

The Education Department announced today (Thursday) details of application of the new round of school allocation exercise in a briefing session held for interested bodies. A total of six school sites, 17 government-built primary or secondary school premises and 37 estate kindergarten premises are made available for allocation in this exercise. These premises are scheduled to be completed in either 2000 (for kindergarten only), 2001 or 2002. (Please refer to the Annex for the list of sites and premises)

To facilitate the development of vibrant private sector schools so as to give wider choices to parents, the ED will continue to allocate school premises and sites to operators of Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS) schools and private independent schools.

Three sites in Yau Ma Tei, Shamshuipo and Ma On Shan will be granted at nominal premium to successful applicants for the construction of private independent schools. School sponsors may also indicate their preference in terms of site location or area if they find the above sites not able to suit their needs. School operators may apply for a capital grant amounting to no more than the cost of constructing a standard design public sector school accommodating the same number of students, to facilitate the construction of the schools.

For the first time, aided and DSS school sponsors may apply for allocation of three sites at Tsing Lung Tau, Yuen Long and Siu Sai Wan. Successful sponsors will be entrusted to construct the schools of their own designs which best suit their educational goals. Funding and entrustment procedures will be announced in due course.

School sponsors may also apply for allocation of government-built primary or secondary school premises to operate aided or DSS schools. To facilitate the "through train" arrangement, a school sponsor may apply for allocation of a primary school premises together with a nearby secondary school premises. School sponsors may also propose to operate a primary-cum-secondary school in one premises.

The selection of sponsoring bodies will be based on the assessment of the applicant bodies' proposed school plan which sets out, among other things, the vision, mission and performance targets of the proposed school as well as self-evaluation indicators.

Other things being equal, priority will be given to applications for operation of DSS schools in the allocation of school premises and sites for aided and DSS schools. This is on the condition that such an allocation will not affect the planned provision of public sector school places.

Successful applicants of aided school are required to enter into an agreement with the Government. They are required to establish a School Management Committee (SMC) duly registered under the Companies Ordinance for the operation of the schools and cause the SMC to enter into a 5-year (for aided schools) or a 10-year (for DSS and private independent schools) service agreement with the Government. Renewal of both agreements will be subject to evaluation based on the targets and evaluation criteria stated in the agreement. The aim of the agreements is to enhance school's accountability in delivering education in exchange for government assistance, and to facilitate the development of performance-based school management.

To become eligible for application, an applicant body must be either a charitable institution or trust of a public character exempted from tax under Section 88 of the Inland Revenue Ordinance.

It must also be incorporated under the Companies Ordinance, and has included in its memorandum and articles of association some standard clauses and articles required by the ED.

Applicant bodies are required to submit applications together with a detailed school plan by end of January 2000 to the Building Section of the Education Department at Room 1427, Wu Chung House, 213 Queen's Road East, Wanchai.

Applications will be considered by the School Allocation Committee (SAC) which comprised an equal number of official and non-official members and with chairmanship assumed by the Director of Education.

Enquiries relating to applications may be direct to the Secretary of the SAC at 2892 6391. Details of the application can be downloaded from the ED's homepage at <http://www.info.gov.hk/ed>.