

# EDB Launches Summer Reading Programme

The Education Bureau (EDB) issued a circular memorandum to all primary schools and secondary schools today (June 18) to encourage them to make use of the newly launched Summer Reading Programme, including the Gift Book Pilot Scheme (2020) and the free use of the eRead Scheme to help students enjoy reading during the summer holiday.

A spokesman for the EDB said, "The EDB has been promoting 'Reading to Learn' through various measures to support schools' implementation of diversified reading activities, thereby developing students' reading interest and habits from a young age to enhance their reading skills and learning capabilities."

The spokesman said, "Due to the deferral of class resumptions caused by COVID-19, schools adopted various learning modes to support students' learning at home. As the summer holiday is approaching, the EDB launches the 'Gift Book Pilot Scheme (2020)' to offer free printed books to all primary and secondary students in the public sector (including special schools) and Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS) schools, with an aim to encourage leisure reading anytime and anywhere during the summer holiday, and nurture students' good reading habits. The Scheme has the full support from the Hong Kong Publishing Federation."

The EDB hopes that schools can make effective use of the printed books offered by the EDB in the Gift Book Pilot Scheme (2020) to set the objectives and directions for reading activities in the next school year, such as arranging sharing sessions to encourage students to exchange their views on the books. Schools may also organise class-based/level-based book crossing activities to help students develop a sense of gratitude and learn to cherish what they have, thereby nurturing their positive values.

The EDB will offer a one-off grant to all public sector (including special schools) and DSS schools in accordance with the number of Primary One – Primary Six/Secondary One – Secondary Five students of each school. The total expenditure involved will be about \$60 million. Schools are required to select appropriate printed books from the EDB's designated book lists for their students. Each student will be given one book so that they can enjoy reading during the summer vacation.

The printed books cover four themes, namely Chinese history and culture, healthy living, moral education and STEM education. Relevant information has been uploaded to the EDB's Summer Reading Programme webpage ([www.edb.gov.hk/SummerReadingProgramme](http://www.edb.gov.hk/SummerReadingProgramme)).

In addition, to support schools' promotion of extensive reading, schools can participate in the free use of Hong Kong Education City's eRead Scheme from July 16 to December 31. The eRead Scheme is a school-based e-book subscription service for primary and secondary schools. It provides a wide

range of quality Chinese and English e-books in various categories and levels. Teachers and students of the participating schools have unlimited access to 100 books during the service period. The reading platform will record the reading data of each student for teachers to better understand students' reading habits so as to devise appropriate strategies for promoting reading.

---

## **CHP investigates four additional confirmed cases of COVID-19**

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health has announced that as of 4pm today (June 18), the CHP was investigating four additional confirmed cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), taking the number of cases to 1 125 in Hong Kong so far (comprising 1 124 confirmed cases and one probable case).

The newly reported cases announced today involve two males and two females aged between 3 and 36. All of them had a travel history during the incubation period. The CHP's epidemiological investigations and relevant contact tracing on the confirmed cases are ongoing. For case details and contact tracing information, please see the Annex.

Meanwhile, the CHP has been actively conducting an epidemiological investigation as well as carrying out preventive and control measures in regard to the cluster in Luk Chuen House, Lek Yuen Estate, Sha Tin. Residents of the "10" and "12" units of Luk Chuen House who are under the compulsory quarantine arrangement in the quarantine centre were tested for the antibody against COVID-19 and none of them tested positive for the antibody.

The Environmental Protection Department has co-ordinated with experts and academics of local universities and conducted tracer gas measurements at Luk Chuen House on June 16 and 17, and the results are being analysed in detail. The Housing Department has arranged disinfection under the direction of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department for the units and applied additional seals on the joints of the pipes in these units before residents return home at Luk Chuen House from the quarantine centre.

In addition, the CHP has given out more specimen bottles to other residents of Luk Chuen House through the Housing Department for collecting deep throat saliva samples for the second round of COVID-19 testing. As of 4pm today, the CHP had collected and tested 1 258 deep throat saliva samples in the second round for Luk Chuen House and all of them tested negative for severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2).

