

This is the version of the original paper which has been edited for length.

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COMMUNITY SPORTS COMMITTEE

Review of the School Sports Programme Coordinator Pilot Scheme

Purpose

This paper aims to report on the implementation progress of the School Sports Programme Coordinator Pilot Scheme (the Scheme) and the review of its effectiveness.

Background

2. The Home Affairs Bureau and the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) jointly launched the three-year Scheme on a trial basis in September 2012 with support from the Education Bureau and the Hong Kong Sports Institute (HKSI). Under the Scheme, each participating school was granted an annual subvention of up to \$300,000 (a total of \$900,000 for three years) from the Arts and Sport Development Fund to organise activities under its sports development plan (the plan) and to employ a retired athlete as its School Sports Programme Coordinator (SSPC). The SSPCs recommended by the HKSI were posted to the participating secondary schools to implement the plan of the school and help the school participate in the activities under the LCSD's School Sports Programme. The main objectives of the Scheme are to provide students with more opportunities to participate in sports so as to promote a sporting culture in schools, to identify students with sports potential for further training, and to provide an on-the-job training platform for retired athletes for further career development.

3. A review of the effectiveness of the Scheme had been conducted one year after its implementation, and Members were briefed on 28 February 2014. The findings of the review show that the Scheme has achieved initial results. A comprehensive review of the Scheme will be conducted after the second year of its implementation and Members will be briefed on the findings and the way forward.

Implementation

4. We invited aided/government secondary schools in the territory to join the Scheme and selected 15 schools from 41 applicants according to a marking scheme. The participating schools and the retired athletes were then paired up, taking into account the submitted plans of the former and the preferences of the latter. In August 2013 (end of the first school year), a total of 14 retired athletes were appointed as SSPCs. As at February 2014, all 15 SSPC openings were filled. Three of the SSPCs later resigned and the vacancies were filled by a replacement provided by the HKSI, and Temporary Organisers with experience in organising activities who were employed by the schools concerned on short-term contracts.

5. In the 2012-13 and 2013-14 school years, 384 activities were organised by the SSPCs of the 15 schools with the participation of more than 86 000 students. A total funding of about \$8.3 million was granted for these activities to cover the salaries of the SSPCs and activity costs. Major projects under the plans of the participating schools included: (a) acquisition of sports equipment such as fitness equipment and sporting goods; (b) introduction of new sports and formation of new school teams; (c) organisation of diversified promotion activities for sports, including training and competitions in various sports, play-ins, exhibitions, cheering teams, training for competition officials and sport captains, experience-sharing sessions and sports exchanges; (d) formation of various sports clubs; and (e) organisation of activities in promotion of a healthy lifestyle such as health talks.

Support for the SSPCs

6. The SSPCs, ranging from 21 to 32 in age when appointed, all held qualifications at Form 5 level or above and had represented Hong Kong at international competitions. Since most of them lacked full-time work experience, we required that the schools appoint one or two mentors to assist the SSPCs in their routine duties. The HKSI provided the SSPCs with pre-service and on-the-job training, which mainly included courses on basic administrative management, activities organisation, communication skills, clerical work and basic computer applications. In addition, we required that the schools let the SSPCs work flexible hours. This would allow them the time to pursue further studies so as to acquire higher academic qualifications and enhance their

competitive edge. Education subsidies were available from the HKSI or the Sports Federation and Olympic Committee of Hong Kong, China (SF&OC) on application.

Review of the effectiveness of the Scheme

7. After implementing for two school years, the Scheme has achieved the intended results in respect of all objectives. The details are given below:

(a) Offering more opportunities for sports activities to promote a sporting culture in schools

8. During the 2012-13 and 2013-14 school years, the SSPCs from the 15 schools gained experience in organising sports activities. The number of activities organised for students was 384, roughly equivalent to 90% (86%) of the planned activities. Two schools (Pui Ching Middle School and Leung Shek Chee College) fully met their respective targets (100%). In another school, only about 70% of the planned activities were organised, mainly due to the inability of its SSPC to cope with the work involved in activities organisation. The SSPC in question left the employment of the school concerned in September 2013 and was replaced by another SSPC in December of the same year. Some planned activities in other schools were not held as scheduled, mainly due to competition from other school activities for venues or clashes with such activities.

9. The Scheme sought to enhance students' interest in sports by offering them more opportunities to take part in sports activities and introducing them to a wider range of sports, including those that were less accessible to students (such as dodgeball, BMX cycling, hockey, windsurfing, archery, canoeing, Pilates, boxing, billiards, rowing, triathlon, skating, shooting, sport climbing, Ultimate, golf and rope skipping). During the two school years, the participating schools used the resources provided to acquire new training equipment, introduce 62 new types of sports, form 67 new school teams and organise a variety of sports and health promotion activities (including sports training; training for competition officials, sport captains and cheering teams; visits to sports facilities such as the Hong Kong Jockey Club International BMX Park; experience-sharing sessions with the Hong Kong teams; joint schools sports exchanges; sports psychology workshops; and healthy diets design

competitions). More than 86 000 students, including 2 500 ones who were less active, took part in these diversified activities, which indeed promoted the sporting atmosphere and culture in schools. Moreover, the SSPCs played a crucial role in the School Sports Programme, and helped it to run more smoothly with increased student participation. The “SportACT” award scheme showed the most prominent growth in the number of participants, under which students would be awarded with certificates if they took part in sports activities regularly and had met a fixed target in terms of the amount of exercise done. The number of students from the participating schools who obtained certificates under the SportACT award scheme almost doubled from 1 215 in the 2011-12 school year to 2 349 in the 2013-14 school year.

