



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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29 May 2023

Legislative Council Panel on Education
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central, Hong Kong
(Attn: Ms Angel Wong)

Dear Ms Wong,

**Legislative Council Panel on Education
Follow-up to the meeting of 5 May 2023 –
“A 12-classroom special school at Oi Kwan Road, Wan Chai (3115ET)”**

I refer to your letter dated 8 May 2023 to the Secretary for Education. We would like to thank all Members of the Legislative Council (“LegCo”) Panel on Education, who spoke at the meeting of 5 May 2023, for expressing support to the proposed project, “A 12-classroom special school at Oi Kwan Road, Wan Chai (3115ET)”. With regard to the supplementary information requested in your letter, our reply is set out in the ensuing paragraphs.

Student-centred design of the proposed new school premises

2. Hong Kong has a well-developed special education system. From the perspective of the education profession and with care and trust, special schools have been dedicated to helping students with more severe or multiple disabilities overcome limitations and difficulties, attaining the learning level commensurate with their abilities, and supporting them to unleash their potential.

3. In general, the admission age for special schools is six. With the implementation of the senior secondary education under the New Academic Structure, special schools provide a 12-year primary and secondary education curriculum for their students. The Committee on Special Educational Needs under the Curriculum Development Council is tasked with coordinating and planning the development of special education curriculum at all levels. It also advises on curriculum continuity and curriculum integration to meet the special educational needs of students with different abilities across all levels of school education.

4. As our society evolves, more pathways have become available to students in special schools. Due to the varying conditions and degrees of their disabilities, the articulation to further studies or school leaving arrangements of these students also vary. Special schools have all along been assisting students in planning and following up post-school placements according to their interests, capabilities and needs. Such efforts include arranging for multidisciplinary teams to discuss with parents the pathways for their children and to apply for appropriate post-school services for them. In addition, this Bureau, the Social Welfare Department, the Vocational Training Council and representatives of special schools hold regular meetings to share the latest developments in various post-school services, with a view to aiding special schools in applying for suitable services for their prospective graduates.

5. On the design of school premises, the Government has been attentive to the views and needs of school sponsoring bodies and special schools. When planning for the construction of new special schools, students' perspectives are taken into account to meet their learning needs. Taking the proposed project as example, an optional subject room in the new premises will simulate a living room, a bedroom and a kitchen to cater for the curriculum design of special schools. This will help students gradually develop independence and self-care abilities, preparing them to embrace the challenges of life after graduation. Specifically, the school will use the optional subject room to train senior secondary students in practical skills that will enable them to live independently, thereby laying a solid foundation for their enrolment in vocation training programmes upon graduation.

6. Besides, Hong Chi Lions Morninghill School ("HCLMS") currently lacks facilities such as assembly hall, student activity centre, small group teaching room, multi-purpose room, optional subject room, occupational therapy room, computer room, resource room, central portioning area, multi-purpose areas, greenery area and accessible lift. To provide these facilities and increase the number and size of classrooms, speech therapy rooms, social worker's rooms, interview rooms and conference room, the proposed seven-storey school building will have a

construction floor area of about 6 800 square meters (m²) (including a community room of about 100 m² with separate access and lavatories to be constructed under the development principle of “single site, multiple uses”), which is taller and larger than a similar special school building¹. The school can use the facilities of the proposed new school premises flexibly to provide individual or group life planning guidance services for students and parents, and invite external parties to conduct diversified vocational training activities to help students understand themselves and explore their careers.

7. As stated in the paper submitted by the Government to the LegCo Panel on Education, HCLMS currently occupies a site area of only about 1 200 m² at Blue Pool Road, Happy Valley. As there is no space for the construction of a new annex and no vacant or to-be-vacant school premises in the vicinity for in-situ expansion, reprovisioning is the only option to improve the teaching and learning environment of the school. The former Wanchai School at Oi Kwan Road in Wan Chai is the only school site available for reprovisioning public sector schools on the Hong Kong Island. Although the demolition of the former school premises and the limitations of the site area will be reflected in the construction period and costs², the Government, after careful consideration, concludes that it is necessary and urgent to invest in the proposed project to create a better learning and teaching environment for the students of HCLMS.

8. Some Members have requested that the Government provides information on how the design of the proposed new special school may help prepare students for the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (“HKDSE”) Examination. In general, special schools adopt the framework of the Hong Kong school curriculum, and develop, under the principle of “one curriculum framework for all”, a school-based curriculum that is tailored to the learning abilities, characteristics and needs of their students. Effective learning and teaching strategies are also employed in special schools to cater for the diverse learning needs of students. Since special schools for children with intellectual disability adopt adapted courses based on their students’ learning abilities and special educational needs, their students do not normally sit for the HKDSE Examination.

¹ There was only one similar project over the past ten years. In 2015, the Finance Committee of LegCo approved the Government’s proposal to build a 12-classroom special school for children with mild intellectual disability near Hoi Lai Estate in Sham Shui Po for reprovisioning Church of Christ in China Mongkok Church Kai Oi School. The proposed school is a four-storey building with a construction floor area of about 5 500 m².

² The contractor needs additional time to demolish the former school premises and carry out asbestos abatement works in compliance with relevant statutory requirements. Besides, the limitations of the site area will increase the construction period and difficulty of the proposed project, including challenges related to site layout, transportation and storage of materials, operation of large-scale machinery, and access arrangements for large construction vehicles during construction.

Latest developments of the proposed project

9. In the paper submitted to the LegCo Panel on Education, the Government has pointed out that in order to meet the construction schedule, it has invited tenders in parallel to enable early commencement of the proposed project upon obtaining approval from the LegCo. As the relevant tender assessment is still underway, the Government can only provide the Panel on Education with a preliminary estimate of the total project cost at this stage.

10. In general, the tender validity period of a school building project is nine months, and the tender assessment takes no less than three months to complete and may take even longer if tender negotiation is involved. If the funding application is not completed within the tender validity period, re-tendering is required and the project cost will very likely increase. To obtain timely funding approval, the Government has consulted the LegCo Panel on the proposed school building project by providing a preliminary estimate of the total project cost for reference. The Government will update the estimated total project cost with reference to the returned tender price before the Public Works Subcommittee meeting. It will also provide detailed financial information on the proposed project to facilitate Members' scrutiny of the project proposal from a public works perspective. The Government will only award the works contract after obtaining funding approval from the Finance Committee.

Next step

11. Subject to the results of the tender assessment for the proposed project, the Government plans to seek funding approval from the Finance Committee of the LegCo within this year.

Yours sincerely,



(Philip Har)
for Secretary for Education

c.c.

Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Attn: Ms Kimmey Ho)