Preparation for Principalship (PFP) Course Framework

The following topics under each module should be covered and the course providers are requested to update the core content from time to time to better address the needs of the aspiring principals.

(A) Strategic direction and policy environment

a. Leading schools for the future
   (i) Hong Kong education policy context
   (ii) Changing societal needs and expectations
   (iii) Hong Kong relationship and interdependence with Mainland
   (iv) Globalisation
   (v) Sense of direction and purpose
   (vi) Values to be upheld, including students’ right to education, equal education opportunities for all
   (vii) Information technology

b. Leading School-based Management\(^1\) and different styles of leadership including ethical leadership and distributed leadership

c. Strategic planning and thinking

d. Legal obligations and liabilities under various ordinances\(^2\) and regulations, such as the key concepts of Basic Law and the good practices on supporting the Basic Law education in school\(^3\).

e. Illustration of leadership and strategic planning in response to policy initiatives: integrated education\(^4\), values education, whole school language policy, career and life planning education, education support to non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students\(^5\), health promotion\(^6\), etc.

(B) Learning, teaching and curriculum

a. Fundamental questions/issues about curriculum development: history, perspectives, processes and decisions; and learning and instructional theories

b. Hong Kong curriculum development and design in the 21\(^{st}\) century - the second decade in reform contexts, Learning to Learn and ongoing curriculum renewal

c. Connection of curriculum development with other education policies/reforms (such as curriculum integration, integrated education and values education)
d. Planning, implementing and evaluating the school-based curriculum

(i) The role of a principal in whole school planning of a school-based curriculum: curriculum and instructional leadership/learning-centred leadership

(ii) Some key perspectives in school-based curriculum planning:

- Whole-person development
  - provide broad and balanced educational experiences to prepare students to be lifelong learners
- Learner diversity
  - identify and understand the diverse needs of different learners such as NCS students\(^7\), students with special educational needs (SEN) (including those with mental illness) and gifted students\(^8\) with reference to related reports from various professionals
  - adopt appropriate instructional and support strategies to cater for learner diversity\(^9\), as well as special examination arrangements
- Cross-curricular issues: education for sustainable development; language across curriculum; moral, civic and national education; STEM education and information technology in education; promotion of creativity, communication and critical thinking skills; building of an inclusive school environment; mental health promotion and personal growth education in primary schools\(^10\)
- Interfaces at various levels of schooling: school-based adaptation for curriculum continuity at interfaces like kindergarten-primary interface, e.g. learning and teaching under quality kindergarten education, primary-junior secondary interface and junior secondary-senior secondary interface

(iii) Constructive alignment between curriculum, pedagogy and assessment, including the use of diverse modes of assessment and quality feedback to promote assessment of, for and as learning

(iv) School-based curriculum evaluation: models and application in Hong Kong context

e. Curriculum planning for secondary schools with special reference to the implementation of the fine-tuned medium of instruction (MOI) arrangements for secondary schools\(^11\) and the senior secondary curriculum framework\(^12\)

(i) Development of a whole-school language policy for the attainment of
biliteracy and trilingualism of students

(ii) Key issues to address as a result of the senior secondary curriculum implementation: 3-year curriculum planning in senior secondary concerning diversity, subject choice changes in senior secondary (including Applied Learning and Adapted Applied Learning courses), life planning, career development and career-related experiences (including pre-service training and job interview skills) to cater for diverse needs of learners with reference to multiple exit pathways.

f. Curriculum planning for primary schools in the context of small class teaching with reference to the findings of the “Study on Small Class Teaching” in primary schools in Hong Kong

(C) Teacher professional growth and development

a. Traditional teacher supervision and problems
b. Policy and practice on teacher development in Hong Kong
   (ii) Teacher Competencies Framework (ACTEQ, 2003)
   (iii) Teacher development leading to changes, e.g. paradigm shift in learning & teaching, cultural change in school settings, conceptual and pedagogical change in curriculum, including the implementation of e-learning, student support and assessment, teachers’ attitude change toward integrated education
   (iv) Teacher Induction Scheme

C. Teaching as a learning profession (including the notion of learning community and reflective practitioner)

f. Professional conduct in education

(D) Staff and resources management

a. Concept and practice in resources management and development (including information and knowledge management) in schools
b. Contexts of school finance in Hong Kong: system, rules and guidelines

c. Practical issues of school finance in Hong Kong including planning, budgeting, monitoring, evaluating, accountability, effective deployment of resources, etc.

