Basic Education for Hong Kong

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Group 6

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Executive Summary

The share of Hong Kong's service sector, currently 86%, will possibly grow further in the future, fostered by the positioning of 'four pillar' industries (financial services, logistics, tourism and producer services) identified by the government. Eventually, Hong Kong will become a pure financial and service center. Such a positioning assumes that Hong Kong can fully integrate itself with Mainland China, or at least with PRD and at the same time maintaining its traditional advantage of international networks.

Most people agree on the requirements in basic competencies for our future generations, but are divided on the achievement or roadmap of our education reform. Hong Kong’s education reform is based on the Reform proposal published in 2000 and a number of EC Reports, its main spirit are:

- Bilingual capacity – Putonghua and English
- Creativity, independent thinking and “all round development”
- Development of a complete person in terms of passion and ethics

There are four policies area that have a huge implication to basic education reforms:

- Language policies: Trilingual and bi-literate, Medium of Instruction (MOI)
- The 3+3+4 reform
- School-based Management Reform
- Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS)

Are we providing the correct basic education to our children?

By contrasting the different viewpoints from policies makers, parents and students, teachers and education organizations as well as employers from our society, we see a huge gap between different stakeholders’ objectives on the reform, let alone their agreement on its achievement. This is evident from the endless resistance from teachers and related organizations to the government’s reform policies as well as an exodus of wealthier and capable students to overseas schools or ESF/international schools in Hong Kong.

When can we see the end of the tunnel?

We hypothesize that resistance from teachers and educational organizations has largely led to execution failures of policies with good intentions. Education reform is a huge re-engineering process involving many stakeholders. This paper will use a business perspective to review some of the policies and its implementation with the objective of bringing out some insights and recommendation to improve the effectiveness of our education reforms.
A. Education Reforms

Source: Reform Proposals for the Education System in Hong Kong, September 2000
http://www.e-c.edu.hk/eng/reform/index_e.html

In his Policy Address 2000, the Chief Executive endorsed the recommendations made by the Education Commission for reforming the education system in Hong Kong. The scope of the reform covers the curricula, the assessment mechanisms as well as the admission systems for different stages of education. The Education Reform proposal has clearly identified the need of education for 21st Century. It acknowledged that Hong Kong would become a “knowledge based economy”, our education must prepare future generations to have ability to meet new challenges, adaptability, creativity and abilities for communication, self-learning and co-operation as prerequisite for success, while a person’s character, emotional qualities, horizons and learning should also be nurtured in order to achieve excellence. “Life long learning and All-round development” is the expectation of everyone in this era.

It also highlighted that despite the huge resources put into education and the heavy workload endured by teachers, learning effectiveness of students remains not very promising. Learning is still examination-driven and scant attention is paid to “learning to learn”. School Life is usually monotonous, students are not given comprehensive learning experiences with little room to think, explore and create.

The education reforms are to realize the visions of Lifelong learning, to raise the overall quality of students, to construct a diverse school system, to create an inspiring learning environment, to acknowledge the importance of moral education, and to develop an education system that is rich in tradition but cosmopolitan and culturally diverse. There are 7 focus areas:

1. Reforming the admission system and public examinations systems so as to break the barriers and create room for all
2. Reforming the curricula and improving teaching methods
3. Improving the assessment mechanism to supplement learning and teaching
4. Providing more diverse opportunities for lifelong learning at senior secondary
level and beyond
5. Formulating an effective resource strategy
6. Enhancing the professionalism of teachers
7. Implementing measures to support frontline educators

The Academic structure proposed is:
1. Earlier Childhood Education
2. 9 years basic education
3. Senior Secondary Education
4. Higher Education
5. Continuing Education

For Assessment Mechanism, the proposal recommended to implement Internal Assessment and Basic Competency Assessments in Chinese, English and Mathematics. External Assessment (HKCEE / HKALE) are to be continued but eventually be replaced by a new public examination after the implementation of 3 years senior secondary education.

It recommended that admission to primary be according to vicinity and a certain number of discretionary places. The Academic Aptitude Test (AAT) would be abolished from school year of 2000/2001. Average AAT results from 1997/1998 to 1999/2000 would be used to scale students’ internal assessment results to derive the allocation bands of students. The number of allocation bands would be reduced and gradually phased out.

The “Through Train Model” was mentioned in which students can be transferred from linked primary to linked secondary school without going through the central allocation system.

