

# Section 3

## Responsibilities of the Incorporated Management Committee

The IMC seeks to govern the school with a view to promoting quality education and improving the learning outcomes of students. To steer the school for continuous development, the IMC is responsible for developing the general direction for the school, formulating its educational and management policies, overseeing the planning and budgetary processes, monitoring performance, ensuring accountability and strengthening the community network.

### 3.1 Strategic Planning

- (a) In fulfilling their obligations and duties, members of the IMC have to bear in mind the crucial role they play. Their creativity and energy should be focused on key issues such as building vision/mission, setting goals and formulating policies, whilst the day-to-day management of the school is left to the principal and staff.
- (b) With the school-based management governance framework being put in place, the IMC is given more autonomy in funding and administrative management. In formulating school policies and procedures, the IMC needs to develop a set of open and fair principles that guide decisions and actions. The IMC has to ensure that the school is transparent and accountable to the community for the school's operation and the proper use of public funds.
- (c) A self-managing school is also accountable for the quality of the education it delivers. For this purpose, the IMC should ensure that a self-evaluation mechanism is in place to evaluate the standards of the school's provision and identify areas for improvement and further development. The evaluation should focus not only on students' academic performance but also on their non-academic achievement.



### 3.1.1 School Development Plan

The School Development Plan (SDP) is a blueprint for school development setting out the priorities and strategies for a longer-term period, say three years. As every school has its own individuality, there is no model plan that fits all schools. The key elements of the SDP should normally include:

- the school vision and mission
- major concerns
- intended outcome/targets
- implementation strategies for each major concern
- the time scale for each strategy

### 3.1.2 Annual School Plan

(a) Based on the SDP and the major concerns defined for each year, the Annual School Plan (ASP) helps guide the school's activities and sets out the implementation details for action during the year. Based on a shared vision and direction, all aspects of school activities are woven together in a coordinated and coherent manner. As every school has its own individuality, there is no model plan that fits all schools. The key elements of the ASP should normally include

- the school vision and mission
- major concerns
- the tasks through which the objectives will be achieved and their time scales
- resources required for the tasks
- success criteria and methods of evaluation for assessing performance

- persons responsible for implementation, monitoring progress and evaluation of the programmes
  - budget summary
- (b) The SDP and the ASP should be drafted by the school head and his/her staff. As the SDP involves strategic planning, the IMC has an important role to play, such as contributing to the school's long-term goals and development priorities. Both the SDP and ASP have to be endorsed by the IMC before they are uploaded onto the school's website by the end of October. A list of points to note in scrutinising SDP and ASP is at [Appendix I](#).

### 3.1.3 School Report

- (a) Schools should report annually their self-evaluation findings, their achievements, reflection and follow-up actions in the School Report (SR). Their performance in the mandatory Key Performance Measures specified by the Education Bureau should also be included. Schools may make use of the templates provided to prepare the SR, which should be endorsed by the IMC and uploaded onto schools' own website before the end of November every year.
- (b) With effect from the 2003/04 school year, schools' self-evaluation activities are to be validated by the Education Bureau. To support external school review by the Education Bureau, schools are required to conduct beforehand an assessment of school performance in 14 areas which cover the four domains set out in the Education Bureau's framework of performance indicators.

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- (c) For the detailed information on SDP, ASP and SR, please refer to referencing materials for School Development and Accountability which are available on the Education Bureau's website.

### 3.1.4 Summary of the Role of the IMC

The IMC is responsible for :

#### *setting the direction for the school*

- building up a shared school mission and setting goals in line with the aims of education in Hong Kong, the vision of the sponsoring body and the expectations of various stakeholders;
- planning the long-term and short-term development strategies of the school;

#### *formulating school policies*

- drawing up school policies, administrative and operational procedures;
- ensuring an accountability mechanism in school policies and administration;
- delegating to the principal and staff decisions on matters relating to daily operations, teaching and learning, student guidance and discipline;

#### *approving the School Development Plan, Annual School Plan and School Report*

- approving the SDP;
- approving the ASP (including the school budget and staff development plan);
- approving the SR (including the school profile and financial statement);

### *evaluating school performance*

- monitoring and evaluating school performance and student achievement against planned priorities and objectives; and
- advising on practical follow-up actions, taking into consideration the evaluation results, current situation and priority needs of the school.

