

10 June 2020

Education Bureau Circular No. 6/2020

Implementation of the Recommendations of the Task Force on Professional Development of Teachers

【 Note: This Circular should be read by

- (a) Supervisors and heads of all government schools, aided schools (including special schools), caput schools and schools under the Direct Subsidy Scheme - for action; and
- (b) Head of sections - for information and action where applicable.】

Summary

This circular aims to elaborate on the details of implementing the recommendations of the Task Force on Professional Development of Teachers, and the measures to be taken in September 2020.

Background

2. The Education Bureau (EDB) set up the Task Force on Professional Development of Teachers (the Task Force) in November 2017 to study the establishment of a Professional Ladder for Teachers, the ranking arrangement of school management in primary, secondary and special schools, as well as the timetable for an all-graduate teaching force. After extensive consultation with stakeholders, an in-depth study and much deliberation, the Task Force submitted a report to the Government in March 2019 with a total of 18 recommendations. The Government has accepted all the recommendations and has actively pursued the relevant measures. Some of these measures were announced in the Chief Executive's 2018 Policy Address, including implementing in one go the all-graduate teaching force in public sector primary and

secondary schools¹ in the 2019/20 school year, earmarking funding to rationalise the salaries for school heads and deputy heads in public sector primary schools, and improving the manpower at the middle management level in primary schools. The EDB will implement other recommendations of the Task Force in the 2020/21 school year, including establishing a Professional Ladder for Teachers, improving the manpower of vice-principals in public sector primary and secondary schools, the manpower of senior teachers as well as ranking arrangements of principals in public sector secondary schools, and making preparations for establishing commendation schemes at multiple levels to acknowledge teachers with outstanding performance. Schools under the Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS) will also benefit from the above measures and the EDB will incorporate the expenses arising from implementing the measures in aided schools into the DSS unit subsidy rates. Through these measures, the EDB hopes to enhance teachers' professional capacity and their effectiveness in managing schools, thus further enhancing the quality of education.

Details

I. All-graduate Teaching Force

3. The Government accepted the Task Force's recommendation to implement the all-graduate teaching force policy as early as practicable and implemented the policy in public sector primary and secondary schools in one go in the 2019/20 school year. Schools may, taking into account their school-based circumstances, achieve full implementation by the 2020/21 school year. The policy recognises teachers holding a bachelor's degree, and enhances their professional roles and functions to further improve the quality of education. Regarding the establishment of an all-graduate teaching force in aided schools, including the implementation details and responsibilities of graduate teachers, please refer to the EDB Circular No.11/2019.

II. Advancing Teachers' Career Prospects, Enhancing School Management Ranking and Deployment Arrangements

4. To tie in with the establishment of a Professional Ladder for Teachers, the EDB will enhance the ranking arrangement of school management with a view to encouraging the continuous development of the teaching profession, recognising the contributions of teachers and school leaders, raising the professional status of teachers, and enhancing the quality of education. Starting from the 2020/21 school year, the

¹ Public sector primary and secondary schools include government schools, aided schools (including special schools) and caput schools.

EDB will implement the following improvement measures to enhance the ranking arrangement of school management for strengthening the coordination and planning of school development work:

Public sector primary schools

- (a) Improving the manpower of deputy heads in public sector primary schools; and
- (b) Upgrading the Primary School Curriculum Leader post in public sector primary schools operating fewer classes.

Public sector secondary schools

- (c) Improving the demarcation arrangements for headship rankings in public sector secondary schools;
- (d) Improving the manpower of vice-principals in public sector secondary schools; and
- (e) Including the additional teaching posts generated from the 0.1 increase in teacher-to-class ratio as from the 2017/18 school year in the calculation of promotion posts in public sector secondary schools.

Aided special schools

In addition to the above measures, the following two measures for improving the ranking arrangement of school management will also be implemented in aided special schools:

- (f) Improving the conversion arrangements for determining the headship ranking and provision of vice-principals/deputy heads in aided special schools; and
- (g) Improving the manpower arrangements for vice-principals/deputy heads in aided special schools operating both primary and secondary sections.