The CHP strongly appeals to the residents to collect their deep throat

saliva samples according to instructions and submit them to the CHP for early testing. The CHP will arrange compulsory testing for those who do not return their samples.

The CHP again urged members of the public to maintain an appropriate social distance with other people as far as possible in their daily lives to minimise the risk of infection. In particular, they should go out less and avoid social activities such as meal gatherings or other gatherings to reduce the chance of contacting infected persons who may not present any symptoms, and minimise the risk of outbreak clusters emerging in the community.

A spokesman for the CHP said, "Given that the situation of COVID-19 infection remains severe and that there is a continuous increase in the number of cases reported around the world, members of the public are strongly urged to avoid all non-essential travel outside Hong Kong.

"The CHP also strongly urges the public to maintain at all times strict personal and environmental hygiene, which is key to personal protection against infection and prevention of the spread of the disease in the community. On a personal level, members of the public should wear a surgical mask when having respiratory symptoms, taking public transport or staying in crowded places. They should also perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes.

"As for household environmental hygiene, members of the public are advised to maintain drainage pipes properly, regularly pour water into drain outlets (U-traps) and cover all floor drain outlets when they are not in use. After using the toilet, they should put the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs."

Moreover, the Government has launched the website "COVID-19 Thematic Website" ([www.coronavirus.gov.hk](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk)) for announcing the latest updates on various news on COVID-19 infection and health advice to help the public understand the latest updates. Members of the public may also gain access to information via the COVID-19 WhatsApp Helpline launched by the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer. Simply by saving 9617 1823 in their phone contacts or clicking the link [wa.me/85296171823?text=hi](https://wa.me/85296171823?text=hi), they will be able to obtain information on COVID-19 as well as the "StayHomeSafe" mobile app and wristband via WhatsApp.

To prevent pneumonia and respiratory tract infection, members of the public should always maintain good personal and environmental hygiene. They are advised to:

- Wear a surgical mask when taking public transport or staying in crowded places. It is important to wear a mask properly, including performing hand hygiene before wearing and after removing a mask;
- Perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes, after touching public installations such as handrails or doorknobs, or when hands are contaminated by respiratory secretions after coughing or sneezing;

- Maintain drainage pipes properly and regularly (about once a week) pour about half a litre of water into each drain outlet (U-trap) to ensure environmental hygiene;
  - Cover all floor drain outlets when they are not in use;
  - After using the toilet, put the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs;
  - Wash hands with liquid soap and water, and rub for at least 20 seconds. Then rinse with water and dry with a disposable paper towel. If hand washing facilities are not available, or when hands are not visibly soiled, performing hand hygiene with 70 to 80 per cent alcohol-based handrub is an effective alternative;
  - Cover your mouth and nose with tissue paper when sneezing or coughing. Dispose of soiled tissues into a lidded rubbish bin, then wash hands thoroughly; and
  - When having respiratory symptoms, wear a surgical mask, refrain from work or attending class at school, avoid going to crowded places and seek medical advice promptly.
- 

## **EDB provides schools with guidelines on display of national flag and regional flag, and playing and singing of national anthem**

The Education Bureau (EDB) issued a circular today (June 18) to all primary and secondary schools in Hong Kong to provide guidelines on the display of the national flag and the regional flag, and the playing and singing of the national anthem as well as latest information on curriculum resources and support measures.

An EDB spokesman said, "The National Anthem Ordinance was gazetted and came into effect on June 12, 2020. According to the Ordinance, the Secretary for Education must give directions for the inclusion of the national anthem in primary and secondary education. The spirit of the National Anthem Ordinance is to respect the national anthem, while there should not be any public and intentional acts to insult the national anthem or misuse the national anthem. All primary and secondary schools should provide opportunities for students to learn to sing the national anthem, understand its history and spirit as well as observe the etiquette for playing and singing the national anthem."

