

Sha Tin District Council
Minutes of the 4th Meeting of
the Education and Welfare Committee in 2016

Date : 28 June 2016 (Tuesday)

Time : 2:30 pm

Venue : Sha Tin District Council Conference Room
 4/F, Sha Tin Government Offices

<u>Present</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Time of joining the meeting</u>	<u>Time of leaving the meeting</u>
Ms LAM Chung-yan (Chairman)	DC Member	2:30 pm	4:16 pm
Mr MAK Yun-pui (Vice-Chairman)	"	2:30 pm	4:15 pm
Mr HO Hau-cheung, BBS, MH	DC Chairman	2:50 pm	4:16 pm
Mr PANG Cheung-wai, Thomas, SBS, JP	DC Vice-Chairman	2:30 pm	4:16 pm
Mr CHAN Billy Shiu-yeung	DC Member	2:30 pm	4:16 pm
Mr CHAN Kwok-keung, James	"	3:33 pm	4:11 pm
Ms CHAN Man-kuen	"	2:38 pm	4:16 pm
Mr CHAN Nok-hang	"	2:30 pm	4:16 pm
Mr CHING Cheung-ying, MH	"	2:30 pm	4:16 pm
Mr CHIU Chu-pong, Sunny	"	2:30 pm	4:16 pm
Mr CHIU Man-leong	"	2:30 pm	4:16 pm
Mr HUI Yui-yu, Rick	"	2:30 pm	4:16 pm
Mr LAI Tsz-yan	"	2:30 pm	4:16 pm
Mr LEE Chi-wing, Alvin	"	4:05 pm	4:16 pm
Mr LEUNG Ka-fai, Victor	"	2:30 pm	3:45 pm
Mr LI Sai-hung	"	2:30 pm	4:16 pm
Mr LI Sai-wing	"	2:30 pm	2:50 pm
Mr LI Wing-shing, Wilson	"	2:30 pm	4:09 pm
Mr MOK Kam-kwai, BBS	"	2:30 pm	4:16 pm
Ms PONG Scarlett Oi-lan, JP	"	2:30 pm	4:16 pm
Mr PUN Kwok-shan, MH	"	3:14 pm	4:16 pm
Mr TONG Hok-leung	"	2:30 pm	4:16 pm
Ms TUNG Kin-lei	"	2:30 pm	4:16 pm
Mr WAI Hing-cheung	"	2:30 pm	4:16 pm
Mr WONG Fu-sang, Tiger	"	2:30 pm	4:16 pm
Mr WONG Hok-lai	"	2:30 pm	4:13 pm
Mr WONG Ka-wing	"	2:30 pm	4:16 pm
Ms WONG Ping-fan, Iris	"	2:30 pm	4:16 pm
Mr WONG Yue-hon	"	2:40 pm	4:16 pm
Mr YAU Man-chun	"	2:30 pm	4:16 pm
Mr YIP Wing	"	2:30 pm	4:16 pm
Mr YIU Ka-chun	"	2:30 pm	4:16 pm
Ms YUE Shin-man	"	2:30 pm	4:16 pm
Mr YUNG Ming-chau, Michael	"	2:30 pm	4:16 pm
Mr CHU Ho-fai, Kelvin (Secretary)	Executive Officer (District Council)1 / Sha Tin District Office		

In Attendance

Mr CHAN Ping-ching, Roy

Mrs YU CHOW Kai-ching, Alice

Ms LAU Yuk-yee, Lydia

Ms CHENG Ka-po, Theresa

Ms CHENG Yuk-kam, Brenda

Mr YUEN Chun-kit, Derek

TitleAssistant District Social Welfare Officer (Sha Tin) 1 /
Social Welfare Department

Senior School Development Officer (Sha Tin) 4 / Education Bureau

Housing Manager (Sha Tin 1) / Housing Department

Chief Liaison Officer / Sha Tin District Office

Senior Liaison Officer (East) / Sha Tin District Office

Senior Executive Officer (District Council) / Sha Tin District Office

Absent

Mr NG Kam-hung

Mr TING Tsz-yuen

Ms TSANG So-lai

Title

DC Member

”

”

(Application for leave of absence received)

(”)

(No application for leave of absence received)

Action

The Chairman welcomed all members and representatives of government departments to the 4th meeting of the Education and Welfare Committee this year.

