

# **立法會**

## ***Legislative Council***

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### **Panel on Education**

#### **Report of the Subcommittee to Study the Development of Textbooks and Teaching Materials for Kindergartens, Primary and Secondary Schools**

#### **Purpose**

This paper reports on the deliberations of the Subcommittee to Study the Development of Textbooks and Teaching Materials for Kindergartens ("KGs"), Primary and Secondary Schools ("the Subcommittee") formed under the Panel on Education ("the Panel").

#### **Background**

2. In the past few years, the quality of textbooks and school-based teaching materials for KGs, primary and secondary schools, in particular those for the Liberal Studies ("LS") subject at senior secondary level, has aroused grave concerns and worries among various sectors of the community. Members have received from parents a considerable number of complaints relating to biased, politicized and inaccurate teaching resource materials. Some of the materials carry hatred messages inciting violence and others contain information spreading law-breaking concepts. The community at large considers that such materials have been misleading and causing harm to students who are mentally immature. It is beyond doubt that the Education Bureau ("EDB") should monitor the quality of teaching resource materials to safeguard students' well-being.

#### **The Subcommittee**

3. The Panel decided at its meeting on 3 January 2020 to set up a subcommittee to study the regulation of the development of textbooks and teaching materials for KGs, primary and secondary schools, and related issues.

The Subcommittee commenced its work in April 2020 upon the availability of a vacant slot for subcommittees on policy issues. The terms of reference of the Subcommittee are in **Appendix I**.

4. Hon YUNG Hoi-yan has been elected Chairman of the Subcommittee. The membership of the Subcommittee is in **Appendix II**. The Subcommittee has held a total of eight meetings, including five to elect the Chairman and three to meet with the Administration.

5. To facilitate members' discussion, the Subcommittee has requested the Research Office of the Legislative Council Secretariat to study the textbook review mechanism and oversight of supplementary teaching materials in overseas places.<sup>1</sup>

## **Deliberations of the Subcommittee**

### Development of textbooks

#### *Textbook review mechanism*

6. The Subcommittee notes that EDB has put in place a textbook review mechanism to ensure the quality of textbooks. Publishers are required to make reference to the "Guidelines on Submission of Textbooks for Review" and "Textbook Writing Guidelines" when writing textbooks. Each textbook is to be assessed by about five reviewers of the relevant subject review panel according to the "Guiding Principles for Quality Textbooks" formulated by EDB. Textbooks that reach the acceptable standard are listed on the Recommended Textbook List ("RTL") for schools' reference in their selection of textbooks. Schools may also use books and references that are not on RTL if they can meet the learning needs of their students.

7. Members are deeply concerned that certain LS "textbooks" available on the market contain biased contents which will mislead students. They have enquired about the reasons for not requiring LS textbooks to be submitted for review. Besides, as LS subject will be reformed, members in general consider it necessary to include the textbooks for the new subject under the review mechanism. There is also a view that EDB should consider providing teachers with official teaching resource materials and strengthening teachers' training for the new subject.

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<sup>1</sup>

The fact sheet can be found at <https://www.legco.gov.hk/research-publications/english/2021fs02-oversight-of-school-textbooks-and-supplementary-teaching-materials-in-selected-places-20210202-e.pdf>

8. As advised by the Administration, LS subject aims at helping students broaden their knowledge base, connect knowledge acquired from different subjects and analyze contemporary issues from multiple perspectives. In view of the evolving nature of most contemporary issues involved in the curriculum, schools are not recommended to use textbooks as the main learning and teaching resources. Hence, it has been decided from a professional perspective that there is no mechanism for submitting LS textbooks for review, nor is there any RTL for the subject. Taking into account the recommendation made by the Task Force on Review of School Curriculum, publishers will be required to submit textbooks of the renamed subject in lieu of LS (renamed as Citizenship and Social Development ("CSD") in April 2021) for review.

9. There is also serious concern that the contents of quite a number of textbooks available on the market are biased and inaccurate, among which some even contain anti-China elements. Some members opine that those textbooks may have breached the National Security Law ("NSL") and urge EDB to set up a professional team to review all approved textbooks in the market to ferret out those that are in breach of NSL.

