

## EDUCATION BUREAU CIRCULAR MEMORANDUM NO. 86/2019

From: Permanent Secretary for Education      To: Supervisors / principals of government schools, aided schools (including special schools that operates junior secondary classes), caput schools and Direct Subsidy Scheme secondary schools

Ref.: EDB(CD)PSHE/F&A/65/1/3/(1)

Date: 26 June 2019

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### **Provision of the Non-recurrent Grant for Supporting Non-Chinese Speaking Students to learn Chinese History and Culture**

#### **Summary**

This circular memorandum sets out the details about the disbursement of the non-recurrent grant for supporting non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students to learn Chinese history and culture (the grant) to secondary schools (including special schools) with junior secondary NCS students admitted.

#### **Background**

2. In the 2017 Policy Address, the Chief Executive announced the implementation of Chinese History as an independent compulsory subject at junior secondary level in the 2018/19 school year, with a view to enabling students to learn Chinese history and culture in a systematic manner. The curriculum also enables NCS students to learn Chinese history and culture, which is conducive to their integration into mainstream society. The Education Bureau (EDB) understands that junior secondary NCS students may encounter difficulties when studying Chinese History due to language barriers and cultural differences. Therefore, the Curriculum Development Council has set up the Ad Hoc Committee on Supporting Non-Chinese Speaking Students Learning Chinese History and Chinese Culture (Ad Hoc Committee) in 2017/18 school year to provide recommendations on learning and teaching strategies, curriculum adaptation and other teaching measures. In the 2018 Policy Address, the Chief Executive further advised the Government to provide funding to secondary schools admitting junior secondary NCS students to support their learning of Chinese History using the Chinese language.

#### **Details**

3. EDB is going to provide a non-recurrent grant of \$50,000 per school year in the 2018/19 and 2019/20 school year to each public sector and Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS)

secondary school, including special school, that have admitted junior secondary NCS students studying in local curriculum.

4. In accordance with school context and development needs, schools may flexibly deploy the grant to support teachers in teaching junior secondary NCS students Chinese history and Chinese culture and in conducting relevant learning activities. Such measures may include:

- procuring professional services to provide training to teachers;
- procuring and developing school-based curriculum and learning and teaching resources specifically for junior secondary NCS students to use Chinese in learning Chinese History;
- procuring and developing high quality learning and teaching resources such as bilingual multi-media & e-Learning resources to enhance junior secondary NCS students' learning interest and motivation to use Chinese in learning Chinese History;
- subsidising teachers to participate in interflow activities to the Mainland that enhance junior secondary NCS students' learning of Chinese history and Chinese culture, or to lead students joining the Mainland interflow activities;
- organising or subsidising school-based learning activities (e.g. Chinese history story-telling competition, exchange programmes to the Mainland<sup>1</sup>) that reinforce junior secondary NCS students' learning of Chinese history and Chinese culture; and
- organising or subsidising junior secondary NCS students to participate in joint school activities or competitions relating to Chinese history and Chinese culture between local schools or between schools in Hong Kong and the Mainland.

5. Adhering to the principles of fiscal prudence and avoiding extravagance, schools should ensure that all expenditures are incurred to serve the purposes specified for the grant and should keep in view the cost-effectiveness in order to benefit as many students as possible.

### **Grant disbursement and accounting arrangement**

6. It is expected that the grant will be disbursed to all eligible schools in August and October 2019. Schools should complete Annex 1 and return it to the EDB **on or before 15 July 2019** for processing.<sup>2</sup> Should the school does not admit any junior secondary NCS students studying in local curriculum so that it turns out to be ineligible for obtaining the grant, it should return the grant to EDB within the 2019/20 school year.

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<sup>1</sup> The grant can be used to pay for the visa application fees and participation fees of NCS students.

<sup>2</sup> If schools have admitted junior secondary NCS students studying at local curriculum after September 2019, please contact the Curriculum Development Institute, EDB (Tel: 2892 6512) as soon as possible, and provide us with the information of students for confirmation of its eligibility for obtaining the grant. EDB will then disburse the grant to schools after confirming its eligibility.

