To make students more convenient, there was a suggestion that schools assumed the responsibility for maintenance, repair, loss and recycling of the devices and provided the devices to students on an loan basis.

21. A few members considered it necessary to provide user and social support, such as training to students on proper use of the Internet for learning purpose and training to help parents provide guidance to their children on web-based learning, under the assistance programme. They believed that such support was important to low-income families and called on the Administration to allocate additional resources to ensure students' proper and safe use of computers.

Student Activities Support Fund

22. The Panel examined the Administration's proposal to set up the Student Activities Support Fund to continue the support for students with financial needs to participate in life-wide learning activities for whole-person development upon the lapse of the Hong Kong Jockey Club Life-wide Learning Fund at the close of the 2018-2019 school year. Members generally supported the objective of the scheme, however, a member expressed reservation about the setting up of a fund to generate investment income, and urged the Administration to consider providing recurrent funding to schools.

23. Members also put forward suggestions to the Administration for improving the implementation with a view to benefiting more needy students,

including widening the coverage to cover students receiving half grant under the School Textbook Assistance Scheme ("STAS") in addition to those receiving Comprehensive Social Security Assistance or full grant under STAS, and increasing the proposed unit subsidy rates, which were \$350 and \$650 per eligible primary and secondary students respectively. The Panel passed a motion urging the Administration to, amongst others, extend the scope of beneficiaries; 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 resource provision.

Promotion of reading

24. Students' poor motivation and low engagement in reading were of grave concern to the Panel. Members urged the Administration to create a reading atmosphere in schools and foster a territory-wide reading culture. In examining the Administration's measures to promote and support reading in schools, members put forth various proposals to the Administration for consideration. These included, amongst others, setting up self-service public library stations in 18 districts; organizing book-crossing activities; developing book-based computer games to raise students' interest in reading; enhancing school library services; enriching book collections in school libraries; defining the roles of teacher-librarians; drawing reference from other countries with a stronger reading culture in formulating measures to promote reading; and shortening working hours so that parents could have time to read with children. As a long term measure, the Administration was requested to take concrete measures to reduce unnecessary drilling, assessment and homework so as to allow more time for students to read.

25. Members were also pleased to note that starting from the 2018-2019 school year, a new recurrent Promotion of Reading Grant would be disbursed to all public sector primary and secondary schools. Depending on the number of operating classes, each primary school would be allocated annually a maximum of \$40,000, and each secondary school a maximum of \$70,000. Each special school will receive a maximum of \$30,000. As it was important to nurture in children a love for reading starting from early childhood, some members called on the Administration to provide the Grant for KGs. Concern was also raised over the relatively small amount of subsidy for special schools.

School-based management

26. The Panel was briefed on the implementation of school-based management ("SBM") and the way forward with a view to supporting schools to further strengthen the effectiveness of school governance. Some members drew the Administration's attention that not all IMC teacher, parent and alumni

managers could fully perform their managing roles during discussions, for example, on promotion of teachers. While expressing support for the setting up of a Task Force to review the implementation of SBM policy, some members considered that the review should cover the composition and teacher/parent/alumni manager election systems of IMC to enhance the democratization of school management.

Hostel Development Fund

27. The Panel scrutinized the Administration's proposal to set up a \$12 billion Hostel Development Fund ("HDF") as a one-off measure to provide funding for the University Grants Committee ("UGC")-funded universities to construct student hostels.

28. As hostel life was an integral part of university, members were pleased to note that with the establishment of HDF, the total projected shortfall of 13 600 student hostel places would be met within 10 years and all local undergraduate students would be provided with hostel places for one year of their studies. A majority of members, however, expressed reservation about the Administration's arrangement of seeking funding from the Finance Committee for the setting up of HDF, instead of individual hostel project. These members requested the Administration to put in place measures under HDF to ensure proper monitoring by the LegCo. The Administration undertook to submit annual report on the progress of hostel development to the Panel on Education after the introduction of HDF.

29. Some members noted with concern that more and more hostels were located far away from the universities. The Administration was urged to help universities identify suitable sites near the campus or along the railway lines for hotel developments. Some members also suggested the Administration to draw reference from the proposed "InnoCell" project to provide innovative hostel accommodation which would be conducive to students' personal growth and life planning. In the allocation of hostel places, members considered there a need to review the eligibility criterion of daily home-university travelling time exceeding four hours given present-day transport facilities in the territory.

30. Some members pointed out that student hostels had failed to serve as a channel to facilitate the integration of local and non-local students. The Panel passed a motion requesting EDB to give a detailed account of how to promote integration among different groups of students at all levels.

Research Endowment Fund

31. The Administration consulted the Panel on its proposal for injecting \$3 billion into the Research Endowment Fund to generate investment income for providing studentships for local students enrolled in UGC-funded research postgraduate ("RPg") programmes. Members generally supported the objective of the proposed studentships scheme to provide non-means-tested studentships to all local RPg students to alleviate their financial burden, thereby incentivizing more local students to engage in research work. Members, however, expressed concern over the declining number of local RPg students and doubted whether the scheme alone would suffice to attract more local students to undertake RPg programmes. To mitigate the concern about the drop in local RPg students, some members urged the Administration to improve the career prospects for RPg graduates, while others considered that the approved UGC-funded student number for RPg programmes should be increased.