The Curriculum Development Council (CDC) has prepared a curriculum framework with a view to realizing the aims of education. The framework embodies five important learning experiences (see Education Policies section below) that could be obtained from integrated learning in and outside the classroom to achieve all-round development:

While existing subjects are suitably incorporated into eight Key Learning Areas (KLAs) in the curriculum framework (see Education Policies section below)
It also provided a number of recommendations to teaching methods reforms such as encouraging more problem-solving and critical thinking rather than knowledge transfer, diversified learning materials rather than standard textbooks, learning outside classrooms, social experiences, flexible arrangement of learning time etc.

There were also very detailed discussions on the Reform of public examination and many other reforms related to higher education. Qualifications and standards of teachers were also of concern. The proposal recommended a quality assurance mechanism.

The proposal also highlighted the importance of effective utilization of existing public resources on education, which amounted to 4% of GDP and 23% of the overall Government budget in year 2000.

**B. Education Policies**

*Source: Interview with Mrs. Fanny Law*

Current education policies are based on the spirit of recommendations from EC and the timetable prepared by the government. An overview of those relevant to basic education is summarized as below.

**Strategy**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Level</th>
<th>Stretching gifted and highly able students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bolstering national identity and moral education</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Encouraging creativity and critical thinking</td>
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<td>Strengthening English and Putonghua proficiency</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution Level</th>
<th>Stretching professional leadership of principals</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enhancing teacher professional standards</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Greater school autonomy in deployment of resources</td>
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<td>Streamlining administrative tasks</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>System Level</th>
<th>Strengthening SBM &amp; accountability system</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Establishing qualifications framework in promoting lifelong learning</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Raising HK to the status of a regional education hub</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
New Senior Secondary & Basic Education Curriculum Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NSS</th>
<th>2-3 Elective (20-30%)</th>
<th>Out of 20 subjects or out of courses in career-oriented studies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 Core Subjects (45-55%)</td>
<td>Chinese Language, English Language, Mathematics, Liberal Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other Learning Experiences (15 – 35%)</td>
<td>Moral and Civic education, community service, Aesthetic and physical experiences, Work-related experiences (e.g. job attachment)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

|------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|-------------------|---------------------|

Gist of Education Initiatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schools Leading Reform</th>
<th>More funding flexibility</th>
<th>Professional development for principals and teachers</th>
<th>Curriculum reform (ten years time frame)</th>
<th>Quality Education Fund (finances school-led reforms)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rigorous Quality Assurance</td>
<td>School Self-evaluation (supported by External School Review)</td>
<td>Strengthened HKCAA, HKEAA and Higher Education institutions Assessment reform</td>
<td>Qualifications Framework</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expansion of Opportunities</td>
<td>Continuing Education Fund</td>
<td>Post-secondary education to achieve 60% participation rate by 2010</td>
<td>Skills Upgrading Scheme for workers with low education attainment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. **Language policies: Trilingual and bi-literate, MOI**

*Sources: EMB website Guidance for Secondary School MOI, September 1997, SSPA and MOI consultation document*


Past research

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<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Views of Secondary 1 students on the MOI used in schools (1994)</td>
</tr>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>A comparison of pupils' Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination results between schools using Chinese as MOI in all subjects and schools using Chinese as MOI by subject (1994)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Evaluation study on the implementation of MOI grouping (1995 to present)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on some research on MOI, guidance for secondary school was published in 1997. According to the guidance, most secondary schools in Hong Kong should adopt Chinese for teaching all academic subjects, starting with their 1998/99 Secondary 1 intake and progressing each year to a higher level of secondary education. Schools wishing to use, or to continue with, English must demonstrate to EMB that they have satisfied the requirements: student ability, teacher capability and support strategies and programmes. MOI are published in the SSPA Secondary School List.

A vetting committee chaired by a non-official on the Board of Education will consider information provided by schools. An appeals committee, whose Chairman will be designated by the Secretary for Education and Manpower, will consider any appeals against the decisions of the vetting committee.
To ensure that schools use the MOI most appropriate for their students, EMB liaise with schools, conduct inspections and monitor parent or student feedback, remind schools where appropriate; and give directions to schools in accordance with Section 82 of the Education Ordinance.