Application for Leave of Absence

2. The Chairman said that the Secretariat had received the applications for leave of absence in writing from the following members:

Mr NG Kam-hung

Mr TING Tsz-yuen

Official commitment

Out of town

3. Members unanimously endorsed the applications for leave of absence submitted by the members above.

Confirmation of the Minutes of the Meeting Held on 3 May 2016

(EWC Minutes 3/2016)

4. Members unanimously confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 3 May 2016.

Discussion Items

5. Members unanimously endorsed to change the order of agenda items and first discuss the motion by Mr Rick HUI on Requesting Education Bureau to Abolish the Territory-wide System Assessment (TSA).

Motion

Motion by Mr HUI Yui-yu, Rick on Requesting Education Bureau to Abolish the Territory-wide System Assessment (TSA)

(Paper No. EW 15/2016)

6. The views of Mr Rick HUI were summarised below:

- (a) he didn't know whether TSA could improve teaching quality as claimed by the Education Bureau (EDB) without putting pressure on students and schools. In his opinion, the TSA was not designed to allocate students to schools;
- (b) the EDB didn't have valid data to prove the effectiveness of TSA. In the review report dated 4 February this year, the EDB only reiterated the positive significance of TSA but did not provide substantive data. Statistics on the attainment rates of Chinese and English subjects he obtained indicated that the TSA failed to improve the effectiveness of teaching and learning, and that results of students taking the TSA at Primary 6 did not show any improvement as compared with those at Primary 3;
- (c) the EDB said that Primary 3 TSA would neither include students' individual performances, nor affect schools' grading. However, experts said that performances in Chinese, English and mathematics of a school were closely related to the TSA, and the EDB would compare the school with other schools to see whether it could reach the standard;
- (d) he also did not see any positive justifications or data from the Government in support of the TSA. Some scholars from the Department of Educational Administration & Policy Faculty of Education, the Chinese University of Hong Kong also supported his argument with data that TSA was ineffective. There was also ample evidence that officials of EDB would use TSA results for school performance assessment; and
- (e) in his opinion, the situation of "sealing one's fate with a one-off examination" would not happen because even though Primary 3 TSA was abolished, Primary 6 TSA was also not a public examination. He thought it was not suitable to continue carrying out TSA because it put more pressure on schools. Therefore, he proposed the motion to abolish the TSA for Primary 3 students.

7. The views of Mr WONG Ka-wing were summarised below:

- (a) the purpose of the TSA was not to classify schools and students, instead it offered an indicator to the EDB to learn about the overall distribution of standards of students and schools in Hong Kong, so as to make arrangements for allocation of secondary school places in the future and send students to suitable schools to study;
- (b) the pressure came from the schools, as the schools required students to go through excessive drills with the hope of improving student intakes and school indicators. The EDB had banned schools from requiring students to go through excessive drills. However, if the TSA was abolished, he questioned whether there were other ways to gauge the capability and distribution of students and schools. The teaching progress would be affected if there was a big difference in the learning abilities of students in the same class. However, the effectiveness of teaching and learning could be enhanced if the allocation of school places was based on students' capability; and

- (c) he thought that abolishing the old system before the availability of a better assessment system would cause problems.

8. The views of Mr WONG Yue-hon were summarised below:

- (a) the current problem was over-drilling by schools. Since the Government has already developed the programme of “TSA for 10% primary schools”, we should first study the outcome of the programme and then decide on the next move instead of making haste to abolish the existing system. He pointed out that if the TSA was abolished, did it mean that it was no longer necessary to make any assessment in the future, nor assess students’ abilities and standards, and how teaching materials could be developed to meet the needs of students in the future; and
- (b) after the TSA was abolished, there would still be comparison between schools. Parents also wanted their children to enter a better school. “Monster Parents” arose as a result of problematic mindset of parents. Since he failed to see the data on the effectiveness of TSA in the motion, he hoped that more data would be available for reference and proposed to restudy the data and reports of the programme of “TSA for 10% primary schools” before making a decision.

9. The views of Mr Michael YUNG were summarised below:

- (a) he inquired about the data source of the proposer of the motion and hoped that he could make clear his proposed requests in the motion;
- (b) he asked why only TSA for Primary 3 students was requested to be abolished but TSAs for other students were not. If there were problems with the system, it should be improved and reformed rather than being abolished. Some other issues such as integrated education were also not covered. The Government has developed the programme of “TSA for 10% primary schools”. If there was no examination and assessment, it would be difficult to make systematic comparisons among students from different schools. If Primary 3 TSA was abolished but Primary 6 TSA continued, the situation of “sealing one’s fate with a one-off examination” would happen. Some school-based assessment systems were also introduced for the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination and Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination, with the hope of alleviating the situation of “sealing one’s fate with a one-off examination”. If Primary 3 TSA was abolished, was there any other method which could make a fair assessment without putting pressure on the students; and
- (c) the current problem was that schools were putting pressure on students due to the rating impact. How would the EDB make a balance to ease the situation, e.g. lowering the difficulty of TSA paper.