5. For details of each improvement measure, please refer to Annex 1.

6. With regard to enhancing the current arrangement and requirements for promotion to headship ranks in the primary sector, the Government will review the current practice and scrutinise areas for improvement.

7. With a view to attracting more suitable candidates to take up leadership duties in special schools, the EDB will improve the promotion arrangement for deputy heads at the rank of Senior Primary School Master/Mistress (SPSM) in the primary section of aided special schools. Since principals of aided special schools operating both primary and secondary sections are currently at the ranks of secondary school principals

(including Principal Graduate Master/Mistress (PGM), Principal II and Principal I), to be eligible for promotion to principal of aided special schools, teachers must have at least three years' secondary school experience as Senior Graduate Masters/Mistresses (SGM) in aided special schools. Besides, the EDB has proposed improvement measures regarding the manpower at the middle management level and the salaries of school heads and deputy heads in public sector primary schools. The measures are also applicable to special schools. Upon the approval of the Legislative Council and the implementation of these proposals, deputy heads at the rank of SPSM in the primary section of aided special schools will not be required to have the aforementioned secondary school teaching experience and will be eligible for consideration for promotion to principal in aided special schools as long as they meet the required years of service and training requirements. Specifically, a teacher's years of service as an SPSM in aided special schools operating both primary and secondary sections will be treated as equivalent to the years of service as an SGM in aided special schools when he/she is being considered for promotion to principal in aided special schools.

8. To complement the implementation of whole-day primary schooling and the move towards an all-graduate teaching force, the Government is working to rationalise the salaries for school heads and deputy heads and improve the manpower at the middle management level in public sector primary schools. These improvement measures will enhance the quality of primary school management and help retain and attract talents for the purpose of further improving the quality of education.

III. Professional Ladder for Teachers

9. The Professional Ladder for Teachers in Hong Kong is established with an aim to promote teachers' professional growth and enhance teachers' professional status. It adopts the professional roles of teachers and principals as portrayed in the "T-standard"² as the goals for teachers' professional development, and the three core elements of teachers' professional growth (including professional competencies; professional values and conduct; and aspiration for self-advancement through self-reflection) as its foundation. With the prevailing Continuing Professional Development (CPD) policy for teachers³ remains unchanged, starting from the 2020/21

² The three professional roles of teachers portrayed in the "T-Standard" are "Caring Cultivators", "Inspirational Co-constructors" and "Committed Role Model". The three professional roles of principals are "Ethical Enablers", "Versatile Architects" and "Visionary Edupreneurs". The stage descriptors under each role depict the beliefs and performance of the teachers or principals at different stages of professional growth. For more information, please visit the website of the Committee on Professional Development of Teachers and Principals (<http://cotap.hk> >T-excel@hk>T-standard).

³ CPD policy for teachers: All teachers, regardless of rank and position, have to undertake no less than 150 hours

school year, the EDB will provide core training for newly-joined teachers, training programmes and resources for in-service teachers, and enhance the arrangements of training for promotion. Details are as follows.

“T-standard⁺”

10. “T-standard⁺” comprises Professional Standards for Teachers of Hong Kong and Professional Standards for Principals of Hong Kong. It portrays the professionalism that teachers and principals are expected to demonstrate at different stages of professional growth. It also provides a self-reflection tool to facilitate teachers’ understanding of their individual professional development needs. Both the Professional Ladder for Teachers and “T-standard⁺” aim at promoting self-reflection and professional development of the teaching profession. With reference to the “T-standard⁺”, the EDB has devised the following training programmes and goals to provide teachers with opportunities for more systematic and focused professional development.

● Training Programme for Newly-joined Teachers

11. To assist newly-joined teachers to understand their professional roles, demonstrate professional values and conduct, and keep abreast of the latest developments in education policies and practices for application in teaching as appropriate, the EDB has developed training programme for newly-joined teachers, which comprises core and elective training. Starting from the 2020/21 school year, teachers appointed to teach in public sector or DSS schools for the first time are required to complete 30 hours of core training within the first three years of service, and not less than 60 hours of elective training based on individual professional development needs.

12. The core training is offered by the EDB, which covers “Teachers’ Professional Identity” and “Teachers’ Professional Learning”. The former is designed with reference to the “T-standard⁺” to promote teachers’ reflection on their professional roles, while the latter mainly elucidates local education policies and initiatives as well as national and international education development. Elective training allows newly-joined teachers to participate in programmes/activities offered by the EDB, teacher education universities, school sponsoring bodies or schools according to individual professional development needs. The training includes professional development

of CPD activities by the end of each three-year cycle. The number of CPD hours is a “soft target” designed to encourage teachers to participate in different modes of CPD activities in accordance with their professional needs and aspirations.

programmes related to Key Learning Area/subject and fostering students' whole-person development, as well as induction programmes organised by school sponsoring bodies/schools. For details of the training programme for newly-joined teachers, please refer to Annex 2.

● **Enhanced Training for In-service Teachers**

13. With full implementation of the all-graduate teaching force policy, all teachers will shoulder more diversified professional duties and work together to promote school development. The EDB has been encouraging teachers to participate in different modes of CPD activities in accordance with their professional needs and aspirations, to meet the soft target of completing 150 hours of training in every three-year cycle. Starting from the 2020/21 school year, teachers are required to spare a minimum of 30 hours, in each three-year cycle, to take part in two categories of professional development programme/activity, namely "Teachers' Professional Roles, Values and Conduct" and "Local, National and International Education Issues", with not less than six hours spent on each category. The enhanced training would facilitate teachers' systematic planning of professional development to address the needs of their duties, cultivate a reflective culture in the teaching profession and broaden teachers' horizons.

14. The EDB will provide teachers and schools with training programmes and resources under the aforementioned two categories. Schools should plan for the incorporation of the relevant content in school-based teacher professional development plans, and make good use of the training resources provided by the EDB on staff development days or at other appropriate training opportunities, taking into account their school-based circumstances. Teachers should make proper plans to participate in the professional development programmes/activities in a balanced manner. For details of the enhanced training for in-service teachers, please refer to Annex 3.

● **Enhanced Arrangements of Training for Promotion**

15. Currently, to be eligible for substantive promotion to higher ranks⁴ in aided schools, teachers must meet the training requirements for promotion⁵ by undertaking 90 hours of refresher training within the last ten years. For substantive promotion to

⁴ The higher ranks are Senior Graduate Master/Mistress (SGM), Primary School Master/Mistress (PSM), Senior Primary School Master/Mistress (SPSM) and Principal Graduate Master/Mistress (PGM).

⁵ In addition to refresher training and management training programmes, special school teachers should also complete acceptable special education programmes for promotion purpose to be recognised as eligible for promotion. For details, please refer to the relevant provisions of the Code of Aid for Special Schools and the latest circulars on special education teacher training at the EDB website (<http://www.edb.gov.hk>) [[Education System and Policy > Special Education > In-service Teacher Training Courses on Special Educational Needs](#)].

the ranks of PGM and SPSM, they have to undertake an additional 40-hour management training course. With the rapid development of technology, society and economy, it is necessary for school management teams to have a broader vision and provide stronger leadership. They are expected to keep pace with the times and lead the school development in order to nurture talents needed by society. The EDB will enhance the content of training for promotion and revise the validity period of such training to better address school development needs and ensure teachers aspiring to advance to higher ranks are adequately equipped to take up promotion posts.