Some schools using Chinese as MOI for their Secondary 1 to Secondary 3, from 1998/99 to 2000/01, may wish to switch to English-medium for certain subjects in some classes at Secondary 4 and Secondary 5. Such schools must demonstrate to EMB that they have satisfied the following requirements: subject teachers being capable to teach in English; sound school-based support strategies and programmes (such as bridging courses) for assisting students to switch to English-medium; and students being sufficiently proficient in English for the switch.

The policy is due for consultation in 2004. The consultation is being undertaken and currently at its final stage. In a letter addressing the public, the EC states the following viewpoint of its current MOI policy:

1. EMB continues to recommend using mother tongue as the mainstream MOI.

2. However, the government also understands the demand from certain part of our society to use English as MOI. Therefore, the government does not object using English as MOI provided that the school satisfy the three prerequisites on student’s ability to learn (85%), the teachers’ capability to teach in English (HKCEE grade C or above) as well as support programmes in school (English learning environment).

3. Irrespective of what MOI being used, the objective must be to educate our students to be competent in both English and Chinese.
4. The EC does not recommend student based streaming of EMI/CMI classes within a school, it supports the existing of school based streaming of EMI/CMI schools.

5. Extra resources will be provided to CMI schools to enhance learning of English language.

2. The 3+3+4 reform

“3+3+4” denotes a change to the structure of the senior secondary school and the university undergraduate degree, from the current system which is called "5+2+3". What these numbers stand for is the time students spend in school and on an undergraduate degree.

At present most students in Hong Kong spend 5 years in secondary school. Only those students who win senior secondary places can have a further 2 years to pursue further studies in Sixth and Seventh Forms. Students who achieve high grades on completion of Seventh Form can then go on to university for a 3-year undergraduate degree.

However, about two thirds of secondary students do not enter the Sixth Form. The primary driver for 3+3+4 is that the Government has endorsed the Education Commission recommendation that ALL students should have 3 years in the lower secondary system (S1 to S3), and a further 3 years in the senior secondary school (S4 to S6). The current S7 year will no longer be part of secondary schooling, but will become part of further education at the tertiary institutions. The 3-year undergraduate degree will be lengthened by one year and become a 4-year degree.

The move is as significant for Hong Kong education as the introduction in 1978 of 9 years Basic Education for all students. The new system will be greatly helped by having a bigger proportion of students complete a broadly-based high quality education at school. An
additional year of senior secondary education for every student and an additional year in university education will raise the overall quality of our young people.

A new single credential, the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) will reduce the number of examinations and create more time for productive learning, and remedial or enhancement programmes.

More integrated and recognised pathways to further education and employment from the secondary school will be developed. Many more students, with different abilities and interests, will stay on to complete senior secondary education and will want to take up further study and/or work. The new system will provide smoother articulation to higher education qualifications (including academic, vocational and professional), so that every student will have opportunities for success in life. They must have opportunities to build on their achievements. The new 4-year degree will also allow the universities to offer different learning approaches, including more independent studies, and to produce outstanding graduates.

Finally, the 3+3+4 system will mean a 12-year academic system for primary and secondary education, better aligning Hong Kong with Mainland China and the international community. This will promote better international articulation of our education system which is important for our global positioning as a world city.

3. School-based Management Reform

Source: Education Commission Report No.7 on Quality education

The Third Reading of the Bill about the School-based Management (“SBM”) governance framework was passed in the Legislative Council on 8 July 2004. The Education (Amendment) Ordinance 2004 was enacted. The Ordinance was published in the Gazette on 23 July 2004 and
came into operation on 1 January 2005. It requires all aided schools to establish an
incorporated management committee (“IMC”) to manage the school. Their sponsoring bodies
(“SSBs”) have to submit on or before 1 July 2009 a draft constitution of the IMC and a list of
proposed managers of the school to the Permanent Secretary for Education & Manpower for
the purpose of establishing the IMC. The Ordinance stipulates clearly the functions and powers
of SSBs and IMCs. Also, it provides for the composition of the IMC, which includes SSB
managers, elected parent manager(s), elected teacher manager(s), the principal (an ex-officio
manager), alumni manager(s) and independent manager(s). Furthermore, the Ordinance makes
provisions for the constitution and operation of the IMC, the selection of the principal and the
functions of the supervisor, etc.

SBM is a management framework. In managing schools own operation and resources, it
allows key stakeholders to participate in school decision-making through an IMC. The
collective wisdom of school managers will help improve the teaching and learning
environment as well as the effectiveness of students’ learning. All managers of the IMC will
work together to ensure better school management and enhance the performance of school.

