

Chapter V

Nurturing Talent

My Belief

“Education is the key to nurturing talent and allocating resources to education is the most meaningful investment for the future.”

“My vision for education is to nurture the future generations into quality citizens who are socially responsible and equipped with a sense of our national identity, a love for Hong Kong and an international perspective. We should create a stable, caring, inspiring and satisfying teaching and learning environment for students, teachers, parents and principals.”

Talent is the most important element in Hong Kong’s continued development, and education is the key to nurturing talent. Success in education requires the collaborative efforts of all who care about our next generation, with the Government playing a key role. The current-term Government will continue to:

- (1) devote substantial resources to education;
- (2) maintain professional leadership in charting the way forward; and
- (3) listen carefully to the voices of the education sector.

“The Government’s expenditure on education is the most meaningful investment for the future” and “we should treat our teachers nicely” – have earned wide support from the education sector and become our internal guiding principles for handling education matters. A stable and caring teaching and learning environment is gradually taking shape. That said, to make our learning and teaching ever more inspiring and satisfying, a lot has yet to be done.

Chapter V
Nurturing
Talent

 Professional Leadership
and Active Listening

Task Force on
Review of Self-financing
Post-Secondary Education

Completed



Task Force on
Review of Research Policy
and Funding

Completed

Task Force on
School-based
Management Policy

Completed

Task Force on
Home-School Co-operation
and Parent Education

Completed

Task Force on
Professional Development
of Teachers

Completed

Task Force on
Review of
School Curriculum

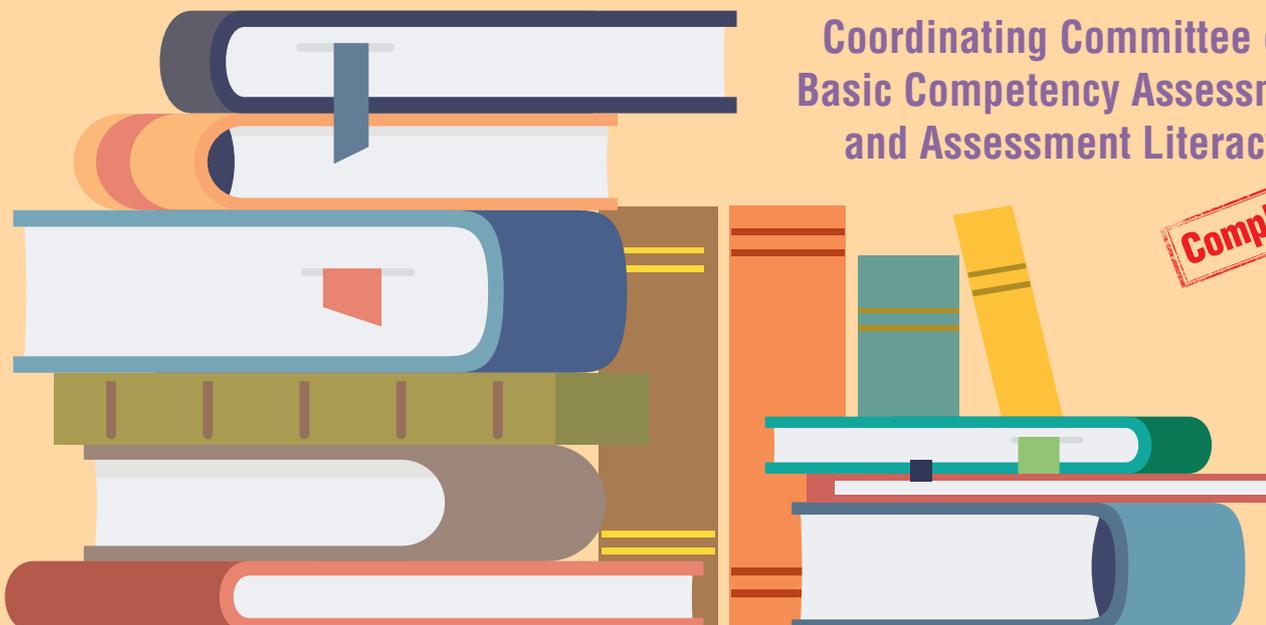
Ongoing

Task Force on
Promotion of Vocational and
Professional Education and Training

Ongoing

Coordinating Committee on
Basic Competency Assessment
and Assessment Literacy

Completed





Kindergarten Education

Significant increase of government subvention in kindergarten education starting from the 2017/18 school year