## **3.2 Curriculum Policy**

- (a) In parallel with Education Commission (EC)'s review on the education system, the Curriculum Development Council (CDC) conducted a holistic review of the school curriculum during the period from 1999 to 2001. Then it developed a curriculum framework as the basic structure for learning and teaching throughout all stages of schooling. The school curriculum should provide all students with essential life-long learning experiences for whole-person development in the domains of ethics, intellect, physical development, social skills and aesthetics. It should help students learn how to learn and develop generic skills to acquire and construct knowledge.
- (b) The IMC plays a leading role in setting the targets of the school-based curriculum and building a framework for its implementation and evaluation. In this section, we will give school managers a brief account of the way forward in curriculum development and the role of the IMC in the school curriculum.

### **3.2.1 Overall Aims of the School Curriculum**

- (a) Our students have to face the challenges of the 21st century, such as globalisation, the impact of information technology and an interdependent but competitive world. To equip our students to meet these challenges, schools have to prepare them to be able to:

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- recognise their roles and responsibilities as members in the family, the society, and the nation; and show concern for their well-being;
- understand their national identity and be committed to contributing to the nation and society;
- develop creative thinking and master independent learning skills (e.g. critical thinking, information technology, self-management);
- engage in discussion actively and confidently in English and Chinese (including Putonghua);
- develop a habit of reading independently;
- possess a breadth and foundation of knowledge in the eight Key Learning Areas (KLAs); and
- lead a healthy lifestyle and develop an interest in and appreciation of aesthetic and physical activities.

(b) Schools have to work out their curriculum goals and a whole-school curriculum plan in line with these overall aims. The goals of the curriculum should be broad enough to achieve whole-person development and enable students with diverse needs to develop their potential to the full. The IMC will ensure that the school-based curriculum is broad and balanced, comprising different learning experiences and all KLAs, in order to lay a good foundation for our students' life-long learning.

### 3.2.2 The Curriculum Framework

(a) The CDC has developed a curriculum framework which is composed of three interconnected components, namely : KLAs; generic skills; values and attitudes.

(b) KLAs

- Chinese Language Education
- English Language Education
- Mathematics Education
- Science Education
- Technology Education
- Personal, Social & Humanities Education
- Physical Education
- Arts Education

(c) In each KLA, learning can be organised in the form of subjects, modules, short courses, projects, etc. To fulfill the needs and goals of individual schools, the curriculum can be organised in different ways using a combination of these forms of study. The IMC will ensure that schools choose subjects from each KLA in order to provide a broad and balanced curriculum for students at all levels. Schools should help students transfer knowledge learnt in one KLA to another, maintain continuity in learning within and across KLAs and ensure that learning experiences are connected.

(d) Generic skills

- communication
- critical thinking
- creativity
- collaboration
- information technology

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- numeracy
- problem-solving
- self-management
- study skills

(e) The generic skills are fundamental in helping students learn to acquire knowledge, construct knowledge and apply knowledge to solve problems. They are to be developed through learning and teaching in the context of different subjects or key learning areas, and are transferable to different learning situations.

(f) Values and attitudes

- Values are qualities that students should develop as principles for conduct and decision-making, such as responsibility, commitment and a sense of national identity.
- Attitudes are the personal dispositions needed to perform a task well, such as cooperativeness and perseverance.

(g) There are many value-oriented studies in the school curriculum, such as religious education, sex education, health education, environmental education, computer ethics, media education or similar studies with different terminology (affective education, life education). They can be taken as an integral part of moral and civic education. A life-event approach to moral and civic-education covering value-oriented themes is advocated by the CDC.