(b) Raising students’ sports standards and identifying athletes with potential

10. To consolidate training, the SSPCs acquired new physical and sports training equipment and brought new training methods (such as the Total Resistance eXercise (TRX)) to the schools. There were even schools that developed sports training and management software for analysing and raising the performance of student athletes. Equipped with enhanced physical capabilities and skills, and benefiting from pre-match experience-sharing by the SSPCs, the new school teams won a total of 46 awards in different areas of sport over the two school years. Some participating schools organised inter-school invitation tournaments among themselves to sharpen the skills of the student athletes and raise the overall sports standards. Furthermore, with their perseverance in pursuing sporting excellence, the SSPCs were worthy role models that could inspire students to become elite athletes and in turn nurture new talents for the local sports scene. The two school years saw 56 students with potential in different sports identified and recommended to relevant national sports associations (NSAs) for further training, for instance, as members of regional/junior squads. Among them, three were recruited into youth squads (in archery, cycling and rugby). Two of these three young athletes represented Hong Kong in international events, and Leung Chung-pak from the Chinese YMCA College won a silver medal in the National Junior Cycling Championships road race.

(c) Retired athletes' future career development

11. Over the two school years, the SSPCs strived to gain experience in sports administration while receiving job-oriented training from the HKSI. It was noted during activities they organised that their activities organisation skills had improved. The SSPCs also made optimal use of their spare time by pursuing further studies to equip themselves. During the two school years, 12 of the SSPCs engaged in further studies, mainly at diploma or bachelor's degree level in the fields of physical education/leisure/recreation/sports management. Some of them studied for a master's degree or took practical short courses on subjects like first aid, sports injury and coaching. As at October 2014, around \$300,000 were offered to the SSPCs by the HKSI and SF&OC as education subsidies. The highest qualifications attained by the SSPCs prior to appointment and to be obtained in 2015 are set out as follows:

Level	Highest qualification attained prior to appointment	Highest qualification to be obtained in 2015
Form 5 / Yi Jin / Certificate	8 (One will progress to the diploma level and two to bachelor's degree)	5 (Two intend to enrol in higher diploma programmes; one will complete a bachelor's degree programme in 2017)
Diploma / Associate Degree	2 (One will progress to the master's degree level)	2
Bachelor's Degree	5 (One has obtained a master's degree)	6 (One will complete a master's degree programme in 2016)
Master's Degree	0	2
Total		15

12. An overview of the further studies pursued by the SSPCs reveals that ten of them (67%) will obtain / will have obtained a qualification at the diploma level or above by 2015. At the joint schools experience-sharing session held in June 2014, the SSPCs unanimously agreed that the Scheme had provided them with an ideal on-the-job training platform and improved their capabilities at work. About half of the SSPCs indicated that they would seek an alternative career path upon completion of the three-year Scheme. Most of them intended

to embark on a career in the field of recreation and sports services, such as working for the LCSD or NSAs. Some SSPCs planned to work as a teacher or coach, while some expressed a liking for their jobs and hoped that they could continue to serve their schools and students after the end of the Scheme.

Stakeholders' views

13. We learnt from the school visits, experience-sharing sessions and the questionnaire survey that the Scheme was favourably received by the participating schools, their students and the SSPCs. They hoped that the Scheme would continue to be run so that more schools, students and retired athletes could benefit. As regards the future mode of operation, the views of school principals/teachers and SSPCs are summarised as follows:

	Views / Suggestions
Schools	Increase the number of participating schools to allow more schools to benefit
	Increase the subvention so that more sports activities can be organised
	Raise the salary of SSPCs
	Put in place a fair and open mechanism for school selection
SSPCs	Align the key terms of employment for equal treatment among all SSPCs
	Provide newly appointed SSPCs with basic pre-service training before they are posted to schools
	Enhance the understanding of school principals, teachers and students on the role and duties of SSPCs to avoid confusion

14. In summary, the Scheme has made extra resources available to participating schools, allowing them to acquire additional sports equipment and provide their students with more opportunities to participate in sports, thereby creating a vibrant sporting culture on campus, enhancing students' interest in sports, encouraging them to exercise regularly and adopt a healthy lifestyle, as well as bringing new blood to the local sports sector. The Scheme has also served as an on-the-job training platform for retired athletes. It has allowed them to gain valuable experience in their familiar sporting field and take advantage of the learning opportunities. This would help them make a

successful career change and launch a second career. The Scheme can thus be regarded as a three-win plan for retired athletes, students and schools.

Way Forward

15. Given the positive review findings and the support from schools, students and SSPCs, we will continue to implement the Scheme subject to available resources. To ensure the smooth running of the Scheme, we will refine its mode of operation in the light of views from stakeholders.

Presentation

16. Members are invited to note the implementation progress and effectiveness evaluation of the Scheme, and the mode of operation of the Scheme to be launched next year.

Community Sports Committee Secretariat
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