

For discussion  
on 2 May 2025

## **Legislative Council Panel on Education**

### **Enhancement and Empowerment of Teacher and Administrative Manpower in Public Sector Schools**

#### **Purpose**

This paper briefs Members on various measures pertaining to the enhancement and empowerment of teacher and administrative manpower in public sector schools in recent years.

#### **Background**

2. Teachers are the foundation and key of education, and the primary resource for the high-quality development of education. A professional and conscientious teaching force is the key to the success of education in Hong Kong. The Education Bureau (EDB) continues to strengthen the teacher manpower and resources in schools, enhancing the professional capacity of the teaching workforce; while increasing the support from specialised staff and administrative staff to promote the collaboration within the multi-disciplinary teams in schools, thereby providing better quality education. The “2024-2035 master plan on building China into a leading country in education” sets out the goal of building a leading country in education with the key mission to support the country’s modernisation in all aspects by 2035. To complement the national development goals and the latest developments in society, the EDB will keep pace with the times, continuously enhancing the professional quality and stability of the teaching workforce, attracting talents to join the teaching profession, and optimising the multi-disciplinary teams, in a bid to foster a conducive environment for learning and teaching, promote the advancement of Hong Kong education, and contribute to building a leading country in education.

#### **Enhancing Teacher Professionalism and Optimising Manpower Provision**

##### All-graduate teaching force

3. In order to raise the professional quality and status of teachers, attract and retain talents for the teaching profession to enhance the quality of education, the EDB implemented the all-graduate teaching force policy in public sector

primary and secondary schools in one go in the 2019/20 school year. Under this policy, all teaching posts within the approved establishment of public sector schools are graduate teaching posts, while the number of non-graduate teachers who have not been regraded to graduate teaching grades will continue to decrease. Schools are reminded to review and adjust their school-based deployment of manpower and distribution of duties with a view to enhancing the professional capacity of their teaching force as a whole, and encourage teachers not holding a local bachelor's degree (or equivalent) to attain the recognised qualification as early as possible, so that they can be regraded as graduate teachers.

#### Strengthening middle management

4. To improve the school management standard, enhance professional capacity and strengthen planning and leadership, the EDB has introduced a series of measures as follows to strengthen the middle management in schools:

- (a) Starting from the 2020/21 school year, the manpower arrangements of deputy heads in public sector secondary and primary schools (including special schools) and senior teachers in public sector secondary schools have been improved, the manpower of deputy heads and middle management level has been increased for coordination of various educational initiatives in order to support the long-term planning and development of schools, incurring an annual recurrent expenditure of about \$360 million;
- (b) Starting from the 2020/21 school year, the Primary School Curriculum Leader post in public sector primary schools (including the primary sections of special schools) operating 11 or fewer classes has been upgraded from the provision of an Assistant Primary School Master/Mistress (APSM) post or Curriculum Leadership Grant to a Primary School Master/Mistress (PSM) post in order to strengthen the support for smaller schools in curriculum leadership, an annual recurrent expenditure of about \$6.8 million is incurred for this measure; and
- (c) Starting from the 2022/23 school year, with the implementation of the measures to improving the manpower at the middle management level in public sector primary schools (including the primary sections of special schools), all primary schools (including those operating 11 or fewer classes) have been provided with more senior teachers to take up school management duties with a view to improving the school management standard, strengthening professional capacity and enhancing the quality of education. Besides, the EDB has rationalised the salaries for school heads and deputy heads in public sector primary schools, an annual recurrent expenditure of about \$890 million is incurred for this measure.

5. In addition to increasing the manpower, the above measures have also broadened the professional development ladder for teachers.

