

School-based Management Document

# School Managers' Handbook



校本管理

School-based Management

# Tips For School Managers

**Participatory  
decision-making**

**Decisions made in the  
interests of students**

**Set directions  
and goals**

**Proper delegation of  
authority and greater  
accountability**

**Be open to different  
views**

**Seek common  
ground while  
reserving differences**

**Be impartial in  
handling matters  
and rational in  
discussion**

**Care about education**

**Promote  
home-school-community  
collaboration in school  
development**

**Seek chances for  
self-enhancement**

**Upgrade your skills and be  
prepared for challenges**

**Actively involve but  
not interfere**

**Collective responsibility  
and commitment**



# Foreword



Under the Education Ordinance, every aided school is required to establish by 2009 an incorporated management committee to manage the school. The incorporated management committee plans the school's future direction, makes decisions on the school's budget and staffing, steers the school to promote students' ethical, intellectual, physical, social and aesthetic development, and is accountable for the performance of the school. These are not simple matters, as they affect the interests of students, the morale of staff and how the school is seen by parents and the community.

As a school manager, you can help your incorporated management committee formulate policies and procedures to improve the education of students in your school. Given the diverse backgrounds of school managers, you can also represent the views of your category of manager to promote quality education for students. By valuing and respecting others' views, you can also help your incorporated management committee to create a partnership among your school, the parents and the community. This partnership will certainly foster an all-round education for students and provide them with an environment to support learning, not just in school but throughout their lives. Your participation in this process is crucial.

This Handbook is designed for the school managers of those schools with incorporated management committees. School managers may use this Handbook as a resource. You will find ideas and guidelines that you may select and adapt to meet your needs and those of your incorporated management committee. School managers of schools without incorporated management committees may also use this Handbook as a reference.

This is the August 2006 edition of the printed version. We will continue to refine the contents of the Handbook and you may visit the website of the School-based Management Section (<http://www.emb.gov.hk/sbm>) for the latest version.

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# Section 1

## Introduction

### 1.1 Purpose of the School Managers' Handbook

- (a) The *School Managers' Handbook* aims to support managers in performing their leading role in school management and development. It seeks to identify the responsibilities of the incorporated management committee (IMC) and put forward general principles that govern the discharge of duties by managers. Except for statutory requirements, the procedures in the Handbook are for reference purposes only. Schools are encouraged to adapt these procedures to suit individual needs.
- (b) With the wider scope to excel and grow created by the education reform, the IMC plays a crucial role in setting the direction for school development and in providing quality education for students. At the same time, the implementation of school-based management provides the IMC with greater autonomy in school management and use of resources. This is a huge responsibility and the *School Managers' Handbook* serves as a handy reference for managers of public sector schools to effectively manage and promote quality education in schools.
- (c) This Handbook may be accessed on the School-based Management Section's website (<http://www.emb.gov.hk/sbm>). Comments on the Handbook are most welcome and can be sent to :

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- (d) In addition to this Handbook, the Education and Manpower Bureau has been providing other support to managers such as experience-sharing sessions for serving, new and potential managers, the *School Administration Guide* and abstracts of relevant circulars. The details can also be accessed on the Education and Manpower Bureau's website.

## **1.2 Mode of Operation in Aided Schools**

### **1.2.1 Management**

- (a) Each aided school shall be managed and operated in accordance with the provisions of the Education Ordinance and those of its subsidiary legislation, the Codes of Aid and guidelines that the Education and Manpower Bureau may issue from time to time.
- (b) The Education Ordinance stipulates that when an IMC has been established in respect of a school, the school shall be managed by the IMC. The IMC consists of members who are required to be registered under the Education Ordinance as managers of the school. The IMC is entrusted with the responsibility of governing the school and is accountable to the Education and Manpower Bureau, the sponsoring body, parents and the community for the overall performance of the school.

### 1.2.2 Staffing

- (a) As the employer of the school staff, the IMC is responsible for handling staff matters such as appointment, promotion, performance management, disciplinary action and dismissal. In the spirit of school-based management, the IMC has been given greater autonomy and responsibilities in school personnel matters. To enhance accountability and transparency in school operation, the IMC should develop a set of open, fair and formal procedures and observe the relevant guidelines stipulated in the Codes of Aid and circulars issued from time to time by the Education and Manpower Bureau.
- (b) The Codes of Aid stipulate the staff establishment for the respective types of school. The staff establishment of a school is mainly determined by the number of operating classes. Additional teachers are also provided for split classes, the school library, language teaching and other services. Each year, the Education and Manpower Bureau issues a letter informing schools of the approved class organisation and staff establishment for the coming school year. The IMC has the discretion to determine, in consultation with its staff, the distribution and allocation of duties to teachers/staff holding promotion posts. Such allocation of duties should align with the priorities for development of the school.



### 1.2.3 Admission of Students

The allocation of school places in Primary 1, Secondary 1, Secondary 4 and Secondary 6 is made according to the allocation systems that the Education and Manpower Bureau may from time to time determine. The Permanent Secretary for Education and Manpower may direct an aided school to admit a pupil to fill an available vacant place in that school. Other than those places filled by the above arrangements, the school head has the discretion to fill the vacant places. The *Reform Proposals for the Education System in Hong Kong* published in September 2000 lays down, inter alia, short-term and long-term mechanisms for the allocation of places and the mechanisms for assessment. Schools have to keep abreast of the latest developments in formulating the relevant school policies.

### 1.2.4 Suspension and Expulsion of Pupils

- (a) Pupils admitted into an aided primary school shall be allowed to complete the six-year course. Pupils admitted into an aided secondary school in the junior secondary course (Secondary 1 - 3) and the senior secondary course (Secondary 4 - 7) should normally be allowed to complete that course. Pupils admitted into a course in an aided special school should normally be allowed to complete that school course.
- (b) No primary pupil and junior secondary pupil (Secondary 1 - 3) aged under 15 years should be expelled without proper warning and notice to parents, as well as the approval of the Education and Manpower Bureau. Pupils must not be expelled solely on the ground that they are academically weak. In appropriate cases, schools which have pupils with persistent lack of academic progress or behaviour problems may seek advice from respective Regional Education Offices.

### 1.2.5 Block Insurance Policy and IMC Liability Insurance Policy

- (a) For tortious liability, such as personal injury or accidents during school activities, the Government provides a block insurance policy for aided schools. This policy covers claims against any public liabilities, employees' compensation and group personal accident.
- (b) The Government also provides an IMC liability insurance policy for IMCs and their managers. Should the IMC still find the insurance cover inadequate, it may arrange its own supplementary insurance cover.

### 1.2.6 Relevant Documents

The Education Ordinance, Education Regulations, Codes of Aid, circulars issued by the Education and Manpower Bureau and reports published by the Education Commission are official documentation listing the principles and requirements within which the IMCs make decisions. In October 2001, the School-based Management Section issued to each school a *School Administration Guide* which provides detailed information on school management in order to familiarize school managers and school personnel with their responsibilities and assist them in running the school more efficiently and effectively. The Guide is updated regularly and the latest version may be accessed on the Education and Manpower Bureau's website (<http://www.emb.gov.hk>).

