

EDUCATION BUREAU CIRCULAR MEMORANDUM NO. 51/2022

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. 5

Date: 28 February 2022 c.c. Heads of Sections – for information

Special Anti-epidemic Grant (March 2022)

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. Recently the number of confirmed cases hit record high amid the lingering Coronavirus Disease 2019 epidemic. In order to help schools cope with the epidemic and prepare for resumption of face-to-face classes, the Education Bureau (EDB) will provide a one-off Special Anti-epidemic Grant to all schools offering full and formal curriculum. Schools may make use of the grant to purchase equipment for epidemic prevention, procure services and items related to cleaning the school premises and pay for the expenses related to student vaccination arrangement (such as arranging transportation taking students to and from vaccination venues).

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), 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) with 66 or less half-day students will receive \$15,000 (one full-time student to be counted as two half-day students) while 67 or more will receive \$22,500¹. Each KG not joining the KG education scheme (non-Scheme KG) will receive \$18,750.
- (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 2021/22 school year. Specifically, schools with 11 or less classes will receive \$22,500; those with 12 classes to 23 classes will receive \$30,000 and those with 24 or more classes will receive \$37,500.
- (iii) Boarding sections of special schools – the amount to be received is determined by their approved boarding capacity in the 2021/22 school year. Specifically, schools with a boarding capacity less than 40 will receive \$45,000; those with a capacity from 40 to 60 will receive \$60,000 and those with a capacity from 61 or more will receive \$75,000.
- (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 \$30,000.

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 grant will be provided in the form of budget allocation under a designated user code. 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 2022 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 select whether to receive the grant by autopay (applicable to schools which were

¹ The EDB will use the number of eligible students (excluding students in child care centres) for calculating the Provisional Unit Subsidy for March 2022 as the basis for disbursement of the grant. The amount of the grant disbursed will remain unchanged even if there are subsequent changes in the number of eligible students.

disbursed with the “Special Anti-epidemic Grant” in 2020) or by crossed cheques. If a school chooses to receive the grant by a crossed cheque, the school should provide the payee name which should be identical with the school name. If the payee name is different from the school name, the school should also complete Annex 2 (The softcopy of Annexes 1 and 2 can be downloaded from the website of the EDB : <https://www.edb.gov.hk> > *School Administration and Management* > *Administration* > *About School* > *Prevention of Communicable Diseases in Schools* > *Special Anti-epidemic Grant (March 2022)*). Schools should return the completed Annexes 1 and 2 (if applicable), with relevant supporting documents (if applicable), to *Central Team 1 / School Development Division, Education Bureau, 5/F., East Wing, Central Government Offices, 2 Tim Mei Avenue, Tamar, Hong Kong* (please specify "Application for Special Anti-epidemic Grant " on the envelope) **on or before 11 March 2022**. Relevant documents can also be deposited in the EDB's "Application for Special Anti-epidemic Grant" drop-in box located at the 2/F Entrance of the Central Government Offices. The grant will be disbursed starting from end March 2022 the earliest.

7. No application is required for Scheme-KGs. The grant will be credited directly to school’s bank account. **As for non-Scheme KGs, they do not need to submit any application.** The grant will be credited to the school’s bank account for receiving the One-off Grant under the sixth round of Anti-epidemic Fund (AEF 6.0) by autopay. In case the schools concerned opt for not receiving this grant, they should inform their respective District School Development Section / Joint Office for Kindergartens and Child Care Centres in writing on or before 11 March 2022. In case the schools have not received the One-off Grant under AEF 6.0, or need to update the bank account information, they are required to submit the duly completed Annex 3. For schools using a bank account with the name different from the school name submitted before, they are required to complete Annex 3a and attach relevant information and form (Electronic version of Annex 3 and Annex 3a can be downloaded from the EDB webpage: <https://www.edb.gov.hk> > *School Administration and Management* > *Administration* > *About School* > *Prevention of Communicable Diseases in Schools* > *Special Anti-epidemic Grant (March 2022)*). Schools are required to submit the original copy of the duly completed documents to their respective District School Development Section / Joint Office for Kindergartens and Child Care Centres on or before 11 March 2022.

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. Scheme-KGs should follow the procurement procedures as stipulated in the latest “Guidelines on Procurement Procedures in Kindergartens” issued by the EDB. As for non-Scheme KGs, they 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 4). Other schools (including private schools and international schools) should also follow the procurement procedures stated in Annex 4.

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 checking and inspection of 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 equipment for epidemic prevention, procurement of services and items related to cleaning the school premises and payment of expenses related to student vaccination arrangement. 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 checking and inspection, 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 Block 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. All schools should not transfer the grant and its surplus, if any, to any other accounts.

12. Schools should use the grant on or before 31 August 2023, and complete and return the "Report on Use of Special Anti-epidemic Grant" attached in Annex 5 on or before 30 October 2023 to the EDB. Any unspent balance as at 31 August 2023 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