

LCQ19: Parent education

Following is a question by the Hon Tony Tse and a written reply by the Secretary for Education, Dr Choi Yuk-lin, in the Legislative Council today (July 10):

Question:

There are views that, in comparison with school education, family education is equally or even more important for the learning and growth of school children, but not every parent knows how to properly and effectively teach their children. In addition, it is learnt that while at present the Government relies primarily on the Education Bureau (EDB) to promote parent education, and EDB has adopted the approach of regarding "schools as a primary platform and the community as a complementary" in implementing parent education, schools differ in terms of motivation, effectiveness and content focus in the promotion of parent education. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the policy measures introduced and amount of resources allocated by the Government in recent years for the promotion of parent education; among such policy measures, of the respective numbers of those implemented through schools, other non-school organisations, and directly by government departments;

(2) regarding the implementation of parent education by primary and secondary schools, how the authorities monitor the relevant quantity, quality, and effectiveness;

(3) whether it has compiled statistics on the participation rates in parent education provided by primary and secondary schools across the territory, and the number of parents of school-age students who have never taken part in any parent education in the past five years; of its plans in place to increase the participation rates of such parents;

(4) apart from written circulars and the Parents' Day normally held once every academic year, whether the Government will encourage schools to maintain communication and contact with parents through more frequent and diversified modes in respect of the learning and growth of students, including making good use of communication technologies such as video conferencing; and

(5) as it is learnt that some primary and secondary schools have provided national security education to parents through talks and other means in recent years, of the number of such activities and the participation rates of parents; whether the Government will further step up the relevant work, including enhancing the contents, frequencies and participation rates of such activities, as well as providing more assistance to schools and related organisations, so as to raise parents' sense of national identity and

awareness of patriotism?

Reply:

President,

Parents are the pivotal figures in nurturing, safeguarding and educating children, playing crucial roles in supporting children's development and learning as well as fostering their proper values, positive attitude and behaviour. Therefore, the Government has long been promoting parent education through the Education Bureau (EDB) and other government bureaux.

Having consulted the Health Bureau, the consolidated reply to the question raised by the Hon Tony Tse is as follows:

(1) The EDB has all along been adopting the approaches of "parent-based" and "schools as a primary platform and the community as a complementary" to promote parent education through diversified means. To enable parents to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills for nurturing their children in a more systematic manner, the EDB commissioned a post-secondary institution to develop the curriculum frameworks on parent education for parents of students at different learning stages. The EDB introduced the Curriculum Frameworks on Parent Education for kindergarten (KG), primary school and secondary school in 2021, 2022 and May 2024 respectively (collaboratively named as the "Curriculum Frameworks"). All the Curriculum Frameworks have been uploaded onto the EDB's website for schools' and relevant organisations' reference.

At school level, the EDB provided KGs joining the Kindergarten Education Scheme with an additional one-off subsidy of \$90,000 to \$100,000 in the 2021/22 school year, and a one-off grant on parent education of \$200,000 for all publicly-funded primary and secondary schools in the 2022/23 and 2023/24 school years respectively to support schools to embark on structured school-based parent education programmes or activities having regard to the Curriculum Frameworks and the needs of parents and students. Besides, all public-sector schools have set up Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs), and the Committee on Home-School Co-operation has been assisting the Government in providing the "Subsidy for Home-School Co-operation Activities" and the "Subsidy for Joint Home-School Co-operation Project" for PTAs, encouraging PTAs to organise diversified school-based home-school co-operation and parent education activities or programmes with reference to the Curriculum Frameworks. To further enhance the support for schools, starting from the 2023/24 school year, the EDB has developed resource packages for primary and secondary schools based on the Curriculum Frameworks in phases to facilitate teachers, social workers and guidance personnel of schools in mastering the relevant knowledge and skills.

At territory level, starting from the 2018/19 school year, the EDB has commissioned post-secondary institutions and non-governmental organisations to organise territory-wide or district-based parent education courses and talks for parents and grandparents of KG and primary students with reference to the Curriculum Frameworks, and produce electronic learning resources to

facilitate parents' self-learning. The EDB has also been implementing the territory-wide Positive Parent Campaign (the Campaign) since 2020 to promote parent education through extensive and diversified channels, with a view to fostering positive thinking, strategies and attitudes in nurturing children among parents. In recent years, we have organised various parent education activities and produced a theme song for the Campaign, Announcements in the Public Interest on television and radio as well as animations and short videos on parent education to further enhance public awareness on positive parent education. We have also reached out to parents of different backgrounds in the communities to promote the messages of positive parenting through a moving showroom, parent-oriented websites, advertisements at MTR stations and on bus body, online platforms, etc.