### Key Points

A school manager should acquire knowledge and develop skills in school management. Besides attending experience-sharing sessions, seminars and so on organised by the Education and Manpower Bureau for school managers, a manager can make reference to relevant documents [Section 1.2.6] such as -

- the Education Ordinance and Education Regulations,
- the Codes of Aid,
- circulars, manuals and guidelines issued by the Education and Manpower Bureau,
- the IMC constitution of the school,
- other relevant ordinances, and
- other codes of practice.

# Section 2

## The School-based Management Governance Framework

### 2.1 Incorporation

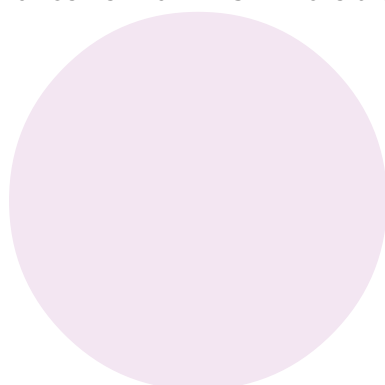
- (a) In respect of an operating aided school, which has commenced operation before 1 January 2005, its sponsoring body shall submit to the Permanent Secretary for Education and Manpower a draft of the constitution of the proposed IMC by 1 July 2009. In respect of a planned aided school, with the scheduled opening date of which falls on or after 1 January 2005, its sponsoring body shall make the submission not later than six months before the scheduled opening date.
- (b) In respect of a Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS) school or a specified school (a school specified in Schedule 3 of the Education Ordinance), its sponsoring body may notify the Permanent Secretary for Education and Manpower in writing of its intention to establish an IMC. For an operating DSS or specified school, the sponsoring body shall make a submission for the purpose of the establishment of IMC within six months from the date of notice given. For a planned DSS or specified school, the sponsoring body shall make the submission not later than six months before the scheduled opening date.

### 2.2 Composition of IMC

- (a) An IMC shall be constituted in accordance with its constitution. The composition of an IMC as provided for in its constitution shall be:
  - the numbers of sponsoring body manager shall not exceed 60% of the maximum of number of managers that the IMC may have under its constitution, one alternate sponsoring body manager may also be provided
  - the principal (an ex-officio manager)



- not less than one teacher manager (where the constitution allows the nomination of not more than one teacher manager, one alternate teacher manager shall be provided)
  - not less than one parent manager (in case of a bi-sessional school, not less than one parent manager for each of the A.M. session and P.M. session)
  - one or more alumni managers where such manager or managers is or are nominated
  - not less than one independent manager
- (b) If the IMC constitution allows the nomination of not more than one parent manager, one alternate parent manager shall be provided. In case one parent manager is provided for each of the A.M. session and P.M. session for a bi-sessional school, one alternate parent manager shall be provided for each session.
- (c) An alternate manager shall have all functions and rights of a manager except voting rights. An alternate sponsoring body manager shall not vote on any matter to be resolved by the IMC by voting unless any sponsoring body manager is absent from meeting or unable to vote on the matter. An alternate teacher manager or alternate parent manager shall not vote on any matter to be resolved by the IMC by voting unless no teacher manager or parent manager is present at the meeting.
- (d) In calculating the maximum number of sponsoring body managers, all alternate managers shall not be counted. No manager shall serve in an IMC in more than one capacity.



### 2.2.1 Supervisor

- (a) The IMC of a school shall have a supervisor who must be a manager of the school. However, the principal or a teacher of the school shall not be the supervisor or act as the supervisor. The supervisor must be appointed by the sponsoring body or elected among the IMC managers as stipulated in the IMC constitution.
- (b) The supervisor shall hold and vacate office as such in accordance with the IMC constitution. If the supervisor is unable to perform his/her functions during a period of not less than 28 days due to absence from Hong Kong or illness, the sponsoring body shall appoint another manager as the acting supervisor to act in the place of the supervisor during the period in case the supervisor is appointed by the sponsoring body. In case the supervisor is elected by the managers, the other managers shall elect amongst themselves an acting supervisor to act in the place of the supervisor during the period.
- (c) The IMC shall give notice in writing of the assumption of office of the first supervisor to the Permanent Secretary for Education and Manpower within 14 days after its establishment and of any subsequent supervisor to the Permanent Secretary for Education and Manpower within 14 days after his/her election or appointment. The notice shall contain the English and Chinese names of the supervisor and such other information as the Permanent Secretary for Education and Manpower may specify.
- (d) The supervisor shall preside over the IMC meetings, give notice in writing to the Permanent Secretary for Education and Manpower that any manager, principal or teacher ceases to hold office, or any teacher is employed to teach at the school, sign the statement of accounts of the IMC, and perform such functions as may be provided for in the IMC constitution.

## **2.3 Nomination of School Managers**

### **2.3.1 Sponsoring Body Manager**

The sponsoring body of a school may nominate such number of persons for registration as sponsoring body manager of the school as may be provided for in the IMC constitution of the school. The sponsoring body may also nominate a person for registration as alternate sponsoring body manager of the school.

### **2.3.2 Teacher Manager**

- (a) The principal of a school shall nominate such number of teachers of the school for registration as teacher manager or alternate teacher manager of the school as may be provided for in the IMC constitution. The teacher manager or alternate teacher manager must be elected among teachers of the school and the election must be held pursuant to the IMC constitution. In the election, all eligible teachers of the school must have equal voting right and right of candidature. The voting for the election must be conducted by secret ballot and the election system must be fair and transparent.
- (b) A person nominated for registration as teacher manager or alternate teacher manager must be a teacher (in relation to a special school, the specialist staff is included), and must not be the principal, of the school.

### **2.3.3 Parent Manager**

- (a) The IMC of a school may recognise one body of persons as recognised parent-teacher association (PTA) for the purposes of making nomination for registration as parent manager. The IMC of a bi-sessional school may recognise one PTA in respect of the A.M. session and another PTA in respect of the P.M. session.

- (b) A recognised PTA may nominate such number of persons for registration as parent manager or alternate parent manager of the school as may be provided for in the IMC constitution. A person nominated for registration as parent manager or alternate parent manager must be a parent of a current pupil of the school, and must not be a teacher of the school.
- (c) The election for parent manager must be conducted by the recognised PTA of the school. In the election, all parents of the current pupils of the school must have equal voting right and right of candidature. The voting for the election must be conducted by secret ballot and the election system must be fair and transparent.

#### 2.3.4 Alumni Manager

- (a) The IMC or sponsoring body of a school, as may be provided for in the IMC constitution may recognise one body of persons as recognised alumni association for the purposes of making nomination for registration as alumni manager. The IMC or sponsoring body of a bi-sessional school may recognise one alumni association in respect of the A.M. session and another alumni association in respect of the P.M. session.
- (b) A recognised alumni association may nominate such number of persons for registration as alumni manager of the school as may be provided for in the IMC constitution. A person nominated for registration as alumni manager must be an alumnus, and must not be a teacher of the school.
- (c) If no person is nominated by the recognised alumni association in respect of a school, the IMC may nominate such number of persons for registration as alumni manager of the school as may be provided for in its constitution.



### 2.3.5 Independent Manager

The IMC of a school may nominate such number of persons for registration as independent manager of the school as may be provided for in the IMC constitution. However, the following persons shall not be nominated for registration as independent manager:

- a teacher or specialist staff of the school;
- a parent of a current pupil of the school;
- an alumnus of the school; or
- a person who is –
  - (i) a member;
  - (ii) the spouse or a grand-parent, parent, brother, sister, child or grand-child of a member; or
  - (iii) an employee,of the governing body of the sponsoring body of the school.

### 2.3.6 Exemption from Composition Requirements

- (a) The first independent manager of a school may be registered as such at any time within one year from the establishment of the IMC of the school. In relation to a planned school, the first teacher manager shall be nominated for registration as such at any time within one year from the establishment of the IMC, whilst the first parent manager shall be nominated for registration within three years. In relation to an operating school, the first parent manager shall be nominated for registration as such at any time within three months from the establishment of the IMC.

- (b) However, an IMC may apply to the Permanent Secretary for Education and Manpower for exemption from any requirement of the Education Ordinance on its composition if it is unable to nominate such number of persons as stipulated in the IMC constitution for registration as the manager of the school after the IMC has taken all reasonable steps to secure compliance with the requirement.

## 2.4 Resignation, Cancellation of Registration of Managers

- (a) If a parent manager ceases to be a parent of a current pupil of the school in a school year, his/her term of office as a manager shall continue until its expiry or the end of the school year, whichever is the earlier.
- (b) If in a school year an independent manager becomes a person mentioned in paragraph 2.3.5, his/her term of office as a manager shall continue until its expiry or the end of the school year, whichever is the earlier.
- (c) If a manager resigns from his/her office as a manager in accordance with the IMC constitution or passes away, the IMC shall give a written notice of the event to the Permanent Secretary for Education and Manpower.
- (d) If a teacher manager or alternate teacher manager of a school ceases to be employed in the school, he/she shall be deemed to have resigned from his/her office as a manager in accordance with the IMC constitution.



- (e) The Permanent Secretary for Education and Manpower may cancel the registration of a manager of a school –
- if the Permanent Secretary for Education and Manpower receives a notice in writing from the IMC of the school that the manager has been absent without the consent of the committee from all meetings of the committee in a school year and the manager has been given due notice to attend those meetings
  - if the manager fails to produce, upon request by the Permanent Secretary for Education and Manpower, a medical certificate issued by a registered medical practitioner after the date of such request certifying that the manager is physically fit to perform the functions of a manager
  - if the manager fails to make declaration of pecuniary or other personal interest under section 40BF of the Education Ordinance
  - if the Permanent Secretary for Education and Manpower receives a notice issued by the IMC under section 40AX of the Education Ordinance as regards the cancellation of the registration of the manager

## 2.5 Liability of School Managers

### 2.5.1 Civil Liability

A manager shall not incur any civil liability in respect of anything done or omitted to be done by him/her in good faith in the performance or purported performance of any function of his/her office as the manager. No civil proceedings shall be brought against a manager of a school for anything done or omitted to be done by or on behalf of the IMC unless he/she has not acted in good faith.

### 2.5.2 Criminal Liability

A manager shall be guilty of an offence only when the IMC contravenes the concerned provisions of the Education Ordinance with his/her consent or connivance.

## 2.6 Amendment to the Constitution

- (a) An IMC may by resolution amend its constitution in the manner provided for in the constitution. The amendment shall be lodged with the Permanent Secretary for Education and Manpower and shall not take effect before the expiry of one month after it is lodged.
- (b) The Permanent Secretary for Education and Manpower may, by notice in writing to the IMC, object to an amendment lodged with him before the amendment takes effect. Within 21 days after the service of the notice, the IMC may appeal to an Appeal Board against the decision of the Permanent Secretary for Education and Manpower referred to in the notice by delivering in duplicate to the secretary of the Appeal Boards Panel a notice of appeal. Every notice of appeal shall be in writing and shall specify the decision of the Permanent Secretary for Education and Manpower in respect of which the appeal is brought and the grounds on which the appeal is brought.
- (c) If the decision of the Permanent Secretary for Education and Manpower is reversed by the Appeal Board, the amendment shall, where the Permanent Secretary for Education and Manpower does not appeal against the reversal within the period of 14 days after he is being served with a notice of decision, take effect at the expiry of that period or on the original effective date, whichever is the later.

# The School-based Management Governance Framework

- (d) If the Permanent Secretary for Education and Manpower appeals against the reversal and the reversal is upheld, the amendment shall take effect on the date on which the reversal is upheld or the original effective date, whichever is the later.
- (e) The IMC shall, as soon as practicable after any amendment to its constitution takes effect, lodge a copy of its constitution as amended with the Permanent Secretary for Education and Manpower.

### Key Points

The main provisions in relation to establishment and operation of an IMC are provided for in Part IIIB of the Education Ordinance. A manager interested in a particular topic may refer to the relevant sections for details.

# 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 and Manpower 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 and Manpower Bureau. To support external school review by the Education and Manpower 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 and Manpower Bureau's framework of performance indicators.



## Responsibilities of the Incorporated Management Committee

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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 and Manpower 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:

## Responsibilities of the Incorporated Management Committee

- 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;

## Responsibilities of the Incorporated Management Committee

- 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 <http://cd.emb.gov.hk>.

### 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*) ;



## Responsibilities of the Incorporated Management Committee

- 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 and Manpower Bureau, a summary of which may be accessed on the Education and Manpower Bureau's website (<http://www.emb.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;

## Responsibilities of the Incorporated Management Committee

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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 and Manpower 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 and Manpower Bureau's website (<http://www.emb.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

## Responsibilities of the Incorporated Management Committee

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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].*

# Section 4

## Code of Ethics for School Managers

### 4.1 Basic Principles Governing the Work of Managers

- (a) As IMCs make important decisions that will affect the interests of different parties, it is of paramount importance that the school be governed in ways that inspire confidence in the public, and that decisions be made in an impartial manner for the benefit of the students and the improvement of the school.
- (b) Participatory decision-making under school-based management implies that a greater number of new managers will join those who have been contributing valuable time and efforts to school development. To create a common ground for managers to perform their duties in collaboration with one another, there is a cogent case for a set of values shared by all. The following paragraphs highlight the core values that many effective school managers have observed.

#### 4.1.1 Commitment

Managers have to set aside time to be involved in and well acquainted with the school. This includes :

- Familiarizing themselves with the Education Ordinance and Education Regulations, Code of Aid, IMC constitution and relevant circulars issued by the Education and Manpower Bureau;
- Preparing for and attending IMC meetings, contributing to discussions and taking part in agreed actions after meetings;
- Getting to know the school through reading relevant papers, visiting the school and taking part in school activities; and
- Keeping abreast of educational developments by attending seminars and training courses.