The spokesman stressed that national flag, national anthem and national emblem are symbols and signs of a nation, and should be respected by every citizen. Fostering students' national identity is one of the key learning

goals of primary and secondary education. Moreover, enabling students to understand the development of their own country in different aspects, such as history, culture, economy, technology and political systems and laws, as well as cultivating in them a national sentiment, are the educational obligation of schools. Schools should educate students about the national flag, the national anthem and the national emblem of their own country. This is part of moral, civic and national education, and helps enhance students' sense of national identity.

The spokesman said that primary and secondary schools must display the national flag and the regional flag as well as play and sing the national anthem when holding celebration activities for New Year's Day (January 1), the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Establishment Day (July 1) and the National Day (October 1). The EDB also strongly advises schools to display the national flag and the regional flag, as well as to play and sing the national anthem on important days and special occasions, such as the first day of a school year, open day and graduation ceremony; and encourages schools to display the national flag and the regional flag, and/or play and sing the national anthem regularly.

The spokesman said that the learning content of the national flag, the national anthem and the regional flag has long been incorporated in the local curricula of different subjects. The EDB has been providing schools with related curriculum resources and professional development programmes for teachers. To support the school sector to capitalise on the existing foundation, as well as to teach students to know and respect the national flag and the regional flag, to sing the national anthem and understand its history and spirit, and to observe the etiquette for playing and singing the national anthem, the EDB has reviewed the curriculum, compiled the relevant resources and enhanced the curriculum support measures. The circular issued today has also provided schools with the latest information on curriculum resources and support measures.

The spokesman added that the EDB will maintain close communication with the school sector and provide suitable support as appropriate to help schools take forward the related work.

---

## **Composite Interest Rate: End of May 2020**

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority:

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) announced today (June 18) the composite interest rate at the end of May 2020. (Note 1)

The composite interest rate, which is a measure of the average cost of funds of banks, decreased by 9 basis points to 0.81 per cent at the end of May 2020, from 0.90 per cent at the end of April 2020 (see Chart 1 in the Annex). The decrease in composite interest rate reflected decreases in the weighted funding cost for deposits and interbank funds during the month (see Chart 2 in the Annex). (Note 2)

The historical data of the composite interest rate from the end of the fourth quarter of 2003 to the end of May 2020 are available in the Monthly Statistical Bulletin on the HKMA website ([www.hkma.gov.hk](http://www.hkma.gov.hk)).

Note 1: The composite interest rate is a weighted average interest rate of all Hong Kong dollar interest-rate-sensitive liabilities, which include deposits from customers, amounts due to banks, negotiable certificates of deposit and other debt instruments, and all other liabilities that do not involve any formal payment of interest but the values of which are sensitive to interest rate movements (such as Hong Kong dollar non-interest bearing demand deposits) on the books of banks. Data from retail banks, which account for about 90 per cent of the total customers' deposits in the banking sector, are used in the calculation. It should be noted that the composite interest rate represents only average interest expenses. There are various other costs involved in the making of a loan, such as operating costs (e.g. staff and rental expenses), credit cost and hedging cost, which are not covered by the composite interest rate.

Note 2: Since June 2019, the composite interest rate and weighted deposit rate have been calculated based on the new local "Interest rate risk in the banking book" (IRRBB) framework. As such, these figures are not strictly comparable with those of previous months.

---

## **[Fraudulent website related to Bank of Singapore Limited](#)**

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority:

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) wishes to alert members of the public to a press release issued by Bank of Singapore Limited on fraudulent website, which has been reported to the HKMA. Hyperlink to the press release is available on the [HKMA website](#) for ease of reference by members of the public.

Anyone who has provided his or her personal information to the website concerned or has conducted any financial transactions through the website should contact the bank concerned using the contact information provided in the press release, and report to the Police or contact the Cyber Security and

Technology Crime Bureau of the Hong Kong Police Force at 2860 5012.