Extension of tide-over grant for **3** years up to the 2021/22 school year

Adjustment of the subsidies relating to teaching staff salary according to the rate of annual civil service pay rise



Headmasters and teachers should attend **60** hours of continuous professional development activities every 3 years



Parent Education

Increase subsidies for Parent-Teacher Associations
Kick off the "Positive Parent Campaign"



Primary and Secondary Education

Student level:

Providing a recurrent Life-wide Learning Grant

Setting up the Student Activities Support Fund



Teacher level:
All-Graduate Teaching Force

$$x^2 + y^2 = 10$$



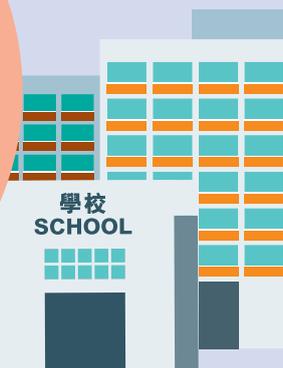
School level:

Barrier-free campuses

One executive officer for each school

One school social worker for each primary school

Two school social workers for each secondary school





Post-secondary Education

Injected **\$20 billion** into the Research Endowment Fund in 2019

Injected **\$3 billion** to subsidise local research postgraduates, about **2 000 students** benefitted in the 2018/19 academic year

Disbursed **\$10.3 billion** of capital grants under the Hostel Development Fund

Launched a **\$3 billion** Research Matching Grant Scheme

Set aside **\$16 billion** for universities to enhance or refurbish campus facilities

Matching Grant Scheme (MGS)

- Granted about **\$500 million** in the 7th MGS
- Launched the **\$2.5 billion** 8th MGS



Vocational and Professional Education and Training



Progress Made

A total of 27 new initiatives were announced in the 2017 and 2018 Policy Addresses and Policy Agendas. All of them have been completed or are progressing on schedule.

Key initiatives completed or major progress made by the current-term Government are as follows:

Investment for the Future

- A total of at least \$8.3 billion recurrent expenditure has been allocated for the implementation of improvement measures to promote quality education. (EDB)

Latest Development in Education

- Starting from the 2018/19 school year, a new Promotion of Reading Grant has been disbursed to all public sector primary and secondary schools and the Pilot Scheme on the Promotion of Reading Grant for Kindergartens has been implemented concurrently. The latter is regularised in the 2019/20 school year. A series of activities have been organised to promote reading. (EDB)
- Starting from the 2019/20 school year, a recurrent Life-wide Learning Grant is provided to public sector schools and schools under the Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS) to support primary and secondary schools in taking forward, on the present foundation, life-wide learning with enhanced efforts. (EDB)
- A \$2.5 billion Student Activities Support Fund was set up in 2019 to support students with financial needs in public sector schools and DSS schools to participate in out-of-classroom learning activities organised or recognised by schools. (EDB)

- The Quality Education Fund (QEF) has set aside \$3 billion for the implementation of a four-year Dedicated Funding Programme for Publicly-funded Schools starting from the 2018/19 school year for launching school-based curriculum and/or student support measures, as well as relevant school improvement works and/or procurement of supplies. As at end-September 2019, the QEF has processed about 500 applications with a funding amount of over \$260 million. (EDB)
- Chinese History has been taught as an independent compulsory subject at the junior secondary level starting from the 2018/19 school year. The revised curriculum framework will be implemented progressively in all schools from Secondary One with effect from the 2020/21 school year. (EDB)
- To stabilise the teaching force, aided secondary schools with surplus teachers arising from the reduction of Secondary One classes from the 2013/14 to 2017/18 school years may apply for extension of the retention period of the surplus teachers concerned to the 2021/22 school year. (EDB)
- Starting from the 2019/20 school year, aided primary schools may apply for retaining the redundant teachers arising from class reduction due to the decline in Primary One student population up to a maximum of three school years. Besides, starting from Primary One in the 2019/20 school year, for schools with class reduction after the student headcount in mid-September, the basis for calculating the number of approved classes will be adjusted downwards from 25 to 23 students per class. The adjusted basis will be applied to that cohort of students progressively until they have reached Primary Six. (EDB)

