From : Secretary for Education

To : Heads of Government, Aided (including Special Schools), Caput and Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS) Schools)

Ref. : 1044-2045-8075-9055-00001
Date : 16 December 2025

AI for Empowering Learning and Teaching Funding Programme
Supporting primary and secondary schools to utilise AI to enhance learning and teaching effectiveness

Summary

The purpose of this circular memorandum is to inform publicly-funded schools[1] about the details of AI for Empowering Learning and Teaching Funding Programme (Funding Programme) and to invite schools to send representatives to attend the related briefing sessions.

Background

2.   The Education Bureau (EDB) established the Steering Committee on Strategic Development of Digital Education (SCSDDE) in January 2025, drawing on the experience from the Mainland and overseas, to set the directions and foci for the promotion of digital education in Hong Kong's primary and secondary schools. These include enhancing students' digital literacy and skills; strengthening professional training in digital education for teachers and encouraging schools to use innovative technologies, particularly artificial intelligence (AI), to support teaching; optimising digital education ancillary infrastructure and creating an intelligent learning environment; and strengthening ties between local, Mainland, or international innovation and technology institutions, tertiary institutions, and relevant sectors to enhance synergy and promote the high-quality development of digital education.

3.   The Chief Executive proposed in the 2025 Policy Address to step up efforts to promote digital education in primary and secondary schools, and announced that the EDB has earmarked $2 billion under the Quality Education Fund (QEF) to advance the relevant support measures proposed by the SCSDDE. This will help Hong Kong's education embrace the opportunities of the AI era and achieve the goal of "AI for ALL subjects", where teachers across all subjects effectively utilise AI to support teaching. We are now launching the AI for Empowering Learning and Teaching Funding Programme, which aims to make AI the core driving force behind digital transformation in schools, thereby empowering education through technology and enhancing learning and teaching effectiveness.

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[1] Publicly-funded schools include government schools, aided schools (including special schools), caput schools, and Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS) schools.

Details

4.　　AI for Empowering Learning and Teaching Funding Programme is supported by the QEF. Publicly-funded primary and secondary schools are eligible to apply for the said funding programme. Successful school applicants will receive a one-off funding of $500,000. Schools can flexibly utilise the funding to initiate or promote school-based programmes that use AI to empower education, tailored to their specific circumstances and developmental needs, including:

(i)　Purchasing/subscribing to/leasing the following AI-powered devices/services [2] that facilitate AI-assisted teaching so as to enhance students' AI literacy and skills and enhance learning and teaching effectiveness:
- Software
- Hardware
- Platforms
- Learning and teaching resources
- School-based AI application solutions

(ii)　Subsidising students' participation in activities (within or outside the school) organised or recognised[3] by the school that enhance their AI literacy and skills.

5.　　Schools participating in the Funding Programme must commit to fulfilling the following requirements within the implementation period of the programme:
- Incorporate the item of "Development of AI-empowered Education" into the School Development Plan and/or Annual School Plan;
- Implement AI-assisted teaching in at least three subjects/curriculum areas (each subject/curriculum area should cover at least two levels), and develop at least six teaching examples or sets of learning and teaching resources with the application of AI;
- Conduct at least three open classes or classroom demonstrations on AI-assisted teaching in at least three different subjects/curriculum areas (within or outside the school);
- Organise at least three experience-sharing sessions on AI-assisted teaching (within or outside the school); and
- Host or arrange for students to participate in at least two student activities focusing on enhancing students' AI literacy and skills.

Funding Application and Disbursement Arrangements

6.　　Schools intending to participate in the Funding Programme are requested to complete

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[2] AI-powered devices/services include learning platforms or tools developed under the QEF e-Learning Ancillary Facilities Programme and other institutes/programmes.
[3] Student activities recognised by schools refer to those organised by external organisations in which the schools have confidence and which content is acknowledged as helping to enhance students' digital literacy and skills. (e.g. Schools may nominate students to participate in programmes/activities/competitions organised by post-secondary institutions, teachers' organisations, Hong Kong Education City, Hong Kong Academy for Gifted Education, innovation technology organisations.)

the attached Application Form and Undertaking (Annex 1) and return it to the Information Technology in Education Section by post or fax **on or before 28 February 2026**. Schools applying for the Funding Programme will normally be notified of the results on or before **31 March 2026**.

