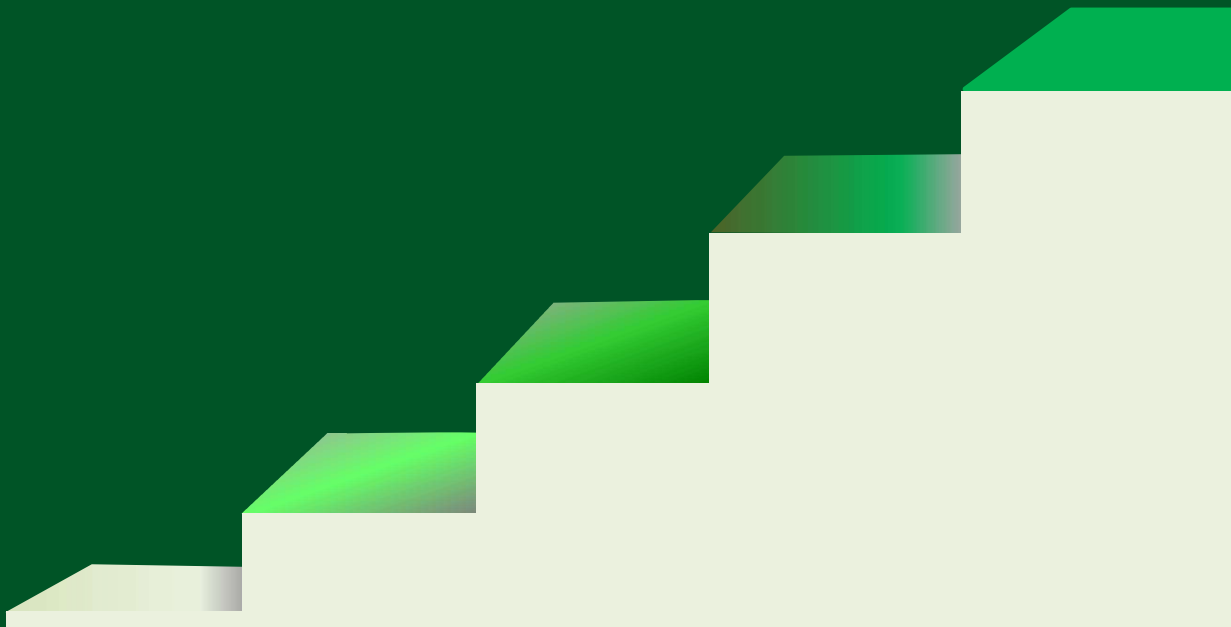


TASK FORCE ON PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHERS

REPORT

March 2019



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Executive Summary and List of Recommendations

The Government is committed to nurturing talents and enhancing the quality of education, and has invested substantially to implement various improvement and support measures. In 2017, the Chief Executive announced in her Policy Address that education experts would be invited to conduct reviews on eight key areas in education, including the professional development of teachers, so that the formulation of education policies would be led by professionals.

2. The Task Force on Professional Development of Teachers (the ‘Task Force’) was set up in November 2017 to study feasible options for establishing a professional ladder for teachers; the ranking arrangement of school management in primary, secondary and special schools; and the timetable for an all-graduate teaching force. The Task Force considers that the establishment of a Professional Ladder for Teachers is the cornerstone of teachers’ professional growth. The other two areas including the review of the ranking arrangements of school management and the timetable for an all-graduate teaching force, on the other hand, will be effective measures to support and promote the Professional Ladder. The Task Force has holistically considered these three areas in an integrated manner and formulated strategic and practicable recommendations from the perspective of overall effectiveness and benefits to the education sector.

3. The Task Force has examined the current state of play in the professional development of teachers in Hong Kong, and undertaken research and literature reviews to learn about the systems and practices in other regions. The Task Force has proactively reached out to, and interacted with the education sector to consult stakeholders’ views extensively, so as to better understand the challenges faced by schools

and gauge feedback which has provided useful reference for the Task Force's reviews and formulation of recommendations.

4. After completing an extensive consultation in September 2018, the Task Force submitted to the Government, in the first instance, its recommendations on the timetable for full implementation of the all-graduate teaching force policy. These have subsequently been accepted by the Government and the policy will be fully implemented in public sector secondary and primary schools as from 2019/20 school year. The 2018 Policy Address has also announced that, in tandem with the implementation of whole-day primary schooling and the all-graduate teaching force policy, there is a need to rationalize the salaries for the school heads and deputy heads and strengthen the middle management level in primary schools. The Task Force has thus accorded priority to the deliberation of the two issues, and in November 2018 submitted to the Government an Interim Report with its recommendations on these areas, so that early consideration and follow-up could be made.

5. After thorough studies, extensive consultation and careful and iterative deliberation, the Task Force has since completed all the reviews under its Terms of Reference and formulated an entire suite of recommendations for enhancement of teachers' professional development in Hong Kong. This is the full Report which has been prepared to set out in detail the Task Force's consideration and all of its recommendations. Set out below is the list of Recommendations.

List of Recommendations

Establishing a Professional Ladder for Teachers

- (1) Establishing the Professional Ladder for Teachers in Hong Kong
(Paragraphs 2.16 to 2.21)
- (2) The Committee on Professional Development of Teachers and Principals (COTAP) to lead the development, promotion and implementation of the Professional Ladder for Teachers
(Paragraphs 2.22 to 2.23)
- (3) Implementing the Professional Ladder for Teachers at Multiple Levels
(Paragraphs 2.24 to 2.28)
- (4) Enhancing the Arrangements of Training for Promotion
(Paragraph 2.29)

All-graduate Teaching Force

- (5) Full implementation of the all-graduate teaching force policy as soon as possible, with flexibility for schools
(Paragraphs 3.9 to 3.10)
- (6) Leveraging on the opportunity of the full implementation of the all-graduate teaching force policy, enhance teachers' professional roles and duties, and foster the culture of professional development
(Paragraph 3.11)

Advancing Teachers' Career Prospects, Enhancing School Management Ranking and Deployment Arrangements

- (7) Improving the manpower at the middle management level in public sector primary schools (including the primary section of special schools)
(Paragraphs 4.16 to 4.17)

- (8) The calculation of promotion posts in public sector secondary schools (including secondary section of special schools) to take into account the additional teaching posts generated from the 0.1 increase in teacher-to-class ratio as from the 2017/18 school year (Paragraph 4.20)
- (9) Schools to critically review senior teachers' roles and duties and plan deployments for capacity building and professional growth (Paragraph 4.23)
- (10) Improving the salaries for school heads and deputy heads in public sector primary schools (including special schools) (Paragraphs 4.40 to 4.43)
- (11) The Education Bureau (EDB) should elucidate to the school sector at an early opportunity the standing conversion arrangement for the adjusted pay scales (Paragraph 4.44)
- (12) EDB should review the current arrangement and requirements for promotion to headship ranks in the primary sector (Paragraph 4.45)
- (13) Improving the demarcation arrangements for headship rankings in public sector secondary schools (including special schools) (Paragraphs 4.52 to 4.53)
- (14) Improving the conversion arrangement for determining the headship ranking and provision of vice-principals in special schools with combined levels and special secondary schools (Paragraphs 4.58 to 4.59)
- (15) Improving the manpower of vice-principals in public sector primary and secondary schools (including special schools) of larger scale (Paragraphs 4.64 to 4.67)

(16) Improving the manpower arrangements for vice-principals in special schools with combined levels

(Paragraph 4.72)

(17) Improving the arrangements for promotion to principal posts in special schools

(Paragraph 4.73)

Commendation on Outstanding Teachers

(18) Establishing commendation schemes at multiple levels to recognize teachers with outstanding performance

(Paragraphs 5.8 to 5.11)

Chapter 1

Introduction

Background

1.1 Nurturing talents is the key to maintaining the competitive edge of Hong Kong and sustaining its advancement. A professional teaching force can effectively facilitate school development and provide quality education to our students. As our society is changing rapidly, the teaching profession must keep pace with the times and strive for continuous development so that we could better prepare our students for the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century. An effective and strategic approach to supporting and promoting teachers' continuing professional development is thus of paramount importance.

1.2 The Government is committed to nurturing talents and enhancing the quality of education, and has invested substantially to implement various improvement and support measures. In 2017, the Chief Executive announced in her Policy Address the setting up of task forces to carry out in-depth reviews on eight key areas of education, including professional development of teachers.

1.3 The Task Force on Professional Development of Teachers (the Task Force) was set up in November 2017 and is chaired by Dr Carrie Willis, with 18 members from primary, secondary and special schools, school sponsoring bodies, universities, teacher groups, as well as an expert on human resources and a representative from the Education Bureau (EDB). The Task Force is tasked to review issues relating to the professional development of teachers and make recommendations on enhancement measures. Adhering to the principles of “Led by Professionals” and “Listening to Views Directly”, the Task Force studies,

within its terms of reference, subjects of concern to the education sector and considers how best these could be practicably addressed.

Terms of Reference of the Task Force on Professional Development of Teachers

- 1.4 The terms of reference of the Task Force include studying:
- (i) feasible options for establishing a professional ladder for teachers;
 - (ii) the ranking arrangement of school management in primary, secondary and special schools; and
 - (iii) the timetable for an all-graduate teaching force.

The membership and terms of reference of the Task Force are at **Appendix 1**.

1.5 The Task Force considers that the three specific areas of its work are inter-related with the establishment of a Professional Ladder for Teachers being the cornerstone of professional growth of teachers. The other two areas including the review of the ranking arrangements of school management and the timetable for an all-graduate teaching force, on the other hand, will be effective measures to support and promote the Professional Ladder. The Task Force holistically considers these three areas in an integrated manner and formulates strategic and practicable recommendations from the perspective of overall effectiveness and benefits to the education sector. The aims are to promote the culture of continuing professional development among the teaching profession; enhance professional standards; accord due recognition to, and raise the professional status of teachers; as well as retain, attract and nurture

dedicated professionals for the continuous enhancement of the quality of education in Hong Kong.

Review and Consultation

1.6 Since its establishment, the Task Force has held 12 meetings. It has examined the current state of play in the professional development of teachers in Hong Kong, including the long-term strategies and initiatives formulated by the Committee on Professional Development of Teachers and Principals (COTAP). It has also undertaken research and literature reviews to learn about the systems and practices in other regions. The Task Force has proactively reached out to, and interacted with the education sector to better understand the challenges faced by schools. Through the series of meetings and focus group discussions held, the Task Force has extensively gauged the views from the sector to support its study and deliberation.

1.7 A Consultation Document was issued in July 2018 to solicit the views from stakeholders on the Task Force's 20 preliminary recommendations on enhancing the professional development of teachers (summary at **Appendix 2**). During the two-month consultation period, five focus group meetings and three public consultation and briefing sessions were organized to directly gauge the views of the stakeholders. Some 400 participants, comprising representatives from school sponsoring bodies, teacher education universities, teacher groups, parent groups, primary, secondary and special school councils, as well as frontline teachers attended these sessions. In addition, over 80 written submissions were received. The stakeholders' responsive feedback on the Consultation Document has greatly facilitated the work of the Task Force in formulating its various recommendations.

1.8 In respect of the Task Force's recommendations on the all-graduate teaching force policy, there is a clear and strong consensus amongst the stakeholders who unanimously appeal in earnest for the policy to be fully implemented as soon as possible. Having carefully considered the rationale for, and practicality of implementation, the Task Force submitted to the Government in September 2018, in the first instance, its recommendations on the timetable for full implementation of the all-graduate teaching force policy. These have been subsequently accepted by the Government, and the Chief Executive has announced in her Policy Address in 2018 that the all-graduate teaching force policy will be implemented in one go in public sector primary and secondary schools as from the 2019/20 school year, but schools will be allowed flexibility to fully implement the policy within two years, taking into account their respective school-based circumstances.

1.9 The Policy Address has also announced that, in tandem with the implementation of whole-day primary schooling and the all-graduate teaching force policy in primary schools, there is a need to rationalize the salaries for the school heads and deputy heads and strengthen the middle management level in primary schools. The Task Force has thus accorded priority to the deliberation of these two aspects and submitted relevant recommendations in an Interim Report to the Government in November 2018 so that early consideration and follow-up could be made.

1.10 Thereafter, the Task Force has also formulated detailed proposals on the other areas of studies under its Terms of Reference. This Report gives a detailed account of the work undertaken by the Task Force since its establishment, and sets out all its recommendations which have been formulated after thorough study, extensive consultation and careful and iterative deliberation. Having completed its tasks under the Terms of Reference, the Task Force is pleased to submit this full Report to the

Government. The Task Force warmly looks forward to Government's favourable consideration and acceptance of all its recommendations for the enhancement of the professional development of teachers in Hong Kong.

Chapter 2

Professional Ladder for Teachers

Current State of Play in Teachers' Professional Development

2.1 The Government attaches great importance to teachers' professional development, and has implemented various measures to enhance teachers' professional competencies and sustain excellence in education. The EDB and the former Advisory Committee on Teacher Education and Qualification (ACTEQ) published the "Principals' Continuing Professional Development Framework" (PCF) and "Teacher Competencies Framework"¹(TCF) in 2002 and 2003 respectively, to facilitate school-based professional development. To support teachers and principals in their planning of relevant continuous professional development (CPD), ACTEQ also formulated policies on teachers' CPD, with a "soft target" under which all teachers, regardless of ranks and duties, are encouraged to undertake not less than 150 CPD hours in each three-year cycle.