10. The Administration has advised that it fully understands the concern of the public and has been doing the best to ensure the quality of textbooks. In fact, the rigorous textbook review mechanism has been working effectively since its implementation in 1972. Publishers are required to ensure that the contents of textbooks are in line with the curriculum aims and objectives, and the information provided is accurate, complete, objective and impartial. Textbooks must have good quality before they can be available for sale on the market and members of the public will be able to monitor their contents. Publishers should always review the textbook contents and make necessary amendments from time to time to enhance the quality of textbooks. EDB may also require publishers to make amendments if deemed necessary. Meanwhile, EDB has been seriously following up complaints against textbooks with inappropriate contents. Upon the enactment of NSL, EDB has provided schools with guidelines on details and requirements about the learning and teaching resources on national security education.

11. Some members consider the present textbook review mechanism not effective in ensuring quality as textbooks with inappropriate contents can still be found in the market. EDB should improve the mechanism to address the public concern about inappropriate textbooks, having regard to the prevailing circumstances. According to the Administration, the Curriculum Development Council ("CDC"), Committee on Learning Resources and Support Services, Working Group on Textbooks and e-learning Resources Development, etc. have from time to time reviewed and enhanced the textbook review mechanism to ensure it is responding to the changing needs of the society.

12. Some other members have pointed out that in California of the United States ("the US"), public comments are solicited for the consideration of the relevant authorities throughout the textbook review process. There are also specific provisions against the inclusion of adverse reflections upon persons and/or doctrine or propaganda against the law in the textbooks. There is a suggestion that EDB may make reference to the experience of overseas places when exploring measures to improve the textbook review mechanism. EDB has undertaken to convey members' suggestions of improvement to relevant committees for their consideration.

13. Textbook review panels play a significant role in the textbook review process. With a view to exploring ways of improvement, members have sought further information about the operation of the appointment mechanism of panel members, including the criteria and procedures for enlisting, selecting and assessing panel members, the term of appointment, and whether self-recommendation is accepted.

14. According to the Administration, textbooks submitted for review are assessed by relevant subject review panels, which comprise both internal and external reviewers. Internal reviewers are members of the relevant subject sections of EDB, while external reviewers include serving principals, teachers, academics and other professionals well versed in the subjects concerned. External reviewers are appointed based on the recommendation of EDB's relevant subject sections for a term of two years. Depending on the subject area and grade level of the textbooks for review, external reviewers take turns to review different textbooks.

15. The Subcommittee considers it vital to help students gain a correct understanding of NSL, facilitate their learning of the spirit of the rule of law, and enhance their national security and law-abiding awareness. For this purpose, some members have suggested that official learning and teaching resources for Constitution and Basic Law ("BL") education and national security education should be developed. Some others opine that publishers should be provided with specific guidelines on writing textbooks in relation to those areas of learning.

16. Some members have pointed out that many textbooks have put much emphasis on human rights, freedom of speech etc., while failing to mention the obligations of citizens. There is a view that EDB should set out clearly in the guidelines to publishers and schools the need to balance the teaching of both the rights and obligations of citizens. On the other hand, students should be taught to understand that their rights are not absolute and should only be exercised in a rational and lawful manner.

*Question-setting mechanism of the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination*

17. Quality textbooks, which are written in line with the aims, objectives and contents of central curriculum, help teachers plan for teaching to achieve the curriculum objectives. Curriculum, teaching and assessment are closely linked. Assessment is an integral part of the curriculum and assessment policies have significant impact on supporting learning process. The Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority ("HKEAA") is responsible for the setting and moderation of the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination ("HKDSE") questions.

18. There are calls for improving the transparency and accountability of the mechanism for setting and moderating HKDSE questions and that for appointing moderation committee members. Some members are concerned that some open-ended examination questions are misleading to students.

19. According to the Administration, arising from a controversial question in History Paper 1 in the 2020 HKDSE, a series of measures have been formulated to enhance the question-setting procedure. These include full-implementation of the six-year rule to ensure a growing number of experts from different professional backgrounds that can contribute to paper development, participation of EDB curriculum experts as ex-officio in moderation committees to help align curriculum and assessment goals, improvement of the workflow by exploring use of advanced technology to streamline and properly document moderation meetings and to provide the development process with a higher degree of structure and consistency, and setting up of a designated committee consisting of senior members of HKEAA and representatives of CDC and EDB to deal with unresolved disputes arising during HKEAA's internal paper moderation process.

