

**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. Applicants **must** be:
  - (i) permanent residents of Hong Kong;
  - (ii) registered teachers;
  - (iii) full-time regular teachers<sup>2</sup> 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 scheme<sup>3</sup>, at the time of application; and
  - (iv) having no less than five years of full-time teaching experience in local kindergartens, primary and secondary schools<sup>4</sup>, at the time of application.
3. Preferences will be given to applicants who:
  - (i) possess relevant experience in
    - (a) whole-school/KLA-level/subject-level curriculum planning; or

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<sup>2</sup> “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.

<sup>3</sup> 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.

<sup>4</sup> Only experience in KGs will be counted for KG teachers, and only relevant experience in primary and secondary schools will be counted for primary or secondary school teachers.

- (b) coordinating and/or organising professional development activities at schools; or
  - (c) conducting educational research on learning and teaching/professional development of teachers; or
  - (d) offering community services in the education field.
- (ii) submit Scheme proposals with study plan and educational research / school development project(s) that are relevant to the following areas:
- (a) enhancing teachers' professional development at the school level; or
  - (b) mentorship/leadership development for teachers/middle leaders; or
  - (c) cross-curricular learning/collaboration/initiatives or integrated approach in learning and teaching at the KG level; or
  - (d) 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 2021 and 31 August 2022 to pursue their planned CPD programmes/activities relevant to achieving their learning objectives, which may include:
- (i) local/non-local structured study programmes;
  - (ii) other modes of professional learning activities such as
    - (a) serving as visiting scholars/researchers/tutors at the universities; or
    - (b) 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:
- (i) 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;
  - (ii) attend meetings with educational experts for professional dialogues on planning and conducting educational research /school development project(s);
  - (iii) plan and/or implement educational research /school development project(s) in their schools;
  - (iv) establish and lead professional learning communities among participants and within schools through regular meet-up and sharing sessions; and

- (v) 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:
- (i) Participating teachers and principals will be entitled to full-pay leave during the sabbatical leave period;
  - (ii) Primary, secondary and special schools of participating teachers and principals will be entitled to funding for employment of daily-rated supply teachers or monthly-paid temporary teachers during the sabbatical leave periods through full reimbursement on actual expenditure. Details are as follows:
    - (a) For sabbatical leave periods of less than 90 days, daily-rated supply teachers can be reimbursed in compliance with the current practices specified in Education Bureau Circular Memorandum No. 40/2020 or any subsequent revision thereof.
    - (b) Monthly-paid temporary teachers can be reimbursed for sabbatical leave periods of 90 days or more. 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
  - (iii) 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 schools<sup>5</sup> or DSS schools in Hong Kong.
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:
  - (i) planned CPD programmes/activities and professional support sessions from education experts;
  - (ii) educational research /school development project(s);
  - (iii) learning progress reports and final reports of the Scheme;
  - (iv) briefings and sharing sessions of the Scheme experience; and
  - (v) 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. There are two rounds of applications for the Scheme with schedule as follows:

	<b>Application Period</b>	<b>Release of Application Results</b>	<b>Sabbatical Leave Period</b>
<b>1<sup>st</sup> round application</b>	From 22 March 2021 to 21 May 2021	By mid-July 2021	From 1 September 2021 to 31 August 2022
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> round application</b>	From 1 September 2021 to 29 October 2021	By the end of December 2021	From 1 February 2022 to 31 August 2022

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<sup>5</sup> Public sector schools include government, aided and caput primary, secondary and special schools.

12. Teachers and principals interested in applying for the Scheme are required to:
  - (i) fill in the Application Form (**Part I**) in fillable pdf form;
  - (ii) make arrangements for the Recommendation Form (**Part II**) to be completed by the principals (for teacher applicants) or by the school supervisors (for principal applicants);
  - (iii) email the scanned copies in PDF format of completed Application Form (**Part I**) and Recommendation Form (**Part II**) to [aaslpd1@edb.gov.hk](mailto:aaslpd1@edb.gov.hk) and copy to school principal/ supervisor during the application period; and
  - (iv) keep the hard copies for verification when required.
  
13. Each applicant shall submit ONE application only. If the applicant had successfully applied and participated in any paid study leave scheme in the past five years, his/her application will be given lower priority.
  
14. A vetting committee is set up 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.
  
15. Applicants and school principals /supervisors will be informed of the result via email.

### **Enquiries**

16. Questions about the Scheme can be directed to Ms Ruby LI (Tel.: 2892 5774) or Ms Clara WONG (Tel: 3509 7581) of the School Leadership and Professional Development Section.

Education Bureau  
March 2021

## **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 2020/21 school year, the monthly salary ranges from \$22,790 to \$ 40,530).

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 2020/21 school year, the daily rates for supply teachers possessing C(ECE) or above qualifications and other qualifications are \$991 and \$375 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.