

**Sabbatical Leave Scheme for
Professional Development of Teachers and Principals
Information Notes to Applicants**

Aim of the Scheme

1. The Scheme aims to
 - create space for serving teachers and principals to plan and undertake individualised continuing professional development (CPD) programmes/activities of different modes and types to meet their professional development needs, apply their learning in the education and school contexts, and to enrich their professional exposure;
 - support schools to nurture professional growth of teachers and principals, and promote a culture of educational research and self-improvement contributing to positive changes and impact on learning and teaching; and
 - establish a vibrant professional learning community and professional teams of teachers and principals to lead the teaching profession in striving for excellence.

Eligibility of Applicants

2. Mandatory requirements:

Application is open to full-time serving teachers and principals who

 - (a) are permanent residents of Hong Kong;
 - (b) are registered teachers;
 - (c) are regular teachers² or principals in government, aided (including special schools), caput or DSS primary and secondary schools, or teachers or principals in KGs joining the KG Education Scheme³, at the time of application; and
 - (d) have no less than five years (as at 3 May 2019) of full-time teaching experience in local kindergartens, primary and secondary schools⁴.
3. Preferences will be given to applicants who:
 - (a) possess relevant experience in
 - (i) whole-school/KLA-level/subject-level curriculum planning; or

² “Regular teachers” refers to 1) teachers on the staff establishment of government, aided and caput schools at the primary and the secondary levels, or 2) regular members of the teaching staff of DSS primary and secondary schools. Teachers employed under the Native-speaking English Teachers Scheme are not included.

³ While there is no approved staff establishment in KGs, all full-time teachers with remuneration fully paid by subsidy or school fees will be eligible.

⁴ Only experience in KGs will be counted for KG teachers, and only experience in primary and secondary schools will be counted for primary and secondary school teachers.

- (ii) coordinating and/or organising professional development activities at schools; or
 - (iii) conducting educational research on learning and teaching/professional development of teachers; or
 - (iv) offering community services in the education field
- (b) submit Scheme proposals with study plan and educational research /school development project(s) that are relevant to the following areas:
- (i) enhancing teachers' professional development at the school level; or
 - (ii) mentorship/leadership development for teachers/middle leaders; or
 - (iii) cross-curricular learning/collaboration/initiatives or integrated approach in learning and teaching at the KG level; or
 - (iv) student support programmes.

Details of the Scheme

4. Participating teachers and principals will be granted “sabbatical leave” from one month to five months as appropriate between 1 September 2019 and 31 August 2020 to pursue their planned CPD programmes/activities relevant to achieving their learning objectives, which may include:
- (a) local/non-local structured study programmes;
 - (b) other modes of professional learning activities such as
 - (i) serving as visiting scholars/researchers/tutors at the universities;
 - (ii) participating in attachment programmes /visits in schools/institutions/organisations, organising inter-school/community activities, sharing sessions, conducting literature reviews, etc.
5. During the sabbatical leave periods, participating teachers and principals shall:
- (a) report regularly to their school principals/supervisors on the progress of their planned CPD programmes/activities and submit learning progress reports in prescribed format to their school principals/supervisors and the Education Bureau;
 - (b) attend meetings with educational experts for professional dialogues on planning and conducting educational research /school development project(s);
 - (c) plan and/or implement educational research /school development project(s) in their schools;
 - (d) establish and lead professional learning communities among participants and within schools through regular meet-up and sharing sessions; and
 - (e) share their experiences regarding the sabbatical leaves, learning outcomes and outcomes of educational research /school development project(s) in briefings and sharing sessions to benefit the teaching profession and schools.

6. Participating teachers and principals shall submit final reports and planned deliverables of the Scheme to their school principals (for teacher applicants) or supervisors (for principal applicants) and the Education Bureau within three months upon completion of their sabbatical leave period.

Financial Support for Participating Teachers, Principals and Schools

7. Participating teachers, principals and their schools will be provided the following support in the Scheme:
 - (a) Participating teachers and principals will be entitled to full-pay leave during the sabbatical leave period;
 - (b) Primary, secondary and special schools of participating teachers and principals will be entitled to funding for employment of supply teachers during the sabbatical leave periods through full reimbursement on actual expenditure in compliance with the current practices specified in Education Bureau Circular Memorandum No. 125/2018 or any subsequent revision thereof. Details are accessible at the Education Bureau website (<https://www.edb.gov.hk>: Home > School Administration and Management > Administration > About School Staff > Salary Assessment in Aided Schools). For the purpose of the Scheme, the reimbursement practice as stated above also applies to government, caput or DSS schools in addition to aided schools. For teachers/principals on acting appointment to a higher rank in relation to paid study leave, schools are advised to take note of the requirements stipulated in EDBC No. 8/2004; and
 - (c) KGs of participating teachers and principals will be entitled to funding for employment of supply teachers during the sabbatical leave periods through full reimbursement on actual expenditure. Details are set out at Annex to Appendix I.