#### **4.1.2 Selflessness**

Managers should avoid using their position for personal gain or the gain of other outside parties, including their friends and relatives. Even when managers are elected by certain constituents, such as parents or teachers, their role in the IMC is to give professional advice to improve student learning, not to serve the interests of their constituents.

#### **4.1.3 Integrity above Private Interest**

School managers have a duty to declare to the IMC any private interests relating to their duties as managers and to take steps to resolve any conflict of interest. The interests of the school as a whole, rather than the private interest of an individual manager, should always take top priority.

#### **4.1.4 Impartiality**

In carrying out duties such as those relating to appointments, promotions, complaint investigations and the award of contracts, school managers should be impartial. Their choices and decisions should always be based on merit and fairness. Under no circumstances should favor be given and advantages be solicited or accepted that will result in preferential treatment being given to any party.

#### **4.1.5 Collective Responsibility**

Under the school-based management framework, all decisions of a school are made by the IMC collectively. The IMC acts as a group. Each manager has a right to participate and to state his/her own views, while respecting the views of others. School managers have no authority as individuals and decisions should be made by a majority vote in IMC meetings. Once decisions are made by the group, individual managers are bound by them. Changes to such decisions have to be instigated through proper channels agreed on by the IMC.

#### 4.1.6 **Accountability and Openness in Decision-making**

School managers are accountable for, and should be as open as possible about, all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the interests of students and schools clearly demand this. Participatory decision-making in the IMC increases the openness and transparency of school governance as well as its accountability to the community.

#### 4.1.7 **Confidentiality**

Each manager must respect the confidentiality of those items of business that have been designated as confidential and must not disclose what individual managers have said and how they have voted. When a matter is under discussion by the IMC, the matter must not be disclosed before a decision is taken. The IMC should reach consensus on items to be disclosed by the spokesperson, who may be the supervisor. Managers have to follow the mode of circulation of confidential documents agreed by the IMC, for example, that these documents will be despatched by hand or in confidential envelopes and should be kept in places with security, such as in a locked cabinet.

### 4.2 **School - based Code of Ethics**

(a) With reference to the above principles and in line with the Education Ordinance, the IMC is encouraged to develop its own code of ethics with binding effects on its members. A sample Code of Ethics for School Managers is at [Appendix II](#). The IMC can take this as a reference in initiating discussion among managers and arriving at an agreed code, modifying and making additions as appropriate. Schools may also incorporate into the code the mission and vision of the sponsoring bodies as well as those of the school.



- (b) The school-based Code of Ethics will help to foster a sense of identity among managers and serve as a useful reminder of the ethical standards and behavior they have agreed to bring to the task. The IMC may also choose to make known to the school community its own code. This will not only further enhance the transparency of the IMC but also help to publicise its work and so gain wider recognition from the community.
- (c) It is the personal responsibility of managers to understand and comply with the Code of Ethics. Violation of the provisions of the code may lead to public criticism, disrepute of the school and, in some cases, cancellation of their registration as a manager.
- (d) Managers who fail to follow the Code of Ethics may face internal action agreed on by the IMC. In circumstances where the existing laws and regulations are contravened, such as under the Prevention of Bribery Ordinance, prosecutions could be instigated. Hence, it is important that school managers carry out their managerial duties in accordance with the agreed code.
- (e) In October 1995, the Council on Professional Conduct in Education extracted and reprinted the *Code for the Education Profession of Hong Kong* (the Code) for all practising teachers in the hope that this would promote professional conduct within the profession. In formulating the school-based Code of Ethics for managers, the IMC may consider the Code as a reference with respect to the ethical standards of conduct in the education profession. Managers who wish to know more about the Code may visit the website of the Council on Professional Conduct in Education at <http://cpc.emb.org.hk/text/english/code.htm>.

## Key Points

(a) The core values that an effective school manager should observe are -

- commitment [Section 4.1.1]
- selflessness [Section 4.1.2]
- integrity above private interest [Section 4.1.3]
- impartiality [Section 4.1.4]
- collective responsibility [Section 4.1.5]
- accountability and openness in decision-making [Section 4.1.6]
- confidentiality [Section 4.1.7]

(b) An IMC should develop its own code of ethics with binding effects for its school managers. [Section 4.2]

# Section 5

## Declaration and Disclosure of Pecuniary or Other Personal Interests

The Education Ordinance requires that each manager's name, tenure of office and category shall be made available for public inspection. To achieve greater transparency and accountability in the operation of the IMC, managers are also required to declare any pecuniary or other personal interest and disclose any conflict of interest. This action protects them from any unwarranted suspicion or criticism that they are serving private interests, which may otherwise arise. It is imperative that managers should work only for the benefit of students and that the interests of the school should always be above those of individual managers.

### 5.1 Declaration of Pecuniary or Other Personal Interests under the Education Ordinance

- (a) A manager shall, at least once in every 12 months, make to the IMC a written declaration which states the particulars of any pecuniary or other personal interest, direct or indirect, that he/she has in any matter that raises or may raise a conflict with his/her duties as a manager of the school, or states that he/she has no such interest. The IMC shall decide when the manager, e.g. within one month after registration as a manager of the IMC, should make the first written declaration. Within one month after a change occurs in any matter stated in a declaration, the manager who made the declaration shall make to the IMC another written declaration which states the change.
- (b) A manager shall, if so required by the IMC, provide the committee with such further information as it thinks necessary to establish any particular contained in a declaration made by him/her.

## 5.2 Disclosure of Pecuniary or Other Personal Interests under the Education Ordinance

- (a) If a manager has any pecuniary or other personal interest, direct or indirect, in a matter that is considered or is to be considered at a meeting of the IMC, and the matters appear to raise a conflict with the proper performance of the manager's duties in relation to the consideration of the matter, that manager shall disclose the nature of the interest at the meeting or (if he/she does not attend the meeting) by giving a notice in writing to the committee before the meeting. The disclosure made by a manager shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting concerned.
- (b) After a manager has disclosed the nature of any interest in a matter, he/she shall not, unless the IMC otherwise determines, be present during any deliberation of the committee with respect to the matter or take part in any deliberation or decision of the committee with respect to the matter. For the purposes of the making of a determination by the IMC, a manager who has any pecuniary or other personal interest in a matter to which the disclosure relates must not be present during any deliberation of the committee for the purpose of making the determination or take part in the making by the committee of the determination.

