

**Minutes of the 2nd meeting of
Education and Welfare Committee (2016)
Sha Tin District Council**

Date : 1 March 2016 (Tuesday)
Time : 2:30 p.m.
Venue : Sha Tin District Council Conference Room
4/F, Sha Tin Government Offices

<u>Present</u>	<u>Post Title</u>	<u>Present from</u>	<u>Left at</u>
Ms LAM Chung-yan (Chairman)	DC Member	2:30 p.m.	3:06 p.m.
Mr MAK Yun-pui (Vice-Chairman)	DC Member	2:30 p.m.	3:06 p.m.
Mr HO Hau-cheung, BBS, MH	DC Chairman	2:30 p.m.	3:06 p.m.
Mr PANG Cheung-wai, Thomas, SBS, JP	DC Vice-Chairman	2:30 p.m.	3:06 p.m.
Mr CHAN Billy Shiu-yeung	DC Member	2:30 p.m.	3:06 p.m.
Mr CHAN Kwok-keung, James	DC Member	2:44 p.m.	3:06 p.m.
Ms CHAN Man-kuen	DC Member	2:30 p.m.	3:06 p.m.
Mr CHAN Nok-hang	DC Member	2:30 p.m.	3:06 p.m.
Mr CHING Cheung-ying, MH	DC Member	2:30 p.m.	3:06 p.m.
Mr CHIU Chu-pong, Sunny	DC Member	2:30 p.m.	3:05 p.m.
Mr CHIU Man-leong	DC Member	2:30 p.m.	3:06 p.m.
Mr HUI Yui-yu, Rick	DC Member	2:30 p.m.	3:06 p.m.
Mr LEUNG Ka-fai, Victor	DC Member	2:30 p.m.	3:06 p.m.
Mr LI Sai-hung	DC Member	2:30 p.m.	3:06 p.m.
Mr LI Sai-wing	DC Member	2:30 p.m.	2:36 p.m.
Mr LI Wing-shing, Wilson	DC Member	2:30 p.m.	3:06 p.m.
Mr NG Kam-hung	DC Member	2:30 p.m.	3:06 p.m.
Ms PONG Scarlett Oi-lan, JP	DC Member	2:30 p.m.	3:06 p.m.
Mr PUN Kwok-shan, MH	DC Member	2:30 p.m.	3:06 p.m.
Mr TING Tsz-yuen	DC Member	2:30 p.m.	3:04 p.m.
Mr TONG Hok-leung	DC Member	2:30 p.m.	3:06 p.m.

<u>Present</u>	<u>Post Title</u>	<u>Present from</u>	<u>Left at</u>
Ms TSANG So-lai	DC Member	2:30 p.m.	3:06 p.m.
Ms TUNG Kin-lei	DC Member	2:37 p.m.	3:06 p.m.
Mr WAI Hing-cheung	DC Member	2:30 p.m.	3:06 p.m.
Mr WONG Fu-sang, Tiger	DC Member	2:30 p.m.	3:06 p.m.
Mr WONG Hok-lai	DC Member	2:39 p.m.	3:06 p.m.
Mr WONG Ka-wing	DC Member	2:30 p.m.	3:06 p.m.
Ms WONG Ping-fan, Iris	DC Member	2:30 p.m.	3:06 p.m.
Mr WONG Yue-hon	DC Member	2:30 p.m.	3:06 p.m.
Mr YAU Man-chun	DC Member	2:30 p.m.	3:06 p.m.
Mr YIP Wing	DC Member	2:30 p.m.	3:06 p.m.
Mr YIU Ka-chun	DC Member	2:30 p.m.	3:06 p.m.
Ms YUE Shin-man	DC Member	2:30 p.m.	3:06 p.m.
Mr YUNG Ming-chau, Michael	DC Member	2:30 p.m.	3:06 p.m.
Mr CHU Ho-fai, Kelvin (Secretary)	Executive Officer (District Council) 1, Sha Tin District Office		