Besides, the EDB has been making use of the one-stop parent education website "Smart Parent Net" (www.parent.edu.hk/en), "Smart Parent Net" Facebook, Instagram pages and YouTube channel to disseminate important information on supporting the physical and psychological development of students, which includes information on parent-child relationship, parenting skills and emotional management of parents.

From the 2020-21 to 2023-24 financial years, the EDB's expenditure on promoting home-school co-operation and parent education is about \$550 million.

Apart from the EDB, the Maternal and Child Health Centres (MCHCs) administered by the Family Health Service of the Department of Health also provide a Parenting Programme for parents of children up to five years old, which aims to enhance parents' understanding of their children's growth and development. The Parenting Programme consists of two components – a universal Parenting Programme and an intensive Positive Parenting Programme (Triple P Programme). The universal Parenting Programme provides individual counselling as well as public health talks and workshops on parenting. During the above individual parenting counselling, healthcare professionals will encourage parents to participate in the Triple P Programme if they notice that the child has early signs of behavioural problems or if the parents encounter difficulties in parenting. The Triple P Programme is a structured parenting programme which aims to increase parents' confidence in parenting and improve their parenting skills. The programme is conducted by accredited facilitators and offered in the MCHCs in various districts. The programme covers the principles of positive parenting and helps parents to use positive communication skills and effective parenting methods to handle children's behavioural problems in a way that does not harm the child's self-esteem.

(2) to (3) Currently, all public-sector schools have set up PTAs. The EDB also encourages schools to plan and organise systematic school-based parent education programmes with reference to the Curriculum Frameworks and constantly evaluate the effectiveness of the programmes. The EDB have all along been regularly reviewing the implementation and effectiveness of the work of schools (including home-school co-operation and parent education) through inspections, school visits, etc, and providing feedback to schools in a timely manner to facilitate continuous development of schools. Publicly-

funded schools are also required to draw up an implementation plan and report on the use of the One-off Grant on Parent Education, setting out the details of the subsidised items or activities, relevant expenses and the evaluations for submission to the School Management Committee/ Management Committee/ Incorporated Management Committee for endorsement.

Besides, the EDB has been requesting the PTAs of schools and the Federations of Parent-Teacher Associations (FPTAs) to submit an assessment report for evaluation of each activity supported by the relevant subsidies on home-school co-operation activities. The EDB also collects opinions from schools and parents through different means to continuously review the effectiveness of the measures implemented. In the 2023/24 school year, about 1 650 schools applied for these subsidies and approval was granted for subsidising around 3 690 activities.

(4) The EDB has been encouraging schools to maintain communication and collaboration with parents through diversified modes and channels so as to facilitate students' learning and development. In general, schools would assist parents to support the whole-person development of children through the PTA activities, Parents' Day, Parents' Night, school publications, e-circulars, school website, groups of the mobile messaging applications, etc. Besides, some schools would make flexible arrangements for meeting and communicating with parents, such as online meetings, to cater for the needs of working parents. Schools may also provide online portals where parents can easily access information to keep track of their children's academic progress and school activities at their convenience. Schools would in general encourage parents' participation through activities related to students' development and learning at school level, grade/form level or class level.

(5) The EDB has been encouraging parents to learn more about the National Security Law, proactively partner with schools and strengthen their collaboration with teachers, with a view to enhancing students' awareness of safeguarding national security and abiding by the law. To strengthen national education, all publicly-funded schools are required to organise one or more activities relating to national education for parents every year from the 2022/23 school year onwards. The EDB continuously monitors and supports schools on the implementation of related measures through channels such as school visits and daily communications with schools, and makes suggestions for enhancement and improvement in accordance with school-based circumstances. Primary and secondary schools continue to organise different kinds of parent-child activities related to Chinese culture and national security education regularly, such as Chinese Culture Day, visits to the Hong Kong Palace Museum, Jao Tsung-I Academy and the Patriotic Education Centre, publications for parents and related exhibition boards in the school campuses, to help parents understand the importance of safeguarding national security. In addition, schools would invite guest speakers, such as representatives of the Hong Kong deputies to the National People's Congress, to give talks in the parent seminars at schools with a view to deepening parents' understanding of national security education and their role in supporting schools' implementation of national security education.

Apart from the above, the EDB provides subsidies for PTAs of schools and FPTAs, encouraging them to organise activities on national education and national security education. From the 2021/22 to 2023/24 school years, the EDB has approved more than 2 390 applications from PTAs and 14 applications from FPTAs to support the provision of programmes or activities related to national education, national security education and values education, including school cultural exchange tours to the Mainland and local parent-child national education tours. About 64 000 parents have participated in such activities.