From : Secretary for Education

To : Supervisors / Heads of all government and aided primary, secondary and special schools (including caput schools and local schools under the Direct Subsidy Scheme)

Ref. : EDB(EID/ITE)/IT/PRO/189

Date 12 February 2015

The Fourth Strategy on IT in Education - Enhancing Schools' WiFi Infrastructure Expression of Interest

Purpose

This circular memorandum invites schools to complete an "Expression of Interest" (EOI) Form to indicate their tentative plan for WiFi infrastructure enhancement under the Fourth Strategy on IT in Education (ITE4) in the coming school years starting from 2015/16. It also outlines the support measures to be provided by the Education Bureau (EDB) for the enhancement of WiFi infrastructure in schools and invites schools to participate in the coming briefing sessions in this regard.

Background

2.   A public consultation on ITE4 was conducted from May to July 2014. Major proposed initiatives include the phased provision of wireless network services and other supporting facilities for all public sector schools. As a pioneer measure, the Support Scheme for e-Learning in Schools (Support Scheme) was launched in January 2014 for 100 public sector schools to enhance their WiFi infrastructure and to acquire mobile computing devices for use in class. With the experience gained in the Support Scheme and the general positive feedback obtained during the consultation period, we plan to implement the enhancement of WiFi infrastructure under ITE4 starting from the 2015/16 school year, subject to the funding approval from the Legislative Council.

Support Measures

Objectives

3.   Our aim is to provide public sector schools (except those which have joined the Support Scheme[1]) with enhanced Composite IT Grant (CITG) to enhance their WiFi infrastructure to cater for the need of using e-textbooks and e-learning resources in class. In

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[1] Schools joining the Support Scheme will receive enhanced CITG from 2017/18 school year onwards.

addition, a one-off grant will be provided to schools for acquiring mobile computing devices for use in class by students. The enhanced CITG comprises provision for replacement and maintenance of the mobile computing devices.

Arrangements

4.		Based on the successful experience gained in the Support Scheme, schools are encouraged to hire a service provider to design, build and operate the whole WiFi infrastructure and to pay for the service by subscription thereafter. Alternatively, schools may use the fund to design, build, and operate the WiFi infrastructure by themselves. In line with the current practice for disbursement of the CITG, the level of grant for individual schools will depend on their school size as reflected in the number of approved classes.

5.		EDB will also disburse a one-off grant in the range of $70,000 to $170,000 per school (actual rate will depend on the number of approved classes) for schools to acquire mobile computing devices for shared use of students in class for e-learning.

6.		To facilitate schools in building up the necessary WiFi environment starting from the 2015/16 school year, a checklist and sample user requirement specifications will be provided for schools' reference in conducting the procurement exercises for WiFi services. A technical advisory team will also be set up under the IT in Education Section to provide off-site technical advisory services to schools in vetting the bidders' proposals and acceptance of construction works by service providers.

7.		To enable teachers to establish firm pedagogical use of e-textbooks and e-learning resources, EDB will continue to provide tailor-made professional development programmes for school teachers to strengthen their knowledge and skills in helping their students in e-learning. EDB will also reinforce the roles of Centre of Excellence and encourage the formation of learning communities to share experiences and good practices with a view to scaling up e-learning, in particular, whole-school adoption of e-textbooks and e-learning resources. It is envisaged that the process will build up a critical mass of teachers to enable sector-wide adoption of e-textbooks and e-learning resources for e-learning. In addition, we will continue to provide reference materials, in the form of short videos, to further share good practices on e-learning pedagogies, technical solutions as well as the promotion of e-safety with teachers.

Expression of Interest

8.		We aim to complete the WiFi infrastructure enhancement in all public sector schools by phases in three school years starting from 2015/16. In order to facilitate the

smooth operation of this large-scale exercise and for resources management, all schools (except those which have joined the Support Scheme) shall indicate their intended WiFi infrastructure enhancement schedule and provide other required information for our follow-up actions.

9.　　　　Schools can visit the website http://www.edb.gov.hk/ited/wifi900 to obtain information on the support measures.　Schools are required to submit the completed EOI Form (available for download at the aforesaid website) **by hand or by post** to:

> Information Technology in Education Section
> Education Bureau
> Room E420 4/F, East Block, EDB Kowloon Tong Education Services Centre
> 19 Suffolk Road
> Kowloon Tong, Kowloon.

on or before 6 p.m. on 23 March 2015 (Monday).

10.　　　　In considering the implementation plan for the enhancement of WiFi infrastructure, schools are encouraged to review their school development plan, including the e-learning implementation for the next three school years (2015/16 – 2017/18).　Provision for Wifi infrastructure enhancement will be arranged in phases taking into account schools' indicated preference and e-learning implementation plan.　Schools will be informed of the outcome after April 2015.

Survey

11.　　　　To capture the latest picture on schools' implementation of e-learning for better arrangement of resources, a data collection form on **"A Snapshot on the Implementation of e-Learning and WiFi infrastructure"** is attached together with the EOI Form.　Schools are strongly advised to complete the data collection form and submit it together with the EOI Form.

Briefing session

12.　　　　We will organise three identical briefing sessions to explain the support measures. . Teachers from schools which have joined the Support Scheme will also share their experience on enhancing their WiFi infrastructure and use of the new environment in e-learning. Schools are invited to nominate a maximum of two representatives to attend the briefing sessions and enroll through the Training Calendar System (TCS) [Course ID: EI0020150181].

Enquiry

13.   For enquiries, please contact the IT in Education Section at 3698 3609.

YT LAU
for Secretary for Education

c.c.   Heads of Sections - for information