2.2 In 2013, the Committee on Professional Development of Teachers and Principal (COTAP) was established. Building on the foundation laid down by ACTEQ, the objectives of COTAP's work are to further improve initial teacher education, facilitate teachers' CPD and promote school leadership. COTAP formulates long term strategies and direction for the professional development of teachers and principals and presents

¹ Education Department. 2002. [Guidelines for Principals' Continuing Professional Development](#); and Advisory Committee on Teacher Education and Qualification. 2003. [Towards a Learning Profession: The Teacher Competencies Framework and the Continuing Professional Development of Teachers](#). The two frameworks describe the professional competencies of teachers and principals in major working domains at each professional stage to provide teachers, principals and schools with references for planning continuing professional development activities. Course providers can design appropriate programmes to cater to teachers and principals' needs and nurture their professional competencies.

advice in these respects to the Government. In 2015, COTAP published its first progress report² which sets out its vision, mission and strategies including an over-arching “T-excel@hk”³ project comprising eight key areas of focus. In 2018, to support and facilitate self-reflections of teachers and principals on their professional roles and CPD planning, COTAP has launched the “T-standard⁺” which portrays the respective professional roles of teachers and principals.

2.3 TCF and PCF illustrate the professional competencies, skills, knowledge and attitudes required of teachers and principals respectively at various professional stages and in respect of various professional duties. “T-standard⁺”, on the other hand, designed on the basis of a student-centred approach, presents the vision and mission of teachers and principals at different stages of their professional growth. These frameworks and the T-standard⁺ provide, from multiple perspectives, useful guidelines for teachers’ professional growth and are well-received by the profession.

2.4 The Government has implemented ACTEQ’s recommended CPD policy as a basic requirement for the teaching profession. In addition, the pre-requisite for promotion of teachers also include requirements for professional development. To be eligible for promotion to higher ranks, in addition to the required teaching experiences or attainment of the Certificate for Principalship (CFP) within five years⁴, teachers are also required to have undertaken, within the last ten years⁵, relevant training

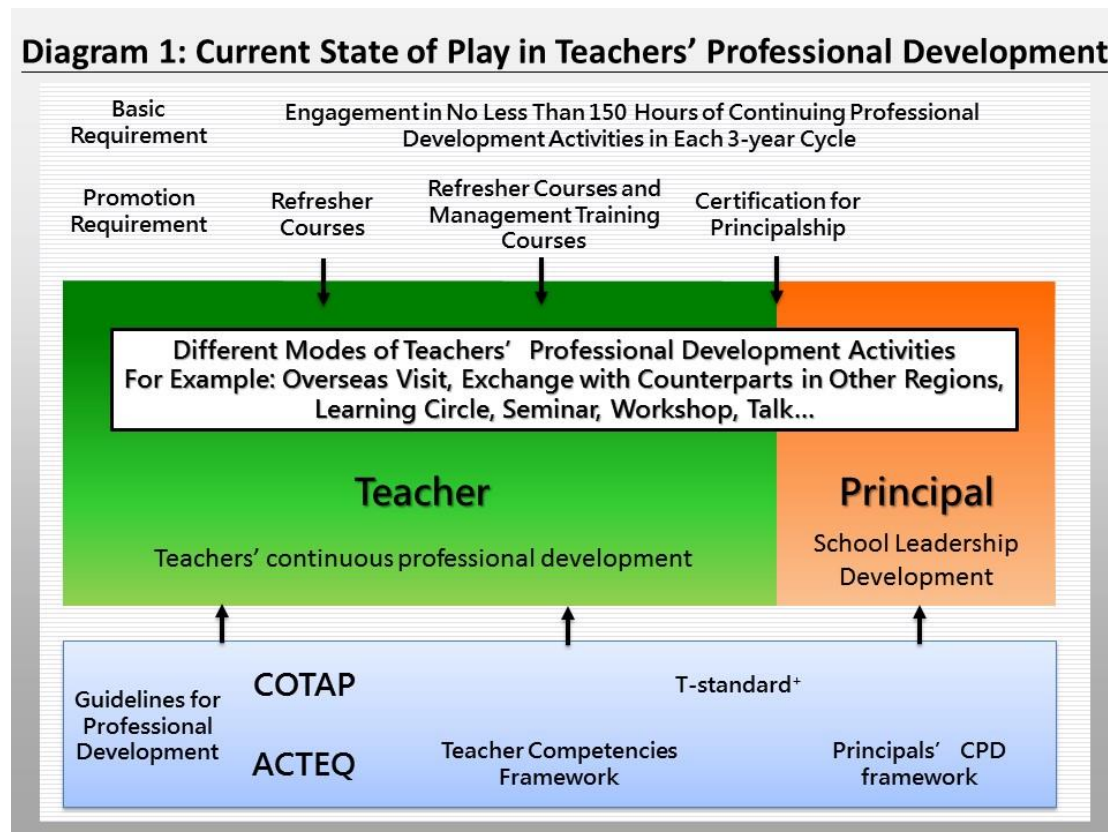
² Committee on Professional Development of Teachers and Principals. 2015. [Odyssey to Excellence : Progress Report](#)

³ “T-excel@hk” : “T” represents the teaching profession, including teachers and school leaders. The over-arching project covers eight areas of focus including T-standard⁺, T-dataset^{PD}, T-train^B, T-surf^{24/7}, T-craft³, T-share, T-applause, T-bridge. The eight areas are prioritized and implemented in phases.

⁴ [CFP](#) - With effect from the 2004/05 school year, aspiring principals have to attain the CFP, in addition to complying with the appointment conditions in force at the time, before they could be considered for appointment for principalship. The CFP process includes Needs Analysis, Preparation for Principalship (PFP) Course and Professional Development Portfolio.

⁵ [Training Requirements](#) - Promotion of Teachers in Aided Schools: To be eligible for substantive

course(s) as prescribed in the Codes of Aid. **Diagram 1** illustrates the basic and promotion requirements of teachers' professional development in Hong Kong.



Professional Ladder for Teachers in Other Regions

2.5 The Task Force has undertaken research and literature review on the systems and practices of teacher professional development in other regions, (including Australia, Canada, Mainland of China, Singapore and United Kingdom), as well as their approaches in implementing teachers' professional ladder. All these regions have different education policies, social environment and culture, hence their systems of professional ladder

promotion to a higher rank in aided schools, the candidate must have undertaken relevant training course(s) as stated in the Codes of Aid, or other equivalent training course(s) acceptable to the Incorporated Management Committee / Permanent Secretary for Education. Relevant training courses include refresher training and management training courses offered by the Education Bureau or Teacher Education Universities. The minimum number of contact hours for refresher training course is 90 hours and for management training course, 40 hours.

for teachers show different strengths and foci. For example, in Singapore, teachers could pursue their professional development paths in different domains, such as teaching, school leadership and subject specialist; in United Kingdom, Australia and Canada, teachers' professional development are referenced against the professional competence requirements at different stages of development; and in the Mainland of China, teachers' promotion paths are linked to evaluation of teaching performance. A common feature in these regions is that they all have teachers' professional standards that set out the required level of competencies in different domains of duties, to guide teachers in setting goals for professional development and self-advancement.

2.6 All these regions attach great importance to teachers' professional conduct and values, which are set out clearly in their professional code or professional standards. For example, in Ontario Canada, care, respect, trust and integrity are prescribed as the ethical standards for the teaching profession; under the United Kingdom's teachers standards, teachers are required to maintain high standards of ethics and behaviours within and outside schools; in the Mainland of China, teachers' professional standards adopt a student-centred approach with teacher ethics as priority attributes (**Table 1**).

Table 1: Major Domains of Teacher Professional Standards in Other Regions

	Major Domains of Professional Standards
Singapore	Ethical Educator, Competent Professional, Collaborative Learner, Transformational Leader and Community Builder (Teacher Growth Model)
United Kingdom	Teaching, Personal and Professional Conduct
Australia	Professional Knowledge, Professional Practice, Professional Engagement
Ontario, Canada	Standards of Practices, Ethical Standards, Professional Learning Framework
Mainland of China	Professional Concepts and Ethics, Professional Knowledge, Professional Competencies

2.7 Teacher education organizations in these regions generally plan professional development programmes and activities in alignment with their teacher professional standards, and teachers could participate in them based on individual developmental needs. Most regions conduct induction programmes for new teachers and some clearly prescribe CPD hours required of teachers. In some regions (e.g. Australia and United Kingdom), there are certification systems for teachers such as the National Teacher Certification and Chartered Teachers Status, which provide recognition to teachers' professional competencies and status, but they are not directly linked to promotion.

2.8 **Table 2** summarizes the teachers' CPD arrangements in these regions and **Table 3** outlines their promotion mechanisms. In each of these regions, their model of professional ladder for teachers is so structured with focused features to meet their specific objectives. The Task Force finds them of useful reference, especially the induction

programmes for new teachers and training for promotion under their CPD and promotion policies.

Table 2: Teacher CPD in Other Regions

	New Teacher	Experienced Teacher	Principal
Singapore	Induction Programme	Teacher Scholarship and Professional Development Courses are provided	Milestone Programmes in Leadership Track
United Kingdom	Mandatory Induction Programme	National Professional Qualification for Middle Leadership and National Professional Qualification for Senior Leadership	National Professional Qualification for Headship
Australia	1-2 years of Induction Programme	At least 20 hours of professional development activity to renew registration (e.g. Victoria, Queensland)	School Leadership Programme
Ontario, Canada	Mandatory 1-year Induction Programme and Fulfill Assessment	Teachers have to attain Additional Basic Qualification and Additional Qualification to take up certain duties	Principal's Qualification Programme and Leadership Practicum
Mainland of China	Teachers have to pass the Qualifying Examination before teaching	No less than 360 teacher training units in 5 years. Training unit is the necessary requirement for teacher registration, appraisal and appointment	New or aspiring principals must participate in training no less than 300 units; serving principals must participate in no less than 360 units in 5 years

Table 3: Teacher Promotion Mechanism in Other Regions

	Teacher Promotion Mechanism
Singapore	Teachers can be promoted in three career tracks, i.e. teaching, leadership and subject specialists. Career advancement is based on performance and potential. Teachers can choose to move across different career tracks, as long as they satisfy the standards and criteria of the career track they aspire to.
United Kingdom	For promotion, teachers undertake National Professional Qualification for Middle Leadership, National Professional Qualification for Senior Leadership and National Professional Qualification for Headship. Teachers can focus on teaching subjects or pastoral care to become leading practitioners.
Victoria, Australia	Teachers can be promoted from range 1 classroom teachers to range 2 classroom teachers, learning specialists, leading teachers and principals. Teachers have to attain qualification and experiences before promotion.
Mainland of China	Teachers' professional ranks include level 3 teachers, level 2 teachers, level 1 teachers, senior teachers and professor senior teachers. Teachers have to fulfill requirements on academic standards and experiences. Some posts require internship for 1-2 years and passing relevant evaluation.

Views of Stakeholders

2.9 Based on the feedback collected in the focus group meetings, public consultation sessions and from written submissions received, the Task Force finds that stakeholders hold positive views on the establishment of Professional Ladder for Teachers. They generally endorse the impact of implementation of the current policies on teacher CPD. The main views of stakeholders are summarized below:

- Stakeholders strongly agree with the preliminary recommendations put forward by the Task Force regarding the objectives and conceptual framework of a Professional

Ladder for Teachers in Hong Kong, especially on grounding it with professional values and conduct as the foundation, attaching great importance to teachers' professional ethics.

- There is general agreement on integrating the Professional Ladder for Teachers and the T-standard⁺ in taking forward the strategies for enhancement of teacher professional development. The professional standards under T-standard⁺ portray the professional roles and visions of teachers and principals, which echo the very objectives and purposes of the proposed Professional Ladder for Teachers. Their integration could better synergize efforts for greater impact. Continuous promotion of the T-standard⁺ is needed to facilitate better understanding and application, as well as promote self-reflection among teachers and principals.
- The majority of feedback supports the use of the Professional Ladder to facilitate teachers' professional growth, and not as a tool for performance or promotion assessment.
- Stakeholders generally endorse that the current teachers' CPD policies are clear under which most teachers actively participate in CPD activities. The "soft target" of no less than 150 CPD hours in each three-year cycle is considered appropriate.
- Given the large number of CPD activities available, stakeholders would like teacher training organizations to target more on teachers' needs for professional development in various domains and stages of professional growth, offering more focused and relevant training programmes.
- Stakeholders are of the view that teachers' training requirements for promotion should be relevant to teachers' duties and responsibilities in the promotion posts, for example, catering for students with special educational needs,

teaching Chinese as second language etc., so that teachers would be equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to cope with the work after promotion. Furthermore, stakeholders suggest that training of leadership competencies should be strengthened in the training arrangements for promotion, to nurture teachers to become competent members of the middle management and school leaders.