The responsibilities of IMC includes:

- development formal procedures for setting school goals and evaluating progress
towards these goals;

- development of documents to outline school profiles, development plans, budgets and
means of evaluating progress;

- availability of written constitutions for the school management committees;

- participation of teachers, parents and alumni in school management, development,
planning evaluation and decision-making;

- development of formal procedures and resources for staff appraisal and staff
development according to teachers’ needs.

The framework allows increased transparency and accountability in school management and ensure the Government’ annual subsidy is put to best use. In the other words, the new Ordinance enforces the SSB passing their authority to IMC, a group of stakeholders.

4. Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS)

Introduced in September 1991, the Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS) was set up in response to the recommendations of the Education Commission in its Report No.3 and approved by the Executive Council. The Government encourages non-government secondary schools which have attained a sufficiently high educational standard to join the DSS by providing subsidies in order to enhance the quality of private school education. Under the scheme, schools are free to decide on their curriculum, fees and entrance requirements. In March 1999, the Executive Council accepted the recommendations of a review of private school policy to allow aided primary schools to join the DSS from the 2000-01 school year onwards.

The aim of the DSS is to develop a strong private school sector by providing high quality schools other than government and aided schools so that parents have greater choice in finding suitable schools for their children.

All aided secondary and primary schools are eligible to apply from the 2000-01 school year onwards. School sponsors may also apply for allocation of government-built school premises to operate DSS schools. Schools admitted to the Scheme will operate as local DSS schools offering principally a curriculum targeted at local students and preparing them for local examinations.

As at September 2004, there are a total of 55 DSS schools (247 KB) (44 secondary, 10 primary and 1 primary cum secondary). In the 2003/04 school year, there are 785 primary schools, 501 secondary schools and 62 special schools.
C. Critics from different stakeholders

1. Educators

*Reference source: Interview with Principal Leung of Fresh Fish Hong Primary School*

a. Language policies

Schools should have freedom on choice of media of instruction. Teachers can choose the one most suitable according to the students’ ability. For example, schools may use English in one class but Chinese in another class.

b. 3+3+4 Reform

Before 1990s, the higher secondary educations were divided by two main streams which are Hong Kong Advanced Level and Hong Kong Higher Level. The universities were also divided into 3-years and 4-years, two different systems. Government insisted to unify all schools into “5+2+3” although objection was raised by many educators at that time. Now the Government suggests to change again to “3+3+4”, the ever-changing policy makes teachers hard to adopt and also increase their workload.

c. School-based Management

Appointing teachers and parents to the body that has executive powers over the schools can raise a lot of problems. Parents and teachers are interested parties, and may have conflict of interest in most matters the IMC deals with.

Many respectable corporations do run stakeholders’ committees where workers, customers and community residents participate and are consulted. But virtually no corporation, not even the most respectable and responsible one, would invite consumer or staff representatives to sit on its governing board of directors.

The parents and independent managers are part-time volunteers, with at best very variable commitment. Many decisions made by SSBs on individual schools involve taking responsibility over the long term. The long-term responsibility and commitment of the
SSBs is the key factor in running successful school systems.

The bill limits the SBM devolution of authority only to IMC and excludes those schools who may want to adopt (or retain) a two-tier structure of management. The new management model is in essence a single-tier management structure that confuses supervisory and functional roles and puts schools under the direct supervision of the government. In other words, it takes all the authorities/responsibilities from SSB.

d. Direct Subsidy Scheme

The system of DSS will eventually draw a line between the poor and the rich in Hong Kong. DSS can deliver higher education standard because they have much more resources comparing with the aided schools. In DSS, Parent pays higher school fee that the poor can’t be afforded.

The outcome will be that rich families can enjoy higher quality education. The poor will never have a chance to get it. Without good quality education, the poor will never improve their living standard.

2. Parents and Students

a. Language polices

Most parents accept the logic that mother tongue teaching will be better for their children. The community has a predominant preference of EMI school to CMI school for other reasons - top performing schools are traditionally EMI and remained to be EMI, it is easy for parents to associate CMI with second-best schools; EMI is also preferred because of continuity in higher education and future job prospects. As many parents cannot create an environment for their children to practice English, they expect the schools to offer such environment. Polarization effect will become more serious as parents of brighter students will try to switch their children to EMI schools or DSS schools (which is generally EMI) or ESF/international schools. Some parents cast their vote by sending children overseas at an early age. In reality, EMI schools are also not strictly using
English in all subjects; it is common for teachers in EMI schools to use Cantonese to teach in science classes such as physics and mathematics. It seems EMB should reconsider their policy to allow schools to stream MOI by subjects rather than by students or by schools.

