



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Sunday, March 10, 1974

EXPENDITURE OF EXPANSION OF EDUCATION SERVICES

The government's estimated expenditure of \$1,069 million on education in the next financial year beginning April 1 allows for expansion of education services in accordance with present approved policies. It does not provide for expansion of services as recommended in the Report of the Board of Education on secondary school education in Hong Kong over the next decade.

The Board's Report is being examined in the light of public comments.

The Board, which is now back to full strength with the recent appointment of two new members, will be asked in due course to take a view on the various comments and advise the government accordingly.

Only then can a policy White Paper be prepared for Hong Kong's biggest expansion in the secondary sector of education.

A spokesman for the Education Department said today: "If any target is approved by the government during the 1974/75 financial year, supplementary provisions will have to be sought following publication of the White Paper.

"Of course, every effort will be made to obtain funds as soon as possible for the implementation of any approved project for the expansion of secondary education during the next decade."

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It should be remembered that Hong Kong's population has multiplied sevenfold in a generation.

Nevertheless, since September 1971, education is free in all government Chinese primary schools and in the majority of aided primary schools.

"This shows that the government in co-operation with voluntary bodies had overcome an immense problem with determination and success," the spokesman said.

"It is with the same enthusiasm that the government is tackling secondary education expansion," he added.

The spokesman said the \$1,069 million education bill for the coming financial year included grants, refunds and assistance for various types of schools, recurrent and capital grants to the two Universities and to the Polytechnic, loans to University students and subsidies for students travelling in public transport.

Subventions alone in 1974/75 were expected to amount to \$684,113,000.

By the end of this month, 614,420 places in aided primary schools are likely to be available and this number is expected to increase by 115,350 on completion of 59 aided school projects over the next few years.

The financial commitment involved in providing a total of 18,400 places by the end of 1976/77 for handicapped and educationally sub-normal children in government and aided schools is estimated at over \$23 million for buildings and equipment and \$17 million in annually recurrent expenditure.

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At the end of this month, 3,916 places for handicapped children in aided schools are likely to be available. During 1974-75 it is expected that a further 5,230 places would be provided, bringing the total of such places in aided schools to 9,146.

As regards the financial implications of the revised policy on post-primary education, the estimated cost of providing the additional places required after March 31, 1974 to meet the likely requirement by March 1976 is about \$40 million annually recurrent and \$150 million non-recurrent.

By March 31, 1974, 141,050 places are likely to be available in secondary aided and assisted schools. During the next financial year it is intended to subsidize or assist about 20,000 more places.

Since September 1, 1973, the per capita grant for three-year bought places in 25 non-profit-making private secondary schools has been increased from \$192 to \$275 a year for each bought place.

Eighty-four per cent of the per capita grant is to be used on supplementation of qualified teachers' salaries and 16 per cent on classroom equipment and other items of approved expenditure.

As a result 16,000 pupils in these schools will benefit from the increased grant.

Hong Kong's capacity to adapt to changing industrial and commercial conditions greatly depends on the technical education expansion programme.

The government's plans in this field have already been announced. They include the provision of four new technical institutes by 1977 in addition to the existing one at Morrison Hill.

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To cater for this considerable expansion, a new technical teachers' training college will be run on a temporary basis at the Morrison Hill Primary School which is being converted for this purpose. This college will begin courses from September 1974.

The cost of running this temporary college is estimated at \$208,000 non-recurrent and \$2,162,000 annually recurrent.

"It is envisaged that eventually an entirely new purpose designed Technical Teachers' College will be built, and this may possibly share a campus with the proposed Fourth College of Education," the spokesman said.

Initially, two main types of courses - one-year and two-year full-time courses - will be provided.

Those of one-year duration are designed mainly for student teachers who will later take up posts in technical institutes, and entrants to this course will be mature persons who already have some industrial or commercial experience.

"A system of grants for these students has been approved. The grants will provide them with financial assistance during the one-year course," the spokesman said.

However, student teachers who receive this allowance will be contractually bound to teach full-time for at least two years after graduation and, in case of default, to refund in full the allowance paid.

"The two-year courses are designed for student teachers who will ultimately take up teaching posts in secondary technical or prevocational schools," the spokesman said.

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Entrants to this course are normally graduating secondary school leavers in common with entrants to the other Colleges of Education.

The spokesman emphasised that an important aspect of the work of the new technical teachers' college will be the provision of part-time and refresher courses for serving teachers. Seminars, "workshops" and conferences will be regular features.

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NEW CLINIC AND MATERNITY HOME FOR SHA TAU KOK

A new standard rural clinic and maternity home in Sha Tau Kok, New Territories, will be in operation as from March 13.

The two-storey Sha Tau Kok Clinic replaces the existing clinic within the closed area of Sha Tau Kok which has been operating temporarily from rented premises and does not have maternity facilities.

The new clinic, located at Shek Chung Au on a site adjacent to the recreation ground of Sha Tau Kok Primary School, provides an out-patient clinic, including a dispensary on the ground floor and a seven-bed maternity ward and staff quarters on the upper floor.

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WATER CUT IN FANLING

Water supply to a number of premises in Fanling, New Territories, will be interrupted for eight hours as from 10 p.m. on Wednesday (March 13).

The temporary interruption is to facilitate water works in the district.

All premises at On Lok Tsuen, including Shung Him Tong Tsuen and Au Wai Lam Laundry, will be affected.

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Release time: 3.00 p.m.