20. There are views that the aforesaid improvement measures may not be able to rectify HKEAA's long-standing problems, i.e. lack of transparency and accountability for setting and moderating HKDSE questions as well as monitoring from EDB. Some are concerned about HKEAA's dual role of implementing and monitoring the improvement measures at the same time. They opine that EDB's high level of participation in the question-setting procedure is of pivotal importance and note that the new designated committee will provide an avenue for professional inputs from EDB or external experts and a check and balance mechanism to enhance quality and timely handling of sensitive and unresolved matters. Some consider that eligibility vetting should be conducted for moderation committee members. There is also a view that HKEAA staff members involved in the development of the problematic History question should be held accountable.

## Development of teaching materials

### *School-based teaching materials*

21. The Subcommittee notes that other than textbooks, teachers may exercise their professional judgement to develop school-based teaching materials to suit students' learning needs. Some of the school-based teaching materials, such as notes, worksheets, quizzes and supplementary information, are designed by teachers themselves and some are sourced and adapted from different sources, such as newspapers, publishers or Internet.

22. Some members have pointed out that the teaching materials developed by teachers can vary considerably in quality. Some materials are weak in contents and some are just cut and paste work. Members are concerned about teachers' capability of developing high-quality teaching materials for students. Some members have suggested that teachers' capacity in developing and selecting school-based teaching materials should be further enhanced by providing them with specific training programmes. There is also a view that EDB should provide teachers and students with prescribed reference/learning materials for the purpose of quality assurance.

23. According to the Administration, it has been elucidating to schools, through guidelines and circular memoranda, school visits, etc. the requirements and criteria for selecting learning and teaching resources, including those aspects related to infringement of copyright. Various kinds of professional training programmes have also been organized for teachers for this purpose. Besides, EDB has been developing learning and teaching resources for various subjects in order to provide schools with quality teaching materials.

### *Management and quality monitoring*

24. The Subcommittee notes that in line with the spirit of school-based management, the selection and development of teaching materials is under the purview of individual schools. Teachers have the flexibility to develop teaching materials or choose from various types of materials to supplement their lessons.

25. While members well appreciate that most teachers have maintained professionalism in discharging their teaching duties, some members are deeply concerned that a few teachers with ulterior motives have abused the school-based management policy and developed/selected inappropriate teaching materials which have proved to cause far-reaching impact on students. For instance, some teaching materials spread the notion of "Hong Kong independence", and some contain hatred messages deviating from the standards of morality as generally acceptable to the society. Members strongly urge EDB

to take steps to ensure that the school-based teaching materials are developed professionally in accordance with the learning goals and objectives of the curriculum without overstepping moral bottom lines established in the society.

26. As advised by the Administration, it is not practical for EDB to review the resources of every subject in every single school given the considerable amount of school-based teaching materials. Schools have the primary responsibility to perform a gatekeeper role by setting out well-defined school-based criteria for selecting learning and teaching materials and devising a review mechanism for evaluating and monitoring their use in school. Nevertheless, EDB has been monitoring the quality of learning and teaching through the channels of inspections, curriculum development visits, during which the teaching materials and samples of students' assignments provided by schools will be scrutinized.

27. Members take note of the various measures already put in place to monitor the quality of school-based teaching materials. However, in view of the numerous inappropriate school-based teaching materials available, there is reservation on the effectiveness of the existing school-based monitoring mechanism for teaching materials. Some others consider that EDB should strengthen its gatekeeping and monitoring role in the school-based management policy. Some opine that the school-based management policy is the root cause of inappropriate teaching materials, which should be substantially revised. The Administration has been urged to review and plug the loopholes in the existing quality monitoring mechanism or to explore a new approach to rectify the mistaken policy.

28. According to the Administration, school-based teaching materials can create room for schools and teachers to cater for different learning needs of students. Teachers should exercise their professional judgement in selecting appropriate information for the development of school-based materials that are in line with the aims and objectives of the central curriculum. Under no circumstances should teachers bias their teaching with their political stance or mislead their students and impart negative values. If members of the public have any queries about the appropriateness of teaching materials or the professional conduct of teachers in developing the teaching materials of a school, they may reflect directly to the school concerned or via EDB.

