

EDB announces guidelines and curriculum arrangements for safeguarding national security and national security education

The Education Bureau (EDB) issued circulars to schools in Hong Kong today (February 4) to provide guidelines on school administration and education in relation to safeguarding national security, as well as details about the mode of implementation and learning and teaching resources for national security education in the school curriculum, with a view to facilitating schools to put in place measures to maintain a safe and orderly learning environment in schools and promote national security education.

The National Security Law clearly stipulates that the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) shall strengthen its work on safeguarding national security and prevention of terrorist activities. The Government of the HKSAR shall take necessary measures to strengthen public communication, guidance, supervision and regulation over matters concerning national security, including those relating to schools, universities and social organisations; and promote national security education in schools and universities and through social organisations, the media, the internet and other means to raise the awareness of Hong Kong residents of national security and of the obligation to abide by the law.

An EDB spokesman said, "Safeguarding national sovereignty, security and development interests is the constitutional duty of the HKSAR. This is also the common responsibility of all Hong Kong residents (including school staff and students). The National Security Law is enacted for the purpose of preventing, suppressing and imposing punishment for acts and activities that endanger national security. In particular, preventive efforts should be accorded priority in order to minimise the need for suppression and punishment. As far as prevention and education are concerned, schools have a significant role to play."

"Schools should review as early as possible and devise appropriate measures in respect of planning and management, staff management, and other relevant areas to facilitate students' effective learning. Among these measures, schools should ensure all school staff to uphold professional ethics, abide by the law and observe the code of conduct acceptable to the society; step up the prevention and suppression of teaching or other school activities that are in breach of laws, prevent and deal with political or other illegal activities from permeating schools; and help students gain a correct understanding of the National Security Law and the important concepts covered by national security, so as to facilitate students' learning of the spirit of the rule of law, and enhance their national security and law-abiding awareness, thereby nurturing them to become good law-abiding

citizens."

The spokesman said that the bureau has, premised on the above fundamental principles, provided schools through the issuance of the circular with a set of guidelines in areas of school administration, staff management and training, learning and teaching, student guidance, discipline and support as well as home-school co-operation, etc. A number of specific measures, examples and templates are contained therein for schools' reference and follow-up. The circular also sets out the respective functions of the school sponsoring body, school governance authority and staff of all levels in formulating and implementing related measures.

He said, "Schools should, in accordance with the requirements of the guidelines and their school-based needs, make necessary enrichment to the recommended measures or adopt other appropriate strategies in devising and implementing relevant plans and measures, arrange school management and administration work properly and promote collaboration among different stakeholders so as to create a peaceful and orderly school environment and atmosphere, deepen students' understanding of the country's development and national security, as well as enhance students' sense of national identity."

For national security education, the spokesman pointed out that national security education is a part of, and inseparable from, national education. The fundamentals of national security education are to develop in students a sense of belonging to the country, an affection for the Chinese people, a sense of national identity, as well as an awareness of and a sense of responsibility for safeguarding national security. Hence, national security education is not confined to learning the provisions of the National Security Law, but should cover its legislative background and rationale, and enable students to understand different aspects of national security, such as ecological security, economic security, cultural security and cybersecurity, all of which are integral to the national security framework.

The spokesman added that the EDB is updating curriculum documents/guidelines to help schools implement national security education at the primary and secondary levels. To facilitate the systematic and comprehensive planning and implementation of national security education in schools, the EDB, based on the implementation mode of Constitution and Basic Law education, has newly compiled the Curriculum Framework of National Security Education in Hong Kong to illustrate related topics, teaching foci and learning elements on national security in the existing primary and secondary school curricula. In order to elucidate to schools how the elements of national security education can be integrated organically in and connected naturally with the curriculum contents of various subject, the circular issued today has drawn examples from General Studies at the primary level as well as Geography and Biology at the secondary level to illustrate the learning and teaching foci of national security education in different subjects. The EDB will release successively the national security education curriculum frameworks for other subjects.

Besides, to support the smooth promotion of national security education

in schools, the EDB continues to update/enrich relevant learning and teaching resources, including adding a three-hour "Supplement: National Security" on top of the existing 15-hour standalone module on "Constitution and the Basic Law" at the junior secondary level. For primary schools, a new audio picture book "Let's Learn about National Security" has also been produced. The EDB will continue to release new learning and teaching resources to schools on an on-going basis.

The EDB will organise briefing sessions and professional development programmes for schools, and also keep close contact with the education sector and provide them with timely support regarding their implementation work concerned.

The guidelines on school administration and education for safeguarding national security and national security education can be referred to the circulars below:

EDB Circular No. 3/2021 National Security: Maintaining a Safe Learning Environment Nurturing Good Citizens

<https://applications.edb.gov.hk/circular/upload/EDBC/EDBC21003E.pdf>

EDB Circular No. 2/2021 National Security Education in School Curriculum – Implementation Mode and Learning and Teaching Resources

<https://applications.edb.gov.hk/circular/upload/EDBC/EDBC21002E.pdf>