

CDC Committee on English Language Education (2013-2015)

Gist of the Fourth Meeting

Date: 5 March 2015

Time: 3:00 p.m. – 7:15 p.m.

Venue: Room 306, 3/F, East Block, Education Bureau Kowloon Tong Education Services Centre, 19 Suffolk Road, Kowloon Tong

1. Confirmation of the minutes of the meeting held on 29 October 2014

(Attended by members of the CDC Committee on ELE only)

- The minutes of the last meeting were confirmed without any amendments and there were no matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting.

2. Progress of the development of the Secondary Education Curriculum Guide (SECG) (S1-S6)

(Attended by members of the CDC Committee on ELE only)

- Re-grouping of the nine generic skills
 - The Vice-chairperson explained the re-grouping of the nine generic skills and informed the members about the renaming of “Study Skills” as “Self-learning Skills”.
 - Members welcomed the proposed regrouping of the nine generic skills. They discussed the scope of “Study Skills” and opined that “Self-learning Skills” had the new orientation of involving students as active learners. The query about whether “Self-learning Skills” was a more updated and adequate term than “Study Skills” was raised. Members also considered replacing “Creativity” with “Creativity Skills” and placing it after “Problem-solving Skills”.
- Literacy, Entrepreneurship, Humanistic Mindset and STEM
 - The Vice-chairperson explained to members that other than the ability to read and write, literacy covered skills to process and create multi-modal texts. Members were also informed about the renaming of the three focuses, Entrepreneurship, Humanistic Mindset and STEM as Entrepreneurship Spirit, Humanistic Qualities and STEM.
 - Members questioned if literacy overlapped with “Communication Skills”. In respect of the three focuses, they made the following comments:
 - the relevance of STEM to English language learning;
 - the need to provide the relevant ideological basis for Humanistic Qualities;
 - the inclusion of Entrepreneurial Spirit;
 - the importance of providing definition of the focuses and using common language to get the message across; and
 - the lack of elements on language.
 - The Vice-chairperson further highlighted that respect for data and evidence would be important in STEM and Humanistic Qualities was to help schools integrate them into their school-based curriculum better. She explained that Entrepreneurial Spirit focused on well-calculated risk taking and perseverance. She also informed members that exemplars would be provided to facilitate schools’ understanding of the focuses.

3. Brief update on the revised Chapters 1-3 and discussion on draft Chapters 4-6 of the English Language Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (KLACG) (P1-S6)

(Attended by members of the CDC Committee on ELE only)

- The CDI officers presented the revisions made to Chapters 1-3 of the KLACG based on CDCC members' views and input. Members made the following comments on the revised content:
 - Chapter 1
 - “adaptive devices” could be added in Section 1.5; and how to cater for the needs of SEN students could also be mentioned in Chapter 4 under Curriculum Planning (Section 4.3.1).
 - “from the Mainland” in “newly arrived children from the Mainland” in Section 1.6 could be deleted to avoid redundancy; and the last challenge of helping students to enter the workforce could be addressed by connecting to the community at large and by enhancing students' innovation.
 - Chapter 2
 - It was not always possible to clearly delineate the generic skills as some tasks require application of several skills. Examples of activities could be added. The presentation of the examples might be further improved.
 - Examples of positive values and attitudes could be provided.
 - A member pointed out that the interface between primary and secondary levels needed to be spelt out in the heading.
 - Chapter 3
 - The distinction, if any, between the roles of teacher and those of English Language teachers should be spelt out.
 - The different focuses and involvement of the curriculum leaders in promoting effective English learning and teaching should be presented.
- The CDI officers presented the updating in Chapters 4-6 for CDCC members' views. The major updating included:
 - encouraging schools to strengthen the holistic planning of the curriculum, deepen and focus on the development of the Four Key Tasks;
 - introducing Assessment as Learning (AaL) as extension of Assessment for Learning (AfL), as well as suggestions and tools to support schools in promoting AfL and AaL; and
 - updating on available resources, including e-resources, in support of learning and teaching of the ELE KLA.
- Members had the following comments on the major updates in Chapters 4-6:
 - AaL should be further defined to give readers a better idea what it was like, whether it was a new concept or inventing a new name on top of AfL.
 - A revised draft, together with new exemplars to illustrate the new focuses, would be tabled at the next meeting for members' consideration and endorsement.

4. Presentation and discussion on the major findings and initial recommendations of the Medium-term Review of the Senior Secondary English Language curriculum and assessment

(Jointly attended by members of the CDC Committee on ELE, CDC-HKEAA on Eng Lang and HKDSE Subject Committee on Eng Lang)

- The CDI and HKEAA officers presented the findings and initial recommendations.

