

Islands District Council
Paper IDC 79/2013

Question on Discovery College

Ms. Amy YUNG notifies this Council that she will raise the following enquiry at the Islands District Council meeting to be held on 2 September 2013:

“ At the Community Affairs, Culture and Recreation Committee meeting held on 8th July this year, I raised the enquiry--“Question on Discovery College”(Paper CACRC 29/2013), which requested the Education Bureau (“EDB”) and Discovery College to attend the meeting and answer my enquiry on a substantial increase in tuition fees in the coming academic year and the imposition of a \$5,900 Nonrefundable Building Levy on each Discovery College student every year. Unfortunately, the EDB only submitted a written reply instead of attending the meeting while Discovery College did neither, claiming that all staff was on summer vacation.

Many parents opined that the EDB and Discovery College were being irresponsible in handling the matter in such a way. I therefore request the EDB to attend the Islands District Council (“IDC”) meeting to be held on 2 September 2013 and answer the following questions:

1. Why did the EDB not detect the financial problems of Discovery College earlier?
2. The former Education and Manpower Bureau granted land at nil premium and allocated \$137 million to the English Schools Foundation (“ESF”) for the building of the school. Why then did the EDB not supervise the financial management and tuition fees of Discovery College?
3. I myself and parents repeatedly requested the EDB to intervene in the matter, and also requested interviews with the Bureau. Why did the Bureau not respond to our requests?

I also request Discovery College to attend the IDC meeting to be held on 2 September 2013 and answer the following questions:

1. How many students of Discovery College are immediate family members of staffers of the ESF (“Staff-related students”)?
2. Do staff-related students pay the same amount of tuition fees as non staff-related students do? If not, what are the concessions?
3. Please give the ratio of scholarships awarded to staff-related students and scholarships awarded to non staff-related students in the past 5 years.
4. Discovery College was founded in 2008. Why only as late as this year did the College detect its financial problems, but at the same time allocated \$1 million for the construction of a new gymnasium for students of the 12th and 13th grades? ”