

## **Education Bureau Circular Memorandum No. 33/2021**

From: Secretary for Education	To: Supervisors / Heads / Teachers of
Ref.: EDB(SLPD)/COTAP/TRA/1(21/22)	Government, Aided, Caput and Direct
Date: 22 March 2021	Subsidy Scheme (DSS) Primary, Secondary Schools and Special Schools, and Kindergartens joining the Kindergarten education scheme

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### **Sabbatical Leave Scheme for Professional Development of Teachers and Principals**

#### **Summary**

This circular memorandum invites serving teachers and principals of kindergartens (KGs) joining the KG education scheme, public sector primary, secondary and special schools as well as DSS schools to apply for the “Sabbatical Leave Scheme for Professional Development of Teachers and Principals” (the Scheme).

#### **Background**

2. As announced in the Chief Executive’s 2017 Policy Address, the Government would provide a non-recurrent funding of \$500 million, with an annual disbursement of around \$50 million, to support suitable projects under the T-excel@hk strategic work plan of Committee on Professional Development of Teachers and Principals (COTAP) to enhance the professional development of teachers and principals. The Scheme commenced in the 2018/19 school year, aiming at creating space for serving teachers and principals to participate in continuing professional development (CPD) programmes/activities that support their professional learning and meet development needs of their students and schools.

#### **Details**

3. The Scheme features a “sabbatical leave” period between one and five months as appropriate for serving teachers and principals to take part in professional development programmes/activities. The Scheme aims to promote self-directed planning of local/non-local structured and/or individualised professional learning activities by participating teachers and principals, leading to enhanced teachers’ professional growth, students’ whole-person development and school development. Participating teachers and principals are required to apply their professional learning in completing planned educational research or school development projects during, and/or within three months upon completion of, the sabbatical

leave period.

4. The Scheme aims to –
- create space for serving teachers and principals to plan and undertake individualised 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 communities and professional teams of teachers and principals to lead the teaching profession in striving for excellence.

5. 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 and implement educational research/ school development project(s). Funding for employment of supply teachers covering the whole sabbatical leave periods will be provided as support for schools. Participating teachers and principals shall undertake to teach (for teachers) or serve (for principals) full-time **for two years** immediately upon completion of the sabbatical leave. KG teachers/principals shall teach/serve in KGs joining the KG education scheme, whereas primary and secondary school teachers/principals shall teach/serve in public sector<sup>1</sup> or DSS schools in Hong Kong.

6. To facilitate the application submission of interested teachers and principals, there are two rounds of applications for the Scheme. For more details of and application for the Scheme, please refer to the Information Notes to Applicants at **Appendix I** and the Application Form at **Appendix II**. Applicants are most welcome to access the COTAP webpage (<https://www.cotap.hk/index.php/en/t-train/SabbaticalLeave>) for more details of the Scheme including how to write a scheme proposal and video clips on participants’ experience sharing, etc.

7. A briefing session will be organised in April 2021. Teachers and principals who are interested in the Scheme are encouraged to attend the briefing session. Please refer to the announcement of the Training Calendar System for details.

8. A vetting committee is set up to assess the applications based on various criteria

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<sup>1</sup> Public sector schools include government, aided and caput schools.

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 period, 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.

**Enquiries**

9. For enquiries, please contact Ms Ruby LI (Tel: 2892 5774) or Ms Clara WONG (Tel: 3509 7581) of the School Leadership and Professional Development Section.

Ms Teresa CHAN  
for Secretary for Education

c.c. Heads of Sections – for information