

## **Consultation Document**

### **Arrangements for Implementing the “Through-train” Mode**

#### **Purpose**

1. This document aims to consult schools and the public on the arrangements for implementing the “through-train” mode.

#### **Background**

2. Education reform proposals put forward by the Education Commission (EC) in its Report on Reform Proposals for the Education System in Hong Kong in September 2000 were all accepted by the Chief Executive in his Policy Address in October 2000. To implement the “through-train” mode is one of the reform proposals.

#### Rationale for Developing “Through-train” Schools

3. The advantages of a “through-train” are that it ensures the continuity of the primary and secondary curriculum, strengthens the school’s understanding of and attention for its students and alleviates students’ adaptation problems upon their promotion to the secondary school. A “through-train” school also facilitates the arrangements for “enhancement and remedial measures” and “Cross Level Subject Setting”. A “through-train” secondary school must admit all the Primary 6 (P6) graduates of its linked primary school so as to provide students with a coherent and comprehensive learning experience, as well as to realize the principle of “education for all without discrimination”. Our aim is to form “through-train” primary and secondary schools which will encourage and support each other in realizing the advantages of the “through-train” mode so as to enhance the quality of primary and secondary education. For example, the primary and secondary school teachers in a “through-train” can work together in the planning of the curriculum and teaching activities. Moreover, the secondary students can help their junior counterparts in the linked primary school in their learning or extra-curricular activities which will in turn benefit themselves. We hope that schools which share this vision and fulfil the requirements will opt for the “through-train” mode. Hence, each primary/secondary school can decide voluntarily whether to apply to form a “through-train” school. The Government will not require all primary and secondary schools in Hong Kong to become “through-train” schools, nor will it set a quota for such schools. **It is estimated that “through-train” schools will only constitute a small number of schools in Hong Kong.**

4. The EC considers that kindergartens should not be included in the formation of “through-train” schools because they have full discretion in admitting students and their financing mode is different from that of primary and secondary schools. Allowing kindergartens to form “through-trains” with primary and secondary schools would advance the pressure of competing for entry into popular primary and secondary schools to the early childhood education stage. Students who cannot afford the school fees charged by the linked kindergartens would be denied access to the linked primary and secondary schools. Please refer to paragraphs 8.2.70 to 8.2.76 in Chapter 8 and Appendix IV (Feeder and Nominated Schools System) of the Report on Reform Proposals for the Education System in Hong Kong for background information on the “through-train” mode.

#### Principles for Considering Applications to Form “Through-train” Schools

5. The Education Department (ED) will consider applications from schools based on the following principles recommended by the EC:

- (i) primary and secondary schools should have the same philosophy and aspiration for education; there should be genuine continuity in the curriculum, teaching methodology and students’ personal development;
- (ii) the number of Secondary 1 (S1) places in a “through-train” school must exceed the number of its P6 graduates; the secondary school must admit all P6 graduates of its linked primary school and reserve places for students of other primary schools who should still have the chance to be admitted; and
- (iii) primary and secondary schools must have the same financing mode to ensure that a consistent mechanism is applied in admitting students. (In this context, private schools and Direct Subsidy Scheme schools are regarded as having the same mode). In case there is new development in the financing modes for schools in future, this principle may need to be reviewed.

#### Matching of “Through-train” Schools

6. According to the three principles mentioned above, it is more appropriate to develop a “one-to-one” linkage for “through-train” schools, that is, one secondary school should link with one primary school to facilitate close collaboration between them.