#### Increasing teacher manpower

6. The EDB has been allocating additional resources, including increasing the regular teaching posts based on the approved number of classes (i.e. teacher-to-class (T/C) ratio), additional regular teaching posts under various initiatives, and cash grants that allow flexible deployment for the employment of additional teaching staff, specifically:

- (a) Starting from the 2017/18 school year, the T/C ratio for public sector primary and secondary schools as well as special schools has increased by 0.1 across-the-board, creating about 2 200 additional regular teaching posts in public sector schools, incurring an additional annual recurrent expenditure of about \$1.5 billion. Currently, the T/C ratio is 1.6 teachers per whole-day class in public sector primary schools. For public sector secondary schools, the T/C ratio is 1.8 teachers per junior class and 2.1 teachers per senior class.
- (b) In addition to the regular teaching posts calculated based on the T/C ratio, additional resources are provided to public sector secondary schools according to students' academic performance to support Academic Low Achievers. Relevant additional teachers (whole number or fractional post) can be given to schools as Graduate Master/Mistress (GM) post(s) in the establishment. Schools can also opt for a cash grant (Fractional Post Cash Grant) calculated on the basis of the mid-point salary of GM teachers which allows schools to deploy the resources flexibly.
- (c) The overall teacher-to-student ratios in public sector secondary and primary schools have continuously improved from 1:14.5 and 1:14.4 respectively in the 2012/13 school year to 1:11.4 and 1:11.8 respectively in the 2024/25 school year, and the unit cost for aided secondary and primary school student has increased from \$49,246 and \$44,451 in the 2012-13 financial year to \$99,590 and \$87,560 in the 2024-25 financial year respectively.

#### Strengthening the professional functions of teachers

7. To better cater students' diverse learning needs, to support their growth more comprehensively, and to implement various education policies more effectively, the EDB has been allocating additional resources, including:

- (a) Starting from the 2019/20 school year, all public sector ordinary primary and secondary schools have been provided with a Special Educational

Needs Coordinator (SENCO) post, and the SENCO posts in schools with a comparatively large number of students with special educational needs (SEN) have been upgraded to the promotion rank, incurring a recurrent expenditure of about \$970 million in the 2024/25 school year. Meanwhile, schools will be provided with 1 to 3 additional regular teaching post(s) in the teaching staff establishment, titled as Special Educational Needs Support Teacher, should the total amount of the Learning Support Grant reach specific threshold, incurring a recurrent expenditure of about \$1.09 billion in the 2024/25 school year.

- (b) Starting from the 2022/23 school year, all public sector secondary schools operating senior secondary classes have been required to convert the Senior Secondary Curriculum Support Grant and the Career and Life Planning Grant into regular teaching posts, offering about 1 000 additional teaching posts and providing more stable teaching force for schools to strengthen the development of life planning education and related guidance services.
- (c) Starting from the 2024/25 school year, the establishment of resource teachers for children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) for the primary and secondary sections of special schools has been strengthened, and the initiative has been extended to cover schools for social development, so as to facilitate special schools to provide students comorbid with ASD with additional support in learning and development, incurring a recurrent expenditure of \$29 million in the 2024/25 school year.
- (d) To support non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students, all primary and secondary schools (including public sector schools and Direct Subsidy Scheme schools offering the local curriculum) as well as special schools admitting NCS students are provided with an additional funding according to the number of NCS students admitted to employ additional teaching staff, procure learning and teaching resources, hire professional services, organise activities for promoting an inclusive learning environment in schools, etc. Currently, the amount of the additional funding ranges from about \$0.16 million to about \$1.6 million per year. In the 2024/25 school year, about 340 secondary schools, 380 primary schools and 60 special schools admitting NCS students are provided with the additional funding, incurring an expenditure of about \$440 million.

#### Enhancing flexibility in recruiting talents

8. The EDB also allows schools more flexibility in the recruitment of talents with different expertise. For example:

- (a) From the 2022/23 to 2024/25 school years, the EDB has been providing flexibility for employment of teachers having expertise in STEAM-related subjects to fill APSM vacancies in the approved staff establishment in aided primary schools (including special schools with primary sections) as STEAM teachers, with a view to facilitating schools in the implementation and promotion of STEAM education. At present, the effectiveness of the pilot arrangement is under review for planning the way forward.
- (b) Starting from the 2025/26 school year, the Native-speaking English Teacher (NET) Scheme will be enhanced to allow eligible public sector primary and secondary schools to opt between (i) retaining the existing NET post; or (ii) receiving a new NET Grant with reference to school-based circumstances. The aims of the enhancement measures are to uphold the high standards of professionalism among NETs in order to enhance the quality of the Scheme, as well as allow schools more flexibility to optimise resources for employing NETs, thereby enhancing the English language learning environment in schools.

