

# SED on national security education and Liberal Studies

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Secretary for Education, Mr Kevin Yeung, at a media session after attending a Legislative Council Panel on Education meeting today (February 5):

Reporter: Could you tell us why national security can be taught in primary school? Don't you think this kind of concept is difficult for children to understand? Secondly, are teachers allowed to use teaching materials that may be critical of the National Security Law?

Secretary for Education: National security is part and parcel of the whole national education. It is very related. We are talking about helping students develop a sense of national identity. Being national citizens, they have to develop a sense of taking up the responsibility to protect our country. And so at the earliest stage, such as primary school, I think students could start to learn that Hong Kong is part of China, that he or she is a Hong Kong resident and at the same time also a Chinese national. Then gradually, building on these fundamental concepts, they can start to learn more about the concept of national security, and then know more about the details of the law as they grow up. That is the whole idea. That is why when you look at the curriculum framework in relation to national security education, we are talking about a number of areas spreading across different stages of learning, from junior primary, senior primary to junior secondary and senior secondary. So it is sort of a continuous process that is part of the education as well. Education that we are talking about is a process, not a single topic.

The other question is about teaching materials. Of course, National Security Law is a law. So when a teacher is developing his or her own materials for teaching a law, he or she has to base on facts. So we will be providing a lot of factual information about the National Security Law, and so they can make reference to these materials.

Reporter: But can they choose other materials?

Secretary for Education: It depends on what material it is. I cannot say just what material it is. But I would say we will be providing a lot of factual information about the National Security Law, and I think they can always make reference to the materials that we provide.

Reporter: Would you mind telling us how you reorganise the Liberal Studies subject? Is that to shape students' national identification? And how would you draw a line between political propaganda and national security education?

Secretary for Education: I think – you are talking about Liberal Studies or national security education?

Reporter: Liberal Studies and national identification.

Secretary for Education: In the Liberal Studies subject, if you look at the revised curriculum framework, you can see that we separate it into three sections. The first section is about Hong Kong. It is about under the "one country, two systems", what the constitutional framework for Hong Kong is and how it is related to the Constitution of the country, and everything like that. So for the students, they will know more about Hong Kong, the set-up and the system, so that they know when they discuss issues in the future, they will know the basis of some of the constitutional and legal frameworks.

The second part is about the development of our country. As you know, with the development of our country, Hong Kong now, the economic development and also the social development, we are part of China. So our development will be closely linked to the development of our motherland. On that part, when our students learn more about the development of our country, they will better prepare themselves for their future development.

The last part is, of course, about the international arena, about different issues like technological development, environmental issues and health issues. This provides an opportunity for the students to have exposure to the international issues as well.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)