7. For aided secondary schools (including special schools), caput schools, and secondary schools under the Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS), they can use the grant until the end of the 2019/20 school year. EDB will claw back any unspent balance of the grant as at 31 August 2020 based on the schools' annual audited accounts. Transfer of funds / unspent balance out of the grant is not allowed.

8. For government schools, the grant will be provided in the form of budget allocation. The unspent balance (if any) can be carried forward to 2020-21 financial year for use until 31 August 2020. Any unspent balance as at 31 August 2020 will lapse.

9. If a deficit is incurred on the grant, schools may deploy the surplus under Expanded Operating Expenses Block Grant (EOEBG) or the General Domain of Operating Expenses Block Grant (OEBG) for aided schools, or DSS Subsidy for DSS schools, or Fee Subsidy for caput schools, whichever appropriate, to cover the deficit of the grant. If there is still unsettled deficit, it should be topped up by schools' own fund. For government schools, they can use the surplus under Expanded Subject and Curriculum Block Grant (ESCBG) to cover the deficit of the grant.

10. Schools are accountable for proper use of the grant and are required to comply with the established principles and requirements on the use of public funds as promulgated by EDB when using the grant. The use of the grant will also be subject to monitoring as other purpose-specific grants to schools, including setting out the income and expenditure in its annual audited accounts to be submitted to EDB annually. Schools should keep a separate ledger account to record the income and expenditure of the grant, with related breakdowns. They should also make available such records and related receipts / invoices to EDB for inspection when necessary.

11. In line with the principle of school-based management, schools should obtain approval from their Incorporated Management Committee / School Management Committee on the implementation plan and the usage of the grant. Schools should also report the details of the programmes / activities covered by the grant, including the amount of fund used and the evaluation results, to their Incorporated Management Committee / School Management Committee. Guidelines and frequently asked questions on the use of the grant are attached in Annex 2 and 3 for schools' reference.

## **Enquiry**

12. For enquiries, please contact the following officers of the Personal, Social and Humanities Education Section, Curriculum Development Institute, Education Bureau:

For the usage and ambit of the grant:

Mr. WONG Ho-ming (Tel: 3540 6829)

Ms. YEUNG Sze-wai (Tel: 2892 5882)

For the grant disbursement arrangement:

Mr. CHAN Hong (Tel: 2892 6512)

Mr Sheridan S L LEE

for Permanent Secretary for Education

cc: Heads of Sections – for information

Please return **on or before 15 July 2019**

For public sector and DSS secondary schools (including special schools) that have / expected to have junior secondary NCS students studying in local curriculum in the 2018/19 school year and / or 2019/20 school year

**Provision of the Non-recurrent Grant for Supporting Non-Chinese Speaking (NCS) Students  
to learn Chinese History and Culture**

**Enrolment of Junior Secondary NCS Students in the 2018/19 and 2019/20 School Year**

To : Personal, Social and Humanities Education Section  
Curriculum Development Institute, Education Bureau  
(Fax : 2573 5299 email : [cdopshe41@edb.gov.hk](mailto:cdopshe41@edb.gov.hk) Tel : 2892 5497)

1. Information to be provided by all public sector and DSS secondary schools (including special schools):

- Our school has / does not have\* junior secondary NCS students studying in local curriculum in the 2018/19 school year.
- By making reference to the current number of NCS students at Secondary 1 to 2 and the estimated number of NCS students at Secondary 1 for the new school year, our school expects that we will / will not\* have junior secondary NCS students studying in local curriculum in our school in the 2019/20 school year.

2. Additional information to be provided by special schools:

- Our school offers / does not offer\* Chinese History as an independent compulsory subject at junior secondary level in the 2018/19 school year.
- Our school offers / does not offer\* Chinese History as an independent compulsory subject at junior secondary level in the 2019/20 school year.

(Remarks: The above information should be in line with other school documents, for example, “Survey on Class and Subject Details” and “Special School Profile”.)