## 5.3 Conflict of Interest

It would be difficult to define all the situations that would call for such a declaration or disclosure, since each individual case differs and unforeseen circumstances arise. Nevertheless, some potential situations of conflict of interest are described below :

- a directorship, partnership, advisory or client relationship, employment or other significant connection with a company, firm,

## Declaration and Disclosure of Pecuniary or Other Personal Interests

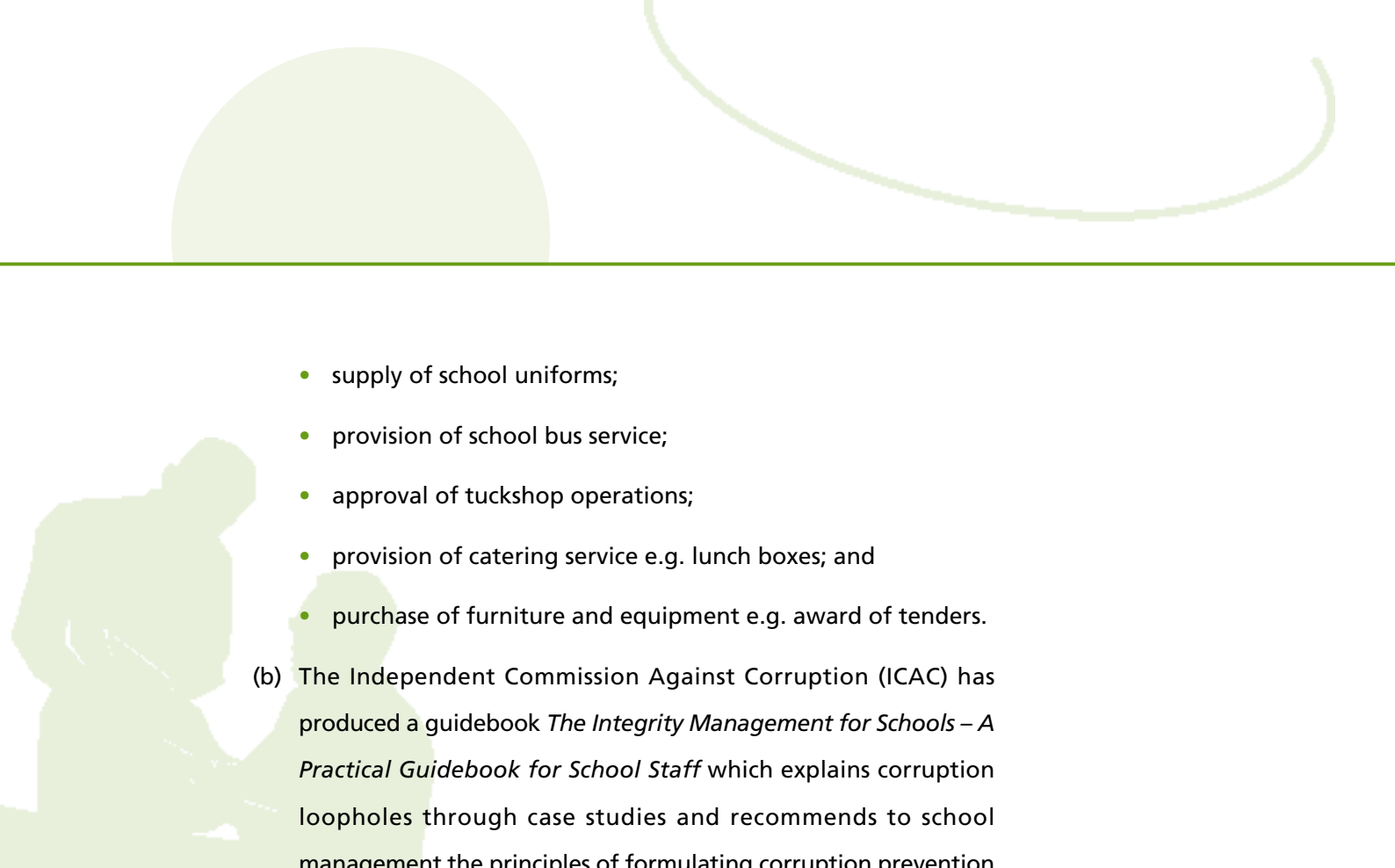
club, association, union or other organization which is connected with a matter under consideration by the IMC;

- pecuniary interests in a matter under consideration by the IMC held either by the manager, his/her family or close relatives;
- some friendships which might be so close as to warrant declaration in order to avoid situations where an objective observer might believe that a manager's advice might have been influenced by the closeness of the association; and
- any interest likely to lead an objective observer to believe that the manager's advice might have been motivated by personal interest rather than a duty to give impartial advice (such as acceptance of free service, entertainment, gifts or other favours).

### 5.4 Examples of Conflict of Interest in Schools

(a) Conflict of interest is a situation in which a school manager's private interests interfere with the proper discharge of his/her duties in the school. Managers should put the interests of students before all other interests in the course of carrying out their duties. Conflict of interest may arise in cases where they exercise authority, influence decisions and actions, or gain access to confidential information. In a school, conflict of interest may arise in the following cases, which are by no means exhaustive:

- admission of students;
- staff appointment and promotion;
- complaints and disciplinary actions against staff and students;
- selection of textbooks, sale of exercise books and other school accessories;

- 
- supply of school uniforms;
  - provision of school bus service;
  - approval of tuckshop operations;
  - provision of catering service e.g. lunch boxes; and
  - purchase of furniture and equipment e.g. award of tenders.

(b) The Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) has produced a guidebook *The Integrity Management for Schools – A Practical Guidebook for School Staff* which explains corruption loopholes through case studies and recommends to school management the principles of formulating corruption prevention measures. The contents cover acceptance of advantages and donations, conflict of interest, tendering and procurement, and accounts management. The guidebook is available on the ICAC homepage (<http://www.icac.org.hk/eng/01/10/17/14811.html>).

## 5.5 A Two-pronged Approach to Declaration of Conflict of Interest

- (a) On taking up office, school managers should declare in writing to the IMC any pecuniary or other personal interests that may conflict with their managerial duties. A two-pronged approach shall be adopted :
- managers declare any conflict of interest to the IMC, which will set up a register for recording the declared interests of individual managers; and
  - managers disclose any conflict of interest during the discussion of specific agenda items at the meetings of IMCs.



- (b) The sample declaration form is at *Appendix III*. IMCs are encouraged to modify the form to suit their needs. Having made a declaration to the IMC, managers should take it upon themselves to update any information whenever necessary, although they are required to declare to the IMC at least once in every 12 months any conflict of interest. If managers are in doubt as to whether a declaration is warranted, they may seek the advice of the supervisor of the IMC.
- (c) When a known direct pecuniary interest exists, the supervisor of the IMC may withhold circulation of relevant papers to the managers concerned. Where a manager is in direct receipt of a paper for discussion that he/she knows presents a direct conflict of interest, he/she should immediately inform the secretary and return the paper.

## 5.6 Register of Interests

- (a) The IMC shall maintain a register of managers' declared financial and personal conflict of interest, which should be available for inspection by any inspector of schools at any reasonable time. It may also consider making available the register for inspection by the interested stakeholders like teachers, parents and alumni of the school upon request.
- (b) The IMC shall also maintain a register of all disclosures relating to the matters that are considered or are to be considered at a meeting of the IMC, which shall be available for public inspection at any reasonable time.

- (c) There should be proper procedures for the safe custody of the declaration forms, which should only be kept by a designated member or the supervisor of the IMC. The IMC may make reference to the *Code of Practice on Human Resource Management* published by the Office of Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data in determining the duration of retention of the register. The personal data should not be kept longer than is necessary for the fulfillment of the purposes for which the data are to be used.
- (d) Any disclosure of conflict of interest made during a meeting has to be recorded in the minutes and the register must be updated accordingly.
- (e) The register and meeting minutes on declaration of conflict of interest are under the protection of the Data Protection Principles of the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance.

### Key Points

- (a) It is imperative that school managers work only for the benefits of students and that the interests of the school should always be above theirs. [Section 5.4]
- (b) A manager has to observe the requirements in relation to declaration and disclosure of interests stipulated in the Education Ordinance. [Section 5.1 & 5.2]

# Section 6

## Procedures for Incorporated Management Committee Meetings

The procedures for IMC meetings have to be laid down in the IMC constitution. Each IMC may set its own procedures for how IMC meetings will be conducted and the decisions reached. The items listed below serve as a reference for IMCs to draw up meeting procedures that suit individual needs.

### 6.1 Number of Meetings

For the IMC to function effectively, there have to be regular meetings to discuss and decide on school matters. While the number of meeting has been specified in the IMC constitution, the IMC may hold more meetings to meet the needs of the school.

### 6.2 Special Meetings

At any time during an emergency, the supervisor may convene an extraordinary meeting at short notice. A meeting may also be held at the request of a certain number of managers as specified in the IMC constitution. This number is at the discretion of the IMC. All members should be notified of the date, time, place and purpose of such special meetings.

### 6.3 Supervisor

- (a) The supervisor of the IMC shall be one of the registered managers of the school. However, according to the Education Ordinance, the principal or a teacher of the school shall not be the supervisor or act as the supervisor. The procedures for the election or nomination of the supervisor, and for resignation, re-election or re-nomination when a vacancy arises, should be made known to each manager and properly documented.
- (b) The supervisor of the IMC will ensure that the meeting is conducted in accordance with the prescribed procedures, and that

members are given opportunities to voice their opinions on the agenda items. He/she must have an understanding of why each item has been placed on the agenda and how each item should be approached and discussed. He/she will preside over the meetings of the IMC in an impartial manner and keep them running efficiently by ensuring that :

- Motions and amendments are relevant, clear and consistent with previous decisions before they are accepted;
- Motions state clearly the actions to be taken and the persons responsible;
- Time spent on discussing issues is proportionate to the importance, relevance and extent of agreement;
- Discussion is pertinent to the issue under consideration;
- As many managers as possible contribute to the discussion and that they are given reasonable opportunity to do so;
- Debates are summed up prior to voting; and
- Formal voting is done only by those entitled to vote.

(c) If the supervisor is absent and has not authorized another manager to preside at the meeting, the managers present at the meeting can elect among themselves a manager to preside at the meeting.

## 6.4 Secretary

A secretary is to assist the IMC to maintain records of its membership and proceedings. A number of activities can be considered to form the main duties of the secretary. These include preparing the agenda, circulating the agenda and papers, taking minutes of IMC meetings, circulating the minutes, collating comments and receiving resignations of IMC members, etc.

## 6.5 Agenda

- (a) The supervisor will draw up the agenda in consultation with the principal. Individual managers, or groups of managers, may request items to be placed on the agenda. It is for the supervisor to decide whether the items should be placed on the agenda for that meeting or a later meeting. An example of an agenda for an IMC meeting is at [Appendix IV](#). The IMC can discuss any issues relating to the management and running of the school.
- (b) The agenda should be available to all members before the meeting. It is to be circulated to all managers, preferably seven days prior to the meeting, along with any relevant information papers or reports. Other supplementary papers can be tabled at the time of the meeting.

## 6.6 Quorum

The quorum for a meeting will normally be one half (rounded up to a whole number) of the IMC membership. For instance, if there are 17 managers, the quorum will be nine. Before the meeting starts, the supervisor should ensure that there are sufficient members to meet the quorum. If no quorum is formed eventually, the meeting shall stand adjourned and will be held at such time and place as the supervisor may specify in accordance with the IMC constitution.

## 6.7 Attendance

Any manager who cannot be present at a meeting has to inform the secretary/supervisor as early as possible and give reasons for his/her absence. According to the Education Ordinance, school managers who has been absent without the consent of the committee from all meetings in a school year will be required by the IMC to resign from office. If resignation is not received, the IMC will be able to seek the

cancellation of the manager's registration from the Permanent Secretary for Education and Manpower.

## 6.8 Withdrawal from Meetings

- (a) Managers may be required by the supervisor to withdraw from a meeting when the discussion and decision involve a conflict of interest. The general principle is that no member should be involved in a decision where his/her personal interests may come into conflict with those of the IMC. This member must not be present when a vote is taken on the matter, but may be included in the quorum for that meeting.
- (b) Withdrawal from a meeting is also necessary to ensure a fair hearing. For instance, when the IMC is discussing disciplinary action against a pupil or a teacher, managers who are involved in the event or who may be biased should withdraw from taking part in the discussion of this item. However, the IMC may call upon such managers to give evidence.
- (c) The IMC can decide what constitutes a personal and pecuniary interest requiring withdrawal from meetings. For instance, a manager employed as a member of staff in the school, including the principal, will need to withdraw from a meeting that considers his/her appraisal, promotion, or a complaint against him/her.

## 6.9 Motions

The supervisor has to decide if a motion is to be a written submission or a verbal notification. Managers should inform the supervisor or secretary of a motion well before the meeting. The procedures for raising, amending or removing a motion should be clearly documented, including details such as whether the motion will be discussed if the manager who raises that motion is absent.

## 6.10 Casting of Votes

- (a) A formal decision of the IMC requires the support of a majority of votes of the managers present. When the IMC has achieved consensus on the issues before them, formal voting is not required.
- (b) When votes are tied, except for an election, the item can be deferred to the next meeting to enable further examination of the issue. Alternatively, the manager who presides over the meeting can have a casting vote on items with equal votes on each side.
- (c) Certain critical circumstances require a majority of votes of all the members of the IMC. These include matters relating to the appointment and dismissal of any member of the teaching staff, as stipulated in regulation 76 of the Education Regulations.
- (d) The IMC may, at its own discretion, require an outsider or any person serving as an advisor to be present at a meeting, to assist or provide related information. However, it is important that these persons or advisors should not have voting rights.

## 6.11 Resolution by Circulation

Between meetings, at the discretion of the supervisor resolutions can be achieved by circulation of papers to all members of the IMC. This may be for issues which require urgent decisions or recommendations and cannot wait for the next meeting. The resolutions will be decided by a majority of members on the IMC. The IMC can also stipulate that nil replies will be regarded as abstentions.