Address	：	Information Technology in Education Section, Innovation Technology Education Division, EDB Room E420, East Block, Education Bureau Kowloon Tong Education Services Centre, 19 Suffolk Road, Kowloon Tong, Kowloon
Fax No	：	2382 4403

7.　　　　Successful school applicants will normally receive the funding **on or before 30 June 2026**. Specific arrangements for fund disbursement will be communicated to schools separately.

8.　　　　Successful school applicants can use the funding until the end of the 2027/28 school year. When deploying the funding, schools should make reference to the Guidelines on the Use of Funding on AI for Empowering Learning and Teaching Funding Programme (the Guidelines) (Annex 2).

Financial and Accounting Arrangements

9.　　　　Successful publicly-funded school applicants can use the funding across school years from the 2025/26 school year to the end of 2027/28 school year. In other words, schools can carry forward any unspent balance of the funding for use in subsequent school or financial years up to 31 August 2028. Transfer of the funding and/or any unspent balance to any other accounts is not permitted in any schools. Schools have to complete the "AI for Empowering Learning and Teaching Funding Programme Interim Report on the Use of Funding" (Annex 3) on or before 30 September 2027 and the "AI for Empowering Learning and Teaching Funding Programme Final Report on the Use of Funding" (Annex 4) on or before 30 September 2028, and return them to the Information Technology in Education Section of the Innovation Technology Education Division of EDB before the aforesaid dates. If a school fails to submit Annex 3 and Annex 4 by the aforesaid deadlines or fails to complete the items in the undertaking within the programme period, the EDB may require the school to return all disbursed funds to the QEF. Based on the reports on the use of the funding submitted by the schools, the EDB will claw back any unspent balance of the funding as at 31 August 2028 from aided schools, caput and DSS schools. Schools must refund the remaining amount to the QEF via crossed cheques through the EDB (cheques payable to "The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region"). Government schools can deploy the funding in the same period as aided schools. Any unspent balance of the funding will lapse on 31 August 2028 and will be returned to the QEF based on the records of the designated user account. While schools are not required to submit copies of invoices and receipts of the expenditure items to the EDB, they should properly use the funding in accordance with the Guidelines and file related documents including financial records and receipts for no fewer than 7 years. If necessary, the EDB may request schools to provide relevant documentation for verification of

the use of funds allocated under this Funding Programme.

10.   Participating schools are required to compile a separate ledger account to record all income and expenditure chargeable to the Funding Programme. Aided, caput and DSS schools should adhere to the requirements on submission of annual audited accounts as stipulated in the relevant EDB circular memorandums/letters, and the annexes therein, in preparing ledger accounts and annual accounts, and submit the annual audited accounts to the EDB in accordance with the prevailing requirements. Otherwise, the EDB may require the school to return all disbursed funds to the QEF. For government schools, the funding will be disbursed in the form of an allocation to a newly assigned designated user code (schools will be separately informed of the related user code), and the expenditure should be charged to the designated user code in accordance with the prevailing financial guidelines. The total expenditure of a government school cannot exceed the disbursed amount of this Funding Programme. Schools may deploy the funding flexibly, in conjunction with resources from the EDB or other sources as appropriate, to launch or promote school-based plans in fostering AI-empowered education. No single expenditure item may receive double funding. Transfer of the funding and/or any unspent balance to any other accounts is also not permitted in any schools. If a deficit is incurred, schools may deploy the surplus (if applicable) under the Expanded Operating Expenses Block Grant (EOEBG) or the General Domain of the Operating Expenses Block Grant (OEBG) for aided schools, the Expanded Subject and Curriculum Block Grant (ESCBG) for government schools, the Fee Subsidy for caput schools and the DSS Subsidy for DSS schools to pay for the additional expenses incurred. If that is still not enough to cover the additional expenses, aided, caput and DSS schools may subsidise using the schools' own fund/non-government fund.