Our school understands that EDB will make reference to the above information as well as the September 2018 and 2019 headcount to confirm whether our school is eligible for obtaining the grant. Should our school does not admit any junior secondary NCS students studying in local curriculum so that our school turns out to be ineligible for obtaining the grant, I hereby undertake to return the grant to EDB within the 2019/20 school year.

(Remarks: If schools have admitted junior secondary NCS students studying at local curriculum after September 2019, please contact the Curriculum Development Institute, EDB (Tel: 2892 6512), and provide us with the information of students for confirmation of its eligibility for obtaining the grant. EDB will then disburse the grant to schools after confirming its eligibility.)

Signature of Supervisor : \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Supervisor : \_\_\_\_\_  
School Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
School Number (6 digit): \_\_\_\_\_  
School Tel: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

School chop:

\* Please delete as appropriate

**Guidelines on the Use of the Non-recurrent Grant for Supporting  
Non-Chinese Speaking (NCS) Students to learn Chinese History and Culture**

**1. Ambit of the grant**

- procuring professional services to provide training to teachers;
- procuring and developing school-based curriculum and learning and teaching resources specifically for junior secondary NCS students to use Chinese in learning Chinese History;
- procuring and developing high quality learning and teaching resources such as bilingual multi-media & e-Learning resources to enhance junior secondary NCS students' learning interest and motivation to use Chinese in learning Chinese History;
- subsidising teachers to participate in interflow activities in the Mainland that enhance junior secondary NCS students' learning of Chinese history and Chinese culture, or to lead students joining the Mainland interflow activities;
- organising or subsidising school-based learning activities (e.g. Chinese history story-telling competition, exchange programmes to the Mainland) that reinforce junior secondary NCS students' learning of Chinese history and Chinese culture; and
- organising or subsidising junior secondary NCS students to participate in joint school activities or competitions relating to Chinese history and Chinese culture between local schools or between schools in Hong Kong and the Mainland.

**2. Procurement arrangement**

- Schools should observe relevant EDB circulars and guidelines as appropriate when hiring outside services and procuring goods.

**3. Examples of the use of the grant**

- For expense incurred in procuring professional services to provide training to teachers
- For expense incurred in procuring and developing school-based curriculum and learning and teaching resources specifically for junior secondary NCS students to use Chinese in learning Chinese History
- For development and purchase of high-quality learning and teaching resources such as bilingual multi-media & e-Learning resources to enhance junior secondary NCS students' learning interest and motivation to use Chinese in learning Chinese History

- For subsidising teachers to participate in or leading students to join the interflow activities in the Mainland that enhance junior secondary NCS students' learning of Chinese history and Chinese culture
- For expense incurred in organising school-based learning activities (e.g. Chinese history story-telling competition, exchange programmes to the Mainland) that reinforce junior secondary NCS students' learning of Chinese history and Chinese culture
- For expenses for junior secondary NCS students and teachers to participate in joint school activities or competitions related to Chinese history and Chinese culture between local schools or between schools in Hong Kong and the Mainland (e.g. visa application fees for students, registration fees, fees for travelling and accommodation)

#### **4. Examples of *inappropriate use* of the grant**

- To hire services from external service providers for organising activities that are irrelevant to the support of junior secondary NCS students to learn Chinese history and Chinese culture
- To purchase computer hardware / software for general purposes
- To purchase mobile computing devices
- To serve guests with food and beverage
- To meet the expenses for food and beverages (however, meal expenses included in the expenditures in non-local exchange activities can be covered)
- To purchase consumables such as flowers or fruit baskets for celebration or ceremony
- To employ teaching and non-teaching staff

**Provision of the Non-recurrent Grant for Supporting Non-Chinese Speaking Students  
to learn Chinese History and Culture  
Questions & Answers**

Q1: Can the grant be used for subsidising junior secondary non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students to participate in students Mainland exchange programmes organised by EDB?

A1: The grant aims at enhancing junior secondary NCS students' interest in and effectiveness of learning Chinese History in accordance with school context and development needs. Schools may use the non-recurrent grant in tandem with the subsidies of other EDB programmes, for example, the "Junior Secondary and Upper Primary School Students Exchange Programme: Understanding Our Motherland", to support NCS students participate in Mainland exchange programmes organised by EDB and pay the relevant visa application fees. For details of the programme, please refer to the relevant EDB circular memorandum.

