

EDUCATION BUREAU CIRCULAR MEMORANDUM NO. 162/2009

From: Secretary for Education

To: Heads of All Aided, Government & Direct Subsidy Scheme Primary Schools (except ESF Schools and International Schools)

Ref. : EDB(LE)/P&R/MISC/25

Date: 4 November 2009

English Enhancement Grant Scheme for Primary Schools

Summary

The purpose of this circular memorandum is to (a) inform aided and government primary schools as well as those under the Direct Subsidy Scheme about the English Enhancement Grant Scheme (EEGS) for Primary Schools, and (b) to invite these schools to apply for the Grant.

Background

2. As part of the biliterate and trilingual policy, it is always important to enhance the learning and teaching of English in primary schools so as to prepare them for the diversified needs of English learning in secondary schools. In tandem with the announcement to fine-tune the medium of instruction (MOI) arrangements for secondary schools via EDB circular memorandum 6/2009 in June 2009, the Education Bureau (EDB) also announced that it would introduce a number of support measures for primary schools. One of them is to re-deploy resources for a time-limited provision to primary schools for adopting school-based English enhancement measures.

The Scheme

Objective

3. The Grant is to help schools develop their school-based English enhancement measures to strengthen the learning and teaching of English and to achieve sustainable effects after the completion of the Scheme.

Eligibility

4. All aided, government or Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS) primary schools

(including special schools with primary section) may apply.

Usage of the Grant

5. The Grant should be used to **build up the capacity of schools for raising students' English proficiency** and to **achieve sustainable effects after the completion of the Scheme**. Given the different school contexts, individual schools are expected to formulate plans according to their own needs. Schools should also consolidate existing resources and practices and come up with a holistic and coherent plan to ensure that the extra funding sought will make a sustainable impact on students' English language learning.

6. When formulating the plans, schools should target at specific groups and/or areas of development, for example –

- (a) facilitating the planning, development and implementation of the school-based English Language curriculum, which may include enhancing the smooth transition between different key stages of English learning and catering for learner diversity in English learning;
- (b) addressing schools' concerns in English learning and teaching which may include strengthening the learning and teaching of English for students with special educational needs, newly arrived children and Non-Chinese Students whose mother tongue is not English or students of low socio-economic background;
- (c) enhancing English teachers' professional development; and
- (d) creating a rich English language learning environment.

7. In implementing the plans, schools may use the Grant in various ways, for example –

- (a) Acquiring learning and teaching resources

The learning and teaching resources to be purchased should tie in with a school-based English programme or project and add value to the capacity of the school in enhancing the learning and teaching of English. Schools should set out how the newly acquired resources would benefit the students and achieve sustainability. *The Grant should not be used merely for adding stock in the library and procuring ready-made English language programmes that do not cater for learner diversity*

(b) Employing teachers/ teaching assistants

The extra manpower should take personnel off the line for developing the school-based English Language curriculum, teaching resources or participating in relevant courses on English learning and teaching. ***The Grant is not meant for reducing the workload of teachers in general.***

(c) Hiring of services for conducting learning activities

The hiring of professional services for English learning activities (e.g. drama, choral speaking) should aim at developing the knowledge and skills of both teachers and students who could subsequently help to lead and conduct these activities which would benefit student learning. ***The Grant should not be used for hiring services for conducting activities for students without the participation and professional development of teachers.***

(d) Hiring of consultants/ experts for conducting professional development programmes for teachers

The professional development programmes for teachers should be related to a specific school-based English programme or project. They should also aim at strengthening teachers' capability in curriculum development, enhancing the effectiveness of learning and teaching of English, or developing pedagogical practices that would meet the varied needs, interests and abilities of students. Teachers are required to organise in-house sharing sessions, implement action plans and/or conduct English learning activities for students after the training.

8. As schools are encouraged to take a holistic approach in using the additional resources, they may use the Grant for supporting initiative(s) already launched and provide evaluation of the impacts and effectiveness of the existing measures when submitting the application. Schools could also propose measures to fill the existing learning or resource gaps identified. This Grant may be combined with other existing grants (e.g. Capacity Enhancement Grant), provided that the usage remains within the parameters of the Scheme. A separate financial report to account for the expenditure of the Grant and a brief evaluation of the impact of the enhanced measures are required.