32. Given that no quota restriction was imposed on the admission of non-local RPg students, members expressed concern that non-local students might take up precious public resources at the expense of local students. They considered it necessary to review the current admission policy for RPg programmes to ensure that the resources available to local students would not be compromised as a result of recruitment of non-local students. There was also a view that the Administration should retain non-local RPg graduates to help strengthen Hong Kong's human capital as considerable investment had been made on them.

Support for students with special educational needs

33. The Panel received a briefing from the Administration on the arrangement for SEN students regarding their transition from KGs to primary schools, the related support to these students under the Integrated Education policy and possible areas of improvement.

34. Members attached great importance to the policy and support measures to provide equal learning opportunities for students with SEN. Concern was raised about the difficulty faced by students with SEN in progressing from KGs to primary schools. To enable SEN students to have a smooth transition, some members proposed that the Administration should devise individualized transition/bridging programmes for pre-school children with SEN so that primary schools could provide appropriate support services for these students at the earliest time possible. The plans should be developed with input from the parents, school staff, social workers as appropriate. They also urged for, subject to parental consent, the establishment of a central database for children with SEN to enable frontline personnel, such as social workers, psychologists, etc. to

understand backgrounds of individual students with SEN comprehensively and take more informed and effective follow-up actions.

35. Members were also concerned that the provision of pre-school rehabilitation services would cease when students reached the age of six. A motion was passed urging EDB to, amongst others, continue to provide pre-school rehabilitation services to students who had reached the age of six but had not attended primary schools. Some members also drew the Administration's attention to the insufficient support for students with limited intelligence. The Administration was urged to provide these students with appropriate assistance.

Gifted education

36. The Panel gave views on the Administration's proposal to inject \$800 million into the Gifted Education Fund ("GEF") to increase its investment income to support the operation of the Hong Kong Academy of Gifted Education ("HKAGE") and the development of gifted education. While raising no objection to the injection, members expressed concern that the existing low rate of investment return would unlikely sustain the operation of HKAGE. Some members were worried that further injections in GEF would be required. As GEF could not provide a regular revenue source, some members suggested the Administration to re-consider providing recurrent funding to support HKAGE's operation. There was also a view that HKAGE should enhance financial transparency and accountability by making its financial position public.

37. Members considered it necessary for HKAGE to strengthen affective education for gifted students, seek out gifted students with SEN and set aside resources to help gifted students with SEN to develop their potential. The Administration agreed to explore measures to improve the collaboration between HKAGE and schools so as to early identify gifted students (including those with SEN) and provide them with appropriate support.

Other major financial proposals

38. The Panel examined four capital works projects, namely, the redevelopment of Island School at 20 Borrett Road in Mid-Levels, the construction of an assembly hall at Munsang College at 8 Dumbarton Road in Kowloon City, the 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 the conversion to Heung Hoi Ching Kok Lin Association Buddhist Po Kwong School. Members' major concerns included the need for early re-provisioning of those ordinary and special schools still operating in

sub-standard premises, and the need for provision of schools with boarding section for students with mild intellectual disabilities.

39. Another major financial proposal considered by the Panel was the one-off payment for the examination fees for school candidates sitting for the 2019 Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination. While supporting the proposal in principle, members strongly called on the Administration to extend the scope of application for the measure to cover private candidates, and regularize the measure as soon as practicable.

Meetings and visits

40. From October 2017 to June 2018, the Panel held a total of 12 meetings, including two joint meetings with the Health Services Panel and the Welfare Services Panel on the subjects of "Mental health of adolescents" and "Mental health of children and adolescents". A meeting has been scheduled for July 2018. The Panel also paid a visit to HKAGE to understand the latest development in gifted education.

Council Business Division 4
Legislative Council Secretariat
3 July 2018

Legislative Council

Panel on Education

Terms of Reference

1. To monitor and examine Government policies and issues of public concern relating to education.
2. To provide a forum for the exchange and dissemination of views on the above policy matters.
3. To receive briefings and to formulate views on any major legislative or financial proposals in respect of the above policy area prior to their formal introduction to the Council or Finance Committee.
4. To monitor and examine, to the extent it considers necessary, the above policy matters referred to it by a member of the Panel or by the House Committee.
5. To make reports to the Council or to the House Committee as required by the Rules of Procedure.

Panel on Education

Membership list for 2017-2018 session *

Chairman	Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan, SBS, JP
Deputy Chairman	Hon IP Kin-yuen
Members	Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, GBS, JP Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, 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, BBS, 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 Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok, SBS, MH, 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 Hon AU Nok-hin Hon Vincent CHENG Wing-shun, MH

(Total : 33 Members)

Clerk Ms Angel WONG

Legal Adviser Miss Joyce CHAN

Date 3 July 2018

* Changes in membership are set out in **Annex to Appendix II**

Panel on Education

**Changes in membership
(Year 2017-2018)**

Member	Relevant date
Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming, SBS, JP	Up to 23 October 2017
Hon CHAN Kin-por, GBS, JP	Up to 23 October 2017
Hon Steven HO Chun-yin, BBS	Up to 23 October 2017
Hon WONG Kwok-kin, SBS, JP	Up to 24 October 2017
Hon Alice MAK Mei-kuen, BBS, JP	Up to 24 October 2017
Hon KWOK Wai-keung, JP	Up to 24 October 2017
Hon Christopher CHEUNG Wah-fung, SBS, JP	Up to 25 October 2017
Hon Martin LIAO Cheung-kong, SBS, JP	Up to 25 October 2017
Hon AU Nok-hin	Since 22 March 2018
Hon Vincent CHENG Wing-shun, MH	Since 23 March 2018