**The Third Meeting of the Education Sub-committee on
the Community Care Fund
7 July 2011**

<u>Summary of Discussion</u>

The Education Sub-committee on the Community Care Fund (CCF) held its third meeting on 7 July 2011.   A summary of the discussion is as follows:

1.   Members noted the budget monitoring and administrative arrangements for CCF regarding such aspects on budgetary control, recording, auditing and reporting.

2.   Members noted that the Education Bureau (EDB) had formally rolled out the assistance programme on School-based Fund for Cross-boundary Learning Activities (the School-based Fund) and two briefing sessions were held on 9 and 16 June 2011 respectively to brief schools on the objectives, application procedures and operational details of the School-based Fund.   EDB issued a circular memorandum inviting schools to apply for the School-based Fund on 27 June 2011.

3.   Members noted that EDB had sought the agreement of the Executive Committee on the CCF and had clarified with schools that the School-based Fund only covered cross-boundary learning activities organised by schools.

4.   Members noted that in response to the relaxation of means-test mechanism of the assistance schemes by the Student Financial Assistance Agency (SFAA) from 2011-12 school year onwards, EDB would adjust the funding ceilings of the School-based Fund in 2011-12 school year with reference to the actual number of students in participating schools who were receiving full or half grant from the assistance schemes under SFAA.

5.   Regarding whether the coverage of the School-based Fund should be extended to students studying the Diploma in Vocational Education Programme in the Vocational Training Council (VTC), Members agreed

that EDB should discuss further with VTC and obtain more information (such as the number of eligible applicants) before submitting a proposal for Members' deliberation.

6. Regarding proposals on expanding the coverage of the School-based Fund to include local extra-curricular activities aimed at boosting students' confidence and broadening their horizons, some Members opined that these activities were already supported by various funds at present and that the School-based Fund should not expand its coverage to these activities or else it would deviate from its original intention. The Sub-committee could evaluate whether the scope and target beneficiaries of the programme should be revised after the programme had been in operation for one year.

7. Members noted the School-based After-School Learning and Support Programme of EDB and the Fee Waiving Subsidy Scheme under After School Care Programme run by the Social Welfare Department (SWD). Regarding the $40 million earmarked by the Steering Committee on the CCF for enhancing after-school care programme, Members deliberated on the following issues:

    (1) Students who were left unattended after participating in extra-curricular activities and before their parents coming home from work might wander in the neighbourhood and befriend unruly elements, which might result in behavioural problems or even social problems.

    (2) Consideration should be given to reintegrating the existing resources.

    (3) Consideration should be given to providing the service jointly by schools and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Students could participate as usual in extra-curricular activities held by their schools and then join the after-school care service of NGOs at schools until around 7:30 pm by which time their parents should have returned home from work. NGOs should be informed of the timetables of extra-curricular activities of students concerned so that they could provide the after-school care service as needed.

(4)   Homework guidance service should be provided to relieve working parents of checking on their children's homework at night.

(5)   Consideration should be given to the sustainability of the programme.

EDB and SWD would provide more information to enable Members to better understand the existing situation before formulating the mode of assistance of the proposed programme.