## 6.12 Minutes of Meetings

- (a) The names of everyone present at the IMC meeting should be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. The minutes will record briefly the main points made in the discussion, the decisions of the IMC and the persons responsible for follow-up actions. Any manager can ask for his/her views to be recorded in the minutes. This includes any dissenting votes and views.
- (b) The minutes of all proceedings at IMC meetings will be drafted by the secretary. The draft minutes will be checked by the supervisor before being circulated among managers for comments and endorsement, preferably within one month of each meeting. The minutes should be marked as 'DRAFT' until passed at the next meeting. The supervisor will announce any amendments to the minutes during the next meeting and sign the minutes to indicate formal acceptance. Any minutes so confirmed and signed will be prima facie evidence of the facts therein stated.
- (c) The agenda of every meeting of the IMC, together with the signed minutes of every meeting, will be entered in books kept and made available for inspection if required. However, the minutes of any part of a meeting deemed confidential, or any papers/reports considered confidential, should be kept separate. The IMC can decide which items of discussion are confidential and managers should respect the confidentiality of these items. The general principles of confidentiality should be observed by each manager.

### Key Points

The procedures for IMC meetings should have been laid down in the IMC constitution. Each manager should have a copy of the IMC constitution for reference and get acquainted with the meeting procedures.



# Section 7

## Collaboration and Delegation

### 7.1 Collaboration with the Principal and Staff

- (a) Collaboration between the IMC, principal and staff is vital in promoting effective management and continuous improvement in schools. In a well-managed school, the IMC, principal and staff work in close partnership. Based on mutual respect and trust and a shared vision for their school, they support each other and recognise their respective responsibilities.
- (b) Broadly speaking, the IMC is responsible for developing school policies while the principal and the staff are responsible for the implementation of policies and the daily operation of the school. The IMC will not be involved in the day-to-day running of the school, which is the duty of the principal. Therefore, it is crucial that the IMC and principal agree on what constitutes the day-to-day management of the school and that the IMC delegates to the principal and staff the authority to perform those duties. In collaboration with the principal and staff, the IMC will :
- develop school goals and set directions for the school;
  - formulate school policies and make important decisions;
  - support the principal in managing the school; and
  - encourage the staff to improve quality.
- (c) On the other hand, the principal will discuss with the IMC major aspects of school life and how the school is managed. The principal supports the IMC by :
- managing the school in accordance with the Education Ordinance and with the school goals and policies set by the IMC;
  - overseeing the routine operations in the school;

- providing information and feedback on school performance; and
  - offering advice and making recommendations that will facilitate the IMC's decisions.
- (d) At the same time, the staff may provide support to the IMC and principal by :
- taking a positive attitude towards the IMC's decisions and working together with the principal to achieve the agreed targets; and
  - providing professional advice on school policies relating to curriculum development, classroom instruction and student activities.
- (e) A good working relationship is created among the IMC, principal and staff when there is effective communication and clear delineation of their complementary roles. They work most effectively together when a climate of trust and openness is fostered in the school.

## 7.2 Collaboration with Committees and Working Groups

- (a) There is no doubt that the task of school administration is complex and the working partnership can be extended to encompass various stakeholders and different members of the school community. The IMC may get teachers, parents, alumni and the community involved in school operations and decision making, through their participation in school committees, working groups and advisory councils formed to serve different functions. The teamwork in these committees and groups can contribute enormously to the smooth operation of a school. Thus it is

important that the IMC and the principal delegate authority appropriately to the committees and groups. This will enhance not only the transparency of school operations but also the ownership of the stakeholders. Committees and groups with delegated authority can make decisions and must report to the IMC both the rationale behind their decisions and the procedures for making them. Those without delegated authority can make recommendations to the IMC but not decisions.

(b) However, it is important for the IMC to avoid overlapping of functions between these committees and groups, which will lead to a waste of human resources. Thus, in collaboration with these committees and groups, the IMC will need to take a strategic view to consider if there are :

- clearly defined terms of reference for each committee and group;
- procedures to select members with appropriate knowledge and skills to serve on the committees;
- effective communication channels to collect feedback from the committees; and
- mechanisms to review regularly the overall organization of the working committees, so that changes can be introduced.

### 7.3 Restrictions on Delegation

With the authority delegated by the IMC, the principal, staff and various committees take the responsibilities to administer the school. Nevertheless, some key decisions cannot be delegated and must rest with the IMC. The IMC may seek recommendations but must make crucial decisions on matters such as approving/endorsing :

- the SDP, ASP and school budgets;
- the SR, school profile and audited accounts;
- staff appointments, promotions, leave and dismissals;
- investigations of cases of conflict of interest, complaints and disciplinary matters involving members of staff (including the principal) and decisions on follow-up actions ; and
- mechanisms for managing school funds, keeping school accounts and auditing school accounts.

### Key Points

Close collaboration with the school principal and staff and appropriate delegation of authority are required for effective school management. Some basic principles are as follows -

- The IMC is responsible for developing school policies while the school principal and staff are responsible for the implementation of school policies and the daily school operation [Section 7.1];
- Appropriate delegation of authority to committees and groups within a coherent organisational structure would enhance transparency and ownership of the stakeholders [Section 7.2];
- Some key functions of IMC including school planning and self-improvement, formulating school policies and staff appointment and dismissal cannot be delegated [Section 7.3].

# 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>	—
<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>

# Appendix II

## Sample Code of Ethics for Managers

### A Code of Ethics for School Managers

#### Foreword

To be a school manager, one needs to have an interest in the education of young people in Hong Kong and be keen on participation in school activities. A manager is willing to devote time to work for the IMC and exchange ideas on educational and school management issues with the principal, teachers and other managers. Apart from this, managers need to acquire the necessary knowledge of educational policy and develop skills in school management.

As a school manager, he/she fully understands that the overall aims of education is to enable every person to attain all-round development in the domains of ethics, intellect, physique, social skills and aesthetics according to his/her own attributes so that he/she is capable of life-long learning, critical and exploratory thinking, innovating and adapting to change.... (Reform Proposals for the Education System in Hong Kong, Education Commission, 2000). Every school should help all its students, whatever their ability, and including those with special educational needs, to develop their potential as fully as possible in both academic and non-academic aspects. The school will not give up any opportunity to educate every individual child.

#### Code of Ethics

A school manager shall do his/her utmost to promote the education of students by adhering to the following commitments :

##### **School mission and goals**

- Shall contribute to the development of sound management and educational practices conducive to the attainment of the school mission and vision.

- Shall ensure the attainment of school goals and the target performance of students.
- Shall endeavour to foster the all-around and unique development of every student.
- Shall base his/her decisions solely on the interests of students and the school.

#### **Support to staff**

- Shall contribute to the establishment of an effective staff management system, for example, by means of staff professional development, delegation and performance management.
- Shall support the work of all teaching and non-teaching staff as they make their contributions to the school.

#### **School management**

- Shall seek all possible opportunities to develop his/her knowledge, skills and understanding in school management.
- Shall be involved in and knowledgeable about the school by visiting it, taking part in school functions and meeting with staff, parents and students.
- Shall not disclose any classified or proprietary information of the IMC or school to anybody without authorization, and also take necessary measures at all times to prevent the leakage or misuse of the information.
- Shall ensure that the financial and human resources of the school are solely and properly used for school business and in the interest of pupils.



