

## LCQ16: Non-skilled employees engaged under government service contracts

Following is a question by Dr the Hon Fernando Cheung and a written reply by the Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Mr James Lau, in the Legislative Council today (January 8):

Question:

Regarding the statistics on the non-skilled employees engaged under government service contracts (contracts), will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the number of non-skilled employees, up to December 31, 2019, engaged by the service contractors (contractors) of the four major procuring government departments (namely, (i) Food and Environmental Hygiene Department, (ii) Leisure and Cultural Services Department, (iii) Government Property Agency, and (iv) Housing Department), and set out in Table 1 a breakdown of such numbers by the type of service (i.e. (a) cleansing, (b) security and (c) others) and the range of hourly wages as pledged in the contracts;

Table 1

Type of service	Procuring department	Range of hourly wages pledged (\$)							Total
		37.5 to 39.5	37.6 to 39.5	39.6 to 41.5	41.6 to 43.5	43.6 to 45.5	45.6 to 47.5	47.6 or more	
(a)	(i)								
	(ii)								
	(iii)								
	(iv)								
	Sub-total								
...									
All types	(i)								
	(ii)								
	(iii)								
	(iv)								
	Total								

(2) among the non-skilled employees engaged by the contractors of the aforesaid four departments up to December 31, 2019, of the number of those who were: (A) aged 65 or above, (B) engaged on a part-time basis, (C) entitled to 17 days of paid general holidays (other than Sundays), and (D) entitled to paid meal breaks, and set out in Table 2 a breakdown of such

numbers by the aforesaid types of service;

Table 2

Type of service	Procuring department	Number of employees			
		(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
(a)	(i)				
	(ii)				
	(iii)				
	(iv)				
	Sub-total				
...					
All types	(i)				
	(ii)				
	(iii)				
	(iv)				
	Total				

(3) of (A) the number of cases of the contractors of the aforesaid four departments reporting to the Labour Department on injuries or deaths of non-skilled employees caused by accidents in the course of their employment, and (B) among such cases, the number of those in which the employers and employees failed to reach agreements on the compensation claims, in each of the past three years, and set out in Table 3 a breakdown of such numbers by the aforesaid types of service; and

Table 3

Type of service	Procuring department	2017		2018		2019	
		(A)	(B)	(A)	(B)	(A)	(B)
(a)	(i)						
	(ii)						
	(iii)						
	(iv)						
	Sub-total						
...							
All types	(i)						
	(ii)						
	(iii)						
	(iv)						
	Total						

(4) in respect of the work injury incidents mentioned in (3), of the respective numbers of (A) fatal cases and (B) cases involving sick leave lasting six weeks or more (set out in a table of the same format as Table 3)?

Reply:

President,

We have consulted the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD), Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD), Government Property Agency (GPA), Housing Department (HD) (being the executive arm of the Housing Authority (HA)) and Labour Department (LD). The reply to each part of the question is as follows:

(1) Since April 2019, government departments and HA have introduced new measures to enhance the protection of non-skilled workers employed by government service contractors (GSCs) when they procure service contracts that rely heavily on the deployment of non-skilled workers (service contracts). Information on the committed hourly wages pledged by GSCs and the non-skilled workers under the service contracts tendered and awarded by FEHD, LCSD and HD (representing HA) since the implementation of the new measures and up to November 30, 2019 is at Annex. GPA did not award any such service contract during the period.

Information as at December 2019 is still under compilation and hence not available.

(2) FEHD, LCSD and GPA do not keep information on the age, mode of employment (whether on a part-time basis), holiday and meal break arrangement of non-skilled workers engaged by their GSCs.

118 non-skilled workers were engaged on a part-time basis under the service contracts tendered and awarded by HD (representing HA) during the period of April 1, 2019 to November 30, 2019. HD does not keep information on the age, holiday and meal break arrangement of the non-skilled workers engaged by their GSCs.

(3) and (4) According to LD, reports of work injuries do not record whether the work injury cases are concerned with government service contracts. LD does not keep information on the number of work injury cases reported by GSCs in respect of their employees, as well as the number of work injury cases involving disputes of employees' compensation liability, fatal cases and work injury cases with sick leave days of six weeks or above.