<u>In Attendance</u>	<u>Post Title</u>
Mr CHAN Ping-ching, Roy	Assistant District Social Welfare Officer (Shatin) 1, Social Welfare Department
Mrs YU CHOW Kai-ching, Alice	Senior School Development Officer (Sha Tin) 4, Education Bureau
Miss LAU Yuk-yee, Lydia	Housing Manager/Shatin 1, Housing Department
Ms CHENG Ka-po, Theresa	Chief Liaison Officer, Sha Tin District Office
Ms LO Wai-man, Mimi	Acting Senior Liaison Officer (East) Sha Tin District Office
Mr YUEN Chun-kit, Derek	Senior Executive Officer (District Council) Sha Tin District Office

<u>Absent</u>	<u>Post Title</u>	
Mr MOK Kam-kwai, BBS	DC Member	(With apologies)
Mr SIU Hin-hong	DC Member	(With apologies)

Absent**Post Title**

Mr CHENG Tsuk-man	DC Member	(Without apologies)
Mr LAI Tsz-yan	DC Member	(Without apologies)
Mr LEE Chi-Wing, Alvin	DC Member	(Without apologies)

**Person in
charge**

The Chairman welcomed Members and representatives of government departments to the 2nd meeting of the Education and Welfare Committee for the year.

Application(s) to be absent by Member(s)

2. The Chairman said that the Secretariat had received the applications to be absent in writing from the following two Members:

Mr MOK Kam-kwai	Work-related
Mr SIU Hin-hong	Work-related

3. Members unanimously approved applications to be absent by the above Members.

Confirmation of minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2016

(Minutes EW 1/2016)

4. Members unanimously approved minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2016.

Item for discussion

Proposed budget for 2016-2017 by Expenditure Head 5

(Paper EW 2/2016)

5. Members unanimously approved the above paper.

For information

Number of newly-arrived school children enrolled at public primary and secondary schools in the Sha Tin District (provided by the Education Bureau)

(Paper EW 3/2016)

6. Collective comments from Mr LI Sai-wing are as follows:

- (a) The number of newly-arrived children enrolled at primary and secondary schools in the Sha Tin District had been on the rise, with vacancies in the Northern District and the Tai Po District reaching extremely low levels; should vacancies in the two aforementioned districts fail to meet future demands, it was conceivable that the Sha Tin District would become a valid alternative for school children, he enquired about corresponding measures that the Education Bureau might take; and
- (b) As the public might not necessarily understand the mechanism of the Central Allocation system, he looked forward to voicing the issue of under-publicity to the Education Bureau.

7. Collective comments from Mr YUNG Ming-chau, Michael are as follows:

- (a) Subsequent to the in-take of Shui Chuen O Estate, the population living at public housing would be substantially increased. In addition to the number of newly-arrived school children enrolled at primary and secondary schools in the Sha Tin District, he also urged the Education Bureau to provide figures about school children from other districts that were enrolled at primary and secondary schools in Sha Tin, with a view to enabling Members to have a clearer picture about the availability of vacancies in Sha Tin District;
- (b) Newly-arrived individuals had their specific needs to be addressed, for example, they might encounter learning difficulties due to language

barriers. He urged the Education Bureau to explain how it would help a wide range of newly-arrived individuals, such as mainland residents holding one-way permits, individuals whose primary language was not Chinese, as well as South Asians;

- (c) It was not mentioned in the paper whether the number of classes at primary and secondary schools would be adjusted according to the number of newly-arrived school children enrolled, nor was there any information about the act of shutting down a school through legal or administrative measures;
- (d) With regard to the measure of extending grant for surplus teachers for one year, he enquired whether the Education Bureau had set up long-term measures to deal with the issue of surplus teachers. According to him, in the absence of the above grant, not only would schools no longer be able to hire contract teachers, contract teachers currently in service might also decide to switch schools, creating added uncertainties in relation to the teaching force;
- (e) Since schools in Sha Tin District seldom accepted students that were not of Chinese descent, whether corresponding curricula would be reviewed as appropriate to address relevant needs; and
- (f) Whether the Education Bureau could inform Members of whether the number of classes at primary and secondary schools in Sha Tin District would be changed, and if so, how the teachers would be allocated.