Professional Leadership and Active Listening

- Of the eight task forces set up to conduct in-depth studies in eight key areas of education, six have completed their work. They are the Task Force on Review of Research Policy and Funding, the Task Force on Review of Self-financing Post-secondary Education, the Task Force on Professional Development of Teachers, the Task Force on Home-school Co-operation and Parent Education, the Task Force on School-based Management Policy and the Co-ordinating Committee on Basic Competency Assessment and Assessment Literacy. The Government has accepted all their recommendations. The remaining two task forces, namely the Task Force on Promotion of Vocational and Professional Education and Training, and the Task Force on Review of School Curriculum, launched consultation exercises to solicit public views on their preliminary recommendations in May and June 2019 respectively. (EDB)

Strengthening Research Capacity of Post-secondary Education Sector

- \$20 billion has been injected into the Research Endowment Fund (REF) for substantially increasing the funding of the Research Grants Council while the Research Matching Grant Scheme was launched in August 2019. Three fellowship schemes for outstanding academics will be implemented within the 2019/20 academic year. (EDB)

- To nurture more home-grown academic and scientific research talents, \$3 billion has been injected into the REF to generate investment return for providing tuition waiver for all local students enrolled in the University Grants Committee-funded research postgraduate programmes. The waiver scheme has been rolled out from July 2018, benefitting about 2 000 students in the 2018/19 academic year. (EDB)

Professional Development of Teachers

- The Government decided to implement in one go the all-graduate teaching force policy in public sector primary and secondary schools. Schools may, taking into account their own circumstances, achieve full implementation in two years starting from the 2019/20 school year. In tandem with the implementation of the all-graduate teaching force policy and whole-day primary schooling, proposals to improve the manpower at the middle management level and rationalise the salaries of heads and deputy heads in public sector primary schools have been submitted to the Legislative Council for approval. (EDB)

School-based Management

- Starting from the 2019/20 school year, resources are provided to each public sector school and DSS school for employment of one executive officer to strengthen the administrative support for schools and their management committees. In addition, a new recurrent School-based Management Top-up Grant is offered to these schools for enhancing the operation of their management committees/incorporated management committees /school management committees (SMC) and strengthening the training of school managers/SMC members. (EDB)

Parent Education and Home-School Co-operation

- Starting from the 2019/20 school year, higher subsidy amounts have been provided for Parent-Teacher Associations of schools and Federations of Parent-Teacher Associations. (EDB)

Enhancing Teaching Facilities in Primary and Secondary Schools

- Starting from the 2018/19 school year, a subsidy has been provided for all public sector and DSS schools to cover the daily expenses of their air-conditioning facilities. (EDB)

Healthy Development of Post-secondary Education

- The Hostel Development Fund was established in July 2018 and a one-off grant of \$10.3 billion in total has been disbursed to six universities. Among the 15 hostel projects, the detailed design of four have been completed and construction is expected to commence soon. (EDB)

- The eighth round of the Matching Grant Scheme, which covers a period of three years, was launched in July 2019, providing a total of \$2.5 billion of matching grants for publicly-funded post-secondary institutions. (EDB)
- The Hong Kong Scholarship for Excellence Scheme is regularised from the 2019/20 academic year onwards, with the maximum amount of the scholarships raised from \$250,000 to \$300,000 per awardee per annum. For awardees pursuing doctoral degree programmes, the duration of the scholarships is relaxed from two years to the minimum years required to complete the programme. (EDB)
- The number of scholarships offered under the Belt and Road Scholarship Scheme has been increased from 10 to 80, covering all countries along the Belt and Road. (EDB)
- The number of subsidised places in undergraduate programmes under the Study Subsidy Scheme for Designated Professions/Sectors has been increased to about 3 000 per cohort starting from the 2018/19 academic year. The scheme is expanded to cover sub-degree programmes and about 2 000 places will be subsidised per cohort starting from the 2019/20 academic year. (EDB)