The Task Force’s Deliberation and Recommendations

2.10 Professional conduct and ethics are featured as the important components in teachers’ professional standards in all the regions studied by the Task Force. These reflect the core belief and consensus among the teaching profession. In Hong Kong, the TCF has stipulated the six core values⁶ which teachers should uphold, and the Code for the Education Profession of Hong Kong⁷ clearly describes the professional conduct required of teachers. The Task Force finds that, overall, the policies and related initiatives on teacher professional development implemented by the Government thus far, including the T-standard⁺ promulgated last year, have laid down a good foundation for the establishment of a Professional Ladder for Teachers in Hong Kong.

2.11 The Task Force is of the view that the establishment of the Professional Ladder for Teachers will further enhance the positive impact from past efforts, help explore new directions and dimensions for teachers’ professional growth, strengthen society’s recognition of the

⁶ The six core values are: belief that all students can learn; love and care for students; respect for diversity; commitment and dedication to the profession; collaboration, sharing and team spirit; passion for continuous learning and excellence.

⁷ The “[Code for the Education Profession of Hong Kong](#)” was promulgated in October 1990 to provide guidelines for normative behavior and foster a sense of professionalism. The Council on Professional Conduct in Education has conducted public consultation on the Code in 2018, and a revised version is expected to be completed in mid-2019.

education profession and enhance teachers' professional status. Having carefully considered stakeholders' feedback, the Task Force concludes that the proposed conceptual framework of a Professional Ladder for Teachers presented in the Consultation Document is feasible, and should be implemented and actively promoted. In order that the objectives and purposes of the Professional Ladder may be realized, promoting professional growth and raising professional status, its implementation should be full-fledged to include efforts at all levels, involving the teachers, schools and systems.

2.12 Regarding application of the Professional Ladder, teachers could set goals with reference to it and the professional roles in the T-standard⁺ that are relevant to their respective stages of professional growth. They could then reflect on their own journey and map out their professional growth and development plans. Schools could make use of it to review the professional development needs of their teaching force, formulate school-based strategies to facilitate teachers' professional growth at different stages. For example, schools could support new recruits to better understand what they are required in teaching, professional conduct and behaviors etc., and help nurture their professional competencies. Schools could also encourage teachers with potentials to chart their career advancement based on their individual strengths and interests. Schools could evaluate the developmental needs of their middle management, in terms of their professional competencies and perspectives (e.g. awareness and appreciation of social and policy developments, global education trends etc.), and draw up appropriate school-based training and development strategies to enhance the effectiveness of school leadership. For pre-service teachers undergoing teaching education, the Professional Ladder will be of useful reference to help them understand the basic competencies required of teachers and be better prepared for joining the profession. Using the Professional Ladder as the foundation, the EDB,

teacher education universities and professional organizations could provide the profession with more systematic and focused professional learning opportunities through progressive stage-based programmes and activities, targeting at teachers' developmental needs at different stages and in different work positions.

2.13 Having reviewed the teacher professional development policies and related initiatives implemented so far, the Task Force considers that the culture of teacher professional development has taken root in Hong Kong. Teachers and principals generally engage actively in professional development activities and sharing of experience and expertise. Under the school-based management policy, schools organize professional development activities having regard to the needs of the schools and teachers, providing opportunities for collaboration and exchanges among teachers and establishing professional learning communities. The Task Force is of the view that in order to bring teacher professional development to a new height, it will be necessary to further promote self-initiated planning of professional learning and growth among teachers. With the growing complexity in teachers' responsibilities, teachers must possess multiple professional competencies to meet the requirements in different work positions. School management will also need to have good leadership abilities to flexibly steer their team's collaborations to cater for students' diverse needs in learning and growth.

2.14 The Task Force considers that the establishment and promotion of the Professional Ladder for Teachers should be supported by other strategies at the same time, including the full implementation of the policy for an all-graduate teaching force, advancing the career prospects of teachers, enhancing the ranking and deployment arrangements at the school management level, and commendation schemes for outstanding teachers. Full implementation of the all-graduate teaching force policy

will raise the overall qualifications of teachers and offer the opportunities for teachers to take up a wider spectrum of professional duties, and through practical application and accumulation of experience, consolidate their professional competencies and develop their professional roles. Enhancing the ranking and deployment arrangements for the school management will encourage the teaching profession to continuously pursue professional development, duly recognize the contributions of teachers and school leaders, help raise their professional status and will be conducive to schools' long-term development. Commendation on outstanding teachers will foster in society a deeper understanding of the essence of professionalism and contributions made by teachers, and hence better recognition, which will in turn enhance teachers' professional image and status. The Task Force's recommendations on these aspects are detailed in **Chapters Three to Five**.

2.15 Having due regard to all the consideration set out above, the Task Force has formulated the following four recommendations on the establishment of the Professional Ladder for Teachers in Hong Kong:

Recommendation 1: Establishing the Professional Ladder for Teachers in Hong Kong

2.16 The Task Force proposes that a Professional Ladder for Teachers should be established in Hong Kong with the following two objectives:

- i. enhancing teachers' professional growth; and
- ii. raising teachers' professional status.

Faced with the rapid changes in society, development in education and the changing needs in student learning and growth, teachers have to adopt a student-centred approach and adequately equip themselves with up to date subject knowledge, teaching skills, values and attitudes for

continuous improvement and self-advancement. The Professional Ladder for Teachers supports teachers in planning their professional development with reference to their individual learning targets and career development needs. In addition, the Professional Ladder reflects the fundamental belief and core values of the teaching profession, which are aligned with society's expectations. This in turn will enhance recognition and respect of the profession in society, and raise its status.

2.17 The Task Force's proposed Professional Ladder for Teachers comprises three components including:

- i. three core elements in teachers' professional growth;
- ii. two essential dimensions in teachers' professional development; and
- iii. the three respective professional roles for teachers and principals under the T-standards⁺ as the goals.

2.18 The three core elements in teachers' professional growth are:

- professional competencies,
- professional values and conduct, and
- aspiration for self-advancement through self-reflection.

These three core elements form the foundation of the Professional Ladder for Teachers. Teachers' professional growth will hinge on the continuous advancement of professional competencies, upholding professional values and conduct in professional work and aspiration for self-advancement through self-reflection throughout the teaching career.

2.19 The two essential dimensions in teachers' professional development are:

- professional growth and
- career development.

Under the professional growth dimension, teachers should take initiatives to renew their professional knowledge and skills at various career development stages and when taking up different positions. Under the career development dimension, teachers being promoted to various posts should thoroughly understand their new duties and requirements, and possess leadership competences to steer the developments of their teaching teams and the schools. Through relevant professional development activities, teachers will be able to achieve self-advancement, professional growth and their aspired career development.

2.20 The ultimate goal of teachers' professional development should meet students' needs, and benefit students' learning and growth. The core principles of the "T-standard⁺", which adopts a student-centred approach, are thus in alignment with the objectives of the Professional Ladder for Teachers. The three professional roles of teachers "T-standard⁺" are:

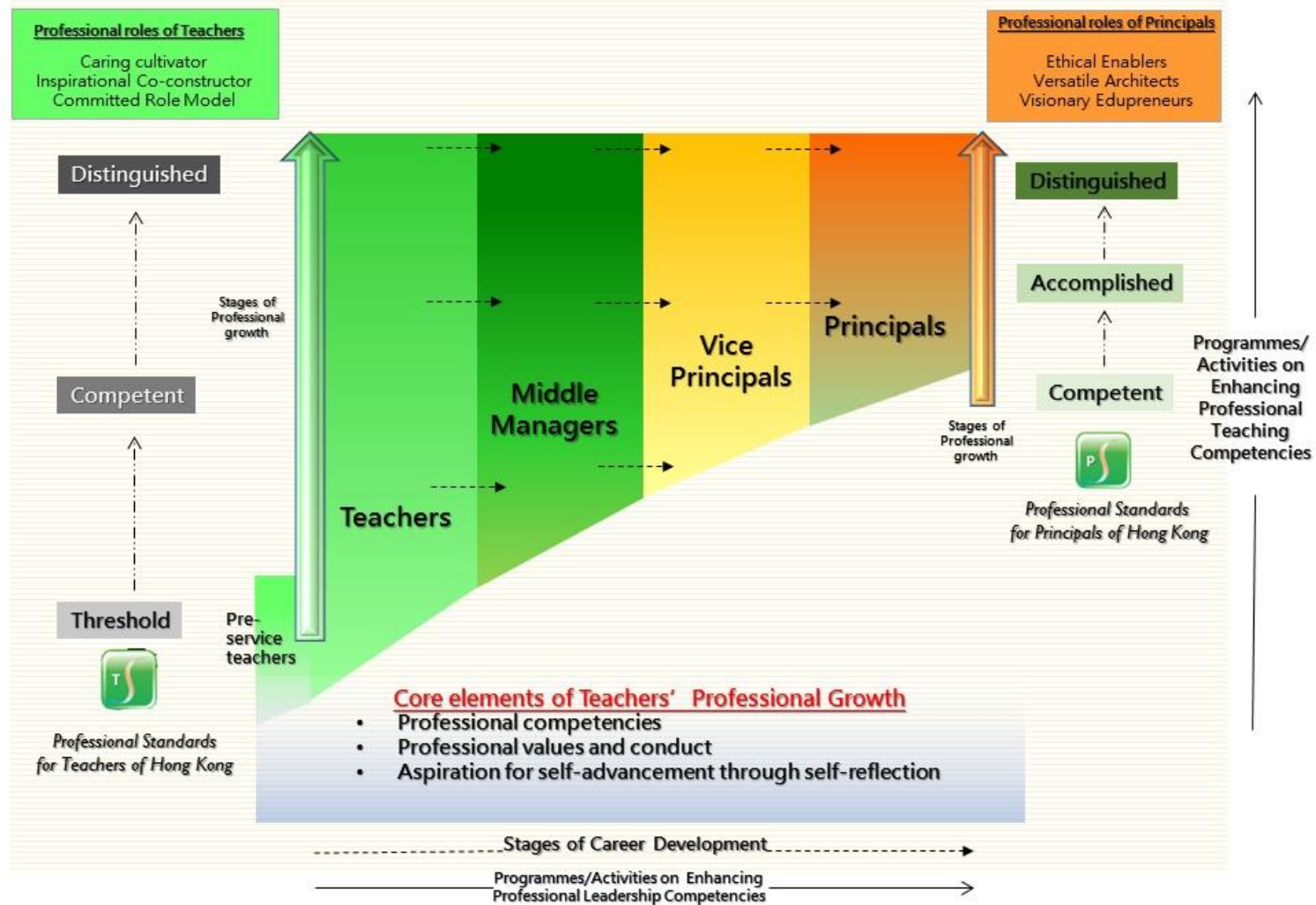
- Caring Cultivators;
- Inspirational Co-constructors; and
- Committed Role Models.

The three professional roles of principals are:

- Ethical Enablers;
- Versatile Architects; and
- Visionary Edupreneurs.

2.21 **Diagram 2** illustrates the conceptual framework of the proposed Professional Ladder for Teachers

Diagram 2: Professional Ladder for Teachers



Recommendation 2: COTAP to lead the development, promotion and implementation of the Professional Ladder for Teachers

2.22 To ensure actualization of the vision and objectives of the Professional Ladder for Teachers, the Task Force recommends that the development, promotion and implementation of the Professional Ladder be steered by COTAP, a standing committee with relevant professional experience. COTAP is responsible for planning the overall direction and long-term strategies for the professional development of teachers and principals. It has also obtained non-recurrent funding from the Government as from 2018/19 school year for implementing the T-excel@hk projects in the next 10 years. For COTAP to lead the implementation and continuous enhancement of the Professional Ladder, it could bring about more effective coordination of various teacher professional development initiatives and achieve better synergy and greater impact. The Task Force recommends that the EDB review and strengthen the membership of COTAP to cope with the additional complex tasks arising from the implementation of the Professional Ladder for Teachers.

2.23 The Task Force recommends that the EDB, COTAP and schools should deploy different channels such as teachers' professional development activities and the public media, to continuously promote to stakeholders the objectives and content of the Professional Ladder, including the Professional Standards for Teachers and Principals under the T-standard⁺, and support teachers in planning and achieving their professional development goals. The Task Force also recommends that the TCF and PCF be reviewed and updated to keep abreast of the latest education development. The Task Force suggests that the EDB and teacher training organizations should make reference to the conceptual framework and content of the Professional Ladder, where appropriate, in

their design and provision of various modes of professional development programmes.

Recommendation 3: Implementing the Professional Ladder for Teachers at Multiple Levels

(I) At the Teacher Level — Promoting professional practices and reflective learning

2.24 The Task Force considers it important that teachers should understand the concept and objectives of Professional Ladder, as well as the three professional roles of teachers and principals under the T-standard⁺, which should be applied in their professional practice. They could make good use of the qualitative and quantitative data available in schools to undertake self-reflection, to better understand personal strengths and areas for improvement, and decide on action plans for improvement. Teachers could also use the self-reflection tools under the T-standard⁺ to review the progress of their professional development in each 1-2 school year cycle, so as to plan for the directions of their future learning and career development. The Task Force recommends that consideration could be given to use professional development portfolios to record progress of professional learning, bridge learning and practice, conclude on learning outcomes and support self-reflection. The Task Force understands that a One-stop Portal is being developed under the T-surf^{24/7} project of COTAP's T-excel@hk umbrella scheme. The Task Force suggests that consideration could be given to duly expand this platform to include the use of professional development portfolios by teachers and schools in support of reflective learning.