29. The Administration has also advised that EDB issued a circular on 4 February 2021<sup>2</sup> reminding schools to establish/strengthen monitoring mechanisms for regularly reviewing the content and quality of learning and teaching (including classroom teaching and teaching resources; learning and

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<sup>2</sup> EDB Circular No. 3/2021 National Security: Maintaining a Safe Learning Environment Nurturing Good Citizens

teaching resources which include school-based teaching materials and assignments (such as worksheets); tests and examination papers; textbooks, reading materials and supplementary exercises and video teaching clips, etc. procured from outsider(s)/ordered for students; and supplementary learning materials compiled by outsourced service providers for the schools). This is to ensure that the content and quality of the learning and teaching resources selected or compiled align with the curriculum aims, goals and coverage prescribed for different key learning stages by CDC and suit students' abilities and learning needs. Teachers should adopt appropriate sources (such as from authoritative institutions/official and verified sources) when selecting materials and guiding students in their study. In addition to the selection of teaching materials, the assignments/reference materials, tests and examination papers, etc. prepared by teachers should also follow this principle.

30. Acknowledging that it is a general practice for teachers to archive work plans/selected and self-compiled teaching materials/student results, etc., the circular further stipulates that school-based learning and teaching materials related to Constitution, BL and national security education be archived and retained for no less than two school years, so that such resource materials for the relevant key stages of learning can be made available to the school management or EDB for inspection on a need basis. To ensure effective planning and monitoring, the circular also requires schools to appoint a working group or dedicated person to formulate and implement measures related to safeguarding national security and national security education, including the oversight of the choice of teaching and learning materials.

31. Some members are concerned that a professional organization has published a children's picture book with negative and political messages, harming the healthy development of young children. There are views that EDB should remove the book from the market and take appropriate follow-up actions if teachers use the book in class. As advised by EDB, teachers and parents must exercise prudence in the selection of reading materials to ensure that the contents are healthy and positive. As the picture book concerned is not published for teaching purpose, it is not under the purview of EDB. Nevertheless, the picture book concerned is definitely unsuitable for KG and primary students. If teachers are found to use the book concerned as teaching materials, EDB will follow up seriously.

### Complaints-handling mechanism

#### *Handling complaints against textbooks*

32. The Subcommittee notes that the public can submit complaints about the appropriateness of textbooks to EDB. Upon receipt of a complaint, EDB



will review the contents of the textbooks concerned and contact the publisher for follow up if necessary. According to EDB, publishers should always review the textbook contents and make necessary amendments from time to time to enhance the quality of textbooks. EDB may also require publishers to make amendments if deemed necessary.

33. At present, parents and students will not be notified if a textbook is found to contain inappropriate contents. Some members consider it vital to put in place an effective notification mechanism, under which EDB will inform schools and the public of the details of the problematic textbooks, including the reasons for taking the textbooks off RTL, so that schools and parents can make timely arrangements. The Administration has advised that if a textbook is substantiated to have contained inappropriate contents, EDB will inform schools of the details at the regular meetings with school heads.

#### *Handling complaints against teaching materials*

34. The Subcommittee notes that under the existing mechanism, the public can lodge a complaint against inappropriate teaching materials or professional misconduct of teachers in developing teaching materials with EDB or the school concerned directly. Upon receipt a complaint, EDB will assess the nature of the case and decide whether to conduct a direct investigation or request the school concerned to follow up.

35. Some members have queried the effectiveness of the existing mechanism for handling complaints as some schools do not respond to complaints nor take substantial follow-up actions. These members have pointed out that complaints which queried individual schools' handling of complaints against inappropriate teaching materials have been received. Concern has also been raised about the conflicting roles of schools in being the subject of complaints and the investigator of complaints at the same time. There is also a view that the Administration should shorten the time for handling each case as far as practicable.

