

EDB to provide one-off relief grant to affected sectors

The Education Bureau (EDB) is issuing letters/circular memoranda today and tomorrow (December 30 and 31) to inform schools of the details about the provision of relief grants and subsidies under the new round of the Anti-epidemic Fund. The total expenditure is about \$600 million.

A spokesman for the EDB said that following the approval of the new round of the Anti-epidemic Fund by the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council last Monday (December 21), the EDB has made immediate arrangements for progressively disbursing subsidies related to the areas of education.

To alleviate the financial hardship arising from the suspension of face-to-face classes due to COVID-19, the Anti-epidemic Fund will provide all kindergartens (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 \$60,000 to \$160,000, will be provided to each KG and private primary and secondary day school. The additional expenditure is estimated to be \$135 million, benefitting about 1 000 KGs and 180 private primary and secondary day schools. Details are as follows:

- Schools joining the kindergarten education scheme (Scheme-KGs) will receive a grant ranging from \$60,000 to \$160,000, 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 \$80,000;
- Private primary and secondary day schools (including schools under the English Schools Foundation, international schools, Private Independent Schools and other private primary and secondary day schools offering a formal curriculum) will each receive \$80,000.

Regarding PSNFCs, a one-off relief grant of \$40,000 will be given to each PSNFC which has been registered under the Education Ordinance and is in operation on the date of invitation of application. The additional expenditure is estimated to be \$108 million, benefitting some 2 700 PSNFCs.

Meanwhile, one-off relief grants under the Anti-epidemic Fund will be provided to the following suppliers and service providers as their services and incomes were severely affected during periods of face-to-face class

suspension/half-day schooling and cessation of on-campus activities. The additional expenditure is estimated to be \$362 million. Details are as follows:

- Operators of catering outlets (namely tuck shops, canteens and restaurants) at primary schools, secondary schools and post-secondary education institutions: a one-off relief grant of \$80,000 to each outlet;
- Lunchbox providers of primary and secondary schools: a one-off relief grant of \$10,000 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 \$10,000 for each driver and \$10,000 per vehicle for escorts (the subsidy of \$10,000 will be shared among nannies based on their proportion of service time if more than one nanny serve in the same vehicle);
- Instructors, coaches, trainers and operators of interest classes engaged by schools: a one-off relief grant of \$7,500 to each operator/service provider.