### 3.2.3 Effective Learning and Teaching

(a) Schools are encouraged to adopt the following four key tasks advocated by the EC as strategies for learning and teaching to help students develop independent learning capabilities through KLAs and across KLAs:



### 1. Moral and Civic Education

The implementation of moral and civic education should be learner-focused. Learning opportunities should be provided for students to develop and reflect on their values and attitudes using events relevant to their daily life.

### 2. Reading to learn

Reading is not just for the improvement of language proficiency, but serves many other important purposes, which add value to the quality of our life. These include reading for interest, appreciation, enrichment of knowledge and experience. Every teacher is responsible for nurturing a reading culture within the school. Extensive reading schemes, book recommendations, speech competitions and reading with parents are some possible ways of promoting reading.

### 3. Project learning

This enables students to connect knowledge, skills, values and attitudes. It also helps students to construct knowledge through investigating and analysing a variety of topics.

### 4. Information technology for interactive learning

This encourages teachers to make appropriate use of information technology in order to motivate students and enhance the interest of class activities.

(b) The IMC should encourage the school to use effective strategies to enhance learning and teaching. Some of these are suggested below for reference:

- Motivate students through building learning and teaching on their success;

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- Give students opportunities to express themselves to enhance their confidence;
  - Promote collaborative learning to remove the feeling of failure;
  - Structure tasks to suit students' abilities and recognise individual progress;
  - Organise different forms of classroom organisation to facilitate the use of diverse strategies;
  - Provide students with opportunities to experience learning beyond the confines of the classroom;
  - Encourage students to inquire beyond the confines of textbooks; and
  - Widen students' learning through life-wide learning opportunities.
- (c) More examples of learning and teaching approaches and strategies are available from the website of the Curriculum Development Institute at <https://cd1.edb.hkedcity.net/cd/cdc/en/>.

### 3.2.4 Assessment for Learning

Assessment is an integral part of the learning and teaching cycle. When approving the assessment plans of the school, the IMC should ensure that the system of assessment facilitates learning to learn. It helps to provide information for both students and teachers to improve learning and teaching. To strengthen the learning-teaching-assessment cycle, schools may:

- use positive feedback to inform students of their strengths and weaknesses;

- put equal emphasis on both the processes of learning (e.g. independent learning, use of generic skills) and the products (e.g. knowledge, skills);
- use different modes of assessment for different purposes (e.g. discussion for collaboration, examinations for knowledge, performance for creativity); and
- avoid excessive assessment and unproductive uses of dictation, memorisation and rote learning.

### 3.2.5 Summary of the Role of the IMC

(a) In line with the curriculum framework developed by the CDC, the school will formulate its curriculum plans, taking into consideration the resources available and the readiness of students, teachers and parents. The IMC is responsible for helping the school to connect and integrate various measures and plans. It should ensure that the school-based curriculum is coherent and flexible which can adapt to changes and is in the best interests of students. The IMC will also give advice from different perspectives and encourage the school to develop a new culture in enhancing students' active learning, such as promoting the professional development of teachers through self-evaluation, experience-sharing, peer lesson observation and action research.

(b) The IMC is responsible for :

- developing coherent short-term and long-term school development plan that aligns the school aims, the needs, interests and abilities of students in accordance with the guiding principles set out in curriculum documents (e.g. *The New Academic Structure for Senior Secondary Education and Higher Education — Action Plan for Investing in the Future of Hong Kong*) ;

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- adjusting the focus of education and curriculum reform, staff development plan, expected achievements of the school suited to the school and community contexts;
- ensuring a broad and balanced school-based curriculum;
- endorsing the direction, targets and priorities for curriculum development;
- advising on curriculum, instructional and assessment plans;
- monitoring the progress of curriculum development and evaluating its effectiveness;
- helping with building up an environment and atmosphere conducive to learning;
- supporting and monitoring professional development of teachers and nurturing their curriculum and instructional leadership;
- establishing networks with other schools and the community, and tapping resources for enhancing learning and teaching (e.g. collaborate with other schools in the same region to offer subjects with lower demand so as to provide more choices for students); and
- communicate with stakeholders regularly on the changes needed.