Q2: Can the grant be used for the construction of Chinese History Resources Rooms?

A2: The grant aims at enhancing junior secondary NCS students' interest in and effectiveness of learning Chinese History. According to EDBCM No.86/2019, schools may use the grant to develop and purchase high quality learning and teaching resources such as bilingual multi-media & e-Learning resources to enhance junior secondary NCS students' learning interest and motivation to use Chinese in learning Chinese History. Schools may place these resources, or organise learning activities that are related to Chinese History and Culture, in the resource rooms. However, the grant cannot be used for subsidising the construction or maintenance of the resource rooms.

Q3: Can the grant be used for hiring tutors and organising Chinese culture interest classes such as tea ceremony (chadao), the game of Go or Cantonese opera?

A3: The grant aims at enhancing junior secondary NCS students' interest in and effectiveness of learning Chinese History and Chinese culture. According to EDBCM No.86/2019, schools may use the grant to organise school-based learning activities that reinforce NCS students' learning of Chinese history and Chinese culture. If the proposed school-based activities involve hiring services from external service providers, schools should observe relevant EDB circulars and guidelines as appropriate. However, schools cannot use the grant to employ teaching and non-teaching staff.



Q4: Are schools required to submit plans and reports to EDB on the use of grant?

A4: Schools are not required to submit plans and reports to EDB on the use of the grant. However, schools are accountable for proper use of the grant and are required to comply with the established principles and requirements on the use of public funds as promulgated by EDB when using the grant. In line with the principle of school-based management, schools should obtain the approval from their Incorporated Management Committee / School Management Committee on the implementation plan and the usage of the grant. Schools should also report the details of the programmes / activities covered by the grant, including the amount of fund used and the evaluation results, to their Incorporated Management Committee / School Management Committee. The use of the grant will also be subject to monitoring as other purpose-specific grants to schools, including setting out the income and expenditure in its audited accounts to be submitted to EDB annually. Schools should keep a separate ledger account to record the income and expenditure of the grant, with related breakdowns. They should also make available such records and related receipts / invoices to EDB for inspection when necessary.

Q5: Can the grant be used for subsidising junior secondary NCS students to participate in Mainland study tours organised by other private institutions?

A5: Schools may use the grant to subsidise junior secondary NCS students to participate in school-based or joint school Mainland study tours and pay relevant fees incurred (including visa application fees). For study tours that are not organised by schools, they are beyond the ambit of the grant.

Q6: Can schools use the “Non-recurrent Grant for Supporting Non-Chinese Speaking Students to learn Chinese History and Culture” in tandem with the “One-off Grant for the Promotion of Chinese History and Culture”?

A6: While the “Non-recurrent Grant for Supporting Non-Chinese Speaking Students to learn Chinese History and Culture” aims at enhancing junior secondary NCS students’ interest in and effectiveness of learning Chinese History, the “One-off Grant for the Promotion of Chinese History and Culture” aims at supporting schools in promoting Chinese History and Culture education in accordance with school context and development needs.

In principle, given the usage of the two grants are within their respective ambit, schools may, in accordance with their school context, flexibly use the “Non-recurrent Grant for Supporting Non-Chinese Speaking Students to learn Chinese History and Culture” in tandem with the “One-off Grant for the Promotion of Chinese History and Culture” in organising learning activities or developing teaching resources to enhancing junior

secondary NCS students' learning of Chinese History using the Chinese language. For example, if the learning activities involve both NCS students and Chinese-speaking local students, schools may pay the expenses for junior secondary NCS students by using the "Non-recurrent Grant for Supporting Non-Chinese Speaking Students to learn Chinese History and Culture", and the expenses for Chinese-speaking local students by using the "One-off Grant for the Promotion of Chinese History and Culture". For details of the "One-off Grant for the Promotion of Chinese History and Culture", schools may refer to EDBCM No.119/2017. However, schools are required to spend the grant according to its ambit, and should not duplicate the use of grant on items that have already been subsidised by other grants.