8. Collective comments from Mr PUN Kwok-shan are as follows:

- (a) The paper failed to provide a sufficient amount of information, and it lacked data whose sources could be cited;
- (b) He urged the Education Bureau to further categorise the data of

newly-arrived school children into the following categories: holders of one-way permits, resident children returning to Hong Kong after periodic enrolment at schools in mainland, non-Chinese citizens, South Asians, etc;

- (c) What kind of schools would newly-arrived school children usually be assigned to, such as participant schools under the Direct Subsidy Scheme, subsidised schools or international schools; and
- (d) The majority of newly-arrived school children were primary school pupils; would it be possible for them to enrol at schools located next to their places of residence or those within the School Net(s) nearby.

9. Collective comments from Mr YAU Man-chun are as follows:

- (a) Vacancies at kindergartens were not mentioned in the paper. Since the in-take of phase II of Shui Chuen O Estate was imminent, he therefore urged the Education Bureau to provide information about the availability of vacancies at schools within School Net (91) after the meeting;
- (b) Whether tendering procedures for the one kindergarten to be located at phase II of Shui Chuen O Estate had been completed, he asked the Education Bureau to provide information about the said kindergarten after the meeting; and
- (c) He urged the Education Bureau to provide information about vacancies of K2 and K3 classes, and to provide a list of schools with remaining vacancies, from which parents of direct-entry students in the district could take reference.

10. Collective comments from Mrs YU CHOW Kai-ching, Alice, Senior School Development Officer (Sha Tin) 4, Education Bureau, are as follows:

- (a) Both primary and secondary schools in Sha Tin District currently had enough vacancies to meet relevant needs;
- (b) In terms of primary schools, the Education Bureau would communicate with district schools from time to time, and to provide parents in need with services in relation to vacancy allocation under the principle of enrolling based on geographic proximity;
- (c) The Education Bureau expected that the demand for primary 1 vacancies at public schools was headed towards the estimated peak for the 2018-19 school year, and would decrease afterwards. In order to cope with the demand for vacancies during the transitional period, the Education Bureau would keep a series of flexible arrangements, such as utilising unused classrooms, altering purpose of other rooms at a school to serve as additional classrooms, as well as borrowing vacancies from nearby School Net(s). When needed, the Education Bureau would also temporarily increase the number of students allocated to each class. Further, the Education Bureau would maintain close communication with schools in the district and actively discuss all feasible measures (such as making use of empty school buildings and expanding temporary classrooms), with a view to meeting the need for vacancies;
- (d) Primary and secondary students who immigrated to Hong Kong from mainland, as well as non-Chinese speaking students from other countries, could apply for enrolment by themselves, or otherwise call the Education Bureau to make an enquiry about the vacancies at public schools. In addition, parents could also register at any Regional Education Office. The information provided by applicants at registration would subsequently be used by the Education Bureau to make enrolment arrangements for their children;
- (e) As schools were entitled to accept direct-entries (whose sources and categories were not required to be submitted to the Education Bureau in

detail) by themselves, the Education Bureau had no record about the number of direct-entries enrolled at schools in Sha Tin District by category; and could therefore only disclose the number of newly-arrived school children enrolled at public primary and secondary schools in Sha Tin District;