7. The “many-to-many” mode of linking several secondary schools to several primary schools, the “one-to-many” mode of linking one secondary school to several primary schools, or the “many-to-one” mode of linking several secondary schools to one primary school are relatively more complicated and less feasible. If schools have good reasons to believe that these modes are more suitable in their own context, they should pay attention to the collaboration and co-ordination among the linked schools. According to the principles of the “through-train” mode, the secondary school must admit all P6 students of its linked primary school without selection. **If P6 students in a “through-train” school have more than one linked secondary schools to choose, S1 places should be allocated according to parental choices on a random basis.**

#### Percentage of Secondary One Discretionary Places

8. According to paragraph 8.2.72 of the Report on Reform Proposals for the Education System in Hong Kong, the secondary school may, after admitting all P6 graduates of its linked primary school, admit P6 pupils of other primary schools using half of the remaining S1 places as discretionary places, provided that the proportion of discretionary places to the total number of S1 places in the linked secondary school would not exceed the prevailing percentage of discretionary S1 places applicable to other public-sector schools.

#### Arrangements for Feeder/Nominated schools

9. The EC has put forward recommendations on how to handle applications from existing feeder and nominated schools to form “through-train” schools at Appendix IV of the Report on Reform Proposals for the Education System in Hong Kong. Appendix 1 of this Consultation Document has tabulated the relevant arrangements for the reference of interested parties.

#### Procedures and Timetable for Applications to Adopt the “Through-train” Mode

10. The procedures and timetable for feeder/nominated, non-feeder/non-nominated public-sector schools and newly-built schools to apply to adopt the “through-train” mode are set out at Appendix 2.

## Areas for Consultation

### Characteristics of “Through-train” Schools

11. It is believed that “through-train” schools differ mainly from ordinary schools in two aspects:

- (i) there is close collaboration and co-operation between the linked primary and secondary schools; and
- (ii) the S1 school places allocation mechanism of “through-train” schools is different from that of ordinary schools.

12. In the light of the above, we would like to consult schools and the public on the following two areas involving three items:

<b>Arrangements for Implementing the “Through-train” Mode</b>	
<b>Area</b>	<b>Item for Consultation</b>
(A) Collaboration between Linked Primary and Secondary Schools	A1. Collaboration between Linked Primary and Secondary Schools under the Existing System
(B) Secondary One Admission Mechanism	B1. Proportion of S1 School Places to the Number of P6 Graduates B2. S1 Admission Mechanism for P6 Students

#### (A) Collaboration between Linked Primary and Secondary Schools

13. We hope that the primary and secondary schools which form “through-trains” will work closely together to develop the following characteristics:

- To plan and design the curricula for the primary and secondary schools with the same aspiration to ensure continuity
- To work out a curriculum framework emphasizing life-long learning and whole-person development of students, and to develop a coherent school-based curriculum addressing practical needs
- To ensure close link and continuity in the course of curriculum development
- To provide students with coherent, all-round and balanced learning experiences so as to develop their potential to the full
- To have an overall planning of support services to students so that they

can enjoy appropriate care and support throughout the basic education stage

- To allow teachers and students more room for experiencing an all-round, effective and coherent learning life
- To provide professional training for primary and secondary school teachers so that they can have a better understanding of each other's learning stage

A1. Collaboration between linked primary and secondary schools under the existing system

14. Since the “through-train” mode is a brand-new concept, we need to continuously explore, implement and verify as we go along. The existing mode of operation for primary and secondary schools under the present education system should still form the main frame of the “through-train” mode, and a progressive approach should be adopted for future development.

15. With respect to administration and operation, existing primary and secondary schools in Hong Kong have their own systems of fund allocation and financial management, staff establishment and school management, which have been working effectively. Before we gain any practical experience from the “through-train” mode of operation, we recommend that, **at the initial stage of development, the primary and secondary schools forming “through-trains” will still be considered as separate entities in fund allocation and financial management, staff establishment, school management, etc. They will not be treated as a new type of schools integrating both primary and secondary education.**

16. In other words, "through-train" primary and secondary schools are to adopt the existing mode of operation. Like ordinary public-sector primary and secondary schools, the management of linked primary and secondary schools is subject to the provisions of the Education Ordinance and its subsidiary regulations, Code of Aid for Secondary/Primary Schools and the instructions governing public-sector schools issued by the Director of Education. While fund allocation is concerned, the funding arrangements of linked primary and secondary schools are similar to those of ordinary public-sector primary and secondary schools and are subject to the provisions of the Code of Aid for Secondary/Primary Schools as well as the instructions governing public-sector schools issued by the Director of Education.