Evaluation and Accountability

11.   Participating schools are required to observe the relevant guidelines issued by the EDB when using the funding and are accountable for its use. In line with the principles of school-based management, schools are required to draw up an implementation plan for the use of the funding and incorporate it into the Annual School Plan for submission to their School Management Committees (SMCs)/Incorporated Management Committees (IMCs) for endorsement. Schools are required to regularly evaluate the use of the funding and include the "Interim Report" and "Final Report" of the Funding Programme with details of the subsidised items/activities, relevant expenses and evaluations in the Annual School Report for submission to their SMCs/IMCs for endorsement. Schools are required to upload the Annual School Plan and School Report (incorporating the implementation plan and the report on the use of the Funding Programme respectively) endorsed by their SMCs/IMCs to the school webpage for transparency and in accordance with established practices.

12.   The Information Technology in Education Section of EDB will conduct focus group meetings with teachers as appropriate to review the implementation of the Funding Programme, and provide appropriate advice to schools when necessary.

Briefing Sessions

13.   Briefing sessions will be held to introduce the details of the Funding Programme and share insights into the development and application of AI in education. Details are as follows:

Briefing Session for Primary Schools

Date: 13 January 2026 (Tuesday)
Time: 10:00 am to 12:00 nn
Venue: Lecture Theatre (WB), 4/F, West Block, EDB Kowloon Tong Education
                 Services Centre
Application: Through the Training Calendar System of EDB
                 (Course ID: ITED20250240)

Briefing Session for Secondary Schools

Date: 15 January 2026 (Thursday)
Time: 10:00 am to 12:00 nn
Venue: Lecture Theatre (WB), 4/F, West Block, EDB Kowloon Tong Education
                 Services Centre
Application: Through the Training Calendar System of EDB
                 (Course ID: ITED20250241)

Enquiries

14.   Should you have any enquiries, please contact the Information Technology in
Education Section, Innovation Technology Education Division, Education Bureau on
3698 3606.

                                                    P W YAN
                                    for Permanent Secretary for Education

cc: Heads of Sections – for information

AI for Empowering Learning and Teaching Funding Programme
Application Form and Undertaking
(Please return on or before 28 February 2026 by fax or mail.)

To：Information Technology in Education Section, ITED, Education Bureau
　　(Fax No: 2382 4403）

Please fill in all required information in block letters and put a "✓" in the appropriate boxes.

Part A: School Particulars

Name of School: _____

School Code: ☐☐☐☐☐☐

School Type: ☐ Primary　　☐ Secondary　　☐ Special School

Finance Type: ☐ Government　　☐ Aided　　☐ Caput　　☐ Direct Subsidy Scheme

School Contact: Tel:_____ Fax:_____ Email:_____

Teacher-in-charge: Name (English):_____

　　　　　　　　Name (Chinese):_____ Post Title:_____

　　　　　　　　Contact Tel: _____ Email:_____

Part B: Undertaking

My school will implement the Funding Programme in accordance with EDBCM No. 221/2025, and commit to the following requirements:
➢ Incorporate the item of "Development of AI-empowered Education" into the School Development Plan and/or Annual School Plan;
➢ Implement AI-assisted teaching in at least three subjects/curriculum areas (each subject/curriculum area should cover at least two levels), and develop at least six teaching examples or sets of learning and teaching resources with the application of AI;
➢ Conduct at least three open classes or classroom demonstrations with AI-assisted teaching in at least three subjects/curriculum areas (within or outside the school);
➢ Organise at least three experience-sharing sessions on AI-assisted teaching (within or outside the school);
➢ Host or arrange for students to participate in at least two student activities focusing on enhancing students' AI literacy and skills;
➢ Maintain proper records of all income and expenditure items, and submit annual audited accounts to the EDB as required; and
➢ Complete and return the Interim Report and Final Report of the Funding Programme as required.

Signature of Principal　　　　:_____

Name of Principal (Chinese) :_____

Name of Principal (English) :_____

Date　　　　　　　　　　　:_____

School Chop

**Guidelines on the Use of Funding on
AI for Empowering Learning and Teaching Funding Programme**

1.   **Principles**

●   Based on their own school development needs and the learning needs of their students, schools should formulate appropriate objectives of the funding and strategies for using it, and review and evaluate whether the resources are effectively used based on the objectives set.

●   Adhering to the principles of fiscal prudence and avoiding extravagance, schools should ensure that all related expenditures are incurred for the purposes of the funding, keep cost-effectiveness in view and do not generate any profit from its use.

●   Schools should strictly observe the relevant circulars and guidelines issued by the EDB on the use of public funds, and deploy the funding in a fair and transparent manner in accordance with established principles and requirements.

●   Schools should not allocate the funding to a single item/area or a small number of students. Prior approval from the School Management Committees (SMCs)/Incorporated Management Committees (IMCs) must be obtained for procuring individual items that incur higher costs.

●   When procuring relevant services, schools are reminded to refer to the Points to Note in the Purchase of Goods/Services in EDB Circular No. 3/2022 "Acceptance of Advantages and Donations by Schools and their Staff", and follow the procurement procedures listed therein. When conducting procurement, aided schools are required to follow the procedures and guidelines stated in EDB Circular No. 4/2013 "Procurement Procedures in Aided Schools" and its appended "Guidelines on Procurement Procedures in Aided Schools", as well as the relevant guidelines from the QEF and Section 6.4 of the School Administration Guide. Government schools should follow the procurement and supplies procedures as stipulated in the existing EDB internal circulars. Caput schools should follow the procedures and guidelines stated in EDB Circular No. 4/2013 "Procurement Procedures in Aided Schools" and "Guidelines on Procurement Procedures in Aided Schools". DSS schools should also observe the guidelines on procurement procedures for aided schools, or follow their own procurement policies and procedures approved by their SMCs/IMCs.

2.   **Ambit**
The funding of the Funding programme must be deployed to subsidise students' participation in activities organised or recognised by the school that enhance their AI literacy and skills and purchase/subscribe to/lease AI-assisted teaching tools or services developed under the QEF e-Learning Ancillary Facilities Programme (e-LAFP) and/or other institutions/programmes, including:
●   Software (e.g. AI drawing software)
●   Hardware (e.g. AI robot kits, single board computer AI kits, AI computers)
●   Platforms (e.g. AI-empowered learning platforms developed under the QEF e-LAFP or other institutions/programmes)
●   Learning and teaching resources; and
●   School-based AI application solutions (e.g. hiring an external organisation to develop and implement a school-based language model, or developing it in-house)

3.   Examples of improper use of the funding
- Procuring resources irrelevant to learning and teaching
- Carrying out renovations
- Subsidising teachers or parents to enrol/participate in AI-related courses/seminars/workshops
- Meeting banquet or courtesy-related expenses
- Meeting expenses for promotional and publicity activities (e.g. sharing sessions)
- Meeting expenses for food and beverages
- Organising activities that are not aligned with learning goals or curriculum objectives, or that are inappropriate to the cognitive and affective developmental stages of students
- Organising activities that contravene circulars, instructions or guidelines issued by the EDB

4.   Points to note
The examples above are by no means exhaustive. SMCs/IMCs should prudently deploy the funding and properly allocate the resources, and should not use the funding on a single item/area. SMCs/IMCs should also ensure that the resources are utilised in a cost-effective manner and that each item of expenditure incurred is used appropriately and in line with the principles and ambit of the funding.