In general, the more educated parents tend to agree that the quality of our language teacher should be improved. They support the Language Proficiency Requirements for Teachers (http://www.emb.gov.hk/index.aspx?nodeID=266&langno=1).

b. School-based Management

Parents would definitely like to see changes in teaching methods and curricula as well as learning experiences, better opportunity for higher education that are the real objectives of the new framework. Middle class parents with good education background are keen to see changes and reforms in schools for their children. They understand that it is not possible to continue with the old teaching methods that they are brought up with.

c. Direct Subsidy Scheme

Under the current SSPA system (3 bands and base on IA), the brighter students will have relatively less chance to enter the secondary school of their choice because there will be more people within the same band to fight for the same number of school places. Very often, bright students will end up in not so ideal schools. The DSS scheme offer a good alternative and choice. Most parents are willing to pay higher fees for their children to study in DSS schools, which generally provide a more attractive option to students in terms of school environment, facilities, teaching methods and curricula.

3. Business

Business people are most concern about the language policies. They want to employ people that can truly master both English and Chinese (Putonhua).
4. Perspective of Policy Maker

The crucial task of policy maker is to lay down the strategic direction that aligns with the macro change of the future world. Our policy maker has laid down a very clear direction for Hong Kong’s Education Policy in the 21st Century. It can be summarized into 3 levels:

A. Student Level
B. Institution Level
C. System Level

From the strategic point of view, our group supports the aforementioned direction. The priority is clear that ‘Student’ should always be placed at the top; the essence of the education plan should equip our students to collaborate with the future world. The policy of trilingualism (Cantonese, Putonghua and English) and biliteracy (Chinese and English) is heading to the right direction to support for the rapid restructuring of Hong Kong and global inter-connectedness.

Furthermore, it is also clear from the presentation at the Education Commission’s Annual Reporting Session - Education for Tomorrow, Professor Arthur K C Li, Secretary for Education and Manpower, “the Primary Aims of Education Reform are (1) Motivating students to learn, (2) Learning to learn” Li also highlighted the priorities for 2005:

- 3+3+4 reform

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1 “Hong Kong Education – From Strength to Strength”, Mrs. Fanny Law, Permanent Secretary for Education and Manpower, HK General Chamber of Commerce, Manpower Committee Roundtable Luncheon, 22 July, 2004
2 11 December 2004
• MOI and SSPA
• Professional development for sustainable improvement
• Developing the qualifications register
• Networking for community support

It is noted that the 1st three priorities are for the Student and yet other stakeholders’ development and supports are also considered (the last 2 points). It is important to gain the support from the practitioners such as the principals and the teachers, they are the ones who implement the policy, they are also the ones to actualize the intangible policies into tangible actions.

From the evaluation of the policies, our group believes that it is on the right direction. It does place the Student as the focus, it does consider the institution level, it does collaborate with the future development of the global restructure.

**Why it couldn’t gain the whole-hearted support from the society?**

D. Recommendations

In this section, we try to apply business concepts to close the gap between the policy and the current execution.

1. **Business Process Reengineering (BPR)**

Reengineering, properly, is the fundamental rethinking and radical redesign of business processes to achieve dramatic improvements in critical, contemporary measures of performance, such as cost, quality, service, and speed\(^3\)

2. **Marketing Strategy**

After the development of good product (the education policy) and fixing the delivery platform (the practitioners), it is important to communicate the proper message to the target customer. Marketing strategy is frequently employed in the business world.

“The essence of marketing isn’t about goods and services. It isn’t about selling. It isn’t even about profits or beating the competition. It’s about developing a relationship with customers. …… It’s about developing trust between customers and the firms ……”

Hence, successful marketing strategy is able to create a trustworthy relationship between the entity and the customers. Customer is the core of the whole Marketing concept, then, who is the genuine customer of the Education Policy in Hong Kong?

3. The Target Customer

From marketing point of view, customer is not necessarily the user. For instance, in the insurance business, the purchaser of the insurance policy may not be the beneficiary of the policy, it’s quite often that the person (e.g. the Son) who purchases the medical policy is not the beneficiary of the policy (e.g. the mom). In the mind of marketers, the purchaser / decision maker is sometimes more important than the actual user.

