

Section 4 : Support for Schools

Target

Different sectors of the community are willing to provide support to schools and teachers in the implementation of the Education Reform. Apart from providing direct support to schools in terms of professional support and resources, the Government is also promoting collaboration between schools and other sectors of the community so as to provide our students with richer and more fulfilling learning experiences.

(1) On-site Support to Schools in Curriculum Development

Progress

- In the 2005/06 school year, different modes of on-site support to facilitate school-based curriculum development were provided to about 300 primary schools. Approximately, 6 000 school-based professional meetings and activities were conducted between the external supporters and teachers whereby curriculum-related issues were discussed and intervention strategies developed and tried out in the classrooms. A curriculum leaders learning community has also been developed with 124 participating schools. In a survey conducted in the 2005/06 school year, about 84% of the 925 primary teacher respondents rated the support services provided by the EMB as "satisfactory" or "very satisfactory".
- In the 2005/06 school year, school-based curriculum development support services were provided to 112 secondary schools. About 600 school-based professional meetings and activities were conducted, the main focus of which was on the four KLAs, namely Mathematics Education, Science Education, Technology Education and Personal, Social and Humanities Education. In addition, a wider range of services catering for the different needs of secondary schools and a number of teacher networks are under development. Feedback from teachers on the support services were in general favourable.

Tasks Ahead

- In addition to the development of practical and contextual pedagogical strategies to enhance the learning of students at the classroom level, special focus will be given to the interface between the primary and secondary education as well as the vertical progression and horizontal coherence of the school-based curriculum based on the integral conceptions of teacher development and curriculum development at the school level.
- The school-based curriculum development support programmes will be expanded to cover more secondary schools with special focus on the preparation of students for the NSS curriculum and devising effective strategies for teachers to cater for the diversity in student learning. Different strategies are being formulated to meet the school-based curriculum development challenges and enhance teacher capacity through their collaboration with external support officers and with peers in the school/teacher networks.

(2) Capacity Enhancement Grant (CEG)

Progress

- In the 2005/06 school year, the Government committed to providing schools with long-term support by making CEG a recurrent provision. Moreover, an additional one-off provision of \$1.65 billion for a period of three years has been provided for schools with a view to enhancing the capacity of teachers to cope with the implementation of SBA and TSA at the initial stage and further relieving teachers' workload.

Tasks Ahead

- The EMB will continue to monitor the effective use of CEG.

(3) Quality Education Fund (QEF)

Progress

- The QEF has completed nine rounds of grant allocation. A total of 6 357 projects have been approved with funds amounting to \$3.35 billion. Over 1 800 schools have benefited from the projects.
- The "priority themes" approach is adopted up to the ninth call for application to give a sharper focus to the QEF in support of the Education Reform. Under this approach, applications that carry a designated theme would receive priority consideration. Themes which have been designated so far include learning and teaching effectiveness, school-based management, research on assessment for learning, addressing diverse learning needs of students and civic and moral education, etc. Please refer to Table (3.1) below for details.

