



教育統籌局

Education and Manpower Bureau

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25 January 2007

Mr Jean-Luc Rey
Chairman
The Hong Kong Association of French Teachers
25/F., Tower 2, Admiralty Centre, 18 Harcourt Road
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Mr Rey,

Thank you for your letter dated 22 December 2006 expressing concern about the study of French in Hong Kong.

It is the goal of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR) Government to help our students to be biliterate and trilingual and to upkeep students' national identity through the study of Chinese Language. The language policy of Hong Kong does not preclude the study of other foreign languages in the school curriculum.

For a modern and international city like ours, with citizens of different nationalities and cultures, the tradition of providing access to study other languages including French is to be upheld and promoted, both before and after the introduction of the New Senior Secondary (NSS) Academic System. However, the learning of these languages is not expected to be done at the expense of learning Chinese Language.

Under the NSS, students can take other languages such as French as elective subjects. Schools can make flexible time-tabling arrangement to accommodate students' choices as in the case of offering other electives in school. For example, students can learn French either within or outside the regular lesson time. We understand that time-tabling arrangements for offering NSS electives is a major concern for many schools and so we are working with a number of schools on time-tabling simulation projects to see how schools can help maximize subject combinations for students. The learning of other languages will be one of the factors that we will take into consideration in these time-tabling projects.

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To support the NSS, the Education and Manpower Bureau (EMB) will provide a Diversity Learning Grant (DLG) to schools. Schools can use the grant flexibly to hire teachers to teach other languages under NSS. French teachers can therefore continue to contribute their expertise under the new system. More details of DLG will be available in due course, and its ambit will specifically include supporting study of foreign languages including French.

The Bureau is also providing professional development programmes for all teachers to help them prepare for the NSS curriculum. Teachers are always welcome to apply for these programmes to upgrade their professional knowledge or prepare themselves to take up the teaching of another subject under the NSS.

As regards the issue of the Cambridge International Examinations AS level examination, the Hong Kong Examination and Assessment Authority (HKEAA) has explained in the seminar that the reason for using the November papers is to ensure that the examination results can be released before June. This is necessary so that results can be incorporated into the new Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE). Some school representatives indicated that schools could actually adjust their teaching arrangements so that students could take the examination in November. Some school representatives also suggested that the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) examination should be offered alongside the AS level examination. HKEAA will explore the feasibility of this proposal with Cambridge International Examinations.

Thank you very much for your views on the study of French in Hong Kong. We believe that, with the inclusion of other languages in the NSS electives and provision of grants and support to schools, our students will continue to benefit from the study of other languages including French in future.

Yours sincerely,



(Chris WARDLAW)

for Secretary for Education and Manpower

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