10. The views of Mr CHAN Nok-hang were summarised below:

- (a) in his view, the TSA had little meaning to Primary 3 students and was also of little help in improving academic performance. Therefore, resources should be devoted to satisfying other learning needs of students, e.g. English learning; and
- (b) as long as the TSA was not abolished, drillings would always exist, and parents would also compare schools with data. For the sake of students, he voiced his support for the abolition of Primary 3 TSA.

11. Ms Iris WONG said that the problem with the TSA did not originate from the system itself, but from drillings carried out by schools. The Government's review report pointed out that the Focus Interviews by Federation of Parent-teacher Associations in 18 districts also mentioned that the culture of drilling would increase students' pressure. She hoped that the proposer of the motion could pay attention to the crux of the issue.

12. The views of Mr Tiger WONG were summarised below:

- (a) the Hong Kong Government would allocate HK\$84 billion for education expenditure in 2016/17, which was the primary expenditure item of the Government. In 2015/16, the Government also disbursed HK\$16 billion for primary schools and required the students to undergo assessment tests once every three years. The first batch of students undergoing TSA tests had just started working in society, so it was not in a position to draw a firm conclusion on whether there was any problem with the system;
- (b) the motion said the TSA created harmful impact on basic education, so he enquired about what the harmful impact meant. The motion also said the Coordinating Committee lacked delegates from representative TSA concern groups, so he asked which groups were representative;
- (c) in November 2015, the government rolled out a three-month consultation on TSA and published an exhaustive report in February this year. The Government had listened to the public opinion and launched short-term and medium to long term programmes. Students in general also considered that test questions under the programme of "TSA for 10% primary schools" were easier, so they had sufficient time to finish the papers. Therefore, he hoped that the proposer of the motion could await the announcement of findings of the "10% test" report before deciding whether to strive for abolishing TSA; and
- (d) on the issue of drilling, he thought communication and study should be carried out between and by EDB and schools, and the abolition of TSA might not avert the drilling culture. He hoped that the Government could first learn about the formation of drilling culture and cure the problem at root. Excessive drilling by schools might also have an impact on the government data. Therefore, we should wait until a more detailed study report was published before deciding on the direction to be adopted.

13. The views of Mr MAK Yun-pui were summarised below:

- (a) he hoped to abolish all TSA assessment tests because they would reduce the learning motivation of children and adolescent students and create a labelling effect. The TSA would also put pressure on students to sacrifice their childhood. But he hoped the proposer of the motion could explain whether there would be any replacement method if the TSA was abolished;
- (b) first of all, it was necessary to find out whether the deprivation of children's rights by TSA was caused by schools, parents or the system itself. If the TSA was hastily abolished without finding solutions to the above problem or finding an effective replacement method, it would not help solve the problem; and
- (c) the Government failed to look squarely at the impact of TSA on students with special education needs because the TSA would put more pressure on students with special needs but not being able to be integrated into the regular classroom. The current problem was that schools' drillings had exerted great pressure on students and parents would also choose schools according to their relevant ratings. Therefore, the Government should propose effective options.

14. The views of Mr TONG Hok-leung were summarised below:

- (a) he held that there was a problem with the education system in Hong Kong itself, and he also did not agree with the "force-feeding" drilling approach. The root of the problem lied in insufficient university places in Hong Kong and the keen competition for school places, which led to problems in primary and secondary schools; and
- (b) in his opinion, the TSA represented only a small part of the problem and there were still many examinations and competitions in Hong Kong. Absolute fairness could hardly be achieved in society. He hoped that the education system in Hong Kong could be changed. However, the current motion did nothing helpful at changing the education system in Hong Kong, so he did not agree with it.

15. The views of Mr Wilson LI were summarised below:

- (a) TSA was one of the many educational problems in Hong Kong, so he supported the motion to abolish Primary 3 TSA. TSAs for Primary 3, Primary 6 and Secondary 3 students had an impact on children. In his opinion, the TSA for Primary 3 students could be the first one be abolished, in order to help young children break free from drillings. Besides, foreign education systems could be used for reference so that children could have a happy childhood; and
- (b) there was no need to set up a replacement system after Primary 3 TSA was abolished, given the fact that there were other assessments and drillings to replace TSAs for Primary 6 and Secondary 3 students, and relevant system reform should also be conducted.

16. Mr Tiger WONG proposed amendments to the motion as below:

“Regarding the problem whether the Territory-wide System Assessment (TSA) should be abolished, the Government made a review earlier and developed the programme of ‘TSA for 10% primary schools’. The Education and Welfare Committee of Sha Tin District Council requested the Government to submit a review report and give an account to the public as soon as possible after the pilot programme was completed.”

