

**Review on the Effectiveness of the
Implementation of Life Planning Education in
Secondary Schools in Hong Kong**

**(Commissioned by the Education Bureau to the
Academic Advisory Team of The Education
University of Hong Kong)**

Report

31st January 2019

This Report has been translated from Chinese. If there is any inconsistency or ambiguity between the English version and the Chinese version, the Chinese version shall prevail.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

Used throughout the Report

Full name	Abbreviