

EDB accepts directional recommendations of Task Force on Review of School Curriculum

Having thoroughly considered the review report entitled "Optimise the curriculum for the future, Foster whole-person development and diverse talents" of the Task Force on Review of School Curriculum, the Education Bureau (EDB) announced today (December 9) its acceptance of the six directional recommendations set out in the report and that the work on the implementation of some of the recommendations is under way.

The EDB set up the Task Force in November 2017 to holistically review the primary and secondary curricula so as to make the school curricula rigorous and forward-looking in enhancing students' capacity to learn and nurturing in them the values and qualities which are essential for learners of the 21st century to meet future challenges and the needs of society. The Task Force submitted its review report to the EDB on September 22 this year, putting forward six directional recommendations including reinforcing the importance of whole-person development, according higher priority to values education, creating space and catering for learner diversity, further promoting Applied Learning (ApL), enhancing the flexibility in university admissions, and strengthening STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) education in primary and secondary schools.

The Secretary for Education, Mr Kevin Yeung, said, "Student learning lies at the heart of this review. We are grateful to the Task Force, led by Dr Anissa Chan, for its work spanning nearly three years, including meeting with different stakeholder groups extensively to hear different views and suggestions, thoroughly considering students' diverse learning and development needs across different key stages and domains, and putting forward the pragmatic and forward-looking recommendations which help further optimise the school curricula. After careful consideration of the review report, the EDB recognises and accepts the six directional recommendations set out therein."

He added, "The six directional recommendations are underpinned by a series of rather concrete and interconnected recommendations, which involve different stakeholders and aspects of the curricula, as well as an injection of resources. The follow-up work should therefore be considered in a holistic manner. The EDB is working closely with various sectors so as to bring the recommendations to fruition. We have already followed up on those recommendations which are generally welcomed by the school sector with the Curriculum Development Council (CDC), and will get them off the ground in this school year first."

Some work pertaining to the Task Force's six directional recommendations has commenced, including:

1. Promotion of whole-person development

- Organising Primary School Leaders' Workshops starting from this school year for enhancing schools' professional capacity and leadership in curriculum planning based on their school contexts and characteristics
- Updating the Basic Education Curriculum Guide (Primary 1-6) (2014) to further delineate the notion of "learning time" for facilitating schools' planning of different learning and teaching activities that are in line with the curriculum

2. Promotion of values education and life planning education

- The setting up of the Standing Committee on Values Education has been endorsed by the CDC to oversee the development of values education in primary and secondary schools
- Adding two important values, namely "law-abidingness" and "empathy", to the existing seven priority values and attitudes, and updating the Moral and Civic Education Curriculum Framework (2008) to spell out the expected learning outcomes of students in various key stages of learning
- Continuing to promote the "My Pledge to Act – Be grateful and treasure what we have, stay positive and optimistic" campaign to develop in students the key values and educate them to care for others, and promoting values education through different subjects, for example instilling in students positive values and attitudes through launching the "Chinese Classic Sayings" and "Promoting Positive Values and Attitudes through English Sayings of Wisdom" campaigns
- Reviewing how to strengthen the learning related to life planning education at upper primary and junior secondary levels and updating the curriculum framework of values education, including clearly spelling out the expectations of student learning in implementing life planning education at various key stages of learning

3. Creating space and catering for learner diversity

- Speeding up the review of the implementation of the curricula and assessments of the four core subjects at the senior secondary level, i.e. Chinese Language, English Language, Mathematics and Liberal

Studies, in order to create space for students to take other elective subjects or engage in personal pursuits

- The EDB announced the direction for reform of Liberal Studies on November 26, and is following up on the details of the changes with the CDC and the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA)

4. Further promoting ApL at the senior secondary level

- Encouraging schools to offer a wider range of ApL courses on their own campuses or through collaboration with other schools, allowing schools to start offering ApL as early as Secondary Four, providing subsidy for students to take ApL as the fourth elective subject, offering ApL taster programmes at the junior secondary level and enhancing the promotion of ApL courses among parents and teachers

5. Enhancing the flexibility in university admissions

- Implementing a new school nomination scheme, namely the School Nominations Direct Admission Scheme, which has initially received a positive response from universities. The EDB will continue to discuss the operational details with University Grants Committee-funded universities and the Joint University Programmes Admissions System Office so that the implementation details could be announced as soon as possible

6. Strengthening STEM education

- The setting up of the Standing Committee on STEM Education has been endorsed by the CDC to oversee the long-term development of STEM education in primary and secondary schools
- Laying the groundwork for developing a STEM Handbook, which features good examples of school-based STEM education to clarify the expectations at the primary and secondary levels, as well as exploring the initiatives to further enhance teacher training

The EDB will continue to follow up on the Task Force's recommendations with the CDC, the HKEAA, and other related organisations and stakeholders in the hope of implementing the recommendations progressively, hence benefiting students.

The follow-up work is interconnected. The EDB hopes to work in collaboration with the school sector and different sectors in society so that the recommendations can be successfully implemented, and students can develop into a new generation who demonstrate a commitment to society and have a sense of national identity, love for Hong Kong and an international perspective.

The full review report of the Task Force can be viewed on the EDB's website (www.edb.gov.hk/en/curriculum-development/renewal/taskforce_cur.html).