



中華人民共和國香港特別行政區政府總部教育統籌局  
Education and Manpower Bureau  
Government Secretariat, Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region  
The People's Republic of China

本局檔號 Our Ref. :

電話 Telephone : 2810 2108

來函檔號 Your Ref. :

傳真 Fax Line : 2147 3207

16 January 2006

### **A Letter to All Teachers in Hong Kong**

Dear Teachers,

First of all I would like to wish you good health and success in the New Year.

Teaching is a very taxing but meaningful job. It has far-reaching impact on individuals and society as a whole. I must thank you all for your hard work and contribution to education, and particularly for your help in implementing the education reform in the past few years.

The education reform, involving principally reforms in the school curriculum, teaching pedagogy and assessment mechanism, has indeed been a great challenge to teachers. Other factors, including parents' expectations, student behaviour, the changing social climate and declining student population, also emotionally affect teachers. Nevertheless, our teachers remain dedicated to their profession and work whole-heartedly to educate our students. Many of them also engage actively in continuous professional development to further improve themselves in teaching. This professional enthusiasm deserves our great respect.

The workload of teachers has always been our concern since the introduction of the education reform. We have put in a lot of resources to enhance the capacity of our teachers. Unfortunately, instead of relieving their work pressure, some of our measures have inadvertently increased their workload, probably due to some misunderstanding in the course of

implementation. To provide a more effective solution to this problem, we have introduced three support measures for teachers. They are:

**(1) Setting up a telephone helpline**

We have set up a Teachers' Helpline as from today. Teachers who feel overwhelmed with work or emotionally disturbed may call 2892 6600 for counseling or assistance. The service hours of the Helpline are from 8 am to 8 pm daily, including public holidays. We have educational counsellors, experienced educators, social workers or doctors to look into the case of the caller, and help him/her analyse and solve the problems. All information given will be kept strictly confidential. The Helpline service will be reviewed after one month, with a view to providing better service for teachers.

**(2) Increasing the Capacity Enhancement Grant (CEG)**

One of the purposes of providing the CEG for schools is to enhance the capacity of teachers. During my school visits, I was aware that the CEG was widely supported by frontline teachers. I also learnt from the school council representatives when I met them last summer that the CEG was helping tremendously to relieve teachers' workload and was well received by schools. In the past few months when we went into further discussions with different school councils on the priorities of resource utilization, all have expressed the wish to increase the CEG as early as possible. As such, we intend to seek approval from the Legislative Council for a funding allocation of \$1.65 billion in February to increase the CEG for three consecutive school years, starting from this school year. The additional provision will be 100% for primary and special schools and 150% for secondary schools. This additional funding can be used to hire more teachers or executive staff or acquire relevant services for supporting teachers in handling the Territory-wide System Assessment and school-based assessment or other areas of work.

**(3) Setting up an independent committee to study the cause of work pressure on teachers**

We will also set up an independent committee to study the cause

of work pressure and the workload of teachers. The committee, comprising independent people, frontline educators and other professionals, will be chaired by a non-official. Teachers are welcome to share their views and problems with the committee. I expect the committee to submit a report to the Government within this year with recommendations to alleviate teachers' workload.

It is clear that our education reform is bearing fruits, thanks to your efforts. Your dedication is deeply appreciated by all students, parents and members of the community, and has earned their support and recognition. Looking forward, we must carry on with the reform. The road ahead is full of challenges. But I firmly believe that you will, with dedication and devotion, continue to work with us in providing quality education for our next generation.

On behalf of my colleagues, I would like to thank you once again. Salute to you all!

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Arthur Li". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial "A" and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

(Arthur KC Li)

Secretary for Education and Manpower