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**[USFH calls on people to take precautions to prevent flu \(with](#)**

## photos)

The Under Secretary for Food and Health, Dr Chui Tak-yi, said today (January 8) that the latest surveillance data showed that there has been a continued increase in local influenza activity, signaling that Hong Kong will enter the winter flu season shortly. People should heighten their vigilance to adopt strict personal and environmental hygiene as well as have a proper understanding of the importance and efficacy of flu vaccines.

As the flu season usually lasts for months, Dr Chui appealed to those who have yet to receive flu jabs to do so immediately, as influenza can cause serious illnesses in high-risk individuals and even healthy persons.

"The winter flu season has already started in quite a number of tourist hotspots. Those who have plans to travel during the Lunar New Year holidays should practice strict personal hygiene and get vaccinated now. Upon return to Hong Kong, please consult a doctor promptly if experiencing a fever or other symptoms. Inform the doctor of your recent travel history and wear a surgical mask to help prevent spreading the disease," he said.

Dr Chui visited the Annunciation Catholic Kindergarten today to view the free delivery of influenza vaccines to children on campus through a school outreach programme, and listen to the views of the school management and some parents on the programme.

"In the past, some small-scale kindergartens, child care centres and even primary schools might think it was hard to identify private doctors to arrange flu vaccinations on campus," said Dr Chui. "Now, with the assistance of the Government, schools can arrange free outreach vaccination services conveniently by participating in the outreach programmes, with a view to effectively protecting the pupils against influenza.

"Based on epidemiological and clinical experiences, vaccinating school children can effectively prevent influenza and reduce influenza-related complications. Furthermore, it is of prime importance that children with a fever, regardless of the presence of respiratory symptoms, should not be allowed to attend school. They should seek medical advice and avoid school till 48 hours after the fever has subsided."

In case children are not able to receive vaccinations on campus, parents can take their children to private doctors enrolled in the Vaccination Subsidy Scheme (VSS) to be vaccinated. The Government will provide a subsidy of \$210 per dose of influenza vaccine for eligible children.

Meanwhile, Dr Chui reminded people who were generally at increased risk of severe influenza or transmitting influenza to those at high risk, to receive a vaccination as soon as possible. They include persons aged 50 years or above, pregnant women, elderly persons living in residential care homes, long-stay residents of institutions for persons with disabilities and persons

with chronic medical problems.

As at January 5, about 206 000 and 79 000 doses of seasonal influenza vaccines had been administered via the Seasonal Influenza Vaccination School Outreach (Free of Charge) conducted in some 430 primary schools and 700 kindergartens/child care centres respectively. The total number of doses administered by different programmes including the Government Vaccination Programme (GVP) and the VSS was about 1 190 000, representing an increase of about 17 per cent over the same period in the 2018/19 season.

People may call the Centre for Health Protection under the Department of Health at 2125 2125 for enquiries or visit the dedicated webpage ([www.chp.gov.hk/en/features/17980.html](http://www.chp.gov.hk/en/features/17980.html)) for details of the VSS and the GVP.



## [LCQ20: Pilot schemes on elderly care service vouchers](#)

Following is a question by the Hon Leung Yiu-chung and a written reply by the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Dr Law Chi-king, in the Legislative Council today (January 8):

Question:

The Social Welfare Department (SWD) launched the First and the Second Phases of the Pilot Scheme on Community Care Service Voucher for the Elderly (CCSV Pilot Scheme) in September 2013 and October 2016 respectively, as well as the Pilot Scheme on Residential Care Service Voucher for the Elderly (RCSV Pilot Scheme) in March 2017. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) Regarding the First and the Second Phases of the CCSV Pilot Scheme respectively, of the following information in each of the years in which they were implemented:

- (i) a breakdown of the number of service units by service type;
- (ii) number of day care service places;
- (iii) number of home care service places;
- (iv) number of concluded cases;
- (v) cumulative number of recipients of the Community Care Service Voucher (CCSV);
- (vi) number of CCSV users;
- (vii) number of persons who did not use any of the CCSVs issued to them;
- (viii) cumulative number of persons having left the Pilot Scheme, together with a breakdown by the major reason for their leaving the Scheme as far as SWD knows;
- (ix) monthly average amount of subsidies; and
- (x) administrative costs incurred by the Scheme.

