

Progress Report
on the Motion on “ Requiring the teaching of Chinese history as an
independent subject at junior secondary level”
Proposed at the Legislative Council Meeting of 16 November 2016

At the Legislative Council meeting held on 16 November 2016, the motion on “Requiring the teaching of Chinese history as an independent subject at junior secondary level” moved by Hon CHEUNG Kwok-kwan was passed with amendments from Hon Mrs Regina IP. This report briefs Members on the Administration’s stance on the matter and the relevant follow-up actions.

2. The Education Bureau (EDB) attaches great importance to Chinese history education. The study of Chinese history and culture has been made compulsory in the curriculum of primary and junior secondary level since 2001. The learning contents are designated as well. Since then, Chinese history has to be implemented in all local schools, including the former prevocational and secondary technical schools. The EDB shares the same vision with the general public that students should be able to receive a holistic and systematic Chinese history education. The EDB will continue to work collaboratively with the professional teaching force and various stakeholders to provide a host of supporting measures for enhancing the learning and teaching effectiveness of Chinese history education.

Reinforcing Chinese History and Chinese Culture Education

3. In the Secondary Education Curriculum Guide (SECG), which was completed in late 2016, and during the several briefing sessions on the updated SECG held in January 2017, the EDB has clearly stated that reinforcing Chinese history and Chinese culture is one of the major emphases of the ongoing curriculum renewal. Chinese history and Chinese culture are the essential learning contents of basic education at primary schools and junior secondary levels. In terms of implementation mode, the status of Chinese history as an independent subject in the majority of schools will remain unchanged. The 90% schools in junior secondary that have

been adopting the independent-subject mode to promote Chinese history education may continue to do so. For schools that have been promoting Chinese history education in a mode linking the two histories or through an integrated curriculum mode, they are required to make Chinese history as the backbone of the curriculum and offer an independent and systematic Chinese history module in providing students with a holistic and systematic Chinese history education. Such an arrangement is similar to the teaching of an independent Chinese History subject. In other words, **regardless of the types of local secondary schools they attend, all students must have the opportunity to receive a systematic Chinese history education.**

4. Currently, nearly 90% of the secondary schools offer Chinese History as an independent subject at junior secondary level. Naturally, there will be no problem for these schools to continue doing so for the promotion of Chinese history education. Regarding schools which adopt a mode of linking the two histories or an integrated curriculum mode in teaching Chinese history, they may have to make further revision to map out a curriculum with Chinese history as the backbone in the light of their whole-school curriculum planning, their students' varying learning needs and teachers' expertise.

5. The latter group of schools have accumulated much valuable experience in their attempts to teach Chinese history at junior secondary level in different curriculum modes and succeeded in enhancing students' interest and motivation to learn. Hence, we propose that these secondary schools should progressively devise a Chinese History curriculum with Chinese history as the backbone in accordance with the Secondary Education Curriculum Guide. The teaching of the curriculum so devised should be similar to that of an independent Chinese History subject. The Ad Hoc Committee will make recommendations upon further exploration along the direction of implementing Chinese History as an independent subject.

6. The principle of "putting equal emphasis on ancient and modern times" in the coverage of Chinese historical development is adopted in the revision of the Junior Secondary Chinese History Curriculum, and having ancient history, early

modern history, modern history and contemporary history served as the backbone for organising the three-year curriculum. Also, contents on cultural characteristics and development history of Hong Kong are appropriately incorporated into different historical periods. These initiatives are aimed clearly at expanding the scope of the curriculum to enrich students' learning experience in Chinese history and Chinese culture, so that students could have a comprehensive, correct and systematic understanding of the development process of the Chinese nation, China's development in recent years, and the interactive relationship between the Mainland and Hong Kong.

7. The current curriculum has already covered the learning of Chinese classical works, historical works, philosophical works and belles-lettres as well as other Chinese literary classics. For example, through subjects including Chinese Language and Chinese Literature, students could study selected articles of Chinese classical works, such as "Lun Yu", "Zhuang Zi" "Han Fei Zi", etc., to gain an understanding of the broad and profound Chinese culture. In alignment with classroom learning, students could also participate in different kinds of life-wide learning activities, such as visits to museums and Mainland exchange programmes, to enhance their understanding of Chinese history and Chinese culture. Moreover, the proposal of covering "the origins of the Hundred Schools of Thought" in the theme "The profound transformation of the Spring and Autumn period and the Warring States period" in the revised Junior Secondary Chinese History Curriculum will enable students to understand the historical background of Chinese classical works, historical works, philosophical works and belles-lettres as well as other Chinese literary classics.

8. The suggestions pertaining to the Chinese History subject curriculum had undergone deliberations at the different tiers of the curriculum development committees and were favourably received. The Working Group on Chinese History Curriculum under the Ad Hoc Committee on Chinese History Education had continued its deliberations on the suggestions at its meetings on 22 December 2016 and 18 January 2017. The EDB will continue to gauge the views of different stakeholders through channels, such as focus group meetings with history

scholars, school heads, frontline teachers, and teachers' professional associations, and through school visits. The Ad Hoc Committee is having a fresh round of discussions to further fine tune the curriculum revision, which is underpinned mainly by the dual professional principles of integrity and operability of the curriculum. The second stage of consultation, expected to be conducted in May 2017, will focus on the details and implementation of the curriculum.

Enhancing Support Measures

9. In line with the Chief Executive's recommendation to promote Chinese history and culture education, the EDB will provide a one-off grant of about \$125 million to support teaching efforts in this respect. We will notify schools of the details through an EDB circular memorandum.

10. At the same time, the EDB will continue to provide more subsidised Mainland exchange opportunities that align with the curriculum for primary and secondary students through a variety of strategies. We aim to consolidate students' classroom learning, deepen their understanding of the relationship between our country and Hong Kong as well as the national history and development strategy through students' first-hand experience of our country's development in various aspects. Subsidy quotas are expected to be further increased in the 2016/17 school year with a view to enabling every student to join at least one Mainland exchange programme in each of the primary and secondary stages.

11. The EDB will continue to strengthen the professional training of teachers and develop diversified teaching resources (e.g. e-resources) to enhance students' learning interest. This could enable teachers, especially those who are not subject-trained, to enrich their professional knowledge of the subject and learn more about effective teaching strategies so as to vitalise the learning and teaching of Chinese history, and enhance teaching effectiveness. The EDB is exploring with local teacher training institutions the possibility of providing more training programmes for Chinese History teachers.

12. Moreover, through channels such as curriculum visits, focused inspection, school-based support services and quality assurance inspection, the EDB regularly reviews and advises on the allocation of lesson time and implementation arrangements, and ascertains the needs of frontline teachers for further enhancement of learning and teaching of the subject.

Concluding Remarks

13. Overall, all students, regardless of the types of local schools they attend, must be given the opportunity to receive a systematic Chinese history education. The concerted effort and support from various parties and stakeholders is pivotal to the effective implementation of Chinese history education and enhancement of students' interest and motivation to learn. The EDB will continue to adopt multiple strategies to further enhance the implementation of Chinese history and culture education, so as to provide our students with better quality education.

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