36. As advised by the Administration, all public sector schools and schools under the Direct Subsidy Scheme are required to formulate their own school-based mechanisms for handling school-related complaints (including complaints against teachers) under the Enhanced School Complaint Management Arrangements. EDB will keep close contact with schools and urge them to follow up complaints seriously, including conducting investigations by appropriate school personnel and taking follow-up actions according to the school-based mechanism to ensure the quality of learning and teaching in schools. In general, schools can follow up and respond to complaints in a timely manner.

37. Some members consider that the public, in particular parents and students, should be encouraged to participate in community surveillance and report inappropriate teaching materials for the benefits of students. Nevertheless, many parents are worried that their children may be victimized if their complaints are handled by the schools concerned. Some members have suggested that the Administration should, from the perspective of parents, establish a clear mechanism with simple procedures for making complaints against biased teaching materials and teachers' misconduct. More importantly, the mechanism should ensure that the identity of the complainants is kept confidential to ease parents' worries. There is also a view that complaint cases should not be handled by the schools concerned. EDB should conduct independent investigation for every single complaint, including anonymous ones.

38. As advised by EDB, all complaints of a serious nature will be handled prudently even if they are anonymous and necessary actions will be taken when sufficient evidence is collected. Under the established mechanism, the complainants' consent will be sought before providing information to the schools concerned so as to safeguard complainants' rights. The purpose for EDB to require the schools concerned to investigate and submit report is to allow schools to provide relevant information of the cases, the basic analyses and follow-up actions at school level. Schools have been advised to set up clear and efficient complaint handling procedures and assign suitable personnel to deal with complaints. Staff member who has conflict or potential conflict of interest should not be responsible for handling the complaints. All complaints should be dealt with in the strictest confidence.

39. Question has been raised as to whether the teachers who have been complained about are allowed to make representations to fully defend themselves during the investigation. As advised by EDB, it has been handling every complaint against teachers prudently and seriously to ensure that every case is treated fairly and impartially. The teachers concerned have full and fair opportunities for making representations and self-defense. During the investigation, the school concerned will look into the complaint and let the teacher concerned give explanations on the case. Upon receipt of the schools' reports, EDB will examine the contents carefully. For a case that is likely to be substantiated, EDB will inform the teacher concerned of its views and invite him/her to submit written representations within reasonable time. During the process, EDB will fully consider all the concrete evidence collected, including the school's report and the teacher's representations, before deciding on whether the complaint is substantiated and the necessary follow-up actions.

*Follow-up to substantiated complaint cases*

40. The Subcommittee fully recognizes the importance of professional conduct of teachers for the delivery of quality education. Members have strongly expressed that under no circumstances should teachers teach distorted or wrong contents which bring far-reaching negative impact on students. There is a view that heavier penalty should be imposed on teachers who deliberately develop inappropriate teaching materials, so as to achieve the necessary deterrent effect. However, a member is worried that the disciplinary mechanism may impose great pressure on teachers, increasing the suicide rate among teachers. The Administration has advised that it is summing up the experience gained from handling those cases for considering improvements to the mechanism of handling such complaints, including appropriate penalty on substantiated cases in a fair and reasonable manner.

41. Some members have suggested that if a complaint against inappropriate teaching materials is substantiated, the school concerned should immediately withdraw the use of the teaching materials and issue a statement to parents explaining the reasons for the decision. There are also views that EDB should make public the names of the teachers who have committed professional misconduct, names of the schools where the teachers concerned have worked, details of the cases and improvement measures.

42. According to the Administration, it is subject to the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance and strictly adheres to the principle of confidentiality when handling matters involving the personal data of teachers. Besides, disclosure of details of the teachers and schools concerned may cause negative effects on the schools, the staff and the students concerned. EDB considers it more appropriate to disclose to the public the overall follow-up actions taken to the substantiated cases. Some of the members do not subscribe to EDB's view that the information about misconducted teachers should not be published. These members consider that the public has the right to know the information and have asked EDB to re-consider the suggestion, so as to safeguard the interests of parents and students.

Support for schools and teachers to enhance teaching and learning effectiveness

*Facilitating schools' effective use of textbooks and teaching materials*

43. The Subcommittee recognizes that support and monitoring of school management is of paramount importance for ensuring schools' effective use of textbooks and teaching materials. Some members consider there is a need to deepen schools' understanding of the general principles and specific requirements for the selection of teaching resource materials. School

management should be provided with clear guidelines on their roles and responsibilities in monitoring the use of textbooks and school-based teaching materials, with a view to enhancing accountability. Training should also be provided to the school management to equip them with the necessary skills to effectively lead their teachers in providing quality education.