17. As a salient feature of the “through-train” mode is the close collaboration between the linked schools so as to promote continuity between primary and secondary education, **we encourage schools to make use of the flexibility allowed under the present school-based management framework.** For example, if the

linked schools are managed by the same School Management Committee (SMC), the composition and membership of the SMC could be modified to cater for the needs of both primary and secondary schools. With regard to the appointment of the principal, if the linked schools are under the same registration, a teacher should be appointed as the principal of both schools as required by the Education Ordinance. However, for operational need, the SMC may appoint a principal each for the primary and secondary schools respectively with one of them taking up the chief principal post in order to meet the requirements of the Education Ordinance. The remuneration and fringe benefits of the principals are determined by the school type and the rank of the post taken.

18. We must emphasize that all such flexibility or room for collaboration is based on the concept of the “through-train”. **It aims to promote mutual understanding between primary and secondary schools so as to enhance coherence and continuity in terms of curriculum design, teaching strategy, student learning and development in primary and secondary education. The ultimate objective is to let students have a coherent and comprehensive learning experience.** We are of the view that the collaboration between primary and secondary schools should be geared towards such an objective.

(B) Secondary One Admission Mechanism

B1. Proportion of S1 school places to the number of P6 graduates in “through-train” schools

19. The number of S1 places in a “through-train” school must exceed the number of its P6 graduates so that students of other primary schools can be admitted through the central allocation process. We recommend that “through-train” secondary schools should, as far as possible, reserve more S1 places for students of other primary schools. Depending on the demand and supply of S1 school places, we shall assist “through-train” secondary schools to provide more S1 places for students of other primary schools.

20. To ensure that students of other primary schools are given chances for admission, we propose that:

- (i) newly-operated “through-train” secondary schools should reserve **not less than 20% of their total number of S1 places** for admitting students of other schools through the discretionary places admission stage or Central Allocation;
- (ii) based on the present situation, if secondary schools switch to “through-train” schools, they should, in principle, reserve **not less than 7%**

**of their total number of S1 places** for admitting students of other primary schools through the discretionary places admission stage or Central Allocation.

**B2. S1 admission mechanism for P6 students in “through-train” schools**

21. According to EC’s recommendations, P6 students of a primary school can be promoted directly to its linked secondary school without going through the central allocation process. Students of a primary school who are unwilling to enter their linked secondary school may apply for discretionary places of other secondary schools or take part in Central Allocation.

22. In drawing up procedures for the S1 admission mechanism for P6 students in “through-train” schools, we have considered three different options. The procedures, advantages and concerns of the three options are set out below for the public’s views:

**Proposed Options for Secondary One Admission Mechanism for P6 Students in “Through-train” Schools**

<b>Option 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• P6 students in “through-train” schools           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>enter the linked secondary school direct</li> <li>apply for discretionary places of other secondary schools → if rejected               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>enter the linked secondary school</li> <li>participate in Central Allocation</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Option 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• P6 students in “through-train” schools           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>enter the linked secondary school direct</li> <li>apply for discretionary places of other secondary schools → if rejected, may participate in Central Allocation and will not be allowed to enter the linked secondary school direct</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Option 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• P6 students in “through-train” schools           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>enter the linked secondary school direct</li> <li>apply for discretionary places of other secondary schools → if rejected, may enter the linked secondary school</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