Nature of the Projects Approved by the QEF in the Past Nine Rounds

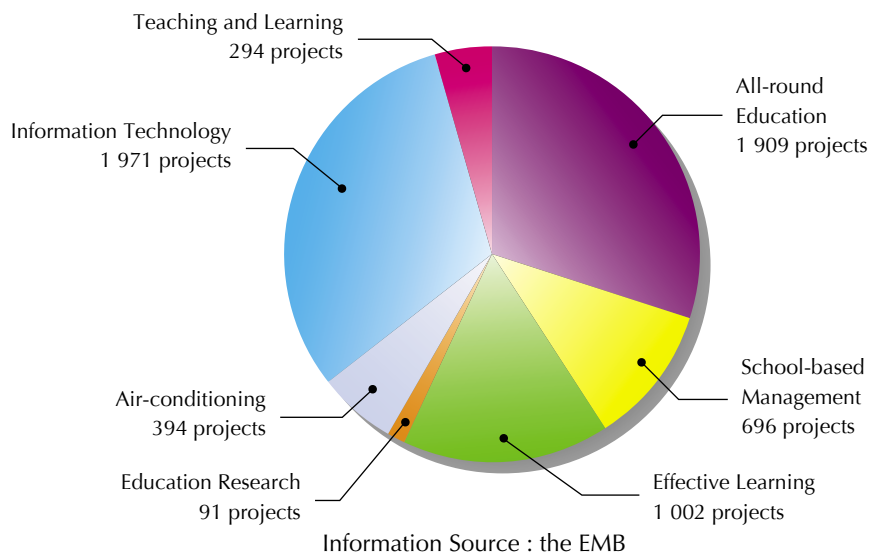


Table (3.1)

- To relieve teachers' workload and their stress in meeting the application deadline, the QEF has adopted a year-round mode of application with effect from September 2006. The funding scope has also been expanded.

- The QEF has provided funding support for the Chief Executive's Award for Teaching Excellence (ATE) which was first launched in November 2003. The aim of the Award is two-fold: to recognize accomplished teachers who demonstrate exemplary teaching practices to enhance their professional image and social status, thereby gaining society's recognition of the teaching profession; and to foster a culture of excellence and collaboration in the teaching profession. The first two ATEs, held in 2003/04 and 2005/06 respectively, covered primary, secondary and special school teachers teaching subjects under the Chinese Language Education KLA, the English Language Education KLA, the Mathematics Education KLA and the Science Education KLA as well as kindergarten teachers involved in language development. So far, 86 teachers have been selected for the Award and 123 for the Certificate of Merit.

Tasks Ahead

- The QEF will continue to provide special matching grants for schools to enhance their IT infrastructure.
- The QEF will continue to promote systematically the good practices and products of successful projects on different themes to the education sector for experience sharing and reference. Thematic networks will be formed and research and development of project outcomes will be commissioned to enhance the promotion and sustainable development of good practices derived from worthwhile projects.
- The QEF will continue to sponsor the ATE. The ATE (2006-2007) is open to teachers of the Arts Education KLA and the Personal, Social and Humanities Education KLA.

(4) School-based Professional Support (SBPS) Programmes

Progress

- The EMB has scaled-up the modes and scope of school-based professional support in facilitating schools to enhance the learning and teaching at KLA levels. The Pre-primary Education Support Section was set up in September 2006 to extend the on-site support services to the pre-primary sector. The nature of the support service is tailored to the identified needs of individual schools. Site-based professional support for principals and teachers is provided according to the different needs of the schools in order to assist them in implementing the different initiatives in the Education Reform.
- The SBPS Programmes are built on projects which have been field-tested with good results and recommended by co-workers. The following 5 programmes are included under the SBPS Programmes:
 - **Principal Support Network**

Experienced principals are seconded on a part-time basis to form a principal network providing collegial support to other principals. Based on identified school needs, individual principals within this network can form smaller networks on selected themes to conduct professional sharing activities.
 - **School Support Partners (SSP) Scheme (Seconded Teacher Scheme)**

Excellent serving teachers are seconded on both full-time and part-time basis in support of learning and teaching at schools. The teacher secondees are attached to a number of schools as teacher mentors. Training and induction programmes are provided to ensure that the SSP can provide high quality support.
 - **Professional Development Schools (PDS)**

A number of effective schools with breakthrough practices in KLAs and whole school pedagogical issues are designated as PDS. The PDS build a network to foster structured interactions amongst the participating schools and to provide support for these schools.

▪ **University-School Support Programmes**

School support services are commissioned to tertiary institutes with proven track records in delivering high quality school-based support to address schools' identified needs and to empower frontline educators in capacity building, for taking forward a number of education initiatives.

▪ **Collegial Participation in External School Review (ESR)**

Serving principals and experienced teachers are encouraged to engage in the ESR of another school to enhance participants' understanding of the school self-improvement processes and techniques and bring additional expertise to the ESR team.

- In the 2005/06 school year, the EMB has produced three publications and two CD-ROMs to share with schools the experience in participating in the SBPS Programmes.
- In the 2006/07 school year, there are 424 schools participating in the SBPS Programmes.