Mr WONG Yue-hon seconded the motion.

17. The Chairman announced the voting results: there were 15 affirmative votes, 15 negative votes and two members did not cast any vote. Since some members said that the voting system failed to record their votes, he proposed to vote again, and no member objected.

18. Mr Billy CHAN requested that the names of members who voted for and against to be recorded, which was supported by four members.

19. The Chairman announced that the members endorsed the motion of amendments to paragraph 16 by 16 affirmative votes and 15 negative votes.

The 16 members casting affirmative votes were:

Mr Tiger WONG, Mr HO Hau-cheung, Ms YUE Shin-man, Mr CHIU Man-leong, Ms LAM Chung-yan, Mr YIU Ka-chun, Mr TONG Hok-leung, Mr Victor LEUNG, Mr MOK Kam-kwai, Ms CHAN Man-kuen, Mr Thomas PANG, Ms Iris WONG, Mr WONG Yue-hon, Mr WONG Ka-wing, Ms TUNG Kin-lei and Mr PUN Kwok-shan.

The 15 members casting negative votes were:

Mr YAU Man-chun, Mr LI Sai-hung, Mr Wilson LI, Mr Michael YUNG, Mr Rick HUI, Mr Billy CHAN, Mr James CHAN, Mr CHAN Nok-hang, Mr MAK Yun-pui, Mr CHING Cheung-ying, Mr WONG Hok-lai, Mr YIP Wing, Mr Sunny CHIU, Mr WAI Hing-cheung and Mr LAI Tsz-yan.

2016-17 Work Plans and Funding Applications of Working Groups under the Committee
(Paper No. EW 14/2016)

20. According to Order 40(6) of Sha Tin District Council Standing Orders, the “Standing Working Group” shall develop the work plan for each financial year in the first quarter of the financial year and shall submit the plan to the committee to which it belonged for approval. Any amendments to the work plan shall also be submitted to the committee to which it belonged for approval. If necessary, the “Standing Working Group” shall submit its work plan to the District Council for approval. Regarding the “Age-friendly Communities Grant Program” discussed at the previous meeting, each district had been allocated HK\$53,000. The committee hereby decided to transfer the fund to the working group for the promotion of the “Age-friendly Community Program”.

21. Members endorsed the above paper unanimously.

Questions

Question to be Raised by Ms LAM Chung-yan on Green Roofs
(Paper No. EW 16/2016)

22. The views of Ms LAM Chung-yan were summarised below:
- (a) she wanted to know about the green roofs in Sha Tin. As parents and citizens were also concerned about relevant situation, so government departments should take a proactive role; and
 - (b) she hoped the EDB could take the initiative to examine the situation and provide more information after the meeting.
23. The views of Mr WONG Yue-hon were summarised below:
- (a) he wanted to know the information on green roofs in schools in Sha Tin District; and
 - (b) if a school found that its roof failed to withstand the loading imposed by greening, he asked whether the EDB would advise the school to take other improvement measures, e.g. replacing comprehensive greening with partial greening.
24. The views of Mr Michael YUNG were summarised below:
- (a) a green roof at the City University of Hong Kong collapsed, possibly due to its insufficient carrying capacity of greening works. According to statistics from the Architectural Services Department, there were currently 45 public school construction projects under its purview in Hong Kong. He asked if there were any school premises built by other departments apart from the Architectural Services Department. If yes, whether relevant information had been forwarded to EDB for follow-up action;
 - (b) currently, whether the EDB had issued guidelines on greening projects to schools and whether the schools would employ authorized persons for project implementation by themselves, or they would apply to the EDB and invite the Architectural Services Department to provide assistance; whether the EDB would check the safety of green roofs during routine inspections after relevant works were completed; if a school employed authorized persons for project implementation by itself, whether the EDB could know the arrangements of authorized persons from relevant documents and follow up on the safety matters of green roofs;
 - (c) how many authorized persons under the purview of EDB were responsible for greening projects or whether the Architectural Services Department would provide relevant professional advices; how many officers of the Architectural Services Department were responsible for the safety and maintenance of green roofs in Hong Kong and Sha Tin District; and

- (d) he hoped that the EDB would supplement the list of schools that had or had had green roofs after the meeting.

25. Mr MAK Yun-pui said that he received enquiries from the public saying that the green roof at the former Hong Kong and Kowloon Chiu Chow Public Association Ma Chung Sum Secondary School was currently left unmanaged after the school premise was closed, so he hoped the EDB could initiate an investigation.