To: Permanent Secretary for Education
              (Attn: Information Technology in Education Section, ITED, Education Bureau)
Address：   Information Technology in Education Section, Innovation Technology
              Education Division, EDB
              Room E420, East Block, Education Bureau Kowloon Tong Education
              Services Centre, 19 Suffolk Road, Kowloon Tong, Kowloon
Fax No: 2382 4403

(Please complete and return this report to Information Technology in Education Section, Innovation Technology Education Division, EDB on or before 30 September 2027.)

AI for Empowering Learning and Teaching Funding Programme
<u>Interim Report on the Use of Funding</u>
(2025/26 to 2026/27 s.y.)

1.   As at **31 August 2027**, our school has used the funding on the following items:

Expenditure Items (as at **31 August 2027**)	Expenditures ($) [Please list the total expenditure for each item (including sub-items).]
(i) Purchasing/subscribing to/leasing:	
- Software	
- Hardware	
- Platforms	
- Learning and teaching resources	
- School-based AI application solutions	
Subtotal of the above items under (i):	( )
(ii) Subsidising students' participation in AI-education-related activities organised or recognised by the school	( )
Total of **(i) + (ii)**:	

2.   As at **31 August 2027**, the AI for Empowering Learning and Teaching Funding

     ☐ has been fully spent.

     ☐ has an unspent balance of $_____.

     (Please put a "✓" in the appropriate box.)

3. As at **31 August 2027**, the progress of the items that our school is required to complete is as follows:

Items to be completed by school	Progress (as at 31 August 2027) (Please put a "✓" in the appropriate boxes.)	
Incorporate the item of "Development of AI-empowered Education" into the School Development Plan and/or Annual School Plan	☐ Completed	☐ In preparation
Implement AI-assisted teaching in at least three subjects/curriculum areas (each subject/curriculum area should cover at least two levels), and develop at least six teaching examples or sets of learning and teaching resources with the application of AI	☐ Completed	☐ In preparation
Conduct at least three open classes or classroom demonstrations on AI-assisted teaching in at least three different subjects/curriculum areas (within or outside the school)	☐ Completed	☐ In preparation
Organise at least three experience-sharing sessions on AI-assisted teaching (within or outside the school)	☐ Completed	☐ In preparation
Host or arrange for students to participate in at least two student activities focusing on enhancing students' AI literacy and skills	☐ Completed	☐ In preparation

4. Declaration

This is to certify that:
- our school has observed the principles and ambit set out in EDBCM No. 221/2025, as well as the requirements of relevant guidelines, circulars and letters issued by the EDB from time to time when using the relevant funding. All of the expenditure is in line with the principles and purposes of using the relevant funding, and in compliance with the financial management guidelines as well as circulars and guidelines on procurement procedures applicable to our school type;
- our school has kept a separate ledger account to properly record all the income and expenditure of the AI for Empowering Learning and Teaching Funding Programme. All expenditure items are supported with documentary proof. All the financial records and receipts have been handled in accordance with the accounting procedures and properly filed for auditing and inspection purposes by the EDB;
- our school will submit the annual audited accounts to the EDB within the prescribed period after the end of each school year, in which the total income and expenditure of the funding will be recorded. In case of any discrepancy between the actual unspent balance as stated in the annual audited accounts and the aforesaid balance, we will notify the EDB as soon as possible for follow-up actions; and
- the information provided in this Report is true and accurate. We understand that the EDB reserves the right to request documentary proof of the expenditure from schools for auditing and inspection purposes. We also understand our school is required to return any disbursed amounts that are not associated with the subsidised items of the AI for Empowering Learning and Teaching Funding Programme to the QEF via the EDB.

School Name   : _____

Signature of Principal   : _____

Name of Principal (Chinese) : _____

Name of Principal (English) : _____

Date   : _____

School Chop

To: Permanent Secretary for Education
               (Attn: Information Technology in Education Section, ITED, Education Bureau)
Address：   Information Technology in Education Section, Innovation Technology
               Education Division, EDB
               Room E420, East Block, Education Bureau Kowloon Tong Education
               Services Centre, 19 Suffolk Road, Kowloon Tong, Kowloon
Fax No: 2382 4403

(Please complete and return this report to Information Technology in Education Section, Innovation Technology Education Division, EDB on or before 30 September 2028.)