(II) At the School level — Enhancing School-based Measures

(1) Enhancing School-based Professional Development

2.25 The Task Force recommends that schools enhance school-based professional development policies by making reference to the Professional Ladder, for example, schools may consider:

- including the core elements of the Professional Ladder in the schools' CPD programmes to encourage reflection and sharing;
- reviewing teachers' participation in CPD in each 3-year cycle, monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the professional development activities organized;
- based on the schools' major developments and their needs for nurturing talents, enhancing professional and leadership capacity by providing relevant training to teachers in different positions;
- in addition to school-based activities, strengthening inter-school collaboration and professional exchanges and jointly promoting the Professional Ladder.

(2) Assigning Designated Teachers to Co-ordinate School-based Professional Development

2.26 The Task Force recommends that schools should assign designated teachers to lead and coordinate school-based professional development. Taking into account schools' development objectives and priorities, appropriate training activities at the whole school, group and individual levels could be planned to strengthen the quality of the

teaching force. The designated teachers could collect relevant data to review the development of the teaching teams with reference to the Professional Ladder, and together with the school leaders, formulate strategies for nurturing talents. The Task Force recommends that the EDB should enhance school supports for school-based professional development, by providing training programmes and activities to broaden teachers' horizon and sharpen acumen in curriculum development, school development and teacher development.

(3) Enhancing Mentoring Support for New Teachers

2.27 The Task Force recommends that schools organize systematic induction programmes of one-to two-year duration for new teachers, the new blood to the teaching profession. Through learning from, and with experienced teachers, new teachers will be able to better recognize their professional identity and better appreciate teachers' professional values. The induction programmes could cover the daily school work, with experienced teachers providing guidance to new teachers; solving problems together on the core issues of professional values and conduct; and supporting new teachers to face, and rise up to challenges with a student-centred approach as their core professional values. Induction programmes will be meaningful to both new and experienced teachers. While new teachers will be supported in their transition into authentic teaching professional roles, experienced teachers will also benefit from the opportunities that shape them into school leaders for school-based professional development. The Task Force recommends that the EDB should proactively arrange relevant training courses for experienced teachers serving as mentors, so as to enhance the effectiveness of the induction programmes.

(III) At the System level — Enhancing support and training

2.28 With the full implementation of the all-graduate teaching force policy, all teachers, including those in the basic rank, could have opportunities to take up more diverse professional duties and share responsibilities in school development. School leaders, including those at the middle management levels, will need to lead teams of teachers flexibly and professionally to cater to the needs of student learning and growth. The Task Force recommends that the EDB, teacher education universities and professional organizations provide multi-faceted programmes, such as programmes on middle leadership, induction, professional learning communities and school-based support etc., to strengthen the leadership roles of the middle management, equipping them with the necessary knowledge, skills and competencies.

Recommendation 4: Enhancing the Arrangements of Training for Promotion

2.29 The Task Force recommends that the arrangements of training for promotion should be enhanced in three areas, including the training content, validity period of training undertaken, and provision of guidelines as set out below--

- i) The Task Force recommends that the current content of training for promotion be reviewed. Consideration should be given to organize the training into core modules and elective modules. The core modules could focus on the necessary competencies required of school leaders, and teachers could select from elective modules focusing on the professional knowledge that cater to the specific needs in different positions. The content of the training programmes could be duly adjusted having regard to the level and

domains of various work positions, and the specific contexts in the primary and secondary schools.

- ii) The validity period of training undertaken by teachers should also be reviewed. For example, consideration could be given to shorten such validity period to, say, five years, as in the case under the CFP. This would help ensure that teachers receive up-to-date training that is aligned with the latest social development and education trends and meets the needs in the promotion posts.
- iii) The EDB should provide specific guidelines for teachers and schools to ensure that teachers receive training relevant to the promotion posts and are adequately equipped with the necessary professional competencies required of them.

The Task Force recommends that COTAP could be requested to follow-up on the detailed formulation and implementation of the enhancement of training for promotion.

Chapter 3

All-graduate Teaching Force

Current State of Play

3.1 Currently, there are two teaching grades in public sector primary and secondary schools: the graduate teacher grade and non-graduate teacher grade. It is Government's long-term target to fully implement the all-graduate teaching force policy to attract talents to join the teaching profession. The ratio of graduate teacher posts in public sector primary schools was increased from 50% to 55% in the 2015/16 school year, to 60% in 2016/17, and then to 65% in 2017/18. In the public sector secondary schools, the ratio of graduate teacher posts has been increased to 85% as from the 2009/10 school year.

3.2 The timetable for an all-graduate teaching force is a matter of concern to the education sector. One of the Task Force's Terms of Reference is to consider and recommend to the Government an appropriate and practicable timetable for the full implementation of the all-graduate teaching force policy.

Views of Stakeholders

3.3 There is a strong consensus and earnest appeal among the stakeholders in the sector for the all-graduate teaching force policy to be fully implemented as soon as possible. However, there are also concerns about whether the professional development of teachers and the readiness in schools could adequately support the pace of implementation. In secondary schools, the views are that they are ready for immediate full implementation of the all-graduate teaching force

policy, given that most teachers have acquired degree qualifications. In primary schools, there are views that schools may need to rearrange duties of teachers upon the full implementation of the policy, as it is common practice that Assistant Primary School Masters/Mistresses (APSMs) and Certificated Masters/Mistresses (CMs) are assigned different duties in school. Some consider that implementation of the policy by phases in two to three years would allow sufficient time for schools to make necessary arrangements. However, there are also views that primary and secondary schools should adopt the same pace of implementation, but flexibility could be allowed for school-based circumstances.

3.4 Some stakeholders have also expressed concern about the current arrangements in primary schools where APSMs are assigned the roles of subject panel heads or leaders for various administrative duties due to limited manpower of senior teachers. There are views that the manpower at the middle management level in primary schools should be increased to take charge of these leadership roles and duties when the all-graduate teaching force policy is implemented.

The Task Force's Deliberation and Recommendations

3.5 The Task Force has taken note that it is the Government's target to have an all-graduate teaching force in Hong Kong. The Task Force acknowledges that full implementation of the all-graduate teaching force policy will help raise teachers' professional status, retain and attract talents, and further enhance the quality of education. The Task Force agrees that, with the series of education reform initiatives implemented in primary and secondary schools in the past and society's high expectations on the teaching profession, teaching posts in the primary and secondary schools should be taken up by teachers with degree qualifications. This

will enhance the professional capacity of the teaching force, and they could better cope with the rapid changes in society and education development, as well as the changing needs in student learning and development. The Task Force agrees that the all-graduate teaching force policy should be fully implemented as soon as possible. The Task Force understands that schools might need time to prepare for implementation, but to different extent depending on circumstances in individual schools. The Task Force considers that it will be more appropriate to allow schools some flexibility in the implementation having regard to their individual school-based circumstances.

3.6 The Task Force is of the view that schools should make use of the opportunity of full implementation of the all-graduate teaching force policy to review graduate teachers' duties and responsibilities. Their professional duties should be enriched and they should be given exposure to a wider spectrum of professional duties, such as curriculum development, student assessment, guidance and discipline, student support, integrated education, etc. Graduate teachers should be encouraged to take on more proactive roles in pursuing professional growth and school development. Schools can build up the professional capacity of their teaching force by suitable arrangements of graduate teachers' duties taking into account their experience and expertise.

3.7 The Task Force considers that the manpower at the middle management level in primary schools should be improved in tandem with the full implementation of the all-graduate teaching force policy, so that schools could plan their human resources holistically to support the effective coordination and execution of various education initiatives in schools (The Task Force's consideration and recommendations in this respect are detailed in **Chapter 4**). The Task Force wishes to emphasize that while schools would benefit from a stronger middle management level, schools should provide basic rank teachers who possess experience

and expertise with opportunities for exposure to different aspects of school duties. This would be a good human resource management practice that helps develop teachers' potential and facilitates their professional growth.

3.8 As regards the timetable and arrangements for the full implementation of an all-graduate teaching force policy, the Task Force's recommendations are set out below:

Recommendation 5: Full implementation of the all-graduate teaching force policy as soon as possible, with flexibility for schools

3.9 The Task Force recommends that the all-graduate teaching force policy be fully implemented as soon as possible to raise teachers' professional status, retain and attract talents, and further enhance the quality of education. The policy should be implemented in one go in primary and secondary schools (including special schools). Schools should be allowed flexibility to formulate their implementation plans to achieve full implementation by phases, taking into account school-based circumstances.

3.10 In view of that there is a strong consensus and earnest appeal among the stakeholders for the all-graduate teaching force to be fully implemented as soon as possible, the Task Force has, in the first instance, submitted to the Government its recommendations on the timetable and arrangements and these have since been accepted. In her 2018 Policy Address, the Chief Executive has announced that the Government would implement in one go the all-graduate teaching force policy in public sector primary and secondary schools in the 2019/20 school year and would allow schools to take into account their school-based circumstances to achieve full implementation within two years, if necessary.

Recommendation 6: Leveraging on the opportunity of the full implementation of the all-graduate teaching force policy, enhance teachers’ professional roles and duties, and foster the culture of professional development

3.11 Seizing the opportunity of the full implementation of the all-graduate teaching force policy, the Task Force recommends that schools should review the duties of teachers, enrich their professional responsibilities and arrange for suitable deployments, taking into account teachers’ experience and expertise, so as to give graduate teachers exposure to more diversified professional duties and responsibilities in school, to support their professional growth and encourage them to take on more proactive roles in school development. Enhancement of teachers’ professional roles and responsibilities could strengthen the professional capacity of the teaching force and foster the culture of professional development.

Chapter 4

Advancing Teachers' Career Prospects, Enhancing School Management Ranking and Deployment Arrangements

Current State of Play in Teachers' Career Progression and School Management Ranking Arrangements

4.1 Currently, it is common practice in schools to accord recognition to teachers of outstanding performance through promotion. The ranking structures for teaching staff in public sector schools can be grouped into the following categories as shown in **Tables 4 and 5**:

- Teachers at basic rank
- Teachers at promotion rank
- Vice-principals
- Principals

Table 4: Teaching ranks in public sector primary schools

Category of posts	Rank [Master pay scale (MPS)]	
	Graduate grade	Non-graduate grade
Teachers at basic rank	Assistant Primary School Master / Mistress (APSM) [MPS 15-29]	Certificated Master / Mistress (CM) [MPS 14-24]
Teachers at promotion rank	Primary School Master / Mistress (PSM) [MPS 30-33]	Assistant Master / Mistress (AM) [MPS 25-29]
Deputy Heads	Senior Primary School Master / Mistress (SPSM) [MPS 34-35]	
School Heads [Rank of school head posts determined mainly on the basis of the number of approved classes]	Senior Primary School Master / Mistress (SPSM) [MPS 34-35] <u>or</u> Headmaster / Headmistress II (HMII) [MPS 35-39] <u>or</u> Headmaster / Headmistress I (HMI) [MPS 38-41]	

Table 5: Teaching ranks in public sector secondary schools

Category of posts	Rank [Master pay scale (MPS)]	
	Graduate grade ⁸	Non-graduate grade
Teachers at basic rank	Graduate Master / Mistress (GM) [MPS 15-33]	Certificated Master / Mistress (CM) [MPS 14-24]
Teachers at promotion rank	Senior Graduate Master / Mistress (SGM) [MPS 34-39]	Assistant Master / Mistress (AM) [MPS 25-29] Senior Assistant Master / Mistress (SAM) [MPS 30-33] Principal Assistant Master / Mistress (PAM) [MPS 34-36]
Vice-principals	Principal Graduate Master / Mistress (PGM) [MPS 38-41]	
Principals [Rank of principal posts determined mainly on the basis of the number of approved classes]	Principal Graduate Master / Mistress (PGM) [MPS 38-41] <u>or</u> Principal II (Pr II) [MPS 40-44] <u>or</u> Principal I (Pr I) [MPS 45-49]	

(i) Staffing provision at basic rank and promotion rank

4.2 The teaching staff establishment (posts at basic and promotion ranks) in public sector primary and secondary schools is determined by:

⁸ In government secondary schools, the corresponding ranks to GM, SGM and PGM are Assistant Education Officer, Education Officer and Senior Education Officer.

- the regular teacher establishment as computed with reference to the teacher-to-class ratio⁹ (T/C ratio) and the approved number of classes; plus
- additional teacher posts provided for various specific improvement programmes (such as: curriculum coordination and leadership, student guidance, enhancing learning of English language, integrated education, supporting academic low achievers, etc.)

4.3 For staffing provision at the promotion rank, the number of senior teacher posts in ordinary primary schools is computed mainly on the basis of the number of approved classes. The provision in ordinary secondary schools and special schools is, on the other hand, computed on the basis of the number of teaching posts created from the T/C ratio¹⁰. **Table 6** shows the ratios of teaching provision at the promotion rank in public sector schools.