## 3.3 School Management

### 3.3.1 School Personnel

- (a) In the spirit of school-based management, the IMC has been given more discretion in personnel matters, such as the authority to approve the appointment and salaries of staff on the Salaries Grant payroll in order to fill vacancies or employ substitutes for

staff on leave, in accordance with the conditions of the Codes of Aid and standing circulars. Other areas of the IMC's responsibilities in personnel matters have been set out in circulars issued by the Education Bureau, a summary of which may be accessed on the Education Bureau's website (<http://www.edb.gov.hk>). With greater autonomy, schools have to be more transparent and accountable to key stakeholders for their decisions on staff matters. The IMCs will need to determine a set of guidelines in line with the general principles of openness and fairness.

- (b) When formulating staff policies and procedures for the school, the IMC has to comply with relevant legislations other than the Education Ordinance, Education Regulations and Codes of Aid. These include the Employment Ordinance, Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance, Code of Practice in Education under the Disability Discrimination Ordinance, Prevention of Bribery Ordinance, Mandatory Provident Fund Scheme Ordinance, Occupational Safety and Health Ordinance, etc.
- (c) The IMC needs to formulate a school policy on the acceptance of advantages and related matters. School managers have to be aware that it is an offence for teaching and non-teaching staff to accept an advantage without the permission of the IMC. All teaching and non-teaching staff are subject to section 9 of the Prevention of Bribery Ordinance, Cap 201. The IMC and the principal may refer to Section 7 of *School Administration Guide* for detailed guidelines on acceptance of advantages.
- (d) To summarise, the IMC is responsible for :
- setting out criteria and procedures for handling personnel matters;

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- making these procedures known to all staff concerned;
- ensuring that these procedures are properly documented;
- recommending for the approval of the Permanent Secretary for Education the appointment of the principal;
- developing an overall plan for staff development and performance management in line with the school goals;
- establishing a staff appraisal system (including the principal);  
and
- handling complaints against staff (including the principal).

### 3.3.2 School Finance

- (a) As part of school-based management, the IMC has been given more resources and funding flexibility to meet their specific needs. A summary of areas of funding flexibility for schools may be accessed on the Education Bureau's website (<http://www.edb.gov.hk>).
- (b) Funds may be allocated to administrative and curriculum programmes in accordance with the school's short-term and long-term priorities for development. The school budget is the financial plan for a set period and reflects the use of resources to achieve its goals. The school head, in consultation with the staff, will set out in the budget proposed allocations to the priority development areas of the school. The school budget should be included in the ASP. The IMC has to approve the school budget, monitor and review its expenditure. This review is important, since most improvement requires financial support.

(c) In exercising discretion in financial matters and monitoring the school finance, schools should always ensure that the interests of students come first and the expenditure is for educational purposes. At the same time, there are also requirements for greater accountability and transparency in the use of resources. The IMC should provide schools with the scope, criteria and rules for allocating funds. The IMC should also ensure that formal procedures for the management of funds are in place.

(d) To summarise, the IMC is responsible for :

- approving the school budget, which should be included in the ASP;
- monitoring expenditure against budget and evaluating outcomes regularly;
- ensuring that accounts and records of financial operations are kept properly;
- putting in place proper reporting and auditing procedures;
- delegating authority to the principal and staff, for example, to approve expenditure up to a certain amount;
- setting up accountability mechanisms for fund management; and
- reporting to stakeholders, such as teachers and parents, on the use of public and private funds by the school.

### 3.3.3 Home-School-Community Partnership

(a) Parents play an increasingly important role in education as they acquire first-hand knowledge of their children. They teach their children and shape their attitudes to learning. Schools can draw on the enthusiasm, knowledge and skills of parents in organising

school activities for the enhancement of students' learning. The IMC plays a leading role in promoting a school culture that encourages and values parental participation in the education of the children.