16. Starting from the 2020/21 school year, the EDB will implement the enhanced training requirements for promotion. The training includes the Core and Elective Parts. The total number of required training hours remains unchanged, and the validity period of such training is five years. For the Core Part, teachers must complete 30 hours of designated programmes offered by the EDB. These programmes focus on the necessary competencies required of school leaders, including professional conduct and values, national and international development, education issues, as well as leadership and reflective skills. For the Elective Part, teachers must undertake 60 hours (for promotion to PSM/SGM) or 100 hours (for promotion to SPSM/PGM) of training, based on the professional knowledge needed for respective promotion posts. The training in the Elective Part should be endorsed by the School Management Committees (SMCs)/Incorporated Management Committees (IMCs) as fulfilling the training requirements for promotion. For details of the enhanced training requirements for promotion, please refer to Annex 4.

17. To facilitate preparation for the enhanced arrangements of training for promotion, schools and teachers are given a three-year transition period. All teachers promoted on or before 31 August 2023 can opt to fulfil the original or enhanced training requirements for promotion.

● **School-based Continuing Professional Development Plan for Teachers**

18. When devising school-based teacher CPD plans, schools should make reference to the Professional Ladder for Teachers as well as “T-standard⁺” and set feasible professional development plans with teachers to cater for their needs at different stages of professional growth. Schools should also provide guidance to help teachers meet the respective CPD requirements, regularly review teachers’ participation in the CPD activities and report to the SMCs/IMCs .

19. Schools should ensure that newly-joined teachers understand the relevant training

arrangements and requirements, provide them space to attend appropriate professional development programmes/activities, and assist them in reviewing and reflecting on what they have learned. Schools should also clearly explain the enhanced arrangements of training for promotion to teachers so that teachers who aspire to advance to higher ranks can plan for their professional development well in advance. Schools should also ensure that teachers have fulfilled the training requirements before substantive promotion.

20. To cater for the teachers' professional growth and their operational needs, the EDB will provide a wider variety of professional development programmes/activities, including online courses. Details of these professional development programmes/activities will be uploaded to the Training Calendar System in a timely fashion. Schools/teachers can review the record of attendance through the EDB e-Services Portal. Through timely review and flexible arrangements of the training programmes, the EDB actively supports teachers' CPD and encourages them to achieve their training goals.

IV. Establishing Commendation Schemes

21. The EDB will establish a new commendation scheme to acknowledge teachers and school leaders with distinguished contributions to education and promotion of school development. In addition, schools are advised to consider creating the title of "Expert Teacher" to recognise the outstanding performance of teachers in learning and teaching, education research and developing professional learning communities, taking into account their school-based circumstances. The new title serves to acknowledge their contributions in enhancing teacher professional development and identify teachers for promoting professional exchange within and across schools. Further details will be announced in due course.

Amendments to the Codes of Aid and School Administration Guide

22. Following the implementation of the above recommendations, the Code of Aid for Primary Schools, Code of Aid for Secondary Schools, Code of Aid for Special Schools, Code of Aid for Aided Schools, Compendium to Code of Aid for Aided Schools, and School Administration Guide will be updated accordingly.

23. The training requirements for teachers in government schools to be considered for promotion to the posts of Education Officer, Senior Education Officer, PSM and SPSM are provided in relevant EDB internal circular.

Related Information and Briefing Session

24. Related information on implementing the recommendations of the Task Force on Professional Development of Teachers has been uploaded to the EDB website, which includes powerpoint, frequently asked questions and training information. Schools/Teachers can browse the information from the EDB website ([Home > Teachers Related > Qualifications, Training and Development > Development > Continuing Professional Development of Teachers](#)).



25. The EDB will hold a briefing session in early August 2020 to familiarise schools and school sponsoring bodies with the implementation details of the Task Force's recommendations. For details of and enrollment for the briefing session, please refer to the EDB Training Calendar System (Course ID: PDT020200073).

Enquiry

26. For enquiries about the all-graduate teaching force policy and enhancing school management ranking, please contact your respective School Development Officers. For enquiries about the Professional Ladder for Teachers and teacher training, please contact the School Leadership and Professional Development Section of the Professional Development and Training Division at 3509 7579.

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for Secretary for Education

Encl.