### **Enhancing the Management and Manpower Planning of Teachers**

9. The EDB continues to enhance teacher registration and management systems. For instance, the EDB requires local primary, secondary and special schools to update and submit information on teachers under their employment through the e-Services Portal every school year. To obtain more comprehensive and accurate mastery of the information on registered teachers, and to provide useful statistical reference for the formulation of policies concerning teacher manpower planning and training, the EDB has commenced the updating and compilation of the Electronic Register for Registered Teachers in the 2022/23 school year to collect and update the lists of registered teachers and permitted teachers from all schools in Hong Kong, including international schools and private schools offering formal curriculum.

10. In the 2024/25 school year, the numbers of teachers in public sector primary and secondary schools were about 21 270 and 23 010 respectively. In recent years, the teaching force has become more stable and the wastage rate of teachers has been decreasing. There are various reasons for teacher wastage, which mainly include retirement, pursuing further studies, taking up employment outside the teaching profession, and leaving the post due to other personal reasons. The figures in recent years clearly show that the number of newly-recruited teachers joining the teaching profession for the first time was much higher than the number of drop-out teachers with retirement as the reason for leaving per year, reflecting a healthy and sustainable education ecosystem, and schools were able to employ sufficient teaching staff to take up duties relating to teaching and

learning. The information on the numbers of teachers and wastage rates in public sector schools from the 2022/23 to 2024/25 school years is set out at the Annex.

## **Enhancing Teachers' Professional Competencies**

### Establishment of the Professional Ladder for Teachers and Provision of Core Training

11. In addition to a stable workforce, the professional quality of teachers is also crucial. The EDB is committed to enhancing the professional competencies and broadening the horizons of teachers and principals through diversified professional development programmes, while encouraging schools to utilise the three staff development days provided by the EDB to schools every school year to organise school-based staff professional development activities. The Professional Ladder for Teachers was established in the 2020/21 school year to set specific goals for professional development for teachers (including principals) at different professional development stages, which include a training framework and requirements for newly-joined teachers in publicly-funded schools and teachers aspiring for promotion in public sector schools. The core training covers workshops on teachers' professional conduct and values, "T-standard"<sup>+</sup> Online Course, contents relating to the Constitution, the Basic Law and the National Security Law, as well as Local Educational Policies and Initiatives, National and International Education Development, etc. In addition, the EDB organises Mainland study tours for newly-joined teachers, promoted teachers and in-service teachers, so that teachers can, through direct personal observation and experience, school visits and professional sharing with Mainland teachers, as well as visits to enterprises and cultural sites, broaden their horizons and gain deeper understanding of the latest development of the country, thereby strengthening their abilities to nurture students' sense of national identity. As for principals, the EDB offers designated professional development programmes to newly-appointed principals in publicly-funded schools, including the two-year Professional Development Programme for Newly-appointed Principals and the Leadership Enhancement Programme for Primary and Secondary School Principals held in Beijing, with the aim of enhancing the management knowledge and skills as well as the leadership capabilities of principals.

### Keeping abreast of the developments in learning and teaching and providing training that to move with the times

12. The EDB also provides ongoing measures to support teachers in teaching according to the developments of different existing curricula. Such measures include:

- (a) Diversified professional training activities are organised in alignment with the learning and teaching of related subjects, which include professional development programmes, workshops, experience sharing sessions, professional networking activities and Mainland study tours. Taking the 2023/24 school year as an example, the Curriculum and Quality Assurance Branch of the EDB has organised about 1 260 in-service teacher training courses on various topics, covering areas like curriculum planning and implementation, learning and teaching strategies, assessment, knowledge enrichment, and so forth, to help teachers stay abreast of the latest developments of the curricula and enhance their professional qualities;
- (b) In the 2023/24 school year, the Curriculum Development Institute conducted curriculum development visits to 247 secondary and primary schools to learn about the implementation of the curricula and provide feedback and suggestions, so as to provide appropriate support to schools according to the needs of schools;
- (c) In the 2024/25 school year, diversified school-based support services have been provided for 229 secondary schools, 420 primary schools and 228 kindergartens, including on-site support, learning communities and sharing of experiences, encompassing the latest curriculum initiatives, including national education, values education, STEAM education/Innovation and Technology Education/digital education, self-directed learning and catering for learning diversity, at the same time addressing the needs of schools and enhancing teachers' professional capacity in curriculum planning and implementation; and
- (d) Learning and teaching resources including curriculum documents, teaching materials, references and examples of good practices are continuously developed, which enable teachers to accurately understand the requirements, teaching strategies and emphases of various subjects, as well as the latest developments of the curriculum, and these resources are uploaded onto the EDB websites for schools' reference and adoption.

13. To implement the strategy of invigorating the country through science and education, the EDB has been organising professional training programmes for teachers or promoting teacher learning circles on the latest key areas in education, such as STEAM education, artificial intelligence (AI) education, Primary Humanities, values education (including national education [covering Constitution and Basic Law education, Chinese culture and art, national history, national geography, national security education and patriotic education] and other cross-curricular domain) as well as national affairs education, with a view to helping teachers grasp the renewed emphases and latest developments of the relevant curricula and broaden their horizons. Examples of relevant training include the Professional Development Programme on Innovation and Technology

for STEAM Co-ordinators of Schools, district-based leadership workshops for STEAM co-ordinators in secondary schools, teacher training programme on AI for the junior secondary level, the Exchange cum Training Programme for Hong Kong STEAM Education Leaders, Primary Humanities learning circle and onsite workshops, as well as a series of seminars, workshops, field trips and film appreciation sessions related to values education and national affairs education.

14. The EDB recently announced the launch of a professional development programme for junior secondary Chinese History teachers not majoring in History. Starting from the 2024/25 school year and spanning over a three-year period, the 30-hour professional training programme (comprising an 18-hour Mainland study tour and a 12-hour local training course) to support about 1 000 junior secondary Chinese History teachers not majoring in History in gaining a thorough and in-depth understanding of the junior secondary Chinese History curriculum and the learning and teaching strategies. In addition, to enhance the professional capacity of senior secondary Chinese History teachers, the EDB plans to provide at least 1 000 training places in learning circles within the next two years, providing training on e-learning, visits and sharing of teaching experiences.

15. On catering for students with SEN, the EDB also provides structured training programmes for serving teachers, including Basic, Advanced and Thematic Courses, as well as thematic professional development programmes. Training targets have been set and each school is expected to arrange teachers to take relevant programmes in accordance with the established training targets to enhance their professional capacity in this regard. Besides, to support teachers in promoting mental health in schools in a more comprehensive and systematic manner, the EDB organises about 40 additional thematic teacher training workshops in the 2024/25 school year to introduce practical skills, counselling techniques and intervention strategies in supporting students with mental health needs.

#### Planning teacher training to meet the needs of society

16. The EDB conducts the overall planning on teacher training resources regularly through a triennial planning of University Grants Committee (UGC)-funded universities, having due consideration to a basket of factors, which include the overall demand and supply of teachers, the sustainable development of teacher education (TE) universities, the quality of TE programmes, the future needs of the society and the latest developments of the curricula. In addition, the EDB has been closely monitoring the training received by teachers, and provides additional resources according to the actual needs.



## **Caring for Teachers' Mental Health**

17. The EDB attaches great importance to teachers' mental health and has been promoting mental health in schools through different measures and activities. In the 2024/25 school year, the EDB launched the 4Rs Mental Health Charter (4Rs Charter) in order for schools to set practical and feasible goals and take concrete actions to implement measures that promote students' physical and psychological well-being, schools joining the 4Rs Charter must also pledge to join the Mental Health Workplace Charter (MHWC), which is jointly implemented by the Department of Health (DH), the Labour Department and the Occupational Safety and Health Council, to encourage schools to create an inclusive and friendly workplace environment and promote mental health in the schools.