⁹ The current teacher-to-class ratio (T/C ratio) in public sector schools are:
 Ordinary primary schools – 1.6 teachers per whole-day class (there are currently 2 schools which operate bi-sessional classes and the ratio is 1.5 teachers per bi-sessional class);
 Ordinary secondary schools – 1.8 teachers per junior secondary class, 2.1 teachers per senior secondary classes; and
 Special schools – 1.8 teachers per primary and junior secondary class, 2.1 teachers per senior secondary class

¹⁰ Starting from the 2017/18 school year, the T/C ratio in public sector primary and secondary schools has been increased by 0.1. The additional teaching posts so generated have not yet been included in the calculation of promotion posts.

Table 6: Ratio of teaching provision at promotion rank in public sector schools

School Level	Ratio of teachers at promotion rank	
Ordinary primary schools	1 teacher at promotion rank for every 3 classes ¹¹	
Ordinary secondary schools	Graduate teachers	5 teachers at promotion rank for every 12 teachers
	Non-graduate teachers	1 teacher at promotion rank for every 2 teachers
Special schools	Primary section	1 teacher at promotion rank for every 4 teachers
	Secondary section	Same as ordinary secondary schools

4.4 Some additional teacher posts provided for individual improvement programmes¹² in special schools and ordinary secondary schools are also included in the calculation of the staffing provision at promotion rank. In addition, for secondary schools operating 15 classes or more, a post at the GM rank can be upgraded to SGM rank. A number of additional senior teachers are also provided to ordinary primary schools and special primary schools for various specific improvement programmes, such as English panel chairperson¹³, curriculum leader¹⁴, etc.

¹¹ For the 2 schools which operate bi-sessional classes, the ratio of promotion posts is 1 teacher at promotion rank for every 4 classes.

¹² Examples include Teacher Assisting in Speech Therapy, Mobility Instructor and Resource Teacher for Autistic Children, etc.

¹³ Schools with 6 classes or more are provided with an additional senior teacher post of English, to be offset by a post at basic rank. Same arrangement applies to special schools adopting the ordinary school curriculum.

¹⁴ Ordinary schools with 12 classes or more are provided with an additional post for Primary School Curriculum Leader at the PSM rank, while schools with 6 to 11 classes are provided with an APSM. Same arrangement applies to special schools. In addition, special schools with less than 6 classes are also provided with an APSM.

(ii) **Provision of principals and vice-principals**

4.5 The ranking of principal posts in ordinary schools is determined by the size of the schools. The rank of the principal posts in schools of smaller scale is the same as the rank of vice-principals in schools of larger scale. **Tables 7 and 8** show the demarcation of the ranking of principal posts in public sector primary and secondary schools.

Table 7: Demarcation of ranking of school head posts in public sector primary schools

Rank of school head	Number of approved classes	Salary scale
HM I	24 classes or more	MPS 38-41
HM II	12 to 23 classes	MPS 35-39
SPSM	11 classes or less	MPS 34-35

Table 8: Demarcation of principal ranking in public sector secondary schools

Rank of principal	Number of approved classes	Salary scale
Pr I	24 classes or more	MPS 45-49
Pr II	15 to 23 classes	MPS 40-44
PGM	14 classes or less	MPS 38-41

4.6 The school head ranking arrangement in public sector primary schools applies to special primary schools, but with some conversions on the number of classes. The principal ranking arrangement in public sector secondary schools similarly applies to special secondary schools and special schools with both primary and secondary levels, also with

conversions on the number of classes. In determining the ranking of principal posts in special schools, the numbers of classes in respective levels will first be converted into numbers of equivalent special classes according to the weighting system¹⁵ as shown at **Table 9** below, and then a relativity ratio (every 18 equivalent special classes are counted as 24 ordinary classes) will be applied to the total of these numbers, and rounded down, to demarcate the ranking of the posts.

Table 9: Weighting system for conversion to the number of equivalent special classes

Class in special schools	Number of equivalent special classes
1 special primary class	0.6
1 special junior secondary class	0.8
1 special senior secondary class	1

4.7 The number of vice-principals in an ordinary school is determined by the size of the school. In ordinary secondary schools with 15 classes or more, two SGM posts can be upgraded to PGM posts as vice-principals. In ordinary primary schools with 12 or more classes, one to two PSM posts can be upgraded to SPSM post(s) as deputy head(s). Schools of smaller scale are not provided with deputy head/vice-principal posts. **Tables 10** and **11** show the provision of deputy heads/vice-principals in public sector primary and secondary schools.

¹⁵ The weighting system is not applicable to special primary schools. Classes in special primary schools are converted by the relativity ratio: every 18 special classes are converted to 24 ordinary classes.

Table 10: Provision of deputy heads in public sector primary schools

Number of approved classes	Rank and number of deputy heads
24 classes or more	2 SPSMs
12 to 23 classes	1 SPSM
11 classes or less	--

Table 11: Provision of vice-principals in public sector secondary schools

Number of approved classes	Rank and number of vice-principals
15 classes or more	2 PGMs
14 classes or less	--

4.8 The arrangements for provision of deputy heads/vice-principals in ordinary public sector schools also apply to special schools, with the conversion procedures set out in paragraph 4.6 above. For special schools with both primary and secondary sections, similar arrangements apply, but the schools can only opt for the provision of deputy heads/vice-principals in either the primary section or secondary section.

Advancing teachers' career prospect, enhancing school management ranking and deployment

I. Manpower arrangement of senior teachers

(a) Primary schools

Views of Stakeholders

4.9 Regarding the provision of senior teachers in primary schools, there are views that school planning and student support services have become more complex and challenging with all the education initiatives implemented in the sector in the past. The number of senior teacher posts in primary schools is determined by the number of approved classes, and is not adjusted with the increase in the number of teaching posts. The sector generally feels that the current manpower at the middle management level in primary schools is inadequate to meet the developmental needs of schools. Due to limited provision of senior teachers, it is common practice for primary schools to arrange for APSMs, graduate teachers at the basic rank, to take up leading roles for various school functions. Such arrangement is considered unsatisfactory as it could cause staff management and morale issues, not conducive to the human resources development in schools. The situation, if allowed to continue, would become even more difficult to manage with the full implementation of the all-graduate teaching force policy.

4.10 The sector strongly requests that the manpower provision at the middle management level in primary schools be improved in tandem with the implementation of the all-graduate teaching force policy. As regards the magnitude of improvements to be made, different suggestions have been received. The sector is also of the view that the senior teacher

provision should be determined with reference to the number of teaching posts in the schools, similar to the practice in secondary schools.

The Task Force's Deliberation and Recommendations

4.11 The Task Force has carefully examined the historical developments leading to the current arrangements in the primary school sector, and the challenges primary schools face with the latest developments on the education landscape, such as integrated education, whole school approach to guidance, inclusion of ethnic minority students, values education, catering for widening student diversity etc., all of which have brought on far-reaching impacts on school operations. School planning and student support work have become more complex and demanding. The Task Force considers that senior teachers are key personnel in leading curriculum implementation and student support in schools. Appointing teachers with expertise, abilities and outstanding performance to senior teacher positions will duly recognize their contributions and give them a platform to further realize their strengths and potential.

4.12 The Task force is aware of that the senior teacher provision in primary schools is calculated on the basis of the number of approved classes and is not adjusted consequent upon any increase in the number of teaching posts in schools. Upon implementation of whole-day primary schooling, the provision of senior teachers has been enhanced from one post for every four classes to one for three classes. Schools have also been provided with additional senior teacher posts for specific purposes (such as leadership in the teaching of English and school curriculum). From the 2019/20 school year, schools with larger number of students with special educational needs can also upgrade the special educational needs coordinator post to the promotion rank. However, other than these adjustments, there has not been any major review or enhancement

of the senior teacher provision to help primary schools cope with the many education developments for meeting the changing learning needs of students.

4.13 Schools deploy middle leaders to take charge of key subject panels such as Chinese, Mathematics, etc.; and lead various functional areas such as comprehensive personal growth education, whole school approach to guidance, extra-curricular activities, language learning support for non-Chinese speaking students, professional development, school administration, STEM¹⁶ education, as well as other education initiatives driven by the developmental needs of individual schools. The Task Force considers that there are strong functional justifications for more senior teacher posts to be provided in primary schools to help lead and implement the wide spectrum of school work to support the further development of quality education. The Task Force is also of the view that the formula for determining the number of senior teacher posts in primary schools should be changed, linking it to the number of teaching posts from the application of the T/C ratio, so that the primary sector could also benefit from any consequential improvement of T/C ratio in the future.

4.14 The Task Force notes that, currently, due to limited manpower provision, it is common practice for primary schools to assign APSMs to roles leading various school functions. The Task Force considers that school capacity could be built by encouraging and arranging for suitable teachers with experience and expertise to shoulder more responsibilities, giving them exposure to a wider spectrum of multi-faceted school functions. This would help develop the teaching staff's potential and nurture their professional growth. Following the full implementation of the all-graduate teaching force policy, APSMs are expected to take up more diversified professional roles and duties. However, the current

¹⁶ STEM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.

across the board arrangements of deployment of the basic APSM rank to leadership and functional roles in school, as a matter of expediency, are unsatisfactory. This could cause quality concerns and undesirable staff management and morale issues, not conducive to the schools' long-term development.

4.15 The Task Force considers that there is a need to rationalize and strengthen the manpower provision and arrangements at the middle management level in primary schools, so that primary schools can effectively play their important roles. Increasing the number of senior teacher posts also provides more opportunities for capable teachers to be promoted in recognition of their contributions, and helps retain and attract talents. The Task Force's recommendation in this respect is set out below:

Recommendation 7: Improving the manpower at the middle management level in public sector primary schools (including the primary section of special schools)

4.16 The Task Force recommends that the provision of senior teachers should be improved in public sector primary schools (including the primary section of special schools) to better support the coordination and implementation of various education initiatives and meet the long-term developmental needs of schools for the further enhancement of quality primary education. The Task Force recommends that the manpower at the middle management level be improved from 1 senior teacher for every 3 classes to 1 senior teacher for every 2 classes. The proposal, if approved, would result in an increase of about 50% in the number of senior teacher posts. These, together with those additional senior teacher posts provided for various education initiatives which will remain, would give primary schools a reasonable number of senior teachers to lead key subject panels, major functional areas and initiatives

for school-based development such as STEM education, etc. The examples in **Table 12** illustrate the proposed provision enhancement in typical primary schools.

Table 12: Examples of how the proposed enhanced provision of senior teacher posts would impact on primary schools

School size (Number of whole-day classes)	Number of Senior Teacher Posts	
	Existing provision^{Note 1}	Proposed provision^{Note 2}
18 classes	6 + (2 initiative-specific senior posts)	9 + (3 initiative-specific senior posts)
24 classes	8 + (2 initiative-specific senior posts)	12 + (3 initiative-specific senior posts)

Note 1: Assuming 2 initiative-specific senior posts (including the senior teacher post of English and the primary school curriculum leader post).

Note 2: Assuming upgrading of the special educational needs coordinator post to promotion rank as from the 2019/20 school year.

4.17 The Task Force also recommends that, to meet the long-term developmental needs of schools, the manpower at the middle management level in primary schools should be determined based on the number of teaching posts calculated from the T/C ratio. Converting the recommendation set out in paragraph 4.16 into this basis will provide an improvement to 1 senior teacher for every 3.2 teachers¹⁷ (equivalent to 1 senior teacher for every 2 classes). For special primary schools and the primary section of special schools, the Task Force recommends that the manpower at the middle management level be improved from 1 senior teacher for every 4 teachers to 1 senior teacher for every 3 teachers¹⁸.

¹⁷ Based on the current T/C ratio of 1.6 teachers per class for whole-day ordinary primary schools (which has included the 0.1 increase in T/C ratio as from the 2017/18 school year).

¹⁸ The teaching posts generated from the 0.1 increase in T/C ratio as from 2017/18 school year will be counted in the calculation of the number of promotion posts.

The teaching posts within the staff establishment created for specific improvement programmes should continue to be provided.

(b) Secondary schools

Views of Stakeholders

4.18 For secondary schools, the sector generally considers that the additional teaching posts generated from the 0.1 increase in the T/C ratio starting from the 2017/18 school year should be included in the calculation of promotion posts. There are also views that some newly created posts in the recent years, such as teachers supporting career and life planning education, senior secondary curriculum, etc. should also be included in the calculation of promotion posts.

The Task Force's Deliberation and Recommendations

4.19 The Task Force notes that, under the existing mechanism, the number of senior teachers in secondary schools has increased correspondingly with the increases in the total number of teachers over the years. An exception is with the increase in the T/C ratio for the public sector schools by 0.1 as from the 2017/18 school year, where the additional teaching posts so generated have not yet been counted towards the calculation of the number of promotion posts. The reasons are to allow time for EDB to review and follow up on teachers' professional development, including the establishment of a professional ladder for teachers. The Task Force considers that these posts should be duly taken into account in the calculation of promotion posts in accordance with the existing mechanism. This would provide additional manpower at the middle management level to enable schools to deploy senior teachers to new school functions. The Task Force has also taken note of EDB's

announcement that starting from the 2019/20 school year, the teaching posts for supporting senior secondary curriculum and career and life planning will be counted towards the calculation of promotion posts. The Task Force's recommendation is set out below:

Recommendation 8: The calculation of promotion posts in public sector secondary schools (including secondary section of special schools) to take into account the additional teaching posts generated from the 0.1 increase in T/C ratio as from the 2017/18 school year

4.20 The Task Force recommends that EDB, after having considered this Report and reviewed teachers' professional development, should count the additional teaching posts from the 0.1 increase in T/C ratio in the calculation of promotion posts for teachers in accordance with the prevailing formula. This would provide additional manpower for taking forward various education initiatives in school, both at the basic rank and middle management level. This could also give schools some latitude in rolling out suitable deployment arrangements for their long-term planning and development.