Vocational and Professional Education and Training

- The Pilot Training and Support Scheme of the Vocational Training Council (VTC) is regularised starting from the 2019/20 academic year. The scheme offers 1 200 training places per year under the “Earn and Learn” model to enable trainees to join industries which require specialised skills. (EDB)

- The key findings and related survey reports of Manpower Projection to 2027 were promulgated in May and June/July 2019 respectively. The full projection report is expected to be completed by end-2019 which could help support the planning and development of vocational and professional education and training (VPET). (LWB)

Supporting Students with Different Needs

- The various funding programmes for integrated education have been restructured and the Learning Support Grant has been extended to all public sector ordinary schools with the grant rate for tier-3 support increased. For public sector ordinary schools with a comparatively large number of students with special educational needs (SEN), the SEN coordinator post has been upgraded to a promotion rank. The School-based Educational Psychology Service has been extended to cover all public sector ordinary schools. Starting from the 2019/20 school year, school-based speech therapist posts are created in public sector ordinary schools in phases. (EDB)
- Starting from the 2018/19 school year, sufficient resources have been provided to each public sector primary school for employing at least one graduate social worker to better cater for the needs of the students. (EDB)

- An injection of \$800 million into the Gifted Education Fund was made in early 2019 for generating investment income to support the service enhancement of the Hong Kong Academy for Gifted Education, to implement measures recommended by the Advisory Committee on Gifted Education, and to encourage gifted education providers to provide quality advanced learning programmes for gifted students. (EDB)
- We have implemented various measures to strengthen the support for non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students (please refer to Chapter VI for details). (EDB)

Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority

- A new commitment of about \$360 million was created in early 2019 to provide a one-off funding support to enable the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA) to administer the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination for four cohorts from 2019 to 2022. Study on possible options to resolve the long-term financial problem of the HKEAA is being conducted in parallel. (EDB)

Kindergarten Education

- Starting from the 2018/19 school year, salary-related subsidies for teaching staff have been adjusted on a school year basis according to the annual civil service pay adjustment. The two-year tide-over grant (2017/18 to 2018/19 school years) has also been extended by three years to the 2021/22 school year. (EDB)

- Measures to strengthen the professional development of principals and teachers in kindergartens have been implemented. Starting from the 2018/19 school year, each principal and teacher of kindergartens joining the kindergarten education scheme should participate in 60 hours of continuous professional development activities for every three-year cycle. (EDB)
- The review on the new kindergarten education policy, including exploring the feasibility of putting in place a salary scale for kindergarten teachers, commenced in mid-2019 and consultation is being conducted. (EDB)

Qualifications Framework

- An injection of \$1.2 billion into the Qualifications Framework Fund was made in early 2018 to further strengthen and drive the development of the Qualifications Framework. (EDB)

Continuing Education

- An additional \$10 billion was injected into the Continuing Education Fund (CEF) in May 2018. A series of enhancement measures, including increasing the subsidy ceiling and expanding the scope of CEF courses, have been implemented with effect from April 2019. (LWB)

Challenges Ahead

Primary and Secondary Schools

- With the significant drop in the population of school-aged Primary One students starting from the 2019/20 school year after a short-term increase earlier on, it is expected that individual public sector primary schools may be affected, resulting in a transient reduction of classes and teacher redundancy. (EDB)
- At present, the provision of public sector secondary school places is planned on a territory-wide basis. The population of Secondary One students has started to rebound from the 2017/18 school year. It is anticipated that the overall Secondary One student population will gradually increase and reach a peak in the 2024/25 school year. It is not feasible to solely count on the usual practice of netting school places from neighbouring areas to meet the projected demand. Since student population and schools are not evenly distributed in the respective districts, individual secondary schools in individual districts may not immediately or fully benefit from the increase in the overall Secondary One student population. (EDB)

