

**Commission on Poverty
Task Force on Children and Youth**

**Implementation of the
School-based After-school Learning and Support Programmes**

Purpose

This paper updates Members on the implementation of the School-based After-school Learning and Support Programmes (the Programmes) since its launch in the 2005/06 school year.

Background

2. In line with the Government's policy objective to reduce inter-generation poverty, the Education and Manpower Bureau (EMB) has allocated a recurrent provision of \$75 million as from the 2005-06 financial year to enable schools and Non-governmental Organisations (NGO) to organize the Programmes for the disadvantaged students whose families cannot afford fee-charging activities for them. We expect the Programmes to increase the learning effectiveness of the participating students, broaden their learning experiences outside classroom, and raise their understanding of the community and sense of belonging.

3. Under the Programmes, the target students are those Primary 1 to Secondary 7 students in receipt of the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) or full grant under the Student Financial Assistance (SFA) Scheme. However, schools are given the discretion to offer not more than 10% of the places reserved for the target students for other needy students. To minimize the labeling effect on the target students, we also encourage schools and NGOs to open up the Programmes to other students. While the target students will receive the service free, other students participating in the Programmes have to pay full fee.

Progress of the Programmes

The 2005/06 Programmes

4. In the 2005/06 school year, schools and NGOs were invited to submit proposals to bid for funds for running the Programmes. To avoid undue additional workload on teachers, schools were encouraged to work in partnership with NGOs which have rich experience in running support programmes and could bring in their backend support to schools.

5. A committee comprising representatives from the school sector, parents associations, NGOs, Social Welfare Department and EMB was set up to formulate the vetting criteria and to consider and approve applications (the committee).

6. A total of 930 applications were received. As the funding requested far exceeded the total allocation for the Programmes, approval of the applications was based on the priority set by the committee. Among them, a total of 285 applications, i.e. 284 from schools and one from an NGO, were approved. 303 schools participated in the Programmes and about 55,720 target students were benefited. The amount of grant received by the successful applicant schools and NGO ranged from \$10 000 to \$770 000.

7. The 2005/06 Programmes included diverse activities such as school tuition classes, cultural activities, leadership training, personal growth, extra-curricular activities and visits.

Evaluation

8. Schools and NGO are required to each submit an interim and a final evaluation reports in late March and late September 2006 respectively. The final report covers assessments on achievement of the goal(s), participation and completion rate, feedback from students and parents on the Programmes and other outcome measures included in the programme plan as well as any academic or affective outcome such as engagement in learning, academic attainment, attitudes etc.

9. According to the final reports received, the participating students have, in general, steady developments in terms of learning effectiveness, personal and social development as well as community involvement.

The 2006/07 Programmes

Mode of funding

10. Having consulted stakeholders including school heads, teachers, parents and NGOs, and taking into account the administrative work for schools/teachers, we have revised the mode of funding for the 2006/07 school year and apportion the provision into School-based Grant (SBG) and Community-based Project (CBP). To satisfy the claim for “equity”, schools which would offer the Programmes are provided a fixed amount of SBG at a rate of \$200 for each target student. Schools may make use of this grant to complement other subsidies/services provided by the schools, Government and other agencies for helping students from disadvantaged families. After disbursing the SBG, the remaining provision is to be used for running CBP.

School-based Grant (SBG)

11. All primary and secondary schools including government, aided, caput and Direct Subsidy Scheme were invited in May 2006 to apply for the SBG. The grant, based on the number of target students maintained on EMB’s record, was disbursed to the participating schools in July 2006.

12. At present, a total of 957 public sector schools including 508 primary schools, 376 secondary schools and 73 special schools received the SBG. The total amount of grant to schools is around \$37.4 million. About 187,100 students, including 75,800 primary students, 109,800 secondary students and 1,500 special school students are benefitted.

13. Schools in receipt of the SBG are required to include in their Annual School Plans the Programmes they intend to run and upload the programme plans onto their Homepage by end October 2006. Schools are also required to report the actual number of target students served and evaluation on the effectiveness of the programmes subsidised by the grant, including students’

learning and affective outcomes in their Annual School Reports to be uploaded onto their Homepage no later than end September 2007.

Community-based Projects (CBP)

14. To facilitate effective sharing of community resources and to promote worthwhile projects, the remaining provision is used for organizing CBP with a view to establishing a service network in the neighbourhood community to which these target students belong. The service networks are expected to provide sustainable supportive service, which in turn can benefit more target students.

15. NGOs were invited to apply for the CBP grant in May 2006. A total of 234 applications from 142 NGOs were received. With due consideration given to the nature of the proposed activities, their relevance to the needs of the particular districts and sustainability etc., the committee recommended 193 applications from 128 NGOs for approval. 27 applications from 13 NGOs were rejected on grounds that the applicant organisations were not meeting the application criteria. 1 NGO with 14 applications had withdrawn its applications. The amount of grant for the successful applications ranged from \$7 200 to about \$1.93 million, serving some 49 100 target students. The total value of the CBP is about \$45.3 million, with an amount of about \$36.2 million to be disbursed in the 2006-07 financial year and \$9.1 million in the 2007-08 financial year.

16. Compared with 55,720 students in the 2005/06 school year, the number of target students benefited from the Programmes in 2006/07 has been increased to about 187,100 and the proportion of beneficiaries has increased from about 22% of the target students in 2005/06 to about 89% of the target students for 2006/07. Similar to the Programmes in the 2005/06 school year, the activities include school tuition classes, cultural activities, leadership training, personal growth, extra-curricular activities and visits.

Evaluation

17. Funds for CBP will be disbursed to successful applicant NGOs by 3 stages i.e. upon approval of the project in September 2006, March 2007, and upon completion of the project in September 2007. NGOs are required to each

submit an interim progress report before the second stage of disbursement. Upon completion of the Programmes, they also have to each submit an evaluation report on the outcome to EMB. Other than a financial statement to account for the usage of the fund, the report should include assessment on achievement of the goal(s) of the CBP, participation and completion rate, feedback from schools, students and parents on the Programmes and other outcome measures included in the programme plan as well as any academic or affective outcome such as engagement in learning, academic attainment, attitudes etc. Final payment will only be made upon completion of the project and submission of an evaluation report with outcome measures.

Advice Sought

18. Members are invited to note the content of this paper for information.

Education and Manpower Bureau
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