(c) Senior teacher deployment arrangement

Views of Stakeholders

4.21 There are views that schools can make good use of the improved manpower provision at the middle management level, based on their school-based circumstances, to enrich senior teachers' roles and responsibilities, such as leading STEM education, positive education, student support, professional development of teachers, etc. to meet the needs of students and school development. There are also views that the spectrum of work of teachers at the middle management level can be

widened with equal emphasis on administration and teaching duties to provide promotion prospect for capable teachers with different expertise. It has been suggested that teachers with outstanding teaching performance should be promoted to senior teacher posts to take charge of professional development for improving the quality of education in schools. There are also views that schools should be able to make flexible arrangements on senior teacher deployments since they best understand their own needs and pace of development.

The Task Force's Deliberation and Recommendations

4.22 The Task Force considers that schools should leverage on the opportunity of the improvement of senior teacher manpower provision to plan deployment, strengthen professional capacity and promote professional growth. Schools should provide their teaching staff with ample support through effective supervision, guidance and counselling, mentoring, training and development, to help them rise to the challenges of their professional duties. Teaching staff should be encouraged to keep abreast of, and equip themselves with the latest knowledge and skills to meet students' continuously changing needs.

Recommendation 9: Schools to critically review senior teachers' roles and duties and plan deployments for capacity building and professional growth

4.23 The Task Force recommends that schools should critically review the various roles and responsibilities shouldered by senior teachers and plan deployment with a view to strengthening professional capacity and promoting professional growth. The Task Force suggests that senior teachers could be deployed to lead new areas which might have been neglected in the past due to resources constraints, for example, according more advancement opportunities to teachers with excellent teaching

performance to senior teacher positions designated for leading professional development and focused educational researches for a more vibrant school professional development culture; deploying senior teacher posts for leading and coordination of teaching Chinese as a second language, STEM education, etc. Another example is to consider deployment of senior teacher posts to lead the enhancement of student guidance under the policy of “One School Social Worker for Each School” in primary schools, etc. All these arrangements can encourage teachers to participate in continuing professional development, enhance professional capacity and realize their potential.

II. Ranking arrangement of principals and vice-principals

4.24 The Task Force notes that the loading and complexity of the work undertaken by principals and vice-principals have increased significantly with the implementation of various new education initiatives. The responsibilities they shoulder have become heavier, and society also expects them to possess more sophisticated professional leadership competencies.

(a) Salaries for school heads and deputy heads in primary schools

Views of Stakeholders

4.25 Regarding the salaries of school heads, there are views that the salaries of primary school heads set years ago have not been adjusted to take into account the significant developments in primary schools. Stakeholders feel that the operation and development of primary schools have undergone substantial changes over the years, and the work of school heads has become heavier and more complex. They urge improvement in salaries to duly reflect the responsibilities of the school heads. There are different suggestions on the magnitude of

improvement sought for, but stakeholders are generally of the view that the gap between the salaries of school heads in primary schools and those of principals in secondary schools should be narrowed and there should be a reasonable number of pay points in the pay scale of each of the ranks for school head positions. Furthermore, it has been suggested that the overlaps between the salary scales of different ranks should be removed. There are also views that school heads managing schools of larger scale should be paid allowance, and that heads of schools of smaller scale should be pegged at HM II rank.

4.26 Regarding the salaries of deputy heads in primary schools, the views are that the loading and complexity of their work have similarly increased with the development in primary education and various education initiatives and they now shoulder much heavier responsibilities. However, the current salary scale of deputy heads at SPSM rank consists of only two pay points. Such a pay scale cannot fairly reflect their important responsibilities in present day circumstances, and is unattractive.

The Task Force's Deliberation and Recommendations

4.27 The Task Force notes that the salaries of School Heads in primary schools were set many years ago based on the arrangements for half-day primary schooling. It is also recognized that over the past decades, numerous new education initiatives and developments including whole-day primary schooling, requirement for CFP and various education reform measures, as well as the increasingly sophisticated and complex society have impacted significantly on students' learning, development and growth. All these have imposed much heavier workload and demands on primary school heads and deputy heads. Their roles had grown significantly with much higher and complex responsibilities.

4.28 In particular, the gradual implementation of whole-day primary schooling since 1993 has brought on substantial changes to school operations and development, and hence more onerous duties, higher responsibilities and heavier workload of the school heads. The longer school days have enabled planning of more flexible curriculum and diversified student learning activities. The school heads need to lead their professional teaching teams in designing and delivering curricula that are conducive to promoting all-round education for the development of students' potential. The operation of whole-day classes with an expanded teaching force has rendered school administration more complex, requiring sophisticated professional and managerial leadership of the school heads.

4.29 With the creation of the PSM grade since the 1994/95 school year and the increase of graduate teacher posts over the years, schools have benefitted from the qualification upgrade and professional capacity enhancement of the teaching force. However, the organization hierarchy and the need for nurturing teacher professional growth and development have also become more complex demanding higher level of professional leadership competencies of the school heads.

4.30 The introduction of school-based management has also significantly changed the roles and responsibilities of school heads. Under the school-based management, schools have been devolved with more responsibilities in holistic planning, strategic development, design and delivery of curriculum, as well as personnel and financial management. The checks and balance from the Incorporated Management Committees, the participation of stakeholders in the school policy decision-making processes, the transparency in the school operations and accountability have further added to the challenges for the school heads.

4.31 Another major initiative that has impacted on the work of school leadership is the School Development and Accountability Framework launched in the 2003/04 school year which empowers schools to strengthen self-evaluation for continuous improvement and enhance accountability and transparency. With the school self-evaluation, school inspections and External School Review under this Framework, continuous self-improvement in schools are promoted through putting in place a systematic Planning-Implementation-Evaluation cycle. School heads shoulder the leading role in its strategic planning, implementation, continuous monitoring and effective evaluation to ensure enhancement of school effectiveness and quality.

4.32 The examples in the paragraphs above well illustrate how the multi-faceted work of school heads in primary schools has grown in complexity with the education developments over the years. School leaders are expected to be more professionally competent in their major domains of duties in strategic direction, learning and teaching, curriculum leadership, teacher professional development, staff and resources management, quality assurance and accountability, as well as external communication, connections and networking with the community. Since the 2004/05 school year, aspiring principals in both primary and secondary schools have been required to attain the CFP prior to appointment.

4.33 While there have been significant school development over the years, the salaries of the school heads set long ago based on half-day primary schooling have not been adjusted to reflect the substantial changes in the scope of work and the increased complexity of responsibilities. The Task Forces is of the view that the current arrangements are unsatisfactory and need to be rationalized to give due recognition to the important roles they play and the complex duties and responsibilities they shoulder.

4.34 The Task Force also finds the current overlapping salary scales for school heads at HM I, HM II ranks undesirable. HM II is deployed as head of school of smaller scale with 12 to 23 classes, whereas HM I is head of a school of larger scale with 24 classes or more. In terms of workload and responsibilities, especially in personnel management and resources deployment, there are differences in magnitude and complexity. The Task Force considers that the existing salaries for these two ranks have not adequately reflected the different levels of responsibilities involved, and that the overlapping salary scales should be rationalized.

4.35 The Task Force has taken note of the sizeable differences between the maximum pay points of school heads in primary schools and those of principals in secondary schools, and there have been calls from the sector for bringing them on par. The Task Force considers that it might be inappropriate to make direct comparison of the salaries for the school heads in primary schools and those for principals in secondary schools, given that there are differences in the breadth and depth of the respective curricula, impacts of public examination, focuses for student development, approaches to counselling adopted in life planning in the two sectors. Nonetheless, the Task Force acknowledges that the gaps in their salaries could be narrowed to better attract talents to join the primary sector for its long-term development.

4.36 Regarding the salaries for deputy heads, the Task Force notes that the creation of the SPSM rank for deputy heads in 2008 for assisting the school heads was an improvement to the structure of the PSM grade then, but its salary scale was constrained by the salaries of school heads and the scale was relatively short (only two pay points from MPS 34 to 35).

4.37 The Task Force is similarly of the view that the current salary scale for deputy head does not adequately reflect the importance and complexity of their responsibilities in the present day circumstances. Also, the two pay-point salary scale could not give due incremental credit in recognition of experience and expertise. Furthermore, in cash value, the current difference between the maximum pay of SPSM and PSM ranks is only about \$1,500, which renders the SPSM rank unattractive. The Task Force is of the view that there is a strong case for rationalizing their salary scale to provide reasonable incentives to encourage career progression.

4.38 The Task force finds the overlapping of salary scales of SPSM and HM II ranks undesirable as this could result in staff management problems arising from ranking relativity, for example, a deputy head at SPSM rank having the same pay as the school head at HM II rank. The Task Force is of the view that the overlap of salary scales should be rationalized.

4.39 For rationalizing the salaries for school heads and deputy heads in public sector primary schools (including special schools), the Task Force's recommendations are as follows:

Recommendation 10: Improving the salaries for school heads and deputy heads in public sector primary schools (including special schools)

4.40 The Task Force has taken into account the following principles in formulating the recommended salary scales for school heads and deputy heads in public sector primary schools:

- The salary scales should be improved to duly reflect and recognize the more important roles and responsibilities assumed

by school heads and deputy heads in primary schools, as well as loading and complexity of their work.

- The salary scales are to be improved to enhance attractiveness to provide reasonable incentives for teachers to take up school leadership roles, and more importantly, to attract talents to join the primary sector for its long-term development.
- The overlap of salary scales should be rationalized to suitably reflect the higher responsibilities for managing schools of larger scale and to avoid staff management issues arising from undue ranking relativity.
- It might not be appropriate to make direct comparison of the salaries for the school heads in primary schools and principals in secondary schools, given the differences in the breadth and depth of their respective curricular, impacts of public examination, focuses for student development, approaches to life planning counselling. However, there is scope to narrow the existing gaps in their salaries to attract talents to the primary sector.

4.41 Having carefully balanced all relevant factors, including ranking relativity, the Task Force recommends improvements to the salary scales for school heads and deputy heads in public sector primary schools as set out in **Table 13** below:

Table 13: Recommended salary scales for school heads and deputy heads in public sector primary schools

Rank	Existing Salary Scale	Recommended Salary Scale
HM I	MPS 38-41	MPS 44-47
HM II	MPS 35-39	MPS 40-43
SPSM	MPS 34-35	MPS 34-39

4.42 The Task Force considers that the recommended salary scale of SPSM rank (MPS 34 to 39) will provide career advancement prospects and incentives to generally attract talents to the primary sector, and specifically attract more PSMs to progress upwards into the school leadership ranks. Setting the salary scale of HM II and HM I at MPS 40 to 43 and MPS 44 to 47 respectively is considered reasonable having regard to their current workload and level of responsibilities. These proposed salary scales would narrow the existing gaps between the salary scales for the school heads in primary schools and principals in secondary schools. A scale consisting of four pay points could also better recognize the building up of experience and expertise in future.

4.43 The 2018 Policy Address has made clear that, in tandem with the full implementation of whole-day primary schooling and the all-graduate teaching force policy, there is a need to rationalize the salaries for school heads and deputy heads and improve the manpower at the middle management level in primary schools. The Task Force has thus submitted to the EDB in November 2018 its recommendations on these aspects so that the Government can take early follow-up.

Recommendation 11: EDB should elucidate to the school sector at an early opportunity the standing conversion arrangement for the adjusted pay scales

4.44 The Task Force understands that it is normal practice in the Civil Service to adopt the standing conversion arrangement when there is a need to convert the pay point upon revision of a salary scale. The Task Force recommends that EDB should elucidate to the school sector the standing conversion arrangement at an early opportunity, if the recommended salary scales for school heads and deputy heads in primary schools are to be implemented.

Recommendation 12: EDB should review the current arrangement and requirements for promotion to headship ranks in the primary sector

4.45 There are views that teachers at PSM and SPSM ranks have to be first appointed as school head at HM II rank in order to be eligible for consideration for promotion to HM I rank, whereas there is no such requirement in the secondary sector. The Task Force is of the view that the PSM grade possesses professional qualifications and competence for taking up the challenges of school leadership, and recommends that EDB reviews and rationalizes the current arrangement and requirements for promotion, with due reference to the practice in the secondary sector.

Related issues

4.46 During the consultation, there are also calls for a comprehensive review on the PSM grade. The Task Force notes that the recruitment or retention statistics thus far do not present a case for grade structure review yet. Furthermore, the Task Force considers that the recommended improvement of manpower at the middle management level and the rationalization of the salaries for school heads and deputy heads in primary schools, if implemented, would help rationalize the situation to a large extent. The Task Force does not consider a grade structure review is called for at this stage.