(2) Of the following information on the RCSV Pilot Scheme in each of the past three years:

- (i) a breakdown of the number of service units by service type;
- (ii) number of service places;
- (iii) number of concluded cases;
- (iv) cumulative number of recipients of the Residential Care Service Voucher (RCSV);
- (v) number of RCSV users;
- (vi) number of persons who did not use any of the RCSVs issued to them;
- (vii) cumulative number of persons having left the Pilot Scheme, together with a breakdown by the major reason for their leaving the Scheme as far as SWD knows;
- (viii) monthly average amount of subsidies; and
- (ix) administrative costs incurred by the Scheme.

(3) Given that SWD has commissioned consultants to review the effectiveness of the two Pilot Schemes, of the timetables of the review work, whether the approach of the reviews includes public engagement exercises, and whether the review reports will be made public; if not, of the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

My reply to the Member's question is as follows:

(1) The first phase of the Pilot Scheme on Community Care Service Voucher for the Elderly (CCSV Pilot Scheme) was implemented from September 2013 to August 2017, while its second phase commenced in October 2016. The information of the first and second phases of the CCSV Pilot Scheme from 2013-14 to 2019-20 is as follows:

The breakdown on number of recognised service providers (RSPs), service types and service places by year:

The first phase of the Pilot Scheme	Number of RSPs	Number of service places (Note)
2013-14	62	881
2014-15	62	923
2015-16	62	993
2016-17	62	998
2017-18 (as at end-August 2017)	62	998

Note: The first phase of CCSV may only be used for day care services. RSPs may separately provide home care services to CCSV users who are in need.

The second phase of the Pilot Scheme	Number of RSPs	Number of service places	
		Day care services	Home care services
2016-17	124	2 081	2 944
2017-18	125	2 254	3 040
2018-19	153	2 815	4 861
2019-20 (as at end-November 2019)	153	2 952	5 151

The breakdown on cumulative number of eligible applications processed, persons issued with CCSVs, number of persons who have used and have not used CCSVs by year:

The first phase of the Pilot Scheme	Cumulative number of eligible applications processed (number of persons issued with CCSVs)	Number of CCSV holders		Cumulative number of persons who have left the Pilot Scheme	
		who have used CCSVs	who have not used CCSVs	who have used CCSVs	who have not used CCSVs
2013-14	1 251	539	604	34	74
2014-15	2 092	972	232	351	537
2015-16	2 919	1 177	187	784	771
2016-17	2 968	1 061	14	1 071	822

2017-18 (as at end-August 2017)	2 968	1 053	1	1 080	834
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The second phase of the Pilot Scheme	Cumulative number of eligible applications processed (number of persons issued with CCSVs)	Number of CCSV holders		Cumulative number of persons who have left the Pilot Scheme	
		who have used CCSVs	who have not used CCSVs	who have used CCSVs	who have not used CCSVs
2016-17	3 373	1 871	1 185	109	208
2017-18	6 520	3 031	1 357	831	1 301
2018-19	8 813	3 608	1 535	1 745	1 925
2019-20 (as at end-November 2019)	10 439	4 077	1 756	2 353	2 253

â€‹The breakdown on cumulative number of persons who have left the Pilot Scheme by year:

Reason for leaving the Pilot Scheme	Cumulative number of persons who have left the first phase of the Pilot Scheme				
	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18 (as at end-August 2017)
<b>Natural turnover</b>					
Will be/have been allocated with subsidised community care service or subsidised/ private residential care service	40	339	642	836	945
Deceased	24	126	227	297	298
Taken care of by family members or domestic helpers	10	117	236	259	264
Others (e.g. hospitalised, out of town)	2	32	82	102	106
<b>Service-related</b>					
No suitable service providers/ service packages	24	274	368	399	401
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>808</b>	<b>1 555</b>	<b>1 893</b>	<b>2 014</b>

Reason for leaving the Pilot Scheme	Cumulative number of persons who have left the second phase of the Pilot Scheme			
	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20 (as at end-November 2019)
<b>Natural turnover</b>				
Will be/have been allocated with subsidised community care service or subsidised/ private residential care service	137	847	1 584	2 097
Deceased	76	483	919	1 189

Taken care of by family members or domestic helpers	40	375	545	614
Others (e.g. hospitalised, out of town)	24	225	357	421
Service-related				
No suitable service providers/ service packages	40	202	265	285
Total	317	2 132	3 670	4 606

As the service mode, places, items, combinations, numbers of service users and time slots for service provision are not the same for the two phases of the Pilot Scheme and each RSP, the Social Welfare Department (SWD) does not have information related to the monthly average amount of subsidy granted to each RSP and the related administrative costs.

