

Opening remarks by SED at press conference on education initiatives in Chief Executive's 2018 Policy Address (with photo/video)

Following are the opening remarks by the Secretary for Education, Mr Kevin Yeung, at the press conference on education initiatives in the Chief Executive's 2018 Policy Address today (October 11):

Education is the key to nurturing talent, which is the most important element in Hong Kong's continuous development. We therefore propose in this year's Policy Address a wide range of new initiatives to improve the quality of education. Some of which are based on the recommendations of the various task forces set up last year for reviewing the major policy areas in education. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the stakeholders involved.

First, we will inject \$20 billion into the Research Endowment Fund to help attract and retain talents. We will also launch a new Research Matching Grant Scheme with a total commitment of \$3 billion for three years. Besides, the Research Grants Council will introduce three new regular Fellowship Schemes for post-doctoral fellows, and researchers at associate professor and professor ranks. We believe these initiatives will foster a stronger research culture, thereby promoting the vigorous development of industries and technological innovation. These are conducive to Hong Kong's development into an international innovation and technology hub.

Secondly, we are implementing measures to support our teachers. All teaching posts in public sector primary and secondary schools will be converted to graduate posts in the 2019/20 school year. We will also provide public sector schools and schools under the Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS) with additional resources of \$570 million each year to strengthen the administrative support for schools and their management committees.

Thirdly, regarding our students, we will provide, starting from the 2019/20 school year, a new recurrent Life-wide Learning Grant with an annual provision of \$900 million to support public sector schools and DSS schools to enable students to broaden their horizons and foster their whole-person development. Furthermore, we will enhance our support for students with special educational needs (SEN). The Learning Support Grant, Intensive Remedial Teaching Programme and Integrated Education Programme will be restructured, with doubling the grant rate for tier-3 support and the provision of permanent teaching posts. The Special Educational Needs Coordinator post of schools with comparatively large number of SEN students will be upgraded to a promotion rank, and the Enhanced School-based Educational Psychology Service will be extended. We will also provide schools

with more comprehensive school-based speech therapy services. All these mean an \$800 million increase of recurrent expenditure on integrated education.