(b) Ranking of principals in secondary schools

Views of Stakeholders

4.47 There are views that the demarcation of headship ranking in secondary schools should keep abreast with the latest development and

appropriately reflect their leadership roles. There are also views that the New Senior Secondary Academic Structure has brought on significant changes in teaching and learning, student support and school administration, as well as altered the class structure in secondary schools. Some suggest that the ranking arrangement of principals should be improved. There is a general consensus among the stakeholders that the number of classes for determining the headship ranking in secondary schools should be adjusted, having regard to the current symmetrical class structure and the principals' increased workload. There is a suggestion for pegging the principal posts in schools of smaller scale at the Pr II rank.

The Task Force's Deliberation and Recommendations

4.48 The Task Force notes that currently headship ranking is determined on the basis of the number of classes, but the demarcation mechanism was designed primarily on the class structure in the past (schools typically adopted asymmetrical class structures, i.e. fewer classes in Secondary 4 to 5 than classes at junior secondary level, and less matriculation level classes than those at Secondary 4 and 5). With the implementation of the New Senior Secondary Academic Structure, most schools adopt symmetrical class structures (i.e. the numbers of classes are the same at all levels). The Task Force agrees that the demarcation arrangements for headship ranking in secondary schools should be reviewed to take into account the current symmetrical class structures and the latest school development.

4.49 The Task Force also notes that, unlike the primary schools which have been impacted by whole-day primary schooling, there has been no fundamental change in the operation of secondary schools. However, the implementation of the New Senior Secondary Academic Structure and various education initiatives (such as school-based management, School

Development and Accountability Framework, IT in education, STEM education, career and life planning, values education, catering for student diversity and students' mental health etc.) have significantly increased the loading of principals in secondary schools. They now shoulder more complex responsibilities and play a more important role.

4.50 Under the New Senior Secondary Academic Structure, all students can complete senior secondary education and further their studies if they so wish. Secondary schools need to offer a broad and balanced curriculum to prepare students for multiple pathways. Principals in secondary schools have to plan the curriculum strategically, promote collaboration across key learning areas, subject panels and functional groups, meet the diverse needs and interests of students, and effectively deploy human, financial, community and curriculum resources. Schools are also required to cater for learner diversity by facilitating the development of the more able students on the one hand and supporting the less able ones' learning, on the other.

4.51 The Task Force is aware of that, unlike primary schools, under the Secondary School Places Allocation System, places are allocated according to student's allocation band, parental choice of schools and a random number in the Central Allocation stage. Secondary schools of medium and smaller scales often admit more student groups requiring special care, such as students with special educational needs and academic low achievers. This adds to the challenges of the principals in leading the design and implementation of curriculum and student support. The Task Force considers that the current number of classes used to demarcate principals' ranking should be adjusted to reflect the responsibilities they shoulder and recommends the following:

Recommendation 13: Improving the demarcation arrangements for headship rankings in public sector secondary schools (including special schools)

4.52 In view of the symmetrical class structure commonly adopted in secondary schools and the development of school operations nowadays, the Task Force recommends to lower the number of classes in demarcating the headship ranking in secondary schools as set out in **Table 14** to suitably reflect the heavier responsibilities now shouldered by principals in secondary schools.

Table 14: Demarcation arrangement for headship ranking in secondary schools

Rank	Existing number of classes	Recommended number of classes
Pr I	24 classes or more	18 classes or more
Pr II	15-23 classes	12-17 classes
PGM	14 classes or less	11 classes or less

4.53 Regarding the suggestion of pegging the headship in schools of smaller scale at Pr II rank, the Task Force envisages that the situation would be much improved with the implementation of the proposed recommendations in Table 14, whereby the vast majority of principal posts in secondary schools would be pegged at Pr I or Pr II rank then.

(c) Ranking of principals in special schools

Views of Stakeholders

4.54 There are views that the principals in special schools have equally substantial workload and responsibilities as those in primary and secondary schools. The education reform initiatives and curriculum implemented in ordinary primary and secondary schools are also implemented in special schools. Apart from managing teaching staff, principals in special schools also need to manage other specialist staff. Besides, some principals have to manage boarding section or provide support services to other schools. The workload they shoulder is heavy and responsibilities complex. It has also been pointed out that the number of classes in special schools is comparatively small, as a result of which many principal posts can only be pegged at the PGM rank and this could not duly reflect or recognize their onerous duties in school operations.

The Task Force's Deliberation and Recommendations

4.55 The Task Force notes that the majority of special schools operate both primary and secondary sections, and the principals are managing both sections. The education initiatives implemented in public sector ordinary schools (such as school-based management, CFP and New Senior Secondary Academic Structure) are implemented in special schools as well. In addition to catering to the complex learning needs of their students, special schools have to render additional support to those students with special medical conditions. Furthermore, their principals carry rather extensive leadership coverage, managing teaching staff as well as specialist staff from different professional disciplines (including educational psychologist, physiotherapist, occupational therapist, speech therapist, nurse and social worker, etc.). For special schools which

provide boarding places, the principals have to manage also staff of the boarding section as well. Their management duties of leading cross-professional collaboration, staff development, training, etc. are complex. The Task Force considers that principals in special schools will need to possess knowledge on various professions in order to cope with these challenges.

4.56 The Task Force understands that under the current arrangement for determining headship ranking and manpower of vice-principals in the special schools involves some complicated conversion and calculation under a weighting system. The numbers of primary, junior secondary and senior secondary classes in the special schools are first converted into numbers of equivalent classes by applying the weighting system and then the total number will be adjusted with a relativity ratio to arrive at a number for demarcating the headship ranking. Given their special nature of their student intake, there could be considerable fluctuations in the number of classes in the primary and secondary sections every year which could impact on the stability of the rank of the headship posts and adversely affect morale. For example, if there is a decrease by one class in the senior secondary level and an increase by one class in the junior secondary level in a school, although the total approved number of classes remains unchanged, the converted number of equivalent classes used to determine headship ranking will alter, which may affect the ranking of the principal post.

4.57 The Task Force considers that apart from providing corresponding improvements to the ranking arrangement for the principal posts in special schools under recommendations 10 and 13 above, the conversion arrangement for determining headship ranking and manpower provision of vice-principals should also be improved so as to reflect more fairly the responsibilities of principals in special schools, and to minimize the

impact of the year-on-year fluctuations in the number of classes on the headship ranking.

Recommendation 14: Improving the conversion arrangement for determining the headship ranking and provision of vice-principals in special schools with combined levels and special secondary schools

4.58 The Task Force thus recommends that the weighting system for determining headship ranking in special schools with both primary and secondary levels and special secondary schools should be improved as shown in **Table 15**. It is also proposed that the number of equivalent classes derived from conversion will further be converted to a number of ordinary secondary classes by applying a relativity ratio (every 18 equivalent special classes are converted to 24 ordinary classes) and rounded off, to arrive at a value for determining the headship ranking in special schools. The recommendation is similarly applicable to determining the provision of vice-principals in special schools.

Table 15: Recommended weighting system for determining headship ranking in special schools

Special school class	Existing number of equivalent classes	Recommended number of equivalent classes
1 special school primary class	0.6	1
1 special school junior secondary class	0.8	1
1 special school senior secondary class	1	1

4.59 The Task Force considers that the recommended weighting system will be able to minimize the influence of the fluctuations in the

number of classes at different levels every year on the headship ranking, maintaining stability of the headship ranking. It will also improve the ranking of some principals through an increased number of equivalent classes, and reflect more fairly on their responsibilities.

III. Manpower of vice-principals

(a) Manpower of vice-principals in primary and secondary schools

Views of Stakeholders

4.60 There are views that there is a need to review the manpower of vice-principals as the work of schools has become more complex due to changes of the academic structure, rapid development in societal culture, and the changing needs of students' learning and growth. Regarding the number of vice-principal posts in schools, there are views that schools should be provided with vice-principal post(s) regardless of their sizes. There are also views that the manpower of vice-principals should be increased, with three posts for schools of larger scale, so that they can be more focused on specific aspects of work in schools.

The Task Force's Deliberation and Recommendations

4.61 The Task Force notes that apart from classroom teaching, vice-principals in primary and secondary schools also need to assist the principals in the three major domains of responsibilities, including curriculum development, student support and school administration. They have to manage and coordinate subject panels (such as: Chinese language education, English language education, Mathematics education, etc.), functional groups (such as: guidance and discipline, extra-curricular

activities, information technology, etc.) and administration (such as: school premises maintenance and repair, external liaison, teacher professional development, etc.). Consequent upon the implementation of various education initiatives, vice-principals need to take on an increased number of tasks requiring management, coordination and leadership (such as implementing STEM education, values education, teaching Chinese as a second language, integrated education, life planning education, e-learning, teacher professional development, etc.).

4.62 Under school-based management, schools are devolved with more responsibilities in personnel and financial management. Various new education initiatives have also been implemented in the school sector. The Task Force notes that the loading and complexity of the tasks managed, coordinated and led by vice-principals have increased. The impact on managing schools of larger scale is even more significant. The Task Force notes that some schools of larger scale have arranged for senior teachers to take up the role of assistant principals so as to share out the vice-principals' workload. The Task Force concludes that there is a need to review the manpower of vice-principals in schools of larger scale.

4.63 Some stakeholders suggest that schools of smaller scale should also be provided with a vice-principal post. The Task Force understands that in the smaller primary and secondary schools, the ranks of the principals are SPSM and PGM respectively. If vice-principal posts are provided in these schools, they will be at the same rank as the principals and this could cause staff management issues. The Task Force is of the view that there is genuine practical difficulty in providing vice-principal posts in schools of smaller scale. On the other hand, the improvements in the middle management level in schools as proposed in recommendations 7 and 8 would be able to make available more senior teachers who could be deployed to share school management duties.

Recommendation 15: Improving the manpower of vice-principals in public sector primary and secondary schools (including special schools) of larger scale

4.64 The Task Force recommends that the manpower arrangement of vice-principals in public sector primary and secondary schools of larger scale be improved as follows (Tables 16 and 17):

Table 16: Recommended manpower arrangement for deputy heads in public sector primary schools

Approved number of classes	Existing number of deputy heads	Recommended number of deputy heads
24 classes or more	2	3
18 to 23 classes	1	2
12 to 17 classes	1	1
11 classes or less	--	--

Table 17: Recommended manpower arrangement for vice-principals in public sector secondary schools

Approved number of classes	Existing number of vice-principals	Recommended number of vice-principals
24 classes or more	2	3
15 to 23 classes	2	2
12 to 14 classes	--	2
11 classes or less	--	--

4.65 The Task Force is of the view that the work is more complex and loading heavier in the schools of larger scale, and thus recommends that the third vice-principal post be provided in schools with 24 classes or more, i.e. schools of larger scale. The Task Force is aware of that the

majority of primary and secondary schools have 24 approved classes or more. If the recommendation is accepted, there will be additional manpower of vice-principals in most schools to lead and coordinate various duties for school development, thereby further enhancing the quality of education.

4.66 As regards the manpower arrangement for deputy heads in primary schools, the Task Force recommends a corresponding increase of 1 deputy head for schools with 18 to 23 classes, which can better reflect the different levels of workload and work complexity in managing schools of different scales.

4.67 In addition, since most secondary schools adopt symmetrical class structure nowadays, the Task Force recommends that the thresholds of approved class for the provision of vice-principals be lowered from 15 classes to 12 classes.

(b) Manpower arrangement for vice-principals in special schools

Views of Stakeholders

4.68 There are views that the workload in special schools is heavy, so the number of vice-principal posts should be increased to assist the principals to manage the schools. Some suggest that as the vast majority of special schools operate both primary and secondary sections, a vice-principal post should also be provided to special schools of smaller scale, taking into account their unique circumstances. There are also views that most of the principals in special schools are at a rank in the secondary section. Deputy heads in the primary section who wish to take up the principal posts have to undergo a long period of acting

appointment in order to meet the relevant requirements on teaching experience. It is suggested that the arrangement should be rationalized.

The Task Force's Deliberation and Recommendations

4.69 The Task Force notes that special schools face the same increase in workload and work complexity as ordinary primary and secondary schools. The Task Force considers that the improvement in the manpower arrangement of vice-principals in primary and secondary schools as proposed in recommendation 15, together with the improvement in the conversion arrangement for determining the provision of vice-principals in special schools as proposed in recommendation 14 will be able to effectively address the manpower issue of vice-principals in special schools.

4.70 The Task Force accepts that the vast majority of special schools operate both primary and secondary sections, and their curricula and focuses for student development in these sections are different. The Task Force agrees that the management duties in special schools are both extensive and complex in respect of catering to the diverse needs of students, and leading a cross-professional team. After considering the unique circumstances of special schools, the Task Force is convinced that, in addition to increasing the manpower at the middle management level, it is justified to strengthen school management at a higher level to take charge of coordination and leadership. The Task Force is aware of that the genuine difficulty for providing vice-principal posts, as faced by ordinary schools of smaller scale referred to and mentioned in paragraph 4.63, may not be entirely applicable to special schools. If there are both primary and secondary sections in a special school, the principal will be at a rank in the secondary section. Consideration may be given for

providing the special schools with a deputy head post to be deployed in the primary section.

