

Elimination of Disability Discrimination Parent-School Coordination and Mediation Mechanism

A) Background

- Enacted in 1996, the Disability Discrimination Ordinance (The Ordinance) aims at eliminating and preventing discrimination against persons with disabilities. Special reference is made to the field of education to ensure that persons with disabilities have equal opportunities for education.
- The Code of Practice in Education (the Code) is formulated by the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) pursuant to the Ordinance and has taken effect since July 2001. The Code provides educational institutions and educators with practical guidelines on how to comply with the provisions of the Ordinance.



B) The Principle

- Both the Government and the school have the responsibility to eliminate and prevent disability discrimination and to ensure that students with special educational needs have equal opportunities for education.

C) Cooperation between parents and schools

1) Parents

- Instil into their children the right attitude of getting along with their peers and teach them not to discriminate against those with special educational needs.
- Take the initiative to inform the school of the special educational needs of their children, if any.
- Take an active part in school activities and pay attention to their children's studies.

- Help the school to establish an inclusive environment with emphasis on equal opportunities.
- Express their concern to the school direct and work out a reasonable solution to accommodate any special needs.

2) **The school**

- Establish an inclusive environment in school with emphasis on equal opportunities.
- Make appropriate arrangements to accommodate the special needs of the disabled students.
- Provide school personnel with training to cater for different needs of students, including special educational needs of students with disabilities.

D) **Mediation mechanism**

1) **The role of the school**

- Formulate policies to provide equal education opportunities for all students.
- Encourage parents to take an interest in school affairs. Invite them to express any different views on how to address special educational needs of students to the school direct in a bid to work out a solution to the problem.
- Establish school-based procedures to handle complaints from parents and students, including those against disability discrimination.

2) **The role of the Education and Manpower Bureau**

- If the school and the parent involved in a dispute fail to reach a settlement, the Regional Education Offices of the Education and Manpower Bureau will render assistance.
- Officers of the Regional Education Offices will collect information from the school and the parent, study the case in depth, and arrange mediation meetings to solve the problem.

- If the mediation meeting fails to reach a settlement over the case, the Department will form a case study group to consult the views of the outsiders to identify a solution.
- Having considered the proposal of the group, its practicability, the resources available and other related factors, the Department will decide on the terms of mediation, conduct mediation between the parent and the school, and implement the agreed measures.
- The Department normally takes 1 to 4 months to handle a complaint case.

3) **The role of the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC)**

- Under the Ordinance, any person who feels discriminated on the ground of his/her disability can lodge a written complaint with the EOC.
- The EOC will make an inquiry into the case and try to secure a settlement between the complainant and the defendant through mediation.
- The EOC normally takes 3 to 9 months to handle a complaint case.

Enquiry

Hong Kong Regional Education Office	Tel:	2863 4646
Kowloon Regional Education Office	Tel:	2782 8383
New Territories East Regional Education Office	Tel:	2639 4876
New Territories West Regional Education Office	Tel:	2437 7272
The Equal Opportunities Commission	Hotline:	2511 8211

EMB Homepage: <http://www.ed.gov.hk/>

EOC Homepage: <http://www.eoc.org.hk>