d. Latest developments in school finance in Hong Kong
   (i) Corporate governance and financial management in the context of schools operated by Incorporated Management Committees
   (ii) Grants for aided schools
       - spirit of autonomy, basic principles and control mechanism with proper checks and balances in the deployment of funding, in particular, the block grant, i.e., Operating Expenses Block Grant (OEBG)/Expanded Operating Expenses Block Grant (EOEBG)
       - flexible and effective utilisation of resource outside OEBG/EOEBG
       - management of existing provision and resources for integrated education
   (iii) Government subsidy and non-government funds of schools under the Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS)

e. Human resources management
   (i) General concept of staff (teaching and non-teaching) establishment of schools including both basic and top-up provisions
   (ii) Flexible and effective deployment of human resources with particular reference to small class teaching in primary schools / NSS curriculum (especially for Liberal Studies) in secondary schools and diverse learning needs of students
   (iii) Basic knowledge of personnel matters with particular reference to the Education Ordinance, Education Regulations, Employment Ordinance and Code of Aid
   (iv) Legal matters and other key issues related to staff management:
       - succession planning (including empowerment of middle leaders)
       - performance appraisal system
       - coaching and mentoring
   (v) Building a collaborative, positive and inclusive school culture through the Whole School Approach, consensus building and capacity building.
   (vi) Raising teachers’ cultural sensitivity in accommodating ethnic diversity and creation of an inclusive learning environment

f. Internal control mechanism with proper checks and balances and enhancing the transparency of school governance

g. Enhancement of school administration through process re-engineering and streamlining
h. Environmental policy and energy saving measures in schools

(E) **Quality assurance and accountability**

a. Quality assurance mechanism for continuous improvement and accountability to stakeholders (including the SSB, SMC/IMC, parents, teachers, students, the public and the Government)

b. Strategic school development planning – meaningful use of data and evidence (self-evaluation tools including Performance Indicators for Hong Kong Schools, Key Performance Measures, Stakeholder Survey and APASO, etc.)

c. Embedding the Planning-Implementation-Evaluation cycle into daily school practice, including the writing of school development plans, annual school plan and school report

d. Internal and external evaluation under the School Development and Accountability Framework

(F) **External communication and connection to the outside world**

a. The understanding of the important role of the community and the building of connections between the school and the local, national and global communities

b. An analysis of home-school co-operation, such as structured home-school communication mechanism to strengthen parent-child relationship and enhance support for students, including potential dropouts, NCS students and students with SEN

c. Co-operation among stakeholders regarding current student problems, e.g. cyber-bullying, cyber traps, internet addiction, sex-related problems, suicide and drug problems, and the implementation of the Healthy School Policy

d. Co-operation and networking with other schools/organisations in supporting NCS students and students with SEN

(i) co-operation between ordinary schools and special schools in supporting students with SEN

(ii) formation of learning circles between schools admitting more NCS students and those admitting a larger number of Chinese-speaking students, and engaging NCS students in community services

(iii) support network by means of School Partnership Scheme or in the form of resources sharing, transfer of information, assessment and referral mechanism in supporting students with SEN

(iv) promotion of inclusive culture among stakeholders, including schools, parents, the community and the public

(v) cross-disciplinary professional support and close co-ordination with
relevant organisations

e. Crisis management
   - leading and preparing the school to manage crisis

f. Dealing with the media and general public, conflict management and handling of complaints
Notes:

1  The following objectives of School-based Management should be achieved:
   - To strengthen partnership among key stakeholders through participatory decision-making
   - To enable schools to manage their operation and resources in a flexible, effective and accountable manner according to the actual circumstances of the schools and learning needs of students
   - To ensure continuous school improvement and development through systematic planning, implementing and evaluation processes

2  Schools are required to comply with ordinances and regulations, such as Education Ordinance, Education Regulations, Employment Ordinance, Prevention of Bribery Ordinance, Disability Discrimination Ordinance, Race Discrimination Ordinance, Sex Discrimination Ordinance, Family Status Discrimination Ordinance, Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance and Buildings Ordinance

3  The 3-hour seminar should focus on the following points:
   - To illustrate the constitutional status of the Basic Law, clearly interpret the policy of the "One Country, Two Systems" and understand the achievements attained by this policy
   - To share the school-based experiences in promoting the Basic Law education

4  (a) For the implementation of integrated education, the following points should be noted:
   - Formulation of a school policy on the support for students with SEN (including those with mental illness), based on the five principles of integrated education in Hong Kong, namely, early identification, early intervention, Whole School Approach, home-school co-operation and cross-sector collaboration
   - Formulation of budget plan and monitoring mechanism to enable the effective utilisation of additional resources provided by EDB to schools for supporting students with SEN (including those with mental illness)
   - Assessing the effectiveness of the school inclusive policy and measures through self-evaluation each year under the School Development and Accountability Framework
   - Enhancing transparency by reporting school’s policies, additional resources and support measures, etc. on integrated education in the annual school report and upload such information onto school’s websites
   - Formulation of strategic plan to achieve the teacher training targets on special education set out by EDB for each public sector school to achieve by the end of the 2019/20 school year
   - Roles of special schools and good inclusive education practices including deployment of resources in ordinary schools

   (b) Please refer to the following documents and circulars relating to integrated education for reference:
   - “Catering for Student Differences – Indicators for Inclusion”
   - “Operation Guide on the Whole School Approach to Integrated Education”
   - “Operation Guide on the Whole School Approach to Integrated Education” (Chinese version)
For the planning of education support measures, students whose spoken language at home is not Chinese are broadly categorised as NCS students. The policy objective is to encourage and support their integration into the community including adaptation to the local education system and mastery of the Chinese language. For details, please refer to the dedicated website:


Please visit the following websites relating to Health Promoting School:

- World Health Organization “What is a health promoting school?”
- Centre for Health Education and Promotion

Starting from the 2014/15 school year, the “Chinese Language Curriculum Second Language Learning Framework” (Learning Framework) should be implemented to help NCS students overcome the difficulties of learning Chinese as a second language with a view to enabling them to bridge over to mainstream Chinese Language classes. For details, please refer to the EDBC No. 8/2014 on “Enhanced Chinese Learning and Teaching for Non-Chinese Speaking Students” issued on 5 June 2014.