Applying this concept to the Education Policy in Hong Kong, “Parents” should be the primary customers, they are the decision makers to select the best education mode for their children.

Nevertheless, the practitioners with passion, who share the same vision of placing student as the focus of the Education Reform, can also help to accelerate the message to the target customer. Their support is also extremely useful as a catalyst factor.

“Gaining the Trust and Building the Relationship with the Parents” is our recommended marketing theme to the Education Bureau. Once the target is identified, all the subsequent marketing activities should be developed according to this direction.

4. Promotion Objectives

Theoretically speaking, there are 5 major objectives for any promotional strategy, they are:

4 “Contemporary Marketing” – Boone & Kurtz, Thomson South Western 2004
a. Provide information to consumers  
b. Increase demand  
c. Differentiate a product  
d. Accentuate a product’s value  
e. Stabilize sales  

Not all the 5 objectives are applicable to the Education Reform policy, instead, the following promotion objectives are more appropriate in the first stage.

- **Provide information** - To introduce the concept of the education reform to the target segment – the parents  
- **Accentuate a product’s value** - To create the value of the education reform and how it benefits to the students  
- **Increase Demand** - To create a strong desire of participating in the education reform  
- **Direct communication** to the Parents is important, it eliminates any distortion of messages in between due to different parties’ individual agenda. Proper design of the communication mix can help to deliver & direct the right message efficiently to the target customer – the Parents.
5. The Communication Process

The AIDA concept means attention-interest-desire-action, they are the steps that consumers take in reaching a purchase decision. To follow the AIDA concept, different communication channels should be employed accordingly to accomplish the respective objectives in each specific step.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Segment Characteristics</th>
<th>Parents 1 Early Adopter</th>
<th>Parents 2 Mass Followers</th>
<th>Practitioners with Passion &amp; Vision</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Middle class</td>
<td>Mass segment</td>
<td>Passionate &amp; visionary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More educated, able to understand conceptual thoughts &amp; complicated details</td>
<td>Less educated, more care about the ultimate benefits rather than the conceptual rationale</td>
<td>Educating rather than teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extremely care about the children’s education,</td>
<td>Care about the children’s education according to the general trend</td>
<td>Possesses high level of support and respect from their students &amp; parents</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Busy but willing to invest time &amp; money if necessary</td>
<td></td>
<td>Willing to change if they are convinced that the changes are beneficial to the students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Value Proposition | “The Education Reform brings out the best potentials of your children and collaborate them to fit with the rapid restructuring of Hong Kong and global inter-connectedness.” | “The Education Reform equips your children to stay competitive in the future world” | “The Education Reform won’t give up any student by offering the practitioners the greatest flexibility to achieve the ends” |

| Substantiation | SBM – parents’ participation in the school management | MOI – the importance of languages | MOI – the importance of languages |
|               | MOI – the importance of languages | DSS – more choices doesn’t mean you have to pay extra! | DSS – flexibility to the practitioners to accomplish their education philosophy |
|               | DSS – more choices other than traditional school, parents’ choices to fit their children’s needs | | |
The proposed Marketing Strategy may involve extra marketing budget in order to cascade the messages to the target segment, however it is worthwhile to do so in order to win the support and build the relationship with the target customers – the Parents and the Passionate Practitioners.

6. Execution Process

Our research in this project has, to a large extent, clarified most of our doubts about the intention and aims of the government’s Education Reform. EMB should indisputably be credited for their tremendous efforts in the past few years in accurately identifying the issues and problems of HK’s education system, and also in devising the relevant solutions to these problems. The recommendations and policies set out in the Education Reform Report have been a direct result from these efforts. So if the government has done such a good job in rightly addressing the education issue, we should be seeing welcoming receptions from parents,
students, schools, teachers and educational sponsors/organizers. However, it seems that the exact opposite has been the case. Noisy controversies over the reform policies and their execution approaches still go on, relevant concerned parties are all still very skeptical and critical about government’s hidden intention. Despite continuous PR efforts by the government, negative perception of another blunder in the making still looms. Why is this so and what should the government do to mitigate the controversy and turn around the situation?

