Committee on the Promotion of Racial Harmony

Notes of the meeting on 15 September 2017

**Present**

**Home Affairs Department (HAD)**

Miss Vega Wong (Chairperson) Acting Deputy Director of Home Affairs (2)

Mr Howard Yam Assistant Director of Home Affairs (3)

Mr K Y Cheng Chief Executive Officer (3), HAD

Mr Alfred Shum (Secretary) Senior Executive Officer (RRU), HAD

**Official Members**

Ms Cathy Li Assistant Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs (5)A,
Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau

Ms So Mei Yee, Sandy Principal Information Officer (Local Promotion), Information Services Department

Ms Ng Yin Yi, Elaine Education Officer (Placement and Support)2, Education Bureau

Mr Chong Heung Yu, John Labour Officer (Employment Services)2,
Labour Department

**Non-official Members**

Mr Dewan Saiful Alam

Mr Sikkander Batcha, MH

Ms Ping Somporn Bevan

Mr Brian Chau

Ms Cheung Yee May, Mimi

Dr Theresa Cunanan

Dr Sharmila Gurung, MH

Mr Vijay Harilela

Mrs Poonam Vijayprakash Mehta

Ms Rigam Rai

**In Attendance**

Mr Raymond Ho Senior Equal Opportunities Officer,
Ethnic Minorities Unit,
Equal Opportunities Commission

For Agenda Item (3)

Mr Leung Kwok Yan Senior Education Officer (Placement and Support), Education Bureau

Dr Shum Shiu Kee, Mark Student Support Programme (SSP) Service Team Deputy Leader, University of Hong Kong

Mr Pang Chi Chuen Project Manager (SSP), University of Hong Kong

Ms Sung Siu Ping Curriculum Development Officer (SSP),
University of Hong Kong

Ms Lee Kit Fong Curriculum Development Officer (SSP),
University of Hong Kong

Ms Becky Ng Learning Support Coordinator,
Yaumati Kaifong Association School

Mr Louis Lo Chinese Subject Panel,
Yaumati Kaifong Association School

For Agenda Item (4)

Dr Tang Shao Fen, Joyce Medical Director, United Christian Nethersole Community Health Service

**Absent with apologies**

Mr Kul Prasad Gurung

Mr Hung Chiu Wah, Derek

Mr Akil Khan

Mr Hafiz Mohammad

1. Introduction
	1. The Chairperson welcomed Members to the meeting, including two new Members, namely Ms Ping Somporn Bevan and Mrs Poonam Vijayprakash Mehta, who have been appointed to the Committee since 1 June 2017. Another newly appointed Member, Mr Hafiz Mohammad, was unable to attend the meeting due to prior commitment. She also congratulated Mr Sikkander Batcha for receiving the Medal of Honour as well as Mr Brian Chau and Mr Akil Khan for receiving the Chief Executive’s Commendations for Community Services on the HKSAR Establishment Day.
2. Confirmation of the notes of discussion on 17 February 2017
	1. The notes of the last meeting held on 17 February 2017 were confirmed.
3. Matters arising from the meeting on 17 February 2017
	1. There was no matter arising from the meeting on 17 February 2017.
4. Chinese Language Learning Support Centres and Summer Bridging Programme for Non-Chinese Speaking Students by the Education Bureau
	1. At the invitation of the Chairperson, Mr Leung Kwok Yan of the Education Bureau (EDB) briefed Members on the Chinese Language Learning Support Centres and Summer Bridging Programme for non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students.
	2. Issues raised by Members and the discussions were summarised below:

**(a) Chinese Language Learning Support Centres**

* + 1. In response to Members’ enquiries, Mr Leung explained that the Chinese Language Learning Support Centres was one of the initiatives introduced by EDB to support NCS students. Each year, schools made nominations for students to join the programme which ran from October to August, including outdoor activities in summer vacation. In addition, EDB had since 2014/15 school year increased the amount of subvention to schools with NCS students so that individual schools could arrange their own student support programmes. Dr Mark Shum of the University of Hong Kong (HKU) said that the Chinese Language Learning Support Centres had been running since 2007. The programme was originally intended for secondary school students and was extended to primary school students a few years ago. Ms Elaine Ng of EDB added that each lesson normally lasted for 1.5 to 2 hours on weekdays or 2 to 3 hours on Saturdays, and each student should receive a total of 120 hours of training in a school year.
		2. Members generally appreciated with the efforts to assist NCS students in learning Chinese. Nevertheless, a Member suggested that on-going efforts should be put into teaching students about social skills and courtesy, educating parents about their children’s needs beyond the classrooms, and providing teachers with training in cultural sensitivity.

*(Post-meeting Note: The Chinese Language Learning Support Centres also provide teacher and parent workshops to teachers and parents to enhance their support for NCS students. Cultural diversities has been a topic included in the teacher workshops.)*

* + 1. A Member who was the parent of an NCS student in a local school said that she was not aware of the programme. Ms Ng replied that invitation letter, including references of information of the programme for parents, which set out the programme details were sent to schools each year. She suggested that parents could enquire with their child’s school or EDB if needed. Mr Leung added that the programme was open to all NCS students. However, individual schools might decide whether parents would be informed of the details having regard to their own circumstances such as the availability of school-based support for NCS students.
		2. A Member suggested that other tertiary institutions such as the Education University of Hong Kong might also have the expertise to run similar programmes. She also suggested tracking the development of the students in order to gauge the effectiveness of the programme.

*(Post-meeting Note: For the past years, tender invitations for Provision of Services for Running of Chinese Language Learning Support Centres for Non-Chinese Speaking Students had been issued to ALL tertiary institutions in Hong Kong and posted on the Internet at* [*http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/public-admin/tender-notices/tender-notice/index.html*](http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/public-admin/tender-notices/tender-notice/index.html)*. Interested tertiary institutions would submit their tenders. Tenders were awarded according to stipulated procedures and approved by the relevant tender board. Evaluation reports on the learning progress of the students were submitted to EDB to gauge the effectiveness of the programme.)*

**(b) Summer Bridging Programme**

* + 1. In response to a Member’s enquiry on the attendance rate of the students in the Summer Bridging Programme and whether there was any room to increase the capacity of the classes, Ms Mimi Cheung of Yaumati Kaifong Association School replied that EDB had set a class size of 15 and the attendance rate had been satisfactory. To promote attendance, school staff would send reminders to the parents before the classes and organise parents’ classes in parallel for the parents to learn Chinese as well.

**(c) Chinese qualification for admission to tertiary institutions**

* + 1. In response to an enquiry on the Chinese qualification for admission to tertiary institutions under the Joint University Programmes Admissions System (JUPAS), Dr Shum said that GCSE and GCE results were acceptable for meeting the Chinese language requirement, i.e. an applicant could apply through JUPAS with HKDSE Examination result in conjunction with an alternative Chinese qualification. However, applicants might still be subject to specific requirements of individual faculties and departments. Ms Sung Siu Ping of HKU commented that the acceptance of such alternative qualifications had helped NCS students in Hong Kong to enter higher education.
		2. Mr Howard Yam said that there had been some misunderstanding about the Chinese language requirements for entering universities in the community and not many ethnic minorities were aware of the options of alternative Chinese qualifications. He suggested that EDB could widely publicise the information on alternative qualifications among the ethnic minority community in Hong Kong.

*(Post-meeting Note: According to the JUPAS website, alternative qualification in Chinese language (e.g. GCE, GCSE, IGCSE, or ApL(C) in HKDSE) may be accepted in determining the eligibility of applicants who have learnt Chinese language for less than 6 years while receiving primary and secondary education or those who have learnt Chinese language for 6 years or more in schools, but have been taught an adapted and simpler Chinese language curriculum not normally applicable to the majority of applicants in local schools.)*

**(d) Others**

* + 1. A Member noted that there was still a high concentration of ethnic minority students in certain schools. She considered that in order for them to truly integrating into the local community, they need to be functionally literate. Instead of preparing NCS students to take the GCSE Examination, they should be educated in local schools where they can learn to speak and write as locals. Mr Leung took note of the comment and acknowledged that while various factors might affect how well NCS students could learn Chinese, it was crucial to impress the importance of learning Chinese upon the NCS students and their parents.
	1. The Chairperson thanked Mr Leung and representatives from HKU and Yaumati Kaifong Association School for their presentations. Summarising the discussion, the Chairperson asked EDB to consider doing more publicity about alternative Chinese qualification for entering universities as well as other measures to support Chinese learning by NCS students. HAD would be pleased to assist in disseminating messages through this Committee and our support service centres to the ethnic minority communities.
1. Health Promotion Programme for Ethnic Minorities by the United Christian Nethersole Community Health Service
	1. At the invitation of the Chairperson, Dr Tang Shao Fen, Joyce, of the United Christian Nethersole Community Health Service (UCNCHS) briefed Members on the health services provided by UCNCHS to ethnic minorities. She said the primary objectives were to help ethnic minorities navigate the healthcare system and gain access to the medical services they needed.
	2. Issues raised by Members and the discussions were summarised below:
		1. In response to Members’ enquiry on the booking arrangement and consulting fees, Dr Tang replied that UCNCHS clinics were self-financed and users had to pay a fee comparable to, if not lower than, the fee of a private medical practitioner for using their service. Advance booking was recommended while walk-in service was also available. Since UCNCHS mainly focused on primary care service, patients who had to be attended by specialists or required surgery would be referred to public or private hospitals as appropriate. Interpretation support could either be provided by their own ethnic minority staff or through telephone interpretation.
		2. Mr Howard Yam asked what the most prominent health issues were among the South Asian population in Hong Kong. Dr Tang replied that ethnic minorities often suffered from high blood pressure and diabetes. Dr Sharmila Gurung of UCNCHS added that obesity was another common health problem among ethnic minorities. Since these health issues were closely related to one’s lifestyle, UCNCHS had been promoting healthy living to young people so as to lower the risk of chronic diseases.
		3. A Member enquired whether there were plans for promoting mental health. Dr Tang replied that UCNCHS carried out a small-scale mental health project for domestic helpers in 2015. The challenges laid in the time spent and interpretation needs to follow up a case. Therefore, the way forward was to focus on promoting positive psychology and mental wellness among ethnic minorities.
		4. The Chairperson thanked Dr Tang for her presentation.
2. Any Other Business
	1. Mr Howard Yam informed Members that HAD would launch a programme to encourage and prepare ethnic minority youths to become qualified lifeguards. At the invitation of the Chairperson, Members suggested that to attract more participants, schools and non-governmental organisations could be engaged to promote the programme. In addition, financial incentive could be provided to encourage more ethnic minorities in participate in and complete the training programme. The Chairperson replied that HAD would take these suggestions into account in designing the programme. Details would be circulated to Members once finalised.
	2. Considering that education was a popular discussion topic among the ethnic minority communities, a Member suggested that EDB representatives should come to brief the Committee about their vision about the adoption of the “Chinese as a second language” curriculum. The Chairperson agreed to convey his suggestion to EDB.
	3. The meeting was adjourned at 5:50 p.m.
	4. For the date of next meeting, Members would be duly informed nearer the time.

**Home Affairs Department**

**October 2017**