(2) In the past three years, the breakdown on cumulative number of RSPs and service places under the Pilot Scheme on Residential Care Service Voucher (RCSV) for the Elderly (the RCSV Pilot Scheme) by year:

Year	Number of RSPs	Number of service places	2017-18	86	4 691
2018-19	104	5 394			
2019-20 (as at end-November 2019)	118	5 816			

â€‹The breakdown on cumulative number of eligible applications processed, persons issued with RCSVs, RCSV users and persons issued with RCSVs but have not used them by year:

Year	Cumulative number of eligible applications processed (number of persons issued with RCSVs)	Cumulative number of RCSV users	Cumulative number of persons issued with RCSVs but have not used them
2017-18	353	325	28
2018-19	1 163	978	185
2019-20 (as at end-November 2019)	1 867	1 617	250

â€‹The breakdown on cumulative number of persons who have left the Pilot Scheme and reasons for leaving the Pilot Scheme by year:

Reason for leaving the Pilot Scheme	Cumulative number of persons who have left the Pilot Scheme			2017-18	2018-19	2019-20 (as at end-November 2019)	21
	Elderly persons having no immediate need for residential care services						
Taken care of by carers of family members, domestic helpers, etc. or community care service	1	29	71				
Deceased	19	106	233				
The preferred RSP was full/no suitable RSPs	3	15	50	Chose to wait for subsidised residential care places	4	18	27
Refused to accept the co-payment arrangement	1	10	18				
Others (e.g. long-term hospitalisation, out of town, chose not to leave the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance Scheme, etc.)	2	11	16				
Total	30	199	436				

As the service places and the duration for accommodating RCSV holders are different for each RSP, the SWD does not have information related to the monthly average amount of subsidy granted to each RSP and the related administrative costs.

(3) The SWD has commissioned consultants to conduct evaluation of effectiveness on the second phase of the CCSV Pilot Scheme and the RCSV Pilot Scheme. In the process of evaluation, the consultants have collected the views of stakeholders through interviews, focus group discussions, telephone surveys, questionnaires, etc. The SWD and the consultants are conducting comprehensive analysis on the data and views collected in the studies. Upon

the completion of the evaluation reports, the SWD will study the content of the reports and consider the way forward for the two pilot schemes.

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## **Second-round applications invited for Community-driven Projects under ICH Funding Scheme**

The Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) Office of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCS D) launched the second round of applications for the Community-driven Projects under the ICH Funding Scheme today (January 8).

The objective of the funding scheme is to support local residents and organisations with relevant experience to carry out ICH projects with a view to strengthening the safeguarding, research, promotion, education and transmission of local ICH items, as well as supporting relevant tasks conducted by local bearers and bearer organisations. By engaging the community's participation in safeguarding ICH, it is hoped that the public can enhance their awareness and understanding of ICH and heighten their respect for it.

The scope of support covers projects related to the items in the Representative List and the Inventory of the ICH of Hong Kong. To attain the desired impacts of the Community-driven Projects, the proposed projects must be of a larger scale. As such, the funding amount applied for on each project shall not be less than \$250,000.

Application information is available at the ICH Office (address: Sam Tung Uk Museum, 2 Kwu Uk Lane, Tsuen Wan, New Territories) and the ICH Office website ([www.lcsd.gov.hk/ICH0](http://www.lcsd.gov.hk/ICH0)). The closing time for receiving applications is 6pm on March 2.

A briefing session will be held at 11am on January 22 at the Lecture Hall of the Hong Kong Science Museum, 2 Science Museum Road, Tsim Sha Tsui East, Kowloon, to brief interested individuals and organisations on the content and application details of the funding scheme. Information about registration matters regarding the briefing session is available on the ICH Office website. For enquiries about the Community-driven Projects, please contact the ICH Office at 2267 1971.