It is clear that the government must have miscalculated or underestimated the negative response of the public and overestimated its own capability in pushing through the reform. They must have so much confidence in their proposed policies that they have missed out on an effective execution approach. Whilst they might have identified the right direction and charted the right course, they have been, however, short on effective strategies in executing the plan. They have failed to address the real needs and values of the parents and the concerns of the education practitioners. For example, in the implementation of mother-tongue Cantonese as the MOI a few years ago, the government should have adopted a more flexible time-frame approach than one with a fixed time-table if they had understood better that parents placed more value on English than Chinese because of continuity issue in tertiary education – they are no universities in Hong Kong that use MOI other than English. Polarization between Chinese and English MOI schools was inevitable, the impact of which is still felt today. Simply put, there exists lack of trust between the general public and the government. Having recognized the reasons for the situation, we would suggest the government to do the following:

- Develop a practical and executable action plan with detailed steps for communicating the rationales and benefits of reform policies to the parents, locating and addressing their concerns over education issues – building trust through “small wins” with frequent “wave-after-wave” campaigns.
- Effective communication programs targeted at the practitioners, such as teachers,
principals, and sponsoring organizations, should be carried out to understand their perspective and concerns – their full cooperation is needed for a successful reform.

- Strategic leadership programs focused on the education sector should be developed and employed to train school principals and teachers into passionate and professional educators.

- Constant and continuous communication campaigns are to be staged to transparently provide analysis of cost and benefit of the reform policies to all the concerned stakeholders to the public through mass media – effort to win support from the media as they have enormous influential power over public opinion.

- Appropriate management training programs should be provided to school principals and senior management members to upgrade their management skills for qualifying as “CEOs” and “COOs” of the schools they serve – addressing their fear of forced early retirement as a result of possible redundancy.

- Appropriate trainings should also be provided to members of the incorporated school management committee under the SBM scheme so that they each may have the required knowledge to play an effective monitoring role on their school operation.

- Business reengineering strategies may be used in teaching schools to effectively retrain and transform teachers into educators – thus addressing teachers’ fear of losing their jobs under the reform scheme. The re-training should emphasize the value of an educator so as to nurture passion with professionalism.

We believe there could be many more recommendations that would help with turning round the situation in favor of the government, that is, if they could realistically face up to the real issues without worrying about losing “face”. One such suggestion would be to consider employing reputable professional marketing consultants to help revamp and re-focus their marketing initiatives to more accurate targets so that resources could be more effectively and efficiently put to use.

**** END ****
Appendix 1

3+3+4 Reform

1. A Comparison of the current and the new academic structure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Structure (“3+2+2+3”)</th>
<th>New Structure (“3+3+4”)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>HKALE</strong></td>
<td><strong>HKCEE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary 7</td>
<td>4-Year Undergraduate Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary 6</td>
<td>Senior Secondary 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary 5</td>
<td>Senior Secondary 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary 4</td>
<td>Senior Secondary 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary 3</td>
<td>Secondary 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary 2</td>
<td>Secondary 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary 1</td>
<td>Secondary 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

New public examination leading to HK Diploma of Secondary Education

2. The articulation to multiple pathways to higher education in the new system:

- Continuing Education for Higher Degrees / Further Qualifications
- Employment
- Senior Secondary 3
- Senior Secondary 2
- Senior Secondary 1
- Career-oriented Studies Awards
- Project Yi Jin
- Junior Secondary
School-based Management

1. No of schools with Management Committee with both teacher and Parent representative

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Education</th>
<th>2001/02 Number</th>
<th>As a percentage of all schools</th>
<th>2002/03 Number</th>
<th>As a percentage of all schools</th>
<th>2003/04 Number</th>
<th>As a percentage of all schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>21.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>21.0%</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>23.8%</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>25.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special School</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: (1) Referring to aided and Government schools only.

2. Number of schools with Parent-Teacher Associations

Note: (1) Referring to special schools, practical schools and skills opportunity schools.
(2) Excluding hospital schools.
Appendix 3

Number of schools with staff appraisal system

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Education</th>
<th>Number of schools with staff appraisal system</th>
<th>Schools with staff appraisal system as a percentage of all schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>371</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special School</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
(1) Referring to aided schools only.
(2) Referring to the position as at April 2004.

Appendix 4

The proposed School-based Management Framework

[Diagram showing the School Sponsoring Body (SSB) setting the vision and mission, followed by the Incorporated Management Committee comprising SSB managers, principal, teacher managers, parent managers, alumni manager(s), and independent manager(s), leading to instructional policies and teaching & learning effectiveness.]