To provide gifted education in support of gifted students, the following aspects should be covered:

(a) concept and definition of giftedness
(b) development of school-based gifted education policy
(c) identification and talent pool development
(d) staff development and programme planning
(e) mode and nature of provisions
(f) resources and networking

The following support strategies to cater for learner diversity could be adopted:

(a) For students with SEN (including those with mental illness)
- Developing effective mechanism to meet the diverse educational needs of their students, including setting up a team of school personnel responsible for developing a systematic data bank on these students, planning and monitoring the school-based support for these students as well as reviewing the progress and effectiveness of the support measures
- Using a 3-tier intervention model, including Individual Education Plan where appropriate
- Adopting curriculum and instructional strategies to cater for learner diversity including curriculum adaptation; parallel and differentiated instructions; collaborative teaching; cooperative learning and peer support; and implementation of
homework/assessment/examination accommodation policy, alternative assessment system and student portfolio

- Please refer to the following document on implementation of examination accommodation:
  - “Special Arrangements for Internal Examinations for Students with Special Educational Needs”

(b) For NCS students:

- Implementation of the Learning Framework, with the use of the Chinese Language Assessment Tools in conjunction with the Learning Framework to assess annually the learning performance of NCS students, make reference to the “small-step” learning approach at different levels of learning as set out in the Learning Framework to set learning targets and implement intensive learning modes as appropriate (such as pull-out learning, split-class / group learning, increasing Chinese lesson time, learning Chinese across the curriculum, after-school support, etc.), recognition of their progress and attainment, and stretching them in setting more ambitious learning goals for higher attainment

  Please visit the website on Personal Growth Education for details:

  Please visit the website on the fine-tuned MOI arrangements for details:

  Please visit New Academic Structure Web Bulletin for further information on the senior secondary curriculum framework:

  Please visit the following website for further information on Teacher Induction Scheme:

  Examples of grants include Learning Support Grant for primary and secondary schools, Substitute Teacher Grant/Teacher Relief Grant, Enhanced Speech Therapy Grant, Senior Secondary Curriculum Support Grant, Diversity Learning Grant and Student Guidance Service Grant in primary schools.

  Please refer to the following document and circular on the existing resources for integrated education:
  - EDBC No. 12/2014 on “Enhancement of Learning Support Grant for Primary and Secondary Schools”
  - EDBC No. 13/2012 on “Learning Support Grant for Secondary Schools”
  - EDBC No. 12/2012 on “Learning Support Grant for Primary Schools”
To achieve flexible and effective utilisation of government subsidy and non-government funds under the DSS for educational and school needs in the best interest of students, please refer to the following circulars:

- EDBC No. 16/2012 on “Delineation of Reserves and Reserve Ceiling for the Operating Reserve of DSS Schools”
- EDBC No. 17/2012 on “Use of Government and Non-government Funds in DSS Schools”

The following related issues should be covered:

- appointment/termination of services, remuneration, acting appointment, promotion, regrading, leave, provident fund / MPF and severance payment / long-service payment

The following issues related to personnel management should be covered:

- all employment-related rules, regulations and legislation and the consequences/ liabilities on school management arising from non-compliance

For DSS schools, please refer to EDBC No. 7/2012 on “Improvement Measures to Strengthen the Governance and Internal Control of DSS Schools”, which includes the following improvement measures:

- completion of self-evaluation checklist;
- submission of essential items to SMC/IMC for discussion and decision;
- review of key management and financial control systems and procedures by a governance review sub-committee; and
- undergoing management and financial audit

Please refer to EDBC No. 4/2017 on “Environmental Policy and Energy Saving Measures in Schools” and the resources information from the following webpage on “Effective Use of Resources in Schools” on the EDB website:


Please visit the following website for further information on Healthy School Policy:

Please refer to EDBCM No. 146/2015 on “School Partnership Scheme in supporting students with special educational needs for the 2015/16 and 2016/17 School Years”.

Please refer to EDBC No. 9/2013 on “Transfer of Information of Students with Special Educational Needs”.

A school crisis management team should be established to assess the impact of crisis on school, identify at-risk students and personnel, organise debriefing, answer enquiries from parents and the media as well as organise crisis drills. Please refer to the Handbook on “School Crisis Management: Intervention and Psychological Support in the Aftermath of Crises” (2016).