AI for Empowering Learning and Teaching Funding Programme
<u>Final Report on the Use of Funding</u>

1.   As at **31 August 2028**, our school has used the AI for Empowering Learning and Teaching Funding on the following items:

Expenditure Items (as at **31 August 2028**)	Expenditures ($) [Please list the total expenditure for each item (including sub-items).]
(i) Purchasing/subscribing to/leasing:	
- Software	
- Hardware	
- Platforms	
- Learning and teaching resources	
- School-based AI application solutions	
Subtotal of the above items under (i):	( )
(ii) Subsidising students' participation in AI-education-related activities organised or recognised by the school	( )
Total of **(i) + (ii)**:	

2.   As at **31 August 2028**, the AI for Empowering Learning and Teaching Funding

     ☐ has been fully spent.

     ☐ has an unspent balance of $_____ which will be returned to the QEF via the EDB.

(Please put a "✓" in the appropriate box.)

3. As at **31 August 2028**, the items that our school are required to complete are reported as follows:

Items to be completed by school (Please put a "✓" in the appropriate boxes.)		Items **actually** completed by school (as at 31 August 2028)
Incorporate the item of "Development of AI-empowered Education" into the School Development Plan and/or Annual School Plan	☐ Completed	Incorporated the item of "Development of AI-empowered Education" into the School Development Plan and/or Annual School Plan
Implement AI-assisted teaching in at least three subjects/curriculum areas (each subject/curriculum area should cover at least two levels), and develop at least six teaching examples or sets of learning and teaching resources with the application of AI	☐ Completed	Implement AI-assisted teaching in _____ subjects/curriculum areas (each subject/curriculum area covered at least two levels), and develop _____ teaching examples or sets of learning and teaching resources with the application of AI
Conduct at least three open classes or classroom demonstrations on AI-assisted teaching in at least three different subjects/curriculum areas (within or outside the school)	☐ Completed	Conducted _____ open classes or classroom demonstrations on AI-assisted teaching in at least three different subjects/curriculum areas (within or outside the school)
Organise at least three experience-sharing sessions on AI-assisted teaching (within or outside the school)	☐ Completed	Organised _____ experience-sharing sessions on AI-assisted teaching (within or outside the school)
Host or arrange for students to participate in at least two student activities focusing on enhancing students' AI literacy and skills	☐ Completed	Hosted or arranged for students to participate in _____ student activities focusing on enhancing students' AI literacy and skills

4. Declaration

This is to certify that:
- our school has observed the principles and ambit set out in EDBCM No. 221/2025, as well as the requirements of relevant guidelines, circulars and letters issued by the EDB from time to time when using the relevant funding. All of the expenditure is in line with the principles and purposes of using the relevant funding, and in compliance with the financial management guidelines as well as circulars and guidelines on procurement procedures applicable to our school type;
- our school has kept a separate ledger account to properly record all the income and expenditure of the AI for Empowering Learning and Teaching Funding Programme. All expenditure items are supported with documentary proof. All the financial records and receipts have been handled in accordance with the accounting procedures and properly filed for auditing and inspection purposes by the EDB;
- our school will submit the annual audited accounts to the EDB within the prescribed period after the end of each school year, in which the total income and expenditure of the funding will be recorded. In case of any discrepancy between the actual unspent balance as stated in the annual audited accounts and the aforesaid balance, we will notify the EDB as soon as possible for follow-up actions; and
- the information provided in this Report is true and accurate. We understand that the EDB reserves the right to request documentary proof of the expenditure from schools for auditing and inspection purposes. We also understand our school is required to return any disbursed amounts that are not associated with the subsidised items of the AI for Empowering Learning and Teaching Funding Programme to the QEF via the EDB.

School Name : _____

Signature of Principal : _____

Name of Principal (Chinese) : _____

Name of Principal (English) : _____

Date : _____

School Chop