9. The Grant should not be used for purchasing hardware (e.g. items such as furniture, audio-visual equipment, computers); granting fringe benefits to staff; carrying out alteration/addition/renovation works and procuring services or materials to drill students in preparation for assessment.

Grant Allocation

10. The amount of grant per school should be no more than \$500,000. The actual amount of grant for each school would depend on individual schools' proposals and implementation strategies. Normally, the earmarked fund will be disbursed annually to schools according to the projected cash flow requirements. Schools have to return the unused fund after completion of their projects. For schools which apply in the first round of application in 2010, funding can be disbursed to them in September 2010 the earliest.

Application

11. The Scheme is open to application from eligible primary schools in 2010, 2011 and 2012. No quota would be set as to the approved number of applications in each round.

<u>Round</u>	<u>Deadline for application</u>	<u>Schedule for implementing the measures</u>
1	15 January 2010	2010/11 – 2011/12
2	mid January 2011	2011/12 – 2012/13
3	mid January 2012	2012/13 – 2013/14

12. Schools applying for the Grant should complete the application form, together with an implementation plan which sets out: (a) present state of play; (b) a holistic school-based plan; (c) proposed measures and implementation details; (d) targets to be attained (preferably measurable); (e) budget and projected cash flow; (f) implementation timetable; (g) method(s) of quality assurance and evaluation. The general notes on drawing up the plan, the template and the application form are at Annex I.

Vetting of Applications

13. A panel comprising language education experts and representatives from the EDB will assess the appropriateness and feasibility of the enhancement measures proposed and recommend revision to the proposal if necessary. Schools will not be asked to present their proposals to the vetting panel. They will be informed of the results by May of the year the latest.

Accountability of Schools

14. Upon approval, each primary school has to enter into a "performance contract" with the Government. The contract sets out the terms and conditions of allocation of the Grant, including the relevant administrative, financial and reporting arrangements.

Besides, schools should comply with the requirements specified in the Codes of Aid, the relevant letters, circulars and guidelines issued by the EDB from time to time. Some important points to note for hiring outside services and staff appointment are at Annex II.

15. Under the spirit of school-based management, schools are required to include the implementation plan in their school development plans, report the progress and evaluation in the annual school reports according to the targets set. Once approved, major changes to the proposal (including the timetable and content) should require prior approval of the EDB.

16. Schools are also required to submit to the EDB a final report, which should include the financial statement and their evaluation of the measures, within three months after completion of the project. If the implementation process takes two years, schools are required to submit a progress report within three months after the first year of implementation. Schools will be advised of the areas to be covered in the final report. Schools may submit their school annual report as their progress or final report if it covers all the areas required.

Tentative Timing of Application

17. Schools may flexibly consider when to apply and implement the enhancement measures within the timeframe. **Schools planning to implement the enhancement measures from September 2010 should submit their application on or before 15 January 2010.** To facilitate work planning by the EDB, schools interested in joining the Scheme are invited to indicate their tentative timing of application in Annex III and return it to *eegs@edb.gov.hk* on or before **30 November 2009**.

Briefing Sessions and Workshops

18. To enhance schools' understanding of the Scheme and the usage of the Grant, four identical briefing sessions will be conducted in November 2009. Schools are invited to nominate a maximum of three representatives to attend any one of the briefing sessions and enroll through the Training Calendar System (TCS). Workshops will be conducted later to facilitate schools in developing a holistic school-based English enhancement programme. Further details about the workshops will be uploaded onto the TCS in due course.

Date	Time	Content	Venue
12 November 2009 (Thursday)	3:15 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Administrative Arrangements of the Scheme ● Usage of the Grant – Do's & Don'ts 	Holy Trinity College 3 Wai Chi St, Shek Kip Mei, Kowloon
16 November 2009 (Monday)			SKH Yau Tong Kei Hin Primary School 23 Yau Tong Road, Yau Tong, Kowloon
17 November 2009 (Tuesday)			Holy Family Canossian School (Kowloon Tong) 8 Tim Fuk Road, Kowloon Tong, Kowloon
19 November 2009 (Thursday)			SKH Yau Tong Kei Hin Primary School 23 Yau Tong Road, Yau Tong, Kowloon

Enquiries

19. If you have any enquiry, please contact Ms Evian Tong at 3527 0162 or Ms Jennifer Yeung at 3527 0176. Soft copies of the Annexes can be downloaded at www.language-education.com.

(Mrs Alice CHEUNG)
for Secretary for Education