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# LCQ17: Scientific, reading and mathematical literacy of Hong Kong students

Following is a question by the Hon Cheung Kwok-kwan and a written reply by the Secretary for Education, Mr Kevin Yeung, in the Legislative Council today (January 8):

Question:

According to the study results of the "Programme for International Student Assessment 2018" released last month by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, among the 79 countries or economies participating in the study, Hong Kong's 15-year-old students ranked fourth in both (i) mother tongue reading and (ii) mathematical literacy, dropping by two places as compared with the rankings in the last study, and kept the ranking of the ninth place in (iii) scientific literacy. Mainland and Macao students' scores in all of the aforesaid three literacy domains were higher than those of Hong Kong students (with Mainland students even achieving the highest scores), and Hong Kong students' scores in scientific and reading literacy hit a record low since 2006. In view of the aforesaid study results, quite a number of Hong Kong people are worried that Hong Kong students are gradually losing their competitiveness as their academic competence is declining and has been overtaken by their counterparts in neighbouring regions. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) given that Hong Kong students' scores in reading and scientific literacy both dropped and their scores in the aforesaid three literacy domains were all lower than those of their Mainland and Macao counterparts, how the Education Bureau (EDB) interprets the aforesaid study results, and whether the EDB has avoided the important and dwelt on the trivial in making the comment, in a press release it issued after the release of the aforesaid study results, that Hong Kong students' "performance in these three areas was significantly higher than the international level";

(2) given that it has been more than four years since education on Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) was promoted in primary and secondary schools, whether the EDB has studied the reasons why Hong Kong students' score in scientific literacy has dropped instead and hit a record low since 2006; if the EDB has, of the details; whether the EDB will review if the deployment and utilisation of STEM education resources are appropriate and effective;

(3) as some academics have pointed out that the drop in the score of Hong Kong students in scientific literacy may be related to the decrease in recent years in the number of senior secondary students taking the subjects of physics, biology and chemistry simultaneously, whether the EDB will review

the weighting of science subjects in the senior secondary curriculum, as well as the levels and contents of those subjects;

(4) whether the EDB will right away put in place effective measures to enhance local students' literacy in mathematics and science, and whether the EDB will study and make reference to the merits of the education systems in Macao and the Mainland in order to improve Hong Kong's education system; and

(5) of the new measures in place to promote a reading culture among Hong Kong youngsters so as to enhance their reading literacy?

Reply:

President,

The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) is organised by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). It aims to assess how well 15-year-old students in participating countries/economies have acquired the knowledge and skills essential for meeting the challenges of our society, and develop educational indicators for governments and policy makers of different countries to examine, evaluate and monitor the effectiveness of their education systems both at national and school levels. Since 2000, PISA has been conducted every three years, assessing students' mother tongue reading, mathematical and scientific literacy. Around 600 000 students from 79 countries/economies participated in PISA 2018.

Hong Kong's education, which aims at facilitating students' learning, provides a broad spectrum of knowledge and nurtures high-level thinking, generic skills and positive values to achieve whole-person development. Our primary concern in curriculum design and delivery is the interest of students and their outcomes. In line with this policy objective, we will carefully study the findings of PISA 2018 to understand the strengths and weaknesses of our students, and review the effectiveness of the curriculum as well as learning and teaching in the light of the successful experience of countries/economies with outstanding performance in order to further enhance the quality of education in Hong Kong and improve the competitiveness of our students internationally.

Our reply to the Hon Cheung Kwok-kwan's question is as follows:

(1) PISA 2018 showed that, among the 79 countries/economies participating in the study, Hong Kong's 15-year-old students ranked fourth in both mother tongue reading and mathematical literacy, and ninth in scientific literacy. In reading literacy, although the ranking of Hong Kong students dropped slightly from second in 2015 and their score dropped marginally from 527 to 524, the score was still significantly above the OECD average of 487. The results reveal that Hong Kong students' performance was still outstanding. As for mathematical literacy, despite the slight drop in the ranking of our students in PISA 2018, the average score increased from 548 in 2015 to 551 in 2018, significantly above the OECD average (the OECD average scores in 2015 and 2018 were 490 and 489 respectively). In addition, 29 per cent of Hong

Kong students attained the highest level of mathematical literacy (i.e. Levels 6 and 5 on a scale from 1 to 6), higher than 26.5 per cent in PISA 2015 and significantly above the OECD 2018 average of 10.9 per cent, reflecting that our students' performance in mathematical literacy remained outstanding. As for scientific literacy, Hong Kong students' ranking did not drop, staying at the ninth in both PISA 2018 and PISA 2015. Although the average score in science (517) was slightly lower than that in the previous assessment (523), the OECD average score in science dropped from 493 in 2015 to 489 in 2018 as well. Compared with other OECD countries/economies, Hong Kong students attained an average score that was significantly higher than the OECD average, sustaining good overall performance. In sum, Hong Kong's performance in the above three areas was significantly above the international level.