Supporting Students with Different Needs

- With increased awareness of SEN among schools and parents as well as the improvement in the assessment tools and mechanism, the number of students identified to have SEN has increased continuously. (EDB)

- NCS students need to be proficient in Chinese in order to be competitive in further studies and career pursuits with a view to integrating into the local community. However, learning Chinese is not easy and there is no short-cut. It also takes time for relevant support measures to achieve the desired effects. While schools, teachers and students have to sustain their efforts, collaboration on the part of families and other stakeholders is also required to create an environment conducive to Chinese language learning. (EDB)

New Initiatives

Primary and Secondary Education

- We have reserved \$1 billion to take forward a time-limited minor works programme under which simple minor internal conversion works will be carried out at some 600-odd aided school premises constructed according to past building standards to facilitate more flexible use of existing space by schools, thereby enhancing the teaching and learning environment and efficacy. The schools concerned may submit works proposals to the Education Bureau in 2019 and 2020 having regard to the conditions of their premises and school-based needs. (EDB)

Post-secondary Education

- Introduce a pilot scheme in the 2020/21 academic year to provide fellowships/scholarships for local students admitted to designated taught postgraduate programmes that meet Hong Kong's development needs. (EDB)
- Commence the amendment exercise of the Post Secondary Colleges Ordinance (Cap. 320) and consult key stakeholders on the preliminary amendment proposals in 2020. (EDB)
- Revamp the Committee on Self-financing Post-secondary Education to enhance its role in facilitating the regulation, support and co-ordination of the self-financing post-secondary education sector. (EDB)
- Work with the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications to explore ways to enhance the academic accreditation standards and practices, with a view to raising the standard of self-financing post-secondary education. (EDB)

- Introduce an Enhancement and Start-up Grant Scheme for Self-financing Post-secondary Education to provide financial support for self-financing institutions interested in offering designated sub-degree or undergraduate programmes that meet market needs but require high start-up costs, so as to help such programmes take off and to alleviate the financial burden of students due to tuition. (EDB)

Vocational and Professional Education and Training

- Actively follow up on the recommendations of the review report to be submitted by the Task Force on Promotion of Vocational and Professional Education and Training by end-2019, with a view to better promoting VPET to cater for students' diverse abilities and interests. (EDB)
- Enhance promotion of a series of activities under the theme of "2020 Hong Kong Skills Year" in 2020, including the VPET International Conference and WorldSkills Hong Kong Competition and Carnival, to promote professional skills to young people and raise public understanding and awareness of professional education and skills training. (EDB)

- Provide subsidies for trainees under the Training and Support Scheme of VTC for three years starting from the 2020/21 academic year to take part in study and exchange programmes outside Hong Kong, attend short-term skills and practical courses and visit institutions/enterprises in those places, with a view to facilitating skills exchange and broadening their exposure. If the scheme proves to be effective, we will consider extending it to cover students of suitable VPET programmes in the VTC and other institutions. (EDB)
- Enhance the staff establishment of the boarding sections of aided special schools starting from the 2020/21 school year so that better services are provided to the boarders of these schools. The measures include upgrading the ranks of warden and assistant warden of boarding sections with a capacity of 40 or above, and increasing the number of assistant wardens and houseparents-in-charge; improving the Saturday and Sunday manning ratios; and providing an additional grant to the boarding sections of schools for children with physical disabilities, moderate intellectual disability (ID), severe ID and visual impairment cum ID to employ personal care workers or hire related services. (EDB)

Supporting Students with Different Needs

- Enhance the support for students with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) by assisting public sector ordinary primary and secondary schools to deploy a 3-tier intervention model with proven effectiveness in phases from the 2020/21 school year, which is expected to benefit about 10 000 students with ASD. The support will also include the provision of tier-2 support by non-governmental organisations on school-based small group training on social adaptive skills. (EDB)
- Implement measures to strengthen the support for NCS students (please refer to Chapter VI for details). (EDB)

Continuing Education

- Further expand the scope of CEF courses to cover eligible online courses provided by local course providers, with a view to providing more diversified channels of continuing learning. (LWB)