- (f) With regard to mainland and non-Chinese speaking school children newly arrived at Hong Kong, in light of their individual circumstances, the Education Bureau would encourage them to attend a six-month Initiation Programme before applying for enrolment; or otherwise advise them to enrol at stream schools and attend its Induction Programme after school, which taught components such as knowing the local community, learning adaption and personal development. The said programmes were currently available at two organisations in Sha Tin District. In addition, the Education Bureau would also provide newly-arrived school children in need with placement assistance services;
- (g) Ever since the 2014-15 school year, the government had been reserving an annual fund of approximately HK\$200,000,000 to further enhance the supporting services for non-Chinese speaking students to learn Chinese, including implementation of the “Chinese Language Curriculum Second Language Learning Framework” at primary and secondary schools and initiatives to build a harmonious campus. In addition, the Education Bureau provided teachers with professional training and learning materials, with a view to helping non-Chinese speaking students overcome difficulties in learning Chinese as a second language. Further, the Education Bureau also provided Applied Learning Chinese (for non-Chinese speaking students) at senior secondary level, offering non-Chinese speaking students with an alternative Chinese language qualification, which would better prepare them for further education and future employment;
- (h) In response to the temporary drop in secondary 1 student population, the Education Bureau further introduced a basket of relief measures that

aimed at "preserving our schools, the teaching force and the strengths of our education sector" since the 2013-14 school year (collectively known as the "three-fold preservation policy"). With a view to stabilising the teaching force, from the 2013-14 to the 2015-16 school year, retention period for surplus teachers resulting from the drop in student population and downward adjustment of class numbers had been extended from one year to three years;

- (i) In addition, the Chief Executive also announced in the 2016 Policy Address that the government would continue to implement its relief measures. In order to further stabilise the teaching force, schools with surplus teachers due to reduction in secondary 1 classes during the 2013-14 and 2014-15 school years could apply, when necessary, for extending retention period for their surplus teachers to the 2017-18 school year;

- (j) With regard to the kindergarten of Shui Chuen O Estate, the second school allocation exercise for 2015 had commenced on 26 June 2015, and its deadline for submission of applications was 27 July 2015. The Education Bureau was expected to announce the allocation results shortly after completion of relevant procedures. Subsequent to which, the Housing Department would contact and enter into leases with relevant school sponsoring bodies; if all went as planned, then the said kindergarten would be expected to be put into service in September this year;

(Post-meeting Note: the second school allocation exercise for 2015 had been completed and the allocation results had been announced at the end of March 2016.)

- (k) Figures about vacancies at kindergartens had been updated by the Education Bureau to its website and posted at all Regional Education Offices at the end of January this year; when necessary, the Education Bureau could also submit relevant figures to Members after the meeting; and

- (1) With regard to concerns expressed by contract teachers about their employment prospect, the education sector had also given their comments. According to suggestion made by the Chief Executive in the 2016 Policy Address, schools could turn the current “Senior Secondary Curriculum Support Grant” and/or “Career and Life Planning Grant” into Regular Teaching Posts from the 2016-17 school year, which would provide more stable teacher manpower for schools to implement respective policies, as well as an additional option for talent selection. To improve faculty morale, schools could consider turning qualified contract teachers into regular teachers. It was expected that student population would rebound gradually from the 2017-18 school year, since relevant relief measures (including the Voluntary Optimisation of Class Structure Scheme and approval of the downward adjustment on the number students for approved secondary 1 classes to 25) had not been completed, they would remain effective in the coming few years. The Education Bureau would stay in touch with industry practitioners to ensure that schools continued to provide quality education.

11. The Chairman said that the Education Bureau could try sorting out and submitting available data to Members for discussion at future meetings. She proposed to discuss the availability of vacancies in Sha Tin District at the next meeting and urged the Education Bureau to prepare relevant papers for Members’ discussion. Education Bureau

12. Mr CHAN Ping-ching, Roy, Assistant District Social Welfare Officer (Shatin) 1, Social Welfare Department said that newly-arrived school children and their families could approach Integrated Family Service Centres in their districts for help if they had any welfare-related need.

13. Members note the above paper.

Date of next meeting

Person in
charge

14. The next meeting will be held at 2:30 p.m. on 3 May 2016 (Tuesday).
15. The meeting was adjourned at 3:06 p.m.

Secretariat of the Sha Tin District Council
STDC 13/15/35 V

April 2016