

EDUCATION BUREAU CIRCULAR MEMORANDUM NO. 37/2020

From : Permanent Secretary for Education To: Supervisors and Heads of all secondary day schools, primary schools, special schools and kindergartens

Ref.: EDB(SDCT)1/P-620/3 Pt.1

Date: 6 March 2020 c.c. Heads of Sections – for information

Special Anti-epidemic Grant

Summary

The purpose of this circular memorandum is to inform all secondary day schools, primary schools, special schools and kindergartens of the details about the provision of a one-off Special Anti-epidemic Grant.

Details

2. To prevent the spread of novel coronavirus at schools and to safeguard the health of students, all schools have temporarily suspended their classes since early February 2020. In order to help schools replenish their epidemic prevention equipment, clean the school premises and pay for the other expenses related to epidemic prevention, the Education Bureau (EDB) will provide a one-off Special Anti-epidemic Grant to all schools offering full and formal curriculum.

Eligible Schools

3. All schools offering full and formal curriculum (including kindergartens, kindergarten-cum-child care centres, and schools operating kindergarten levels (hereafter referred to as “KGs”), government, aided and caput schools, schools under Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS), schools under the English Schools Foundation (ESF), international schools, Private Independent Schools (PIS), private primary schools and private secondary day schools) are eligible for the grant.

The Amount

4. The Special Anti-epidemic Grant is a one-off grant. Details are as follows:

- (i) KGs – the amount to be received by KGs joining the kindergarten education scheme (Scheme-KGs) is determined by the total number of

students as at 15 January 2020 (excluding the students enrolled in child care centres). Specifically, KGs with 66 or less half-day students will receive \$10,000 (one full-time student to be counted as two half-day students) while 67 or more will receive \$15,000. Each non-Scheme KG will receive \$12,500.

- (ii) Government schools, aided schools (including special schools), caput schools and DSS schools – the amount to be received by schools is determined by the number of approved classes in the 2019/20 school year. Specifically, schools with 11 classes or less classes will receive \$15,000; those with 12 classes to 23 classes will receive \$20,000 and those with 24 classes or more will receive \$25,000.
- (iii) Boarding sections of special schools – the amount to be received is determined by their approved boarding capacity in the 2019/20 school year. Specifically, schools with a boarding capacity less than 40 will receive \$15,000; those with a capacity from 40 to 60 will receive \$20,000 and those with a capacity from 61 or more will receive \$25,000.
- (iv) Private secondary and primary schools (including private schools offering full and formal curriculum, international schools, PIS and schools under ESF) – each school will receive \$20,000.

Note: Special schools operating both primary and secondary levels (including the special school under ESF) are counted as one school while other schools operating both primary and secondary levels are counted as two schools. If a school operates in more than one location, it will be counted as one school only.

Disbursement Arrangement

5. For government schools, the one-off grant will be provided in the form of budget allocation under a new designated user code (to be notified separately). For schools which are in receipt of government subvention (including Scheme-KGs, aided schools, caput schools, DSS schools, and schools under ESF), the grant will be credited directly to the schools' bank accounts in March 2020 the earliest. Application is not required.

6. Private secondary and primary schools (including private schools offering full and formal curriculum, international schools and PIS) are required to complete Annex 1, and provide the EDB with a bank account, the name of which should be exactly the same as the school name. If schools are using a bank account with the name being different from the school name, they should fill in Annex 2. (The softcopy of Annexes 1 and 2 can be downloaded from the website of the EDB : <http://www.edb.gov.hk> >

School Administration and Management > Administration > About School > Prevention of Communicable Diseases in Schools > Special Anti-epidemic Grant). If schools return the completed Annex 1 or 2 with complete and accurate information, and relevant supporting documents (if applicable) to the respective School Development Sections **on or before 18 March 2020**, the grant will be disbursed to them starting from April 2020.

7. For non-Scheme KGs, the EDB has issued a letter dated 2 March 2020 entitled “Provision of Support to Kindergartens NOT Joining Kindergarten Education Scheme (Ref: EDB(KGA)ADM/90/1). **Non-Scheme KGs are required to fill in Appendix 1 or 2 attached in the above-mentioned letter.** The EDB will process the applications of both the Support Grant stated in the above-mentioned letter and the Special Anti-epidemic Grant stated in this Circular Memorandum. Please refer to the above-mentioned letter for details.

8. In procuring relevant items / services, schools are reminded to refer to the Points to Note in the Purchase of Goods/Services in the EDB Circular No. 14/2003 “Acceptance of Advantages and Donations by Schools and their Staff”, and follow the procurement procedures listed therein. Aided schools are required to follow the procedures and guidelines stated in the EDB Circular No. 4/2013 “Procurement Procedures in Aided Schools” and “Guidelines on Procurement Procedures in Aided Schools (April 2013)” while government schools should refer to the store and procurement guidelines as stated in the relevant EDB Internal Circulars. Caput schools and DSS schools should follow the guidelines on procurement procedures for aided schools, or their own procurement policies formulated upon the endorsement of their School Management Committees/Incorporated Management Committees. Schools under ESF should follow their prevailing procurement procedures.

9. As for Scheme-KGs, they should follow the procurement procedures as stipulated in the latest “Guidelines on Procurement Procedures in Kindergartens” issued by the EDB. Non-Scheme KGs should also refer to the principles of procurement of goods and services listed in Appendix 2 of the EDB Circular No. 16/2013 “Collection of Fees, Sale of School Items and Provision of Paid Services in Kindergartens” (an extract copy is in Annex 3). Other schools (including private schools and international schools) should also follow the procurement procedures stated in Annex 3.

Accounting and Auditing Arrangement

10. All schools should keep a separate ledger account to properly record all income and expenditure of the Special Anti-epidemic Grant. All books of accounts, receipts,

payment vouchers and invoices must be kept for at least 7 years by schools for accounting and auditing purposes. Aided schools, caput schools and DSS schools should adhere to the EDB's requirements on submission of audited accounts as set out in the relevant circular memoranda as well as their appendices in preparing ledger accounts and annual accounts. The EDB may request schools (including all types of private schools) to provide relevant documents for examining the use of the Special Anti-epidemic Grant, if necessary. Schools are responsible for ensuring the effective use of the grant, all of which should be used for purchasing items or services for epidemic prevention or cleaning the school premises, and paying for other expenses related to epidemic prevention. If schools are found not spending the grant according to the ambit as stated in this Circular Memorandum, or cannot provide the relevant supporting documents during audit, schools will be required to return the disbursed grant to the EDB.

11. Aided schools should note that the Special Anti-epidemic Grant is outside the Operating Expenses Block Grant (OEBG) / Expanded Operating Expenses Block Grant (EOEBG) while deficit will be borne by the surplus of OEBG / EOEBG as appropriate. Caput schools and DSS schools can make use of the DSS Subsidy and Caput Fee Subsidy respectively to make up the deficit. If deficit is still found, it should be borne by the schools' own fund / non-government fund. Government schools, if deemed necessary, should make use of the Expanded Subject and Curriculum Grant to make up the deficit while other schools can deploy other relevant government subvention (if applicable) / schools' own fund to make up the deficit. The grant and its surplus, if any, should not be transferred to any other accounts.

12. Schools should use the grant by 31 August 2021, and complete and return the Report on Use of Special Anti-epidemic Grant attached in Annex 4 by 29 October 2021 to the EDB. Any unspent balance as at 31 August 2021 should be returned to the Government. Schools will be informed of the relevant details later.

Enquiries

13. For enquiries, please contact the respective Senior School Development Officers or Senior Services Officers.

KK LEE
for Permanent Secretary for Education