Background

- Stakeholders' views were collected from a school questionnaire survey, focus group interviews, briefing sessions and forums conducted during the 3-month consultation from Nov 2014 to Feb 2015. The feedback would be consolidated to inform deliberations at the Joint CDC-PEB meeting in Apr 2015, where the proposed Medium-term Review recommendations would be endorsed.

Summary of the findings of the Medium-term Review of the Senior Secondary English Language curriculum

- The majority of the schools were in favour of the recommendations on the Elective Part regarding the flexibility in offering two to three modules in the course of three years though some of the respondents were concerned about the suggested time allocation.
- All of the academics interviewed recognised the role of the Elective Part in adding variety to students' learning experiences.
- While catering for learning diversity was the most frequently raised concern in the planning and implementation of the senior secondary English Language curriculum, teachers opined that they required more support in e-learning and the learning and teaching of grammar in context, especially the learning and teaching resources in these two areas.
- Academics also suggested that there should be more support to teachers to expand their pedagogical repertoire in enabling students to apply grammar knowledge meaningfully and purposefully.

Summary of the findings of the Medium-term Review of the Senior Secondary English Language assessment

- All teachers and academics agreed that SBA provided more opportunities for students to interact with authentic English texts and proved instrumental in the development of students' speaking skills. There was also a general consensus among teachers that the weighting, requirements and workload of SBA were appropriate.

The proposed Medium-term Review recommendations on the Senior Secondary English Language curriculum and assessment

- The CDI and HKEAA officers gave a brief presentation on the initial recommendations and support measures which included:
 - Offering two to three modules in the Elective Part in the course of three years;
 - Keeping the suggested time allocation for the Elective Part unchanged; and
 - Keeping the public examination and SBA unchanged.
- Members were concerned about who should decide whether to offer two or three elective modules in a school. The Vice-chairperson explained that individual schools could decide with due consideration of their students' interests and needs, and teachers' readiness.

5. Presentation and discussion on the major findings and initial recommendations of the Medium-term Review of the Senior Secondary Literature in English curriculum and assessment

(Jointly attended by members of the CDC Committee on ELE, CDC-HKEAA on Lit in Eng and HKDSE Subject Committee on Lit in Eng)

- The CDI and HKEAA officers presented the findings and initial recommendations.

Background

- Stakeholders' views were collected from a school questionnaire survey, focus group interviews, briefing sessions and forums conducted during the 3-month consultation from Nov 2014 to Feb 2015. The feedback would be consolidated to inform deliberations at the Joint CDC-PEB meeting in Apr 2015, where the proposed Medium-term Review recommendations would be endorsed.

Summary of the findings of the Medium-term Review of the Senior Secondary Literature in English curriculum

- A majority of the responding schools supported the implementation of the proposed mechanism for the replacement of set texts from the 2018 HKDSE Examination. Teachers and academics who attended the FGIs and briefing session also considered the proposed mechanism appropriate.
- Teachers opined that they required more support in the learning and teaching of film, and poetry, especially the professional development programmes in these two areas.
- The teachers and academics interviewed also welcomed support for the two aforementioned areas.

Summary of the findings of the Medium-term Review of the Senior Secondary Literature in English assessment

- A majority of the responding schools agreed that no further changes to the SBA requirements were needed.
- Teachers who attended the FGIs and briefing sessions had no objection to the full implementation of the SBA in the 2019 HKDSE Examination and they found the SBA requirements appropriate and manageable to students. They suggested a mechanism to be introduced to ensure the fairness and consistency in marking.
- Nearly 70% of schools agreed that there should be no further changes to the revised design of the papers, subject to regular review and continuous improvement in light of feedback from live examination.
- Teachers who attended the FGIs and briefing sessions generally supported the revised design of the examination papers for the 2016 examination, with some comments and suggestions on role play questions and the standard set for marking schemes and suggested answers.

The proposed Medium-term Review recommendations on the Senior Secondary Literature in English curriculum and assessment

- The CDI and HKEAA officers gave a brief presentation on the initial recommendations and support measures which included:
 - The mechanism on the replacement of set texts was recommended.
 - No further changes would be made to the SBA requirements.
 - No further changes would be made to the revised design of the Literature in English public examination papers.
- Members were concerned about the marking of SBA and advising students to attempt a critical review or an analytical essay. The HKEAA officer expected that trial marking sessions for SBA would be conducted upon the finalisation of the assessment rubrics to pilot the rubrics and familiarise teachers with the use of the criteria for assessing students' portfolio work. He also suggested that students could refer to reviews on newspapers and magazines to develop an awareness of the genre features.

6. A.O.B.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.