

**The First Meeting of the Education Sub-committee on  
the Community Care Fund  
24 January 2011**

**Summary of Discussion**

The Education Sub-committee on the Community Care Fund (CCF) held its first meeting on 24 January 2011. A summary of the discussion is as follows:

1. Members noted the requirements of the two-tier system of declaration of interests for Members (including co-opted Members) of the Sub-committees, i.e. Members would be required to register their personal interests on appointment to the Sub-committees, and annually thereafter, by filling in a declaration form, and to declare any direct personal or pecuniary interest related to matters under deliberation at meetings. The registers of Members' interests would be uploaded to the CCF website and kept by the Secretariat for public inspection.
2. Members noted the operation arrangements of the Sub-committees, including the operating principles for matters of programme budgets, funding priorities, indicators for evaluation of effectiveness, and mechanism for processing individual applications seeking assistance and handling cross-sectoral issues, etc.
3. Members noted that the indicative amount available for allocation by each of the four Sub-committees would be \$100 million in 2011-12. The allocation of the remaining \$100 million would be determined by the Steering Committee having regard to the recommendations of the Executive Committee on the priorities of assistance programmes proposed by the Sub-committees.
4. Members noted that some of the programmes proposed by Members may be under the portfolios of other Sub-committees. For more effective distribution of work, the Executive Committee would co-ordinate and make recommendations on the responsible Sub-committee for collaboration of follow-up actions for cross-sectoral initiatives.

5. Members were briefed on the current support provided by the Education Bureau to students in need, including students from low-income families, and the student financial assistance schemes managed by the Student Financial Assistance Agency.
6. Members proposed and discussed the following:
  - (1) To enhance assistance to students from low-income families for participating in cross-boundary learning activities such as national education study tours to the Mainland and other overseas study trips or exchange programmes; and the financial assistance for students with disability to cover the travel expenses of their parents or caretakers as well (if necessary);
  - (2) To consider collaboration with non-governmental organisations for strengthening school-based or community-based after school care services and/or homework guidance services to provide support to families with working parents;
  - (3) To provide tutorial services to students from low-income families who have intention to learn but encounter difficulties in learning;
  - (4) To provide assistance to gifted students or students interested in a career in the field of art from low-income families to purchase apparatus (such as musical instruments) or to attend art courses;
  - (5) To enhance assistance to students from low-income families for participating in extra-curricular activities, social services and activities related to “other learning experiences” under the new senior secondary curriculum;
  - (6) To provide assistance to students with special educational needs to improve their learning environment, for example, subsidies for purchase of better technical aids (such as hearing aids), and to provide assistance for professional treatment expenses and the relevant medical and care services for students with intellectual disability, learning difficulties, hyperactivity disorder or autism;

- (7) To provide more places in “Schools for Social Development” to support for students with behavioural or emotional problems with a view to improving their situations;
  - (8) To provide learning apparatus and support (for example, computers) for children in residential homes or foster homes;
  - (9) To strengthen the provision of language training for students of ethnic minorities and to provide assistance in translation for ethnic minority families (especially for parents having children with special educational needs); and
  - (10) To strengthen the development of adult education programmes to help enhance the employability of those with low educational attainment.
7. Noting that quite a number of subsidy schemes providing learning support to students were available at present, Members commented that the CCF should supplement or fill the service gaps of existing schemes or services, including strengthening the existing programmes to support those outside the assistance net or introducing new programmes to support people inside or outside the net, instead of providing additional assistance under existing programmes or services.
  8. Given the limited resources of CCF, Members noted that if all the students in the existing assistance net were to be covered by the proposed programmes, the extra subsidy available to each student would be very limited. It was proposed that CCF should focus resources on students most in need by providing them with more direct assistance.
  9. Members proposed that having regard to the circumstances of individual school (including the number of students with special educational needs and the number of students within the assistance net), each school should be allocated a subsidy with several designated programme areas. The school principals might determine the actual use of the subsidy within the designated programme areas so that direct assistance could be provided to students most in need. The subsidy should not be used for overall service enhancement of the schools and there should be mechanism for

reporting and prevention of abuse.

10. Given the limited resources of CCF and the need to implement assistance programmes to support the needy as soon as possible, Members agreed that programmes which required more detailed study or complicated integration of services should be considered in the next stage.
11. Members recommended the Sub-committee to further consider the feasibility of the following programme areas:
  - (1) To provide assistance to students from low-income families for participating in cross-boundary learning activities;
  - (2) To provide assistance to students from low-income families for participating in art and sports activities as well as other competitions and training courses;
  - (3) To provide assistance to students from low-income families for participating in extra-curricular activities, social services and activities related to “other learning experiences” under the new senior secondary curriculum; and
  - (4) To provide more assistance for students with special educational needs to improve their learning environment, for example, subsidies for the purchase of better technical aids (such as hearing aid).
12. The next meeting would be held in February or March. The relevant policy bureaux and departments would draw up concrete proposals for the programme areas mentioned in paragraph 11 above, including financial implications, implementation arrangement and schedule, etc., for further deliberation by the Sub-committee.