

SED's opening remarks at media session (with video)

Following is the transcript of opening remarks by the Secretary for Education, Mr Kevin Yeung, at a media session at the Central Government Offices today (July 10):

Since class resumption in late May, all schools have adopted a series of anti-epidemic measures, including body temperature checks, wearing face masks, and keeping social distancing, as well as other contingency measures. All these have ensured the hygiene of schools and enabled us to protect the health of our students. Up to now, there has not been any confirmed cases of infection at schools, which reflects the good work of our schools.

However, in view of the exponential growth of confirmed COVID-19 local cases over the past two days and the Government's announcement on further tightening up of social distancing measures with effect from tomorrow as well as parents' concerns as reflected by school principals, the Education Bureau, after thorough consideration and consultation with experts, has decided that all secondary schools, primary schools and kindergartens could advance the beginning of their summer holiday to next Monday.

Those with important examinations to be held next week could have special arrangements as follows. Primary schools could continue with their scheduled examination next week, by which I mean, the Primary Five students, if they choose to; on the other hand, they could also choose to defer the examination to September. And the deadline for submission of the P5 internal assessment (results) would be extended to October 20.

The examination for Secondary Three to Secondary Five students could continue next week in view of the need to prepare for the selection of subjects for Secondary Three students and for the preparation of the DSE (Diploma of Secondary Education) examination for Secondary Four and Secondary Five students.

The Pre-S1 examination will continue on July 14. As this is not a compulsory examination, schools which choose not to take the examination should notify the Education Bureau before noon on July 13.

Schools should take necessary precautionary measures for the examination including temperature checks, wearing masks, asking students to wash hands and keeping distancing between students during the examination. As I said, this is now the afternoon of a Friday, schools and teachers may find them unprepared for students to take summer vacation on Monday, such as not yet arranging some homework for students during the vacation. There may also be matters that schools would like to complete with students face-to-face. Schools could arrange for students to come back to schools in batches to deal with these matters and necessary precautionary measures should be put in

place. Schools should also remain open till the originally scheduled summer vacation commencement date to take care of those students in need. Thank you very much.

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