23. The advantages and concerns of the three options are as follows:

Advantage	Concern
<p><u>Option 1</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Since the “through-train” mode is a new attempt, arrangements for the promotion of P6 students in such schools should be more lenient;</li> <li>• More alternatives for admission to S1 will be favourable to the development of “through-train” schools;</li> <li>• The attraction of the linked secondary school in a “through-train” is based on its strengths, therefore, it will help to motivate schools to improve and strive for excellence;</li> <li>• In line with EC’s recommendations as set out in paragraph 8.2.70 of its Report on Reform Proposals for the Education System in Hong Kong: “We propose that students of primary schools should be allowed to proceed to their linked secondary schools without going through the central allocation process. If students do not want to go to the linked secondary schools, they can either apply for the discretionary places of other schools or take part in Central Allocation.”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Through-train” school students have an additional choice, therefore, “non-through-train” school students will find it unfair;</li> <li>• “Through-train” schools may be conceived as a reserve, as a result, secondary schools may not be willing to link with primary schools to form “through-train” schools;</li> <li>• Since P6 students of a “through-train” school can choose to participate in Central Allocation, “through-train” schools are required to follow ED’s instructions to conduct internal assessments and to submit students’ internal assessment results in the second term of P5 as well as the first and second terms of P6 to ED to determine the allocation bands. However, the number of schools affected will not be great and the duration will not be long.</li> </ul>
<p><u>Option 2</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safeguards the admission situation of “through-train” secondary schools;</li> <li>• In line with EC’s recommendations as set out in paragraph 8.2.70 of its Report on Reform Proposals for the Education System in Hong Kong.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compared to Option 1, there is less flexibility for S1 admission;</li> <li>• Undermines the attraction of “through-train” primary schools;</li> <li>• Since P6 students of a “through-train” school can choose to participate in Central Allocation, “through-train” schools are required to follow ED’s instructions to conduct internal assessments and to submit students’ internal assessment results in the</li> </ul>



Advantage	Concern
	<p>second term of P5 as well as the first and second terms of P6 to ED to determine the allocation bands. However, the number of schools affected will not be great and the duration will not be long.</p>
<p><u>Option 3</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Through-train” schools are not required to follow ED’s instructions to conduct internal assessments and to submit students’ internal assessment results, thus allowing schools greater flexibility in curriculum development, teaching methodology and mode of assessment, hence making full use of the advantages of “through-train”;</li> <li>• Encourages primary school students to enter its linked secondary school to reap the benefits of a “through-train”. The alternative to direct promotion aims only to provide an option for individual students who wish to seek other educational opportunities for special reasons or needs;</li> <li>• Ensures that there is an alternative to direct promotion for students in “through-train” schools while providing conditions for linked schools to make full use of the advantages of “through-train”.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure that every child is allocated a P1 place in the Primary One Admission (POA) school net in which the child lives, a small number of children may be allocated to a primary school not within their parents’ choices. Therefore, if Option 3 is implemented, students who do not enter “through-train” primary schools voluntarily will not be provided with more choices in seeking admission to secondary schools;</li> <li>• Students may change schools before they reach P6, but there may not be enough school places to accommodate them. Also, this may affect the coherence of primary school students’ learning experiences;</li> <li>• Not in line with EC’s recommendation: there is no allowance for participation in Central Allocation (Paragraph 8.2.70 of Report on Reform Proposals for the Education System in Hong Kong).</li> </ul>

## Views Sought

24. Since the “through-train” mode is still at its initial stage, it is considered appropriate to implement it in a prudent way. The Education Department will constantly review the practical experiences gained in order to create more room for “through-train” schools.

25. If you have any comments on the arrangements of the “through-train” mode set out in paragraphs 13 to 23 of this Consultation Document, please send them to the Education Reform Co-ordination Section, Education Department by mail, fax or e-mail on or before **Monday, 10 September 2001**. (You may refer to / make use of the opinion form at Annex 1). In case of enquiry, please contact Mrs. Y.H. FOK, Senior Education Officer (Education Reform Co-ordination) at 2892 6601 or Ms. P.L. WU, Education Officer (Education Reform Co-ordination) at 2892 6466.