44. The Subcommittee notes that in the process of teaching and learning, teachers' solid professional knowledge is another important factor for ensuring effective use of textbooks and teaching materials. EDB has been urged to promote the continuing professional development of teachers through the provision of professional development courses and activities, with a view to facilitating them in selecting and using appropriate teaching resources. Some members have highlighted that EDB should facilitate holistic planning and implementation of the teaching of Constitution and BL education as well as national security education in schools by including relevant elements in the professional training programmes for teachers.

45. There are views that EDB should take measures to facilitate schools' effective use of textbooks and teaching materials through enhanced guidance, supervision and regulation. Some opine that EDB can consider making reference to the US where teachers are required to prepare an annual teaching schedule specifying key learning highlights, allocation of lesson time and teaching sequence. The schedule should strictly follow the approved curriculum framework and be distributed to students at the commencement of every school term. Some others urge EDB to compile official learning and teaching resources for teachers' use, so as to provide better guidance on resource materials.

46. According to the Administration, teachers are required to prepare for every subject an annual teaching schedule which sets out the learning objectives, teaching and learning content and strategies, topics, teaching resources, assessment, etc. Moreover, other measures are adopted by schools to enhance the effectiveness of teaching and learning, including joint preparation of teaching and learning materials by teachers responsible for the same subject, regular subject panel meeting to review teaching progress, etc. On the provision of teaching resource materials, EDB has all along been keeping an eye on the overall teaching needs and social development and publishes various teaching materials on certain subjects on an on-going basis.

47. Members consider it is of pivotal importance to cultivate students' positive values and attitudes. EDB has been urged to strengthen moral education and education on the rule of law with a view to building up students' standards of morality and awareness of abiding by law. To enable teachers to explain accurately the related concepts to students, there are suggestions that

EDB can consider providing schools with more support measures, such as ready-to-use learning and teaching resources, teachers' training programmes.

48. According to the Administration, it attaches great importance to developing students to become informed and responsible citizens. Through the implementation of Moral and Civic Education, schools are recommended to nurture in their students the seven priority values and attitudes, which are "perseverance", "respect for others", "responsibility", "national identity", "commitment", "integrity", and "care for others". EDB has, on the basis of the recommendation of the Task Force on Review of School Curriculum, accorded higher priority to values education in schools and strengthen its implementation by adding "law-abidingness" and "empathy" as the priority values and attitudes.

49. There are suggestions that the number of inspections, curriculum development visits, etc. should be increased to provide specific professional advice to help schools refine the work on curriculum implementation and random inspections should be conducted for quality assurance. Nevertheless, some members consider inspections by EDB ineffective.

#### *Assisting teachers with application of technology*

50. There are concerns over the actual performance and behaviour of teachers in classrooms. Some members have pointed out that a few teachers with ulterior motives will not adhere to the curriculum requirements in their daily lessons even if they are provided with official textbooks or teaching materials. For instance, individual teachers may distort facts and some may teach biased concepts or instilled negative values into students in actual teaching.

51. To tackle the few "black sheep" in the teaching profession so as to safeguard the well-being of students, there is a suggestion that closed-circuit television systems ("CCTVs") should be installed in the classrooms of secondary schools for capturing teachers. Some members opine that additionally, classroom CCTVs can be a valuable tool in assisting with teachers' training and students' learning. Students can have the chance to review the lessons and parents can understand the learning progress of their children. Besides, CCTVs can protect teachers from false allegations. In fact, installing CCTVs in classrooms is not a new idea. CCTVs were already in place in the US universities in the 1960s.

52. The Administration has advised that there are alternative means to achieve the purpose of improving the quality of learning and teaching. At present, schools mainly install CCTVs for the purpose of crime prevention. Installing CCTVs in classrooms will put unnecessary pressure on teachers and students, thereby affecting the quality of education. Schools that wish to install

CCTVs in classrooms should take into account the necessity, reasonableness and openness of the installation, and reach a consensus with the relevant stakeholders.