18. Starting from the 2023/24 school year, the EDB has commissioned non-governmental organisations or post-secondary institutions to organise courses on physical and mental health for teachers every year to enhance teachers' capacity at work. In the 2023/24 school year, the EDB organised a total of 48 workshops and online courses covering topics on mental health, expressive arts, mindfulness and physical health, offering more than 1 600 quotas. The participating teachers gave very positive feedback on the above workshops and online courses, saying that they were useful in reducing stress and helping them to relax. These workshops and courses were not only helpful to their physical and mental well-being, but also enabled them to acquire knowledge about physical and mental health. The EDB continues to run the above-mentioned courses in the 2024/25 school year, and will increase the number of sessions to 56. The courses have commenced since March 2025.

19. The EDB has set up the Teachers' Helpline since 2006 to support teachers in coping with stress at work and mental health problems. Apart from this, professional counselling services and face-to-face counselling will be provided as and when necessary, and professionals will be arranged to follow up relevant cases. Meanwhile, the service providers will organise talks on how to relieve stress for teachers.

## **Commending and Recognising the Contribution of Teachers**

20. The core mission of education is cultivating values and nurturing people. President Xi Jinping has called on all teachers to regard outstanding educators as role models, carry forward their spirit, and make contributions to the building of a strong country and rejuvenation of the nation. The EDB attaches great importance to the cultivation of teachers' morality and ethics, actively supports activities which promote teachers' morality and ethics and foster a culture of respect for teachers. Among other things, the EDB sponsors the annual Teacher Commendation Scheme and Teachers' Day ceremony organised by the Committee

on Respect Our Teachers Campaign, as well as supports the Greater Bay Area Forum on Teachers' Professional Ethics and activities for promoting teachers' professional ethics and commending teachers organised by other professional bodies. In addition, the EDB commends teachers with teaching excellence through the Chief Executive's Award for Teaching Excellence (CEATE), with a view to enhancing the professional image and social status of teachers, thereby gaining society's recognition of the teaching profession and fostering a culture of respect for teachers. The CEATE also aims to pool together accomplished teachers to facilitate sharing of good practices and foster a culture of excellence in the teaching profession, thereby sustaining the development of education talents.

21. Starting from the 2024/25 school year, the "Award for Budding Teachers" and the "Award for Education Innovation" have been introduced under the CEATE so as to recognise more accomplished teachers who are excelled in different areas, ensuring that more teachers' teaching practices are recognised by the society, empowering the professional teaching force, motivating them to continue contributing to students, and working together for providing better education for children.

### **Multi-disciplinary Teams in Schools**

22. With rapid social changes and developments in technology, the society and parents have higher expectations of education, and the support for meeting the needs of student growth has become more diverse. There is no doubt that teachers are the backbone of a school team. To enhance the synergy among different professionals, the Government has been providing additional resources for schools to set up multi-disciplinary teams in recent years to provide comprehensive support to meet the needs of student growth.

#### Additional support for administrative and information technology personnel

23. To support the administrative work of teachers and principals, thereby creating room for them to focus more on core teaching tasks and to take care of student development, starting from the 2019/20 school year, the EDB has implemented the "One Executive Officer for Each School" policy, under which all public sector schools are provided with additional resources to facilitate them in employing at least one full-time School Executive Officer according to their school-based circumstances and needs, or they may opt to receive the School Executive Officer Grant. Schools can, in light of their school contexts, flexibly deploy the additional resources to recruit additional supporting staff or procure external services to support the teaching and administrative work of teachers.

24. Besides, from the 2017/18 school year, the EDB provides the Information Technology (IT) Staffing Support Grant to all public sector primary and secondary schools (including special schools) for strengthening the IT staffing support to practise e-learning and take forward various education initiatives which will harness IT. Schools could use the grant to employ their own IT staff or engage IT companies to provide agency worker(s) to render the required technical support services in school campus.

### Other professionals

25. Schools have set up multi-disciplinary teams (including school-based educational psychologists, school social workers and guidance personnel) to collaborate with teachers to provide guidance and support for students. Teachers are important members of the team, and the EDB has increased or optimised the manpower of the aforementioned professionals in recent years. For example, starting from the 2016/17 school year, the School-based Educational Psychology Service has covered all public sector ordinary primary and secondary schools in Hong Kong, while the EDB and the Social Welfare Department have been implementing the measures of “one school social worker for each school” in primary schools since the 2018/19 school year and “two school social workers for each school” in secondary schools since the 2019/20 school year respectively.

