

# EDB announces measures to optimise four senior secondary core subjects

The Education Bureau (EDB) accepted the optimising proposals of the four senior secondary (SS) core subjects (i.e. Chinese Language, English Language, Mathematics and Citizenship and Social Development in lieu of Liberal Studies) endorsed by the Curriculum Development Council (CDC) and the Public Examinations Board (PEB) of the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA), and issued a circular memorandum today (April 1) to schools to provide details about the implementation of the optimising measures of the respective subjects at Secondary Four in the 2021/22 school year.

The EDB conducted a school questionnaire survey on "Optimising the SS Core Subjects to Create Space for Students and Cater for Learner Diversity" from February 2 to March 2 this year and concurrently collected suggestions and views from the school sector on the proposals to optimise the four SS core subjects through different channels, including school briefing sessions, teacher focus group meetings, etc. The EDB is pleased to know that the CDC and the PEB of the HKEAA held a joint meeting yesterday (March 31), and after thorough examination and deliberation, endorsed the proposals to optimise the four SS core subjects.

A spokesman for the EDB said, "The EDB is grateful and has accepted the optimising proposals endorsed by the CDC and the PEB of the HKEAA."

The spokesman pointed out that the four SS core subjects currently take up more than half or even more of the lesson time in many schools, resulting in a lack of space for students to obtain more diversified learning experiences. The optimising proposals can release lesson time, reduce examination pressure and enhance the SS curriculum flexibility; schools can thereby flexibly use the released time, taking into consideration their contexts and student needs, to provide more diversified learning experiences, cater for students' different interests, abilities and aspirations, and nurture their whole-person development and diverse talents. Optimising the four core subjects concurrently by schools can generate synergy and create more space for students. Given the different contexts of schools across the territory, the subjects concerned in the schools have varying degrees of needs for optimisation. In this light, it is suggested that about 100 to 250 hours of lesson time be released from the optimising proposals in order to provide flexibility and allow schools to plan carefully according to students' needs.

The EDB is grateful to the school sector for their active response and collaboration in the process of optimising the four SS core subjects, with students' learning benefits as the premise, and deliberating on the arrangement of the SS curriculum in a holistic manner to prepare for implementing the optimising measures at Secondary Four in the 2021/22 school

year so that students will benefit as soon as possible.

The EDB will maintain close communication with the school sector and different stakeholders (including universities, the HKEAA, etc) and provide support in different aspects, including the provision of professional development programmes for teachers, learning and teaching resources, etc, to ensure the smooth implementation of the optimising measures.

In addition, the number of schools offering Combined Science and Integrated Science and the number of students taking the two subjects have been on the decrease in recent years. The EDB agrees with the suggestions by the CDC and HKEAA, and has decided to phase out the two subjects starting from Secondary Four in the 2021/22 school year to release space for schools to concurrently arrange for optimising the curriculum. Close communication with the schools currently offering the subjects will be maintained.

For details about the optimising measures of the four SS core subjects, please refer to the EDBCM No. 39/2021 ([applications.edb.gov.hk/circular/upload/EDBCM/EDBCM21039E.pdf](https://applications.edb.gov.hk/circular/upload/EDBCM/EDBCM21039E.pdf)).