53. Members take note of EDB's concern over CCTVs. As an alternative, some members have suggested that schools can record the lessons with recorders or video recorders for the same purpose. Resources should also be allocated to help schools set up an internal system for parents and students to archive and retrieve class recordings to reinforce learning. EDB has advised that every school has equipment for recording classes for teaching purpose. Teachers can determine whether their lessons should be recorded on a need basis.

54. There are calls for EDB to explore the feasibility of setting up a central database to store a full collection of the teaching materials developed by teachers. With the establishment of the database, EDB should require schools to upload all the school-based teaching materials to the database and allow the public to get access to it. The database can facilitate central monitoring of teaching materials, sharing of teaching materials among teachers and community surveillance of teaching materials. The Administration has advised that the suggestion of submitting all school-based teaching materials to EDB for record purpose must be carefully considered as many practical operational problems are involved at both school and system levels.

#### *Use of information technology in learning and teaching*

55. Some members consider that apart from monitoring teachers' performance, EDB should spare no effort in enhancing teaching and learning effectiveness so as to restore public confidence in Hong Kong's education. For instance, EDB should consider reforming the education system, including the review of curriculum, improvement of teacher management and development of official resource materials. Some others have suggested that EDB should encourage teachers to make use of audio-visual aids and technology such as reading pens to arouse students' motivation in learning. There is also a suggestion that EDB should join hands with the Innovation and Technology Bureau ("ITB") to promote the use of information technology ("IT") in teaching.

56. As advised by EDB, it has been enhancing school's IT environment in terms of hardware, resources and teacher training, and closely collaborating with the school sector and the community to implement various strategies to facilitate teachers to make good use of IT to enhance learning and teaching effectiveness. Among others, it was proposed in the 2020 Policy Address that \$2 billion be set aside in the Quality Education Fund ("QEF") to launch a three-year programme to assist schools to implement blended mode of learning and teaching under the new normal. Schools can also seek funding from QEF in supporting the use of

innovative teaching methods. EDB has been organizing a wide variety of professional development programmes for school leaders and teachers to equip them with the knowledge and skills needed for the implementation of e-learning, including their professional capabilities in using e-textbooks and other e-learning resources.

## **Recommendations**

57. The Subcommittee considers that the Administration should:

### Textbook development

- (a) make reference to the experience of overseas places in reviewing textbooks, such as conducting public hearings and inviting public views at different stages of textbook review, and enhance the existing textbook review mechanism so as to address the public concern of inappropriate textbooks;
- (b) review the textbook review mechanism on a regular basis to ensure it is responding to the changing needs of the society, the development of different subjects and students' needs;
- (c) include textbooks for the new LS subject (renamed as CSD) under textbook review mechanism and develop official textbooks relating to Constitution and BL education and national security education;

### Development of teaching materials

- (d) critically review the existing mechanism for managing and monitoring school-based teaching materials and make enhancement where necessary;
- (e) step up monitoring and ensure that the school-based teaching materials are accurate and in line with the aims and objectives of the central curriculum;
- (f) devise measures to ensure that the school-based teaching materials are developed professionally, such as provision of teachers' training;
- (g) seriously consider developing official teaching resource materials, reference/learning materials and prescribed reading lists for quality assurance;

Handling complaints against textbooks and teaching materials

- (h) provide effective channels or strengthen existing ones for parents to complain against inappropriate school-based teaching materials and professional misconduct of teachers in developing teaching materials;
- (i) keep the complaint-handling mechanisms under ongoing review and enhancement; and where necessary, gauge the views of stakeholders so as to ascertain the effectiveness of the arrangements;
- (j) take practicable steps to shorten the time for handling and investigation of complaints so as to facilitate a timely follow-up on inappropriate teaching materials and minimize negative impact on students;
- (k) closely communicate with the schools concerned to ensure that proper follow-up actions to complaints against inappropriate teaching materials have been taken;
- (l) impose heavier penalty on teachers who deliberately develop or select inappropriate teaching materials to instill negative values in students;
- (m) where complaints against inappropriate teaching materials are substantiated, require the schools concerned to immediately withdraw the use of the materials and issue a statement to parents explaining the reasons for the decision;
- (n) work out an effective notification mechanism to inform schools and the public of the details of the textbooks to be taken off from RTL;
- (o) consider making public details about the substantiated complaints cases regarding inappropriate teaching materials and professional misconduct of teachers, such as publishing those details on EDB's website;