Tasks Ahead

- The above SBPS Programmes will continue and be refined where appropriate. It is expected that more schools will benefit from these on-site support services in the coming years.
- Upon the establishment of the Pre-primary Education Support Section, school-based professional support will be provided to kindergartens and kindergarten-cum-child care centres to help schools address the developmental and educational needs of children.

(5) Parent Education and Home-School Co-operation

Progress

- The Committee on Home-School Co-operation (CHSC) has been promoting parent education in kindergartens and primary and secondary schools through home-school co-operation interface. As at the end of the 2005/06 school

year, about 1 400 schools have set up their parent-teacher associations (PTAs). Federations of PTAs (FPTAs) have also been formed in 16 districts. The PTAs and FPTAs have organized parent education programmes and home school co-operation activities at both the school level and district level.

- To strengthen communication with parents, to help parents understand the latest educational policies and to provide useful information on learning and teaching, the EMB has committed itself to organizing various parents' talks, to delivering *e-Bulletin for Parents* and to issuing *Parents' Newsletter* half-yearly. The parents' talks have wide-ranging topics, including Primary One Admission (POA), SSPA, Liberal Studies under the NSS academic structure, etc. The talks were well received by parents. A total of 22 sessions of parents' talks including the annual CHSC symposium, eight Secretary for Education and Manpower (SEM) Forum with parents on regional basis and 13 talks on different topics were organized in the 2005/06 school year. For the 2006/07 school year, 11 sessions of parents' talks including four SEM Forum with S1 parents on regional basis have been organized as at November 2006. From September 2005 onwards, *e-Bulletin for Parents* covering hot topics in education, useful information and the latest education policies has been issued to parents via email.

Tasks Ahead

- Building on its existing strength, the CHSC will strive to initiate genuine partnership between parents and schools by encouraging more involvement of parents and teachers as well as promoting the sharing of good practices on home-school co-operation and parent education among schools.
- The EMB will continue to organize various parents' talks and to publish *e-Bulletin for Parents* and *Parents' Newsletter* in the coming year with a view to providing parents with relevant information on education policies and enhancing their roles as stakeholders of education.
- The EMB has established communication channels with parents through radio programmes as well as organizing talks for parents at the school, district and territory levels. The EMB will continue to collaborate with FPTAs to enhance communication between the Government and parents.

(6) Support by Other Sectors

Progress

- The EMB has promoted the following activities with different Government departments and other sectors:

Organization	Support Activities
Social Services Agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To provide support for newly arrived children by running induction programmes for them.• To implement the Understanding Adolescent Project in primary schools, through which a series of group, adventure-based and parent-child activities will be organized for the students identified with greater needs for guidance. The objective is to enhance students' resilience.• To assist needy students to join the activities of Uniformed Groups and the Hong Kong Award for Young People, funding is provided by the EMB to assist student members in purchasing uniforms and participating in camping/outing activities and/or joining leadership training courses.

Organization	Support Activities
Disciplinary Forces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In order to further enhance the concepts and effectiveness of the Smart Teen Challenge Project, the EMB has collaborated with the Hong Kong Police Force, Fire Services Department, Customs and Excise Department, Correctional Services Department, Immigration Department and Civil Aid Service to organize the Enhanced Smart Teen Project (the name of the Project was revised in April 2006). Through a series of discipline training and physical activities, the Project aims to develop students' self-discipline, confidence, resilience and collaboration skills.
Business Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Business-School Partnership Programme (Programme) launched by the EMB aims at helping S4 to S7 students understand their own abilities and potential with a view to planning for their future careers through cooperation between schools and the business sector. At present, there are over 130 industrial and commercial organizations participating in the Programme. Through participating in various activities like education forum, workshop, workplace visit, work attachment, etc., students will not only understand business operation and employers' requirements, but will also learn the appropriate work attitude and positive life values and ultimately achieve the goal of whole-person development.

Tasks Ahead

- The EMB will continue to encourage different Government departments and other sectors of the community to build up partnerships with schools so as to provide students with diversified and enlightening learning experiences.