

LCQ4: Education and talent development planning

Following is a question by Professor the Hon Lau Chi-pang and a reply by the Under Secretary for Education, Dr Sze Chun-fai, in the Legislative Council today (April 2):

Question:

It has been reported that the director of the film *Ne Zha 2* chose to abandon a career in pharmacy in order to pursue his passion for animation production, ultimately achieving remarkable success. There are views that his story offers profound insights for education and talent development planning in Hong Kong. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) as it is learnt that many university students currently choose to pursue careers in fields unrelated to their major, whether the Government will consider providing students with more macro and comprehensive information at the stage of subject selection in secondary schools and in life planning education, so as to deepen students' understanding of relevant disciplines and professions and help them explore their interests and give play to their strengths; if so, of the specific plans; if not, the reasons for that;

(2) as there are views that a large creative team and talent pool are important factors contributing to the success of the aforesaid film, whether the Government will further strengthen the training and guidance on creative thinking for students in the curricula of primary and secondary schools; if so, of the specific plans; if not, the reasons for that; and

(3) as there are views pointing out that Hong Kong's current education system places too much emphasis on assessment and examination preparation, which is not conducive to the development of students' creative thinking, whether the Government has plans to make improvements; if so, of the specific plans; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

Quality education is the key to nurturing talent, and is essential for the continuous development of the society. In the face of a complicated and ever-changing global environment, fostering creativity in students is crucial for their future development. As such, through kindergarten, primary and secondary education curricula, the Education Bureau (EDB) has continuously integrated elements that nurture creative thinking, facilitating students' holistic development and enabling those with diverse interests, abilities and backgrounds to fully unleash their potential.

Regarding the question raised by Professor the Hon Lau Chi-pang, I will respond in four aspects including school curricula, student activities and

competitions, latest developments in the modes of assessment, and life planning education (LPE):

(1) to (3) Nurturing creativity throughout the primary and secondary curricula

The school curriculum developed by the EDB in collaboration with the Curriculum Development Council consists of components including knowledge, generic skills, values and attitudes. Creativity is one of the generic skills which emphasises students' demonstration of creative thinking in new ideas or products grounded on a solid knowledge foundation. Students are required to integrate knowledge, discern details from observation, synthesise and apply knowledge, be eager to explore, display perseverance and commitment in the face of difficulties, and solve problems with creative thinking.

To dovetail with the national strategy of invigorating the country through science and education, the EDB is proactively promoting STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) and innovation and technology (I&T) education in primary and secondary schools. By integrating and applying knowledge and skills in science, mathematics and technology, students develop their capabilities of innovation and problem-solving through the process of knowledge creation and I&T inventions.

At the same time, the EDB has reformed Science Education by introducing Primary Science and updating the junior secondary Science curriculum. A programme on artificial intelligence (AI)-assisted teaching has also been launched in junior secondary Science to foster pedagogical innovation. Moreover, we actively promote I&T education at the upper primary and junior secondary levels, such as teaching programming and AI learning to strengthen the cultivation of students' innovative and problem-solving skills so that they can adapt to the ever-changing world.

As for other Key Learning Areas, Arts Education promotes arts technology and interdisciplinary learning, and Personal, Social and Humanities Education promotes "entrepreneurial spirit", both of which cover the qualities of creativity and innovativeness. At present, there are 55 Applied Learning courses offered at the senior secondary level, of which courses under the Areas of Studies "Creative Studies" and "Media and Communication" place particular emphasis on nurturing students' creativity. Courses such as Computer Game and Animation Design, and Film Production are specifically designed for students interested in creativity and the media. In the 2024/25 school year, a total of 3 932 students enrolled in the related courses under "Creative Studies" and "Media and Communication", reflecting that the courses are popular among students.

Unleashing students' innovative potential through diversified activities

In recent years, Hong Kong students have had outstanding performances beyond the classroom in various fields, such as science and technology, and creative thinking, etc. Much to our delight, they bring glory to Hong Kong with remarkable achievements in international or major competitions, such as the International Mathematical Science and Creativity Competition, Odyssey of

the Mind World Finals.

The EDB also provides diversified activities to offer students with more opportunities to unleash their creativity. We also arrange for students with potential in STEAM to participate in systematic training and competitions of a considerable scale, and they have thrived and flourished on international stages time and again. The EDB also continues to collaborate with the Hong Kong Academy for Gifted Education to promote the effective use of the "school-based student talent pool", so as to identify students who are gifted in different areas. At the same time, we arrange for students to engage in exchanges with arts and cultural specialists from the Mainland, so that students can gain an understanding of the country's development and outstanding achievements.

Developing students' potential by integrating creativity into assessment

Assessment is an integral part of the curriculum and learning and teaching. Students' performance both within and beyond the classroom can reflect their learning progress and inform learning and teaching. The current assessment policy no longer relies solely on the conventional modes of assessment, but employs diversified formative assessments to promote student learning on all fronts and stimulate their learning motivation and curiosity. We have always recommended schools to adopt diversified assessment modes and assignment designs that allow students to demonstrate their learning outcomes and unleash their creativity in the forms of text, images, physical models and others.

The EDB continues to organise professional training activities for teachers and develop learning and teaching resources to support teachers in designing assessments and assignments. We also encourage schools to review and optimise their assessment policies, so as to enable students to participate in more inspiring learning activities and develop their potential.

Starting life planning early in age to understand aspirations

To help students understand early their own aspirations, interests and abilities, and develop a broader view of further studies, future careers and pathways, the EDB has strengthened LPE at primary and secondary levels.

Regarding information on subject choices, the EDB organises talks for parents annually and updates the website "One-stop Portal on Articulation to Multiple Pathways·Transition to Senior Secondary and Post-secondary Education" to disseminate the latest information on elective subjects and multiple pathways.

In addition, through the Life Planning Information website, the EDB provides the latest career information of over 300 types of work from different industries, including director and stage designer, etc. On the website, there is also an online learning system, "My Life Planning Portfolio", for students to conduct career aptitude assessments.

The EDB also implements the Business-School Partnership Programme (BSPP) in collaboration with different business corporations, government departments and community organisations. Through the non-traditional learning platform provided by BSPP partners, students have been provided with diversified career exploration activities, with a view to equipping them with knowledge and information about different industries, including arts, culture and entertainment industries. In the 2022/23 school year, the EDB further promoted co-operation between the business sector and schools through launching the BSPP 2.0 with more business partners, covering more industries for widening students' exposure. Holiday Work Experience Programmes arranged under the BSPP 2.0 enable senior secondary students to gain first-hand experience and understand different industries, including animation production and performing arts industries. Study tours to workplaces under the "Greater Bay Area Career Exploration Tours" Programme also deepen students' understanding of the developments and talent needs of various industries in the Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area.

To conclude, the EDB will continue to optimise the curriculum and collaborate with different stakeholders to nurture students' creativity through diversified strategies, with a view to cultivating talent for our society.

Thank you, President.