4.71 The Task Force notes that for special schools with both primary and secondary sections, the vice-principal posts are currently provided to either the primary or the secondary section, but not both. The Task Force considers that more flexibility could be allowed in the arrangement which should be improved.

Recommendation 16: Improving the manpower arrangements for vice-principals in special schools with combined levels

4.72 The Task Force recommends that deputy head posts be provided to special schools with primary and secondary levels and of smaller scale (operating 11 equivalent ordinary secondary classes or less). The principals of these schools are at a rank in the secondary level, so a deputy head post could be provided in the primary section to strengthen the management effectiveness of the schools and to avoid causing staff management issue arising from having principal and vice-principal at the same rank. The Task Force also recommends that for special schools with 2 or more vice-principals, the vice-principal posts can be provided to both primary and secondary sections. The proposed arrangement will be in line with the school organization structure and can better assist the principals to manage both sections and enhance management effectiveness.

Recommendation 17: Improving the arrangements for promotion to principal posts in special schools

4.73 The Task Force notes that the vast majority of the principals in special schools are at a rank in the secondary section and there are hurdles for the deputy head in the primary section to advance to the

principal posts at a different school level. Under the existing arrangements, deputy heads in the primary section who wish to take up the principal posts are required to accumulate teaching experience in the secondary section in order to meet the requirements for promotion. The current restrictions are not conducive to the succession arrangements for the principals. The Task Force recommends that such requirements be suitably relaxed so as to expand the pool of talents for the principal posts in special schools.

Chapter 5

Commendation on Outstanding Teachers

Current State of Play

5.1 The EDB organizes from time to time large-scale events to commend on outstanding teachers in order to recognize teachers' contributions, enhance their professional image and nurture the culture for pursuing excellence. For instance, the Committee on Respect Our Teachers Campaign organizes annual Teachers' Day and Commendation Certificate Presentation Ceremony; the EDB presents annually The Chief Executive's Award for Teaching Excellence (CEATE) to accomplished teachers who demonstrate exemplary teaching practices in different domains. Furthermore, COTAP has also launched the "T-applause" initiative under the "T-excel@hk" umbrella scheme to celebrate the achievements of outstanding teachers. In addition, professional organizations also initiate thematic commendation events or nomination schemes for outstanding teachers.

View of Stakeholders

5.2 Stakeholders generally agree that more teacher commendation schemes should be introduced to recognize outstanding performance of teachers. Some suggest that the commendation for outstanding teachers could be linked to promotion, reserving a certain proportion of promotion posts for outstanding teachers and providing them with monetary rewards. This could enable outstanding teachers in promotion posts to focus on teaching, leading schools in learning and teaching, as well as supporting the culture of education research. Some stakeholders are of the view that the application and assessment procedures of some teacher commendation schemes are unduly complicated, imposing considerable

paper work on the applicants (such as personal statements, teaching plans, video recordings of lesson etc. for submission to the vetting committees). This might discourage outstanding teachers from participating in the commendation schemes.

The Task Force's Deliberation and Recommendations

5.3 The Task Force has studied overseas experience in enhancing teachers' professional image and status. There are different schemes in different regions, each with its distinct features. Examples include the Chartered Teachers in the United Kingdom¹⁹, Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers in Australia²⁰, Master Teachers in Singapore²¹ and Master Teachers in Mainland of China²². In addition to their own academic qualifications, teachers could acquire under these schemes professionally and publicly recognized qualifications through training and development courses, participation in professional development activities, teaching performance evaluation or sharing of teaching research experiences etc. These professional qualifications are highly recognized by the education sector and society and they help promote teachers' professional image.

5.4 The Task Force notes that some of these commendation schemes are established at national and international levels with distinguished reputation and extensive recognition. The Task Force considers that schools and EDB could encourage more teachers to participate in non-local outstanding teacher commendation schemes and share their experiences on regional and international platforms. These would help

¹⁹ Chartered Teacher: <https://chartered.college/chartered-teacher>

²⁰ Certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers in Australia: <https://www.aitsl.edu.au/tools-resources/resource/guide-to-the-certification-of-highly-accomplished-and-lead-teachers-in-australia>

²¹ Master Teacher: <https://www.moe.gov.sg/careers/teach/career-information>

²² Master Teacher (特級教師): http://www.moe.gov.cn/srcsite/A02/s5911/moe_621/199301/t19930110_81916.html

showcase the achievements and teaching excellence of Hong Kong teachers and promote teachers' professional status.

5.5 The Task Force agrees that the outstanding performance of teachers could be recognized through teacher commendation schemes at different levels to enhance awareness among the teaching profession and societal understanding of teachers' outstanding performance, and promote teachers' professional status. These commendation schemes could help identify more outstanding teachers for promoting professional exchange and the culture of professional growth.

5.6 The Task Force considers that teacher promotions should be evaluated based on the teachers' competencies, potentials and leadership qualities and capabilities to lead teaching teams and school development. Promotion is mainly to enable outstanding teachers to realize their strengths and potential in the higher ranks, rather than solely for rewarding outstanding performance. The Task Force is of the view that under the school-based management policy, schools can already consider individual school contexts to reward outstanding teachers through promotion. To rigidly linking commendation to promotion is thus considered unnecessary.

5.7 The Task Force has drawn up the following recommendations on commendation on outstanding teachers:

Recommendation 18: Establishing Commendation Schemes at Multiple Levels to Recognize Teachers with Outstanding Performance

5.8 The Task Force recommends that, apart from CEATE, Teachers' Day and various "T-applause" initiatives, more commendation schemes

be established to acknowledge outstanding educators at the district- and territory-level, including schemes for:

- Principals and vice-principals: with school leadership competencies as the key assessment domain to recognize efforts in promoting school improvement, school changes, and building team culture, etc.;
- Middle leaders: Teachers' professional development as the key assessment domain to recognize efforts in promoting teachers' professional development, building professional learning communities, and mentoring teachers at different professional development stages;
- Teachers with distinguished contributions to the education: Continuous efforts and commitment to the whole teaching profession as the key assessment domain to recognize exceptional contributions to the teaching profession or for a substantial period.

5.9 The Task Force recommends that the new commendation schemes should be reputable, with renowned education experts serving on the assessment panels. More diversified approaches can be adopted in the selection process, for example, inviting nomination, self-recommendation, and expert evaluation, to help identify outstanding teachers with various strengths. These commendation schemes can be implemented at the school, regional, and territory-wide levels, with commendation certificates presented by the Secretary for Education or Chief Executive. COTAP could be invited to work out these schemes in detail.

5.10 At the school level, the Task Force recommends that the title of "Expert Teacher" be created to recognize outstanding teachers and acknowledge their contributions in learning and teaching, education research, and developing professional learning communities. Taking into account school-based needs, schools may promote "Expert Teachers"

to middle management posts for leading the development of learning and teaching in schools, and achieving excellence in instructional leadership.

5.11 The Task Force recommends that these “Expert Teachers” could form cross-school professional learning communities to share, consolidate and disseminate valuable experience to the whole teaching profession to promote the culture of professional sharing and exchange.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

6.1 The Task Force envisions that the establishment of the Professional Ladder for Teachers in Hong Kong will further intensify the positive impact of the policies on teacher professional development in the past; open up new directions for promoting the professional growth of teachers; enhance societal recognition of the teaching profession and raise its professional status.

6.2 The Task Force has also recommended a series of multi-faceted strategies to promote the Professional Ladder for Teachers, including implementing the all-graduate teaching force policy, advancing the career prospects of teachers, enhancing the school management ranking and deployment arrangement, and commending on outstanding teachers. Whilst implementing these recommended strategies may well require considerable financial commitment of the Government, the Task Force is confident that they will effectively steer the teaching profession to continuously renew their professional knowledge and skills, scale up their professional capacity and management efficiency, and ultimately provide our students with quality education to be better prepared for the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century.

6.3 In the past months, the Task Force has undergone in-depth studies and reviews, active interactions with stakeholders, extensive gauging of feedback and thorough and iterative deliberation, which have culminated in the detailed proposals contained in this Report. The Task Force appeals to the Education Bureau for its favourable consideration of these recommendations, and their early implementation which will add to the impetus for the future development of education in Hong Kong.

6.4 The staunch support of the education sector and stakeholders has greatly contributed to the Task Force's smooth operation and successful completion of this Report. The Task Force would like to extend its heartfelt gratitude to stakeholders for their active participation in various focus group and consultation sessions, for their candid and rational exchange and sharing of views and suggestions through various channels. The Task Force is also deeply appreciative of the relentless support and assistance of the Secretariat throughout the process.

Task Force on Professional Development of Teachers

Terms of Reference

To establish a platform to discuss and gauge professional views on enhancing and promoting professional development of teachers, and to make recommendations to the Secretary for Education on related issues; the following areas will also be covered:

- (1) feasible options of establishing a professional ladder for teachers, which includes recognition of teachers' expertise in various areas of teaching and learning (such as in specific subjects, guidance, teaching Chinese as a second language and supporting students with special educational needs, etc.);
- (2) ranking arrangement of school management of primary, secondary and special schools; and
- (3) timetable for an all-graduate teaching force.

Task Force on Professional Development of Teachers

Membership

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Dr Carrie WILLIS

Non-official members

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Ms CHEUNG Wai-ye, Addy

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**Summary of Preliminary Recommendations in the
Consultation Document of the
Task Force on Professional Development of Teachers**

Establishing a Professional Ladder for Teachers

- (1) The objectives of the Professional Ladder for Teachers are to include:
 - i. enhancing teachers' professional growth; and
 - ii. raising teachers' professional status.

- (2) The Professional Ladder for Teachers is to set out the substance and pathway of teachers' professional growth, which include:
 - i. core elements of teachers' professional growth; and
 - ii. professional leadership competencies required in realising career aspiration in the education sector.

- (3) The three core elements in teachers' professional growth, with which teachers should equip themselves, are to include:
 - i. professional competencies;
 - ii. professional values and conduct; and
 - iii. aspiration for self-advancement through self-reflection.

Enhancing Teachers' Professional Growth

- (4) Build on the present foundation, integrate the core elements of teachers' professional growth and "T-standard⁺" to establish a Professional Ladder for Teachers, which could be extensively applicable to the entire teaching profession. Undertake further study on the professional competencies required of the teaching profession, at different stages of growth and in different career positions, so as to provide them with useful reference for proper planning and development of their professional growth.

- (5) Review the holistic planning and contents of existing initial teacher education, continuing professional development and school leadership

training to align with the vision and objectives of the Professional Ladder for Teachers.

- (6) Promote the Professional Ladder for Teachers at all levels including the individual, school and system levels.
- (7) Invite COTAP to take up the responsibilities to plan, implement and monitor the further development of the Professional Ladder for Teachers, to ensure that the vision of the Professional Ladder is realised and the quality of teacher's professional development is enhanced.

Raising Teachers' Professional Status

A. Commendation on Outstanding Teachers

- (8) Build on the foundation of "T-applause" to establish systematic, multilevel and diversified commendation schemes in recognition of the outstanding achievements of teachers and principals in different domains.
- (9) With reference to overseas experience, establish large-scale and publicly recognised commendation schemes for teachers, such as awarding outstanding teachers with respectable honours.

B. Advancing the Career Prospects of Teachers, Enhancing the School Management Ranking and Deployment Arrangements

- (10) Improve the manpower at the middle-management level in primary schools to coordinate the implementation of various education initiatives and meet the schools' long-term developmental needs.
- (11) Count the additional teaching posts generated from the 0.1 increase in teacher-to-class ratio towards the calculation of promotion posts in secondary schools in accordance with the prevailing formula.
- (12) Schools should make use of the opportunities of an enhanced provision of senior teachers to review and rearrange the functions and roles of senior teachers, so as to support the schools'

development and long-term planning, strengthen the professional capacity of the teaching force, accord due recognition to teacher's expertise, and encourage teachers to acquire relevant knowledge and skills to meet students' needs.

- (13) Review and improve the salaries for principals and vice-principals in primary schools.
- (14) Review the demarcation arrangements for headship rankings in secondary schools, taking into account their current symmetrical class structures and the latest situation of their operation.
- (15) Review the manpower arrangements for vice-principals in primary and secondary schools of larger scale.
- (16) The Education Bureau and schools to collaborate to review the training requirements for the teaching profession at different stages, and support them with sufficient and updated professional development programmes to ensure that relevant training requirements are fulfilled before promotion.
- (17) Consider corresponding measures for enhancing the ranking and deployment arrangements for the school management in special schools that operate classes at primary and secondary levels.

C. All-graduate Teaching Force

- (18) Implement the policy on an all-graduate teaching force as soon as practicable to raise the professional status of teachers and enhance the quality of education.
- (19) The timetable for implementation of the all-graduate teaching force policy should be practical, taking into account the current situation of school operations, and dovetailing with the proposed improvement in the manpower provision at the middle-management level in primary schools.
- (20) School could make use of the opportunity of implementing the all-graduate teaching force policy to further enhance the professional

roles and functions of teachers, and foster the culture of professional development.