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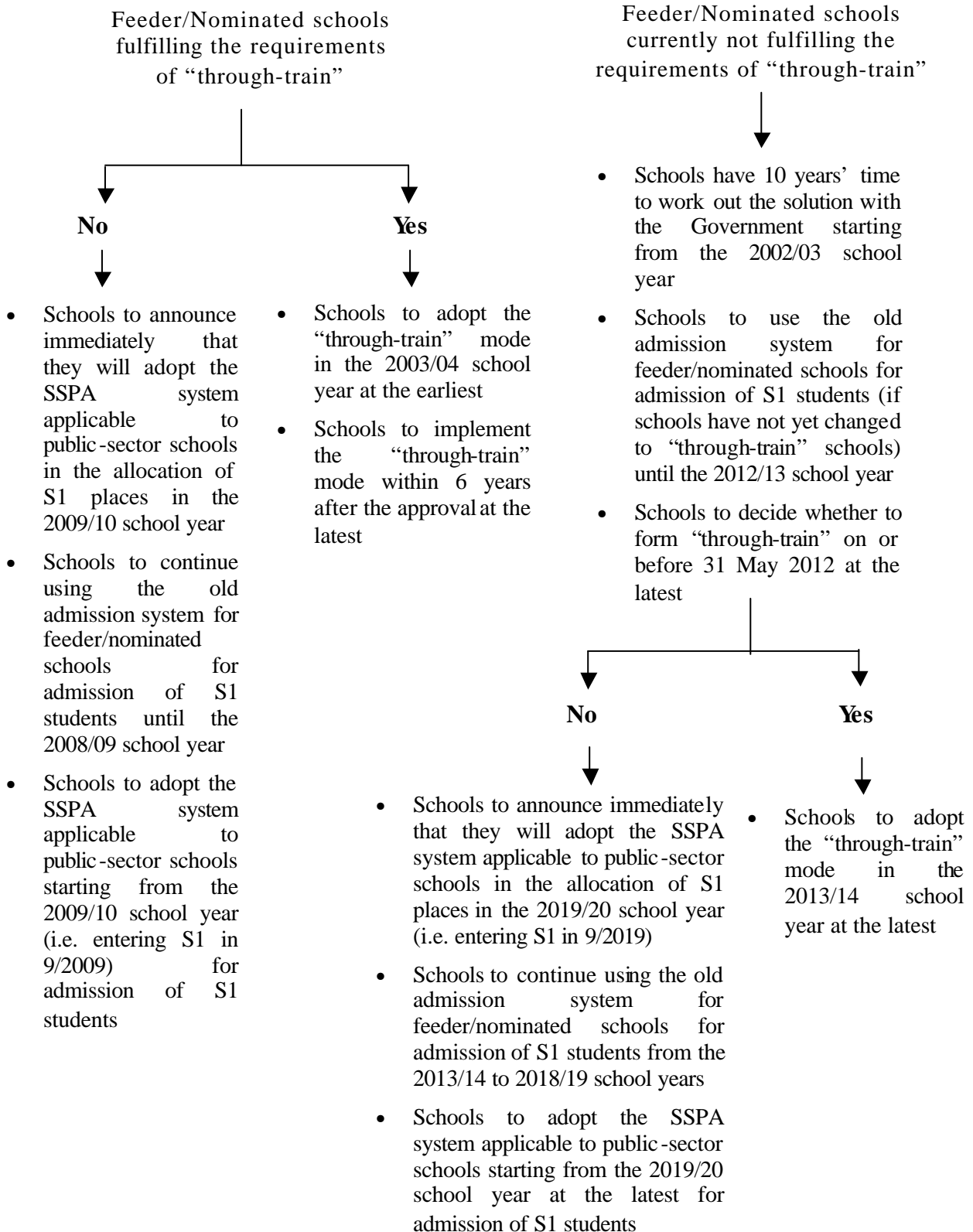
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Education Department  
June 2001

## Arrangements for Existing Feeder/Nominated Schools Applying to Change to the “Through-train” Mode

As some of the existing feeder/nominated schools have already met the “through-train” principles while some have not, respective actions to be taken are as follows:



**Procedures and Timetable for Applications to Adopt the “Through-train” Mode**

1. To form “through-train” is the mutual decision made between the primary and secondary schools concerned. Before making any application, the schools concerned must consider carefully their own situations and agree on their plan for co-operation.

