

EDB to provide one-off relief grant to affected sectors

The Education Bureau (EDB) issued letters/circular memoranda today (January 18) to inform schools of the details about the provision of relief grants and subsidies related to the areas of education under the fifth round of the Anti-epidemic Fund (AEF). The total expenditure is about \$338.4 million.

A spokesman for the EDB said that the Government announced last Friday (January 14) measures for the fifth round of the AEF to assist the sectors directly affected by the anti-epidemic measures. To alleviate the financial hardship arising from restrictions on face-to-face classes and on-campus school activities, especially the suspension of face-to-face classes of primary schools and kindergartens (KGs) from mid-January 2022, the AEF will provide all KGs, private primary and secondary day schools as well as private schools offering non-formal curriculum (PSNFCs) (generally referred to as "tutorial schools") with a one-off grant.

The grant, ranging from \$30,000 to \$80,000, will be provided to each KG and private day school. The additional expenditure is estimated to be \$67.5 million, benefitting about 1 000 KGs and 185 private day schools. Details are as follows:

- Schools joining the kindergarten education scheme (Scheme-KGs) will receive a grant ranging from \$30,000 to \$80,000, depending on their types (i.e. half-day, whole-day and long whole-day) and sizes;
- For non-Scheme KGs, each KG will receive a grant of \$40,000; and
- Private day schools (including schools under the English Schools Foundation, international schools, private independent schools and other registered private primary and secondary day schools offering formal curriculum) will each receive a grant of \$40,000.

Regarding PSNFCs, a one-off relief grant of \$20,000 will be given to each PSNFC which has been registered under the Education Ordinance and is in operation on the issuance date of the circular memorandum. The additional expenditure is estimated to be \$54 million, benefitting some 2 700 PSNFCs.

Meanwhile, one-off relief grants under the AEF will be provided to the following service suppliers or service providers as their businesses and incomes were affected by restrictions on face-to-face classes and on-campus school activities. The additional expenditure is estimated to be \$216.9 million. Details are as follows:

- Catering outlet operators at primary and secondary day schools: a one-off relief grant of \$40,000 to each tuck shop or canteen;

- Lunchbox suppliers of primary and secondary day schools: a one-off relief grant of \$5,000 per school each provider is serving;
- School bus drivers, school private light bus drivers and escorts (commonly called "nannies"): a one-off relief grant of \$6,700 for each driver and \$6,700 per vehicle for nannies (the subsidy of \$6,700 will be shared among nannies based on their proportion of service time if more than one nanny serve in the same vehicle); and
- Instructors, coaches, trainers and operators of interest classes engaged by schools: a one-off relief grant of \$5,000 to each operator/service provider.

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The letters/circular memoranda, which have been uploaded to the EDB website (www.edb.gov.hk/en/sch-admin/admin/about-sch/diseases-prevention/special_anti-epidemic_subsidy.html), have detailed the application and disbursement arrangements for the relevant grants. The EDB will effect payment as soon as possible after verification of the relevant information.