Support for schools and teachers to enhance teaching and learning effectiveness

- (p) provide training programmes to enhance teachers' capacity in developing and selecting high-quality teaching materials and include elements of Constitution and BL education and national security education in the professional training programmes and activities for teachers;



- (q) provide more guidance to the school management in selecting and using textbooks and teaching materials effectively;
- (r) consider introducing measures to ensure teachers' appropriate use of teaching resource materials in classes and to enhance students' learning, such as installing CCTVs in classrooms, using recorders/video recorders and developing a system for schools to archive and retrieve class recordings;
- (s) examine the feasibility of creating a central database to store the school-based teaching materials developed by schools for public access;
- (t) closely collaborate with ITB to devise strategies to drive the adoption of new IT applications in teaching and deploy necessary resources to promote the use of IT with a view to arousing students' interest in learning; and

#### Question-setting of HKDSE

- (u) expeditiously take steps to improve the transparency and accountability of the mechanism for setting and moderating HKDSE questions, including conducting eligibility vetting for moderation committee members and allowing a higher level of participation from EDB.

#### **Advice sought**

58. Members are invited to note the deliberations and recommendations of the Subcommittee.

**Panel on Education**

**Subcommittee to Study the Development of Textbooks and Teaching  
Materials for Kindergartens, Primary and Secondary Schools**

**Terms of reference**

To study the regulation of the development of textbooks and teaching materials for kindergartens, primary and secondary schools and related issues, including the impact of prevailing school-based management policy on the development and regulation of textbooks and teaching materials, examine the relevant regulatory mechanism and make timely recommendations.

**Panel on Education**

**Subcommittee to Study the Development of Textbooks and Teaching  
Materials for Kindergartens, Primary and Secondary Schools**

**Membership list\***

**Chairman** Hon YUNG Hoi-yan, JP

**Members** Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, GBS, JP  
Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun, SBS, JP  
Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-yee, GBS, JP  
Hon LEUNG Che-cheung, SBS, MH, JP  
Hon KWOK Wai-keung, JP  
Hon Elizabeth QUAT, BBS, JP  
Hon LAU Kwok-fan, MH  
Dr Hon CHENG Chung-tai

(Total : 9 Members)

**Clerk** Ms Angel WONG

**Legal Adviser** Miss Joyce CHAN

\* Changes in membership are shown in Annex to Appendix II.

**Annex to Appendix II**

**Panel on Education**

**Subcommittee to Study the Development of Textbooks and Teaching Materials for Kindergartens, Primary and Secondary Schools**

**Changes in membership**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Relevant date</b>
Hon HO Kai-ming	Up to 31 May 2020
Hon CHAN Chi-chuen	Up to 30 September 2020
Hon Tanya CHAN	Up to 30 September 2020
Hon IP Kin-yuen	Up to 10 November 2020
Hon SHIU Ka-chun	Up to 11 November 2020
Hon HUI Chi-fung	Up to 11 November 2020
Hon Claudia MO	Up to 12 November 2020
Dr Hon Helena WONG Pik-wan	Up to 12 November 2020
Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung	Up to 15 November 2020
Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung	Up to 18 November 2020
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, GBS, JP	Up to 27 November 2020
Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming, SBS, JP	Up to 27 November 2020
Hon MA Fung-kwok, GBS, JP	Up to 27 November 2020
Hon Charles Peter MOK, JP	Up to 27 November 2020
Hon Alice MAK Mei-kuen, BBS, JP	Up to 27 November 2020
Hon Jimmy NG Wing-ka, BBS, JP	Up to 27 November 2020
Hon CHAN Chun-ying, JP	Up to 27 November 2020
Hon Vincent CHENG Wing-shun, MH, JP	Up to 27 November 2020
Hon Tony TSE Wai-chuen, BBS, JP	Up to 27 November 2020
Hon Wilson OR Chong-shing, MH	Up to 5 January 2021
Hon Starry LEE Wai-king, SBS, JP	Up to 5 February 2021
Hon CHEUNG Kwok-kwan, JP	Up to 17 March 2021