2. In principle, the S1 admission mechanism for “through-train” schools is only applicable to the newly-admitted P1 students in the linked primary schools. Only when this batch of students graduate from the linked primary schools 6 years later will direct and full admission take effect. Under normal circumstances, the time for schools to implement the “through-train” mode should be determined as below:

- As the application for P1 discretionary places normally starts in September of the preceding school year, the earliest school year for schools’ conversion to the “through-train” mode depends on whether there is sufficient time to inform parents of pupils applying for P1 admission in that school year.

However, if a school which has been approved to adopt the “through-train” mode intends to advance the effective date for the S1 admission mechanism for “through-train” schools to students already studying in its linked primary school, **the parents and students concerned must be consulted beforehand.**

3. The application procedures for different types of schools are as follows:

<b>School Type</b>	<b>Procedure</b>
Feeder/Nominated schools <u>meeting the requirements</u> of “through-train”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• ED will issue a circular in January 2002 inviting schools to indicate on or before 31.5.2002 whether they intend to form “through-train”.</li><li>• Schools with such intention should submit their applications at the same time.</li></ul>
Feeder/Nominated schools <u>currently not meeting the requirements</u> of “through-train”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• ED will issue a circular in January 2002 requesting schools concerned to work out a solution with ED.</li><li>• Schools concerned to decide whether to change to “through-train” schools on or before 31.5.2012 at the latest.</li></ul>
Existing non-feeder/non-nominated schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• ED will issue a circular in January 2002 inviting interested schools to make applications to change to “through-train” schools on or before 31.5.2002.</li><li>• Starting from the 2002/03 school year, ED will invite</li></ul>

School Type	Procedure
	applications through circulars issued to schools at the beginning of the school year.
Newly-built schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sponsoring bodies which intend to apply for new school premises to operate “through-train” schools may indicate their intention in the school plan for the consideration of the School Allocation Committee.</li> </ul>

4. The dates of application, approval and implementation for feeder/nominated schools, non-feeder/non-nominated public-sector schools and newly-built schools to switch to “through-train” schools are as follows:

School Type	Date of Application	Date of Approval	Date of Implementation
Feeder/Nominated schools meeting the requirements of “through-train”	On or before 31 May 2002	Before 1 July 2002	Starting from P1 in the 2003/04 school year
Feeder/Nominated schools currently not meeting the requirements of “through-train”, but have already solved their problems before the end of the grace period	On or before 31 May 2012 at the latest	On or before 1 July 2012 at the latest	In the 2013/14 school year at the latest
Existing non-feeder/non-nominated schools	First batch to apply on or before 1 May 2002  From the 2002/03 school year onwards, by the end of December of each school year	First batch to be approved before 1 July 2002  By the end of May in the following year	First batch will commence in 9/2003  In the following school year after ED’s approval
Newly-built schools	When applying for school operation	When applications for operating “through-train” schools are approved	Immediately when the schools start operation

**Consultation Document on “Through-train” Mode  
Opinion Form**

My/Our views on the Consultation Document are as follows:

A. Collaboration between “Through-train” Primary and Secondary Schools

1. Collaboration between linked primary and secondary schools under the existing system (paragraphs 13 to 18)

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B. Secondary One Admission Mechanism

2. Proportion of S1 school places to the number of P6 graduates in “through-train” schools (paragraphs 19 & 20)

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3. The S1 admission mechanism for P6 students in “through-train” schools (paragraphs 21 to 23)

Please put a ✓ in the appropriate box(es)

	For	Against	No comment
Option 1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Option 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Option 3	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Views on Option 1, Option 2 and Option 3

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4. Other comments

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

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Method of contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

**If necessary, please set out your views on a separate sheet. Thank you!**

Please send us your views by mail, fax or e-mail  
on or before **10 September 2001 (Monday)**.

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