26. Members of a school team each perform their respective duties and collaborate across disciplines from time to time. The Government also encourages schools to maximise both internal and external resources to support the development needs of schools and students in various aspects.

### **The Way Forward**

27. Education is the key to nurturing talent, hence the Government attaches great importance to education. Facing the structural decline in the school-age population, the EDB remains committed to education. From the perspective of the long-term development of education and the overall interests of society, we will continue to invest resources to meet the needs of society, schools, and students, increase the teacher manpower in schools, promote collaboration among teachers in the multi-disciplinary teams to provide comprehensive support on student growth by adopting a spirit of whole-school participation. In accordance with curriculum development, we will also provide more diversified professional development activities, while strengthening the cultivation of teachers’ morality and caring for teachers’ mental health to enhance the professional capacity of the teaching workforce. The EDB will continue to implement various new measures to enhance and optimise the quality of education, to push forward our education towards high-quality development and to build Hong Kong into an international hub for high-calibre talents.

## **Advice Sought**

28. Members are invited to note the content of this paper and provide their views.

**Education Bureau  
April 2025**

**Numbers of teachers appointed within and outside the approved establishment  
in public sector schools,  
their proportions among all teachers concerned,  
numbers of drop-out teachers and wastage rates  
from the 2022/23 to 2024/25 school years**

School year	Teachers within the approved establishment								Teachers outside the approved establishment (i.e. temporary teachers/teachers employed under other grants)			
	Graduate teachers				Non-graduate teachers				No. of teachers	Proportion among all teachers (%)	No. of dropout teachers	Wastage rate (%)
No. of teachers	Proportion among all teachers (%)	No. of dropout teachers	Wastage rate (%)	No. of teachers	Proportion among all teachers (%)	No. of dropout teachers	Wastage rate (%)					
Primary schools (government and aided)												
2022/23	19 400	87.4	1 520	7.6	270	1.2	60	16.6	2 530	11.4	340	14.8
2023/24	19 020	87.6	1 260	6.5	220	1.0	30	12.0	2 480	11.4	450	17.8
2024/25	18 660	87.7	1 070	5.6	170	0.8	40	19.4	2 440	11.5	460	18.6
Secondary schools (government, aided and caput)												
2022/23	19 280	84.2	1 830	9.4	140	0.6	40	18.6	3 470	15.2	370	11.5
2023/24	19 340	84.5	1 350	7.0	110	0.5	20	17.0	3 440	15.0	500	14.3
2024/25	19 310	83.9	1 150	5.9	80	0.4	20	20.2	3 610	15.7	440	12.9
Special schools												
2022/23	1 940	95.8	220	11.4	20	1.0	Note (5)	13.3	70	3.2	10	15.5
2023/24	2 000	97.1	180	9.3	20	0.8	Note (5)	20.0	40	2.0	10	21.5
2024/25	2 050	96.9	150	7.7	10	0.7	Note (5)	23.5	50	2.5	10	33.3

Notes:

- (1) Figures refer to the position as at mid-September of the respective school years. Figures for the 2024/25 school year are provisional figures.
- (2) Numbers of teachers/drop-out teachers are rounded to the nearest 10. The proportions among non-graduate teachers are calculated based on the unrounded figures.
- (3) Teachers outside the approved establishment in public sector special schools only cover temporary teachers.
- (4) “Wastage rate” refers to the number of “drop-out teachers” as a percentage of the total number of teachers concerned in the preceding school year. “Drop-out teachers” of the public sector ordinary schools refer to the teachers who were serving in public sector ordinary schools in the preceding school year but were no longer serving in any local ordinary schools in the school year concerned. “Drop-out teachers” of the public sector special schools refer to the teachers who were serving in public sector special schools in the preceding school year but were no longer serving in any public sector special schools in the school year concerned.
- (5) Less than 5.