(2) The Education Bureau (EDB) released the Report on "Promotion of STEM Education – Unleashing Potential in Innovation" in late 2016, and has been actively promoting STEM education by implementing a wide range of strategies, so as to enable students to develop abilities required to excel in the 21st century. These strategies included, among others, renewing the curriculum of the Science Education Key Learning Area (KLA), enhancing teachers' professional training in STEM education, and providing resources to support schools in taking forward school-based STEM education projects. STEM education is not a separate and new subject, but is implemented in local primary and secondary curricula through the Science, Technology and Mathematics Education KLAs (such as Mathematics at the primary and secondary levels, Science and Computer Literacy at the junior secondary level, and General Studies at the primary level). These KLAs must be included in both primary and secondary school education. The aims of promoting STEM education are to enable students to recognise the relationship between innovative technology and their daily lives, to enhance their ability in integration and application of knowledge and skills learnt in the relevant KLAs, and to nurture their collaborative, hands-on, minds-on and creative problem-solving skills. Evaluation of the effectiveness of STEM education in schools by merely looking at the PISA rankings of students in mathematical and scientific literacy is far from comprehensive. Given the different circumstances and developmental focus of schools, the pace at which STEM education is promoted in schools may, understandably, vary. All along, we have gained an understanding of the progress of implementation of STEM education in schools, including the effectiveness of relevant supporting measures, through various channels (including daily liaison with schools, school visits, school inspections and questionnaires). Leveraging their existing strengths, schools have generally implemented school-based STEM education. By improving the design of STEM learning activities, most schools have provided their students with STEM-based learning activities and assessment tasks, which include investigations, "hands-on and minds-on" activities, "design-and-make" activities, problem-solving activities, and open-ended assessment tasks related to daily life, to enhance their problem-solving skills, creativity and innovation. As a result, many students have become more interested in STEM and more proactive in learning with self-confidence, fully demonstrating the positive impact brought by STEM education on students.

(3) and (4) We have been discussing with stakeholders the strengths and weaknesses of our students in learning by actively making reference to PISA-related data and the practices of other countries/economies, with a view to optimising the learning and teaching of science and enhancing students' interests and capabilities in science and technology. Apart from international studies, the EDB has been keeping an eye on the learning and performance of Hong Kong students from multi-perspectives through different sources including school inspection reports, students' overall performance in the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination, and their performance in major international competitions.

The senior secondary curriculum and subjects under the New Academic Structure (NAS), implemented since 2009, are formulated prudently upon extensive consultation, taking into account different factors including, among others, social demands, students' needs, lateral coherence of various subjects, and international benchmarks. Students' needs and school contexts have been considered from a professional perspective to provide an adequate choice of subjects to students with different aptitudes, abilities and backgrounds. The former division between the arts and science streams in the old system has been replaced with a broad and balanced senior secondary curriculum under the NAS. The proportion of senior secondary students taking one or more STEM-related elective subjects has remained at about 60 per cent in recent years, and Biology, Physics and Chemistry have also been among the most popular elective subjects for senior secondary students.

The EDB has all along reviewed the implementation of the curriculum in a timely manner, including drawing reference from different places' curricula and curricula implementation as well as their successful experience, and has promoted the professional development of teachers through international exchange platforms at various levels so as to improve students' learning effectiveness and continuously enhance the quality of education in Hong Kong. We conducted the NAS Review from 2012 to 2015 to improve the implementation of the senior secondary curriculum and assessment. We established the Task Force on Review of School Curriculum (Task Force) in November 2017 to holistically review the implementation of the primary and secondary curricula. The Task Force conducted a public consultation from June to October 2019 on its six directions of preliminary recommendations, including how to enhance STEM education in primary and secondary schools. Upon the Task Force's submission of its final report in early 2020, the EDB will consider and implement various recommendations, where feasible, as soon as possible.

(5) To further enhance the reading interests and abilities of students, we will draw reference from the successful experience of other places and continue with our efforts in the promotion of "Reading to Learn". We will also continue to strengthen the support for schools, including providing a recurrent grant to facilitate schools to further promote reading starting from the 2018/19 school year, implementing the new "Reading across the Curriculum" initiative and the reform of the Chinese Language Curriculum introduced in recent years, as well as providing continuous programmes/training for teachers' professional development and the learning

and teaching resources on reading to help teachers (including teacher-librarians) employ appropriate reading strategies and organise reading activities.