### **IMC meetings**

- Shall do his/her best to attend the IMC meetings, contribute to the discussions and take part in necessary follow-up actions.
- Shall abide by the majority decisions of the IMC.
- Shall respect the confidentiality of the discussions of confidential items and shall not disclose the views of individual managers and how they have voted.
- Shall recognise that all IMC members are collectively accountable for the decisions and actions of the Committee.

### **Conflict of interest**

- Shall not use his/her IMC membership for any personal gain or procurement of financial benefits for his/her family or friends.
- Shall avoid conflict of interest and declare any private interests relating to his/her duties as a school manager.
- Shall absent himself/herself during an IMC meeting when a decision is made on a matter in which he/she or his/her immediate family have any direct pecuniary interest.
- Shall not accept lavish or frequent entertainment from persons having official dealings with the school (e.g. suppliers or contractors) lest he/she will be placed in a position of obligation to the offerers.

### **Acceptance of advantages**

- Shall not solicit or accept any advantage from pupils, parents, staff and any persons having business dealings with school (e.g. suppliers and contractors) without the IMC's permission.

- For any gift offered voluntarily to him/her in his/her official capacity, shall regard it as a gift to the IMC and seek the IMC's permission for acceptance and the method of disposal.
- Shall decline to accept any gift if the acceptance could affect his/her objectivity in conducting the IMC's business and induce him/her to act against the interest of the pupils.

### Commitment of the Education Profession

The following items are extracted from the *Code for the Education Profession of Hong Kong* (the Code). The IMC may take the Code as a reference in formulating the school-based code of ethics.

A member of the profession :

- Shall strive in every way for any improvement which will help or encourage students' physical and psychological development so as to fulfill society's expectations of a profession.
- Shall uphold professional autonomy as an indispensable condition for the exercise of the education profession's social responsibilities and shall strive to create a working environment which fosters professional autonomy.
- Shall strive to uphold the honour, dignity and ethics of the education profession and to foster unity and harmonious working relationships within the profession.
- Shall constantly endeavour, through a variety of channels, to improve his/her self-development, self-growth and knowledge of educational and world developments.
- Shall promote the highest possible image of the profession by fostering public understanding of the profession and maintaining effective public relations.

- Shall exert every effort to provide a professional service, to raise professional standards and to promote a climate that encourages the exercise of professional judgement.
- Shall strive to support and enrich the education profession's ideals and achievements so that the profession is attractive to high quality recruits.
- Shall endeavour to promote the understanding and respect of different cultures in order to enhance harmony between those of all origins and races.
- Shall make every effort to establish and maintain effective channels of communication within the profession to ensure its healthy development.
- Shall refrain from activity that is detrimental to the image of the profession.
- Shall not advertise or canvas for the purpose of promoting his/her own advantage.
- Shall not accept gratuities, gifts or favours that might impair professional judgement.
- Shall, when making any public statement in his/her capacity as a professional educationalist, state clearly, when appropriate, his/her qualification to make this statement; the capacity in which the member is speaking; on whose behalf the member is speaking; and any association with any party or vested interests that may benefit from such statements.

# Appendix III

## Sample Form for Declaration of Interests

To : Supervisor, Incorporated Management Committee of XXX School

I hereby declare that :

- I have no pecuniary or other personal interest, direct or indirect, in any matter that raises or may raise a conflict with my duties as a manager of the Incorporated Management Committee of XXX School.
- I have pecuniary or other personal interest, direct or indirect, in certain matter that raises or may raise a conflict with my duties as a manager of the Incorporated Management Committee of XXX School. The particulars of such matter are stated below :

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I also acknowledge that I shall make another declaration to state any change in any matter contained in this declaration within one month after the change occurs and shall provide further information on the particulars contained in this declaration if so required by the Incorporated Management Committee of XXX School.

Signature : \_\_\_\_\_

Name : \_\_\_\_\_

Date : \_\_\_\_\_

- Note : (a) Please put a "✓" in the appropriate box  
(b) Please continue on supplementary sheet if necessary

# Appendix IV

## Example of an Agenda for an IMC Meeting

**The Incorporated Management Committee of ABC College**

**Meeting to be held on dd mm yyyy**

**at 6:30p.m. in Room 101 of ABC College**

### **AGENDA**

1. Welcome and Apologies
2. Announcements/Additions to the Agenda (if any)
3. Confirmation of the Minutes of the Last Meeting
4. Matters Arising
5. School Report for the 2005/06 School Year
6. Annual School Plan for the 2006/07 School Year
7. School Budgets for the 2006/07 School Year
8. Staff Appraisal System and Staff Development
9. Any Other Business
10. Date and Time of Next Meeting

# References

Some useful materials and websites listed below for reference:

1. Legislation (available at the website of the Bilingual Laws Information System <http://www.legislation.gov.hk>)
  - The Education Ordinance and Education Regulations
  - The Employment Ordinance
  - The Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance
  - The Prevention of Bribery Ordinance
  - Anti-discrimination legislation
2. Documents on education (available at the Education and Manpower Bureau's website <http://www.emb.gov.hk>)
  - Basic Education Curriculum Guide – Building on Strengths, Curriculum Development Council, 2002
  - Circulars issued by the Education and Manpower Bureau from time to time
  - Codes of Aid
  - Education Commission Reports, Nos. 1-7
  - Learning to Learn – The Way Forward in Curriculum Development, Curriculum Development Council, June 2001
  - The New Academic Structure for Senior Secondary Education and Higher Education – Action Plan for Investing in the Future of Hong Kong, May 2005
  - Performance Indicators for Hong Kong Schools, Education Department, September 2002
  - Performance Indicators for Hong Kong Schools: Evidence of Performance, Education Department, September 2002

- Reform of the Education System in Hong Kong – Summary, Education Commission, 2001
  - Reform Proposals for the Education System in Hong Kong, Education Commission, September 2000
  - School Administration Guide, Education Department, 2001 (Updated from time to time and uploaded to the Education and Manpower Bureau’s website)
3. Reference Materials on School-based Management  
(available at the School-based Management Section’s website <http://www.emb.gov.hk/sbm>)
- Guidelines on compiling School Development Plan, Annual School Plan and School Report
  - Training Courses for School Managers
4. Related websites
- Committee on Home-School Co-operation : <http://embhsc.hkedcity.net>
  - Curriculum Development Institute : <http://cd.emb.gov.hk>
  - Education Commission : <http://www.e-c.edu.hk>
  - Hong Kong Education City : <http://www.hkedcity.net>
  - Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority : [http:// eant01.hkeaa.edu.hk/hkea/new\\_look\\_home.asp](http://eant01.hkeaa.edu.hk/hkea/new_look_home.asp)
  - Quality Education Fund : <http://www.info.gov.hk/qef>

**Education and Manpower Bureau**  
**August 2006**