26. The responses of Mrs Alice YU CHOW, Senior School Development Officer (Sha Tin) 4 of Education Bureau were summarized below:

- (a) the EDB attached great importance to the safety of school premises installed with green roofs and sent letters to all schools to remind them of points to note regarding installation of green roofs, including compliance with regulations of relevant works and the related inspection and maintenance. In the letter, the EDB also attached the advice provided by the Buildings Department on the green roof work of the school and the assessment of the existing green roofs, for reference by the school;
- (b) on 17 June this year, the EDB held briefing sessions for schools in conjunction with the Buildings Department, Architectural Services Department, Development Bureau, the Independent Checking Unit under the Transport and Housing Bureau and Environmental Protection Department, to provide them with information about green roof works and maintenance approval procedures, points to note and related provisions, so as to ensure the safety of school premises;
- (c) in respect to the green roof works in existing school premises, there would be no security issues in general if the work was carried out upon evaluation by professionals and approval by relevant professional departments and the roof was maintained properly. If green roofs were constructed by the Architectural Services Department, the aided schools could apply, as required, to the EDB for emergency repairs to the hard landscaping according to the established mechanism, or apply to the EDB for repair and maintenance works to relevant items via the mechanism for annual major repairs/alterations. However, the replacement or maintenance of plants, soil and drainage layers were not covered in the above works and the schools should be responsible for the management and arrangement of landscape softworks by themselves. If schools carried out green installations via the application for Environment and Conservation Fund/other external funds, the expenses required for repairs and maintenance had been covered by the funds, and the schools should follow up with professionals according to their individual circumstances. For schools which noticed any water seepage, cracks or loose concrete at the ceiling of the storey below the green roofs, they shall seek professional advice from an authorized person or a registered structural engineer as soon as possible to ensure the safety of school premises. Aided schools could also submit applications for emergency repairs to the EDB as required according to the established mechanism. By then, the project consultant appointed by the EDB would be arranged to visit the schools concerned to assess the condition and make proper follow-ups.

Government schools should contact the Architectural Services Department immediately for follow-up or conducting repairs to ensure safety;

- (d) the EDB had further collected information from schools to help relevant government departments (including Buildings Department, Architectural Services Department and the Independent Checking Unit under Transport and Housing Bureau) know about the actual conditions of green roofs in schools, so as to facilitate the inspections on the schools' green roofs in phases to ensure the safety of school premises. The EDB would submit the collated information to relevant dedicated departments for follow-up; and
- (e) the former Hong Kong and Kowloon Chiu Chow Public Association Ma Chung Sum Secondary School was located in Pok Hong Estate, Shatin. In respect of its green roof, the EDB would pay attention to the situation of its school premise and make proper follow-ups as required.

(Post-meeting note: With regard to the details about green roofs at schools in Sha Tin District, it was improper for the EDB to disclose the names and other information of the schools without their consent.)

Information Papers

Number of Newly Arrived Mainland Children Admitted to Public Sector Secondary and Primary Schools in Sha Tin District Provided by the Education Bureau
(Paper No. EW 17/2016)

27. The views of Mr YAU Man-chun were summarised below:

- (a) as the primary school places in School Net 91 had been fully occupied and more residents would move into Shui Chuen O Estate, he worried that there would not be adequate school places for transfer students. He hoped that the EDB could provide relevant data after the meeting, so that parents could know relevant conditions and make arrangements as early as possible; and
- (b) as the kindergarten in Shui Chuen O Estate had not yet signed the contract with the Housing Department, he hoped that the EDB could communicate with its sponsoring bodies and notify parents as early as possible if the kindergarten could not start operating in this school year.

28. The responses of Mrs Alice YU CHOW were summarised below:

- (a) currently, there were still adequate school vacancies in School Net 91 for transfer students living in Shui Chuen O Estate. The EDB would notify parents of relevant placement as early as possible. If necessary, the EDB would also provide additional classes for relevant grades by utilizing vacant classrooms in the district to meet the demands for school places; and
- (b) as for the kindergarten in Shui Chuen O Estate which had not yet signed the contract with the Housing Department, the EDB had contacted relevant

sponsoring bodies and urged them to submit the application for school registration and conduct interior decoration as early as possible. The EDB would pay close attention to it and follow it up.

29. The Chairman advised the EDB to follow up the matters concerning the primary school places and the kindergarten and make a follow-up report at the next meeting.

Date of Next Meeting

30. The next meeting was scheduled to be held at 2:30 pm on 30 August 2016 (Tuesday).
31. The meeting was adjourned at 4:16 pm.

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

July 2016