

## LCQ12: Secondary school nets for primary schools in Islands District

Following is a question by the Hon Lillian Kwok and a written reply by the Secretary for Education, Dr Choi Yuk-lin, in the Legislative Council today (May 29):

Question:

According to the Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA) System of the Education Bureau (EDB), the entire territory is divided into 18 different secondary school nets based on the district administration boundaries. In principle, the secondary school net to which a student belongs is determined by the physical location of the primary school the student attends. However, some parents have relayed that while the primary schools in Discovery Bay and Peng Chau both fall under Primary One Admission (POA) School Net 99 of the Islands District, the secondary school net for the primary school in Discovery Bay is the Central and Western District, and for that in Peng Chau is the Islands District, causing dissatisfaction among parents and resulting in unfair competition. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the principles adopted and factors considered by the SSPA Committee in advising the EDB on the demarcation of the secondary school nets;

(2) of the reasons why the current SSPA System demarcates primary schools under POA School Net 99 of the Islands District to the secondary school nets of the Central and Western District and the Islands District respectively; and

(3) whether it will, after re-examining the ancillary transport facilities in the Islands District, review the appropriateness of the secondary school nets demarcated for primary schools in the Islands District; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

Our reply to the question raised by the Hon Lillian Kwok is as follows:

(1) The Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA) Committee, which comprises representatives from school councils and representatives of principals of participating secondary/primary schools in each school net, gives advice to the Education Bureau (EDB) each year on the arrangements of the SSPA System. The EDB takes into consideration a basket of factors, such as the demand and supply of school places in different districts, the distribution of school types, the location of schools and the associated transport facilities, as well as the established netting pattern, in its holistic planning, so as to ensure a sufficient supply of school places in each district and provide

parents with more choices, while striking a balance and addressing the concerns and needs of different stakeholders as far as practicable.

(2) and (3) Under the SSPA System, the whole territory is currently divided into 18 school nets in accordance with the administrative districts of Hong Kong. The secondary school net to which a student belongs is generally determined by the administrative district of the primary school the student attends. In principle, the primary schools in Lamma Island, Cheung Chau, Lantau Island and Peng Chau fall within the secondary school net of the Islands District.

Since the implementation of the SSPA System in 1978, there has been ferry services running between Peng Chau and other islands. Therefore, the public sector primary school in Peng Chau has been included in the secondary school net of the Islands District according to the established principle. As for the public sector primary school in Discovery Bay, when it started operation in 1993, the ferry services to and fro Central was the only means of public transportation available in Discovery Bay. Bounded by the constraint of public transportation and considering that no public sector secondary school was expected to be built in the area in the near future, the primary school there was placed under the secondary school net of the Central and Western District.

Since then, the EDB has been keeping in view the external transport of Discovery Bay and the arrangement for the secondary school net of the said school has been reviewed from time to time. At present, apart from taking ferries to Central, residents of Discovery Bay can also travel to Tung Chung MTR Station by bus. Nevertheless, land traffic in the area of Discovery Bay is still subject to "Prohibited Zones for Taxis and Buses at Discovery Bay, Lantau Island" and "Restricted Zones at Discovery Bay, Lantau Island" issued by the Transport Department under the Road Traffic (Traffic Control) Regulations (Cap. 374), while the Discovery Bay Tunnel Link is under regulation of the Discovery Bay Tunnel Link Ordinance (Cap. 520). In view of the land traffic and transport network around Discovery Bay, the existing school net arrangement should remain unchanged at this stage.

As for the primary school in Peng Chau, its students may select secondary schools in other districts during the Discretionary Places stage and are given three unrestricted school choices in Part A of the Central Allocation (CA) stage. Besides, under the netting arrangement, Primary Six students of Islands District (including those in Peng Chau), when making the 30 restricted school choices in Part B of the CA stage in 2024, may select from the seven secondary schools located in the school net of the Islands District, as well as up to 78 secondary schools in other districts (including 33 schools in the Central and Western District, Wan Chai District, Eastern District and Southern District on the Hong Kong Island as well as those in the Kwai Tsing District, Tuen Mun District and other districts). The EDB considers that the existing school places allocation and school net arrangements can provide a diverse and sufficient choice of secondary schools for Peng Chau students. We will continue to listen to stakeholders' views on the matter and review the situation in light of latest developments in transport facilities and other relevant factors according to the established

mechanism.