- (b) By exchanging information and collaborating in children's learning, parents can become partners in the educational process. Parents have the right to be informed about the various aspects of the school, such as its rules, student and teacher profiles, development priorities, financial situation and student performance. They have to be consulted before changes are introduced, especially those which affect their children's education. At the same time, parents have the responsibility to keep the school informed of pertinent information about their children. Parents can play an active role in school education and take the initiative to communicate with the school.
- (c) The IMC should develop school policies to promote home-school cooperation and cultivate a partnership with the parents. In formulating a parental participation policy, the IMC may consider :
- providing professional development for teachers to enhance their communication skills with parents;
  - informing parents regularly about the school goals, children's participation and achievement towards the goals;
  - promoting parents' knowledge of educational policies and developing their skills in helping their children to learn;
  - involving parents in various school functions and activities (taking into consideration the diverse family structures and economic backgrounds);



- encouraging participation of parents through links with community groups and voluntary service agencies; and
- providing opportunities for parents to share in decision-making, especially on school policies and procedures affecting their children's learning.

(d) To promote life-wide learning, which is one of the key principles of the educational reforms, our students should be able to learn through activities both inside and outside the classroom. People from different professions in the community provide valuable resources and diversified learning opportunities for our students. The IMC plays an important role in fostering a sense of co-operation and communication among parents, communities and schools. The IMC needs to :

- develop outreach mechanisms to inform the community about the school's objectives, policies and achievements; and
- tap resources from the community to promote the all-round development of students.

### Key Points

As a key stakeholder of school education, a school manager can contribute at the strategic level to the following areas -

- setting the direction of the school and formulating school policies in accordance with the vision and mission of the school *[Section 3.1.4];*
- approving the SDP, ASP and SR *[Section 3.1.4];*
- monitoring and evaluating school performance *[Section 3.1.4];*
- ensuring a broad and balanced school-based curriculum that meet the needs of students of the school *[Section 3.2.1];*
- setting out criteria and procedures for handling personnel matters including staff development planning, staff performance management and handling complaints *[Section 3.3.1];*
- setting up accountability mechanisms for financial management including budgeting, monitoring expenditure, auditing and reporting *[Section 3.3.2];* and
- promoting home-school-community relationship *[Section 3.3.3].*

# Appendix I

## Points to Note in Scrutinising School Development Plan and Annual School Plan

	School Development Plan	Annual School Plan
<b>Major Concerns</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>list out the major concerns; the focus should be on the items with greatest concern and high priority, e.g. developing school self-evaluation, building a reading culture in school, but not daily operation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>set out the implementation details for the major concerns</li> </ul>
<b>Intended outcome / targets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>plan a challenging and practicable improvement, and set a common target/intended outcome, e.g. stakeholders participate in school self-evaluation, set a clear target for the school plan and use the appropriate tools to make evaluation</li> </ul>	<p>————</p>
<b>Strategy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>list out the implementation strategies for a longer-term period, say three years, e.g. improve the communication channels between the school and stakeholders, develop the tools for collecting and analyzing data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>list out a series of tasks through which the objectives will be achieved, for instance, a school may improve the communication channels between the school and stakeholders by reporting the latest news of school every week through internet and conduct a survey through internet to collect the views of teaching staff and students</li> </ul>
<b>Time Scale</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>list the time scale for each strategy over the three years' period, so that the school can implement the plan and make evaluation strategically</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>set out the time scale for each strategy, e.g. from September 2006 to December 2006.</li> </ul>

	School Development Plan	Annual School Plan
<b>Success criteria</b>	—	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>set out some quantitative and qualitative success criteria e.g. over XX% of stakeholders who have been interviewed (teachers, students and parents) agree that the existing communication channels can help them understand the latest development of the school</li> </ul>
<b>Methods of evaluation</b>	—	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the methods of evaluation for assessing performance should be compatible with the success criteria and intended objective/outcome</li> </ul>
<b>Responsible persons</b>	—	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>list out the responsible persons of the subject department/team</li> </ul>
<b>Budget</b>	—	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the budget should include human and financial resources, e.g. professional development and training</li> <li>reflect the priorities of development and the flexibility of using resources</li> <li>facilitate the compilation of budget summary</li> </ul>