Teaching Obligation and Undertaking

8. Participating teachers and principals shall undertake to teach full-time (for teachers) or serve full-time (for principals) **for two years** immediately upon completion of the sabbatical leave periods to sustain the positive impact on school development. KG teachers and principals shall serve in KGs joining the KG Education Scheme, and primary and secondary school teachers shall serve in public sector schools⁵ or DSS schools in Hong Kong.

⁵ Public sector schools include government, aided and caput primary, secondary and special schools.

9. Participating teachers and principals are required to sign an undertaking, which delineates the terms and conditions that they should comply with, upon their acceptance of a place in the Scheme. These include satisfactory completion of, but are not limited to, the following:
 - (a) planned CPD programmes/activities and professional support sessions from education experts;
 - (b) educational research /school development project(s);
 - (c) learning progress reports and final reports of the Scheme;
 - (d) briefings and sharing sessions of the Scheme experience; and
 - (e) fulfilment of two-year teaching and service obligation upon completion of the sabbatical leave periods.

10. At any point of time, if a breach of the undertaking occurs, the participating teachers and principals of the Scheme shall repay to the Government the expenditure, on an interest-free basis, incurred by the Government because of his/her participation in the Scheme. For special circumstances that the undertaking cannot be completely fulfilled is due to reasons not within the participants' control such as accidents, ill health, etc., they will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Application and Selection

11. Teachers and principals interested in applying for the Scheme are required to:
 - (a) fill in the Application Form (**Part I**) in fillable pdf form;
 - (b) make arrangements for the Application Form (**Part II** Recommendation Form) to be completed by the principals (for teacher applicants) or by the school supervisors (for principal applicants);
 - (c) email the completed Application Form (**Part I**) in the fillable pdf form to aaslpd1@edb.gov.hk, together with the scanned copies of Application Form (**Part II** Recommendation Form) **at or before 6:00 p.m. on 3 May 2019 (Friday)**; and
 - (d) keep the hard copies for verification when required.

12. Each applicant shall submit ONE application only.

13. A vetting committee will be formed to assess the application based on various criteria including eligibility of applicants, their relevant academic qualifications and work experience, action plans on CPD programmes/activities and educational research /school development project(s) during sabbatical leave periods, relevance and benefits of their action plans to the education sector and their schools, and recommendations by the school principals/supervisors, etc. Interviews may be arranged where appropriate.

14. Applicants and school principals /supervisors will be informed of the result via email within June 2019.

Enquiries

15. Questions about the Scheme can be directed to Ms Clara Wong (Tel.: 3509 7581) or Ms Fion Lam (Tel: 3509 7580) of the School Leadership and Professional Development Section.

Education Bureau

March 2019

Arrangements of employing supply teachers for kindergartens joining the kindergarten education scheme

When a kindergarten (KG) teacher is taking approved sabbatical leave, the KG may need to employ a supply teacher to take up his/her duties. For smooth school operation, the Education Bureau encourages KGs to employ the same supply teacher throughout the period. If the employment period of a supply teacher lasts for 90 consecutive calendar days or more, the KG concerned should employ the supply teacher on a monthly-rated basis. In principle, KGs should employ persons possessing Certificate in Early Childhood Education [C(ECE)] or above qualifications and the salary range for basic rank teachers under the KG Education Scheme should be applied in determining the salary (in the 2018/19 school year, the monthly salary ranges from \$21,680 to \$38,550).

2. If a KG employs a supply teacher possessing other qualifications because of special circumstances (such as recruitment difficulties), the KG should provide adequate support to ensure the quality of the education service. KGs may make reference to the salary ranges for supporting staff when determining the salary of the supply teacher possessing other qualifications. In any cases, the salary of the supply teacher should not be higher than that of the teacher taking sabbatical leave or the ceiling of the above-mentioned salary ranges (whichever is the lower).

3. For supply teachers whose employment period is less than 90 calendar days, KGs should calculate their salary on a daily basis. In the 2018/19 school year, the daily rates for supply teachers possessing C(ECE) or above qualifications and other qualifications are \$943 and \$357 respectively. EDB will adjust the daily rates every school year. If the employment period of a daily-rated supply teacher is across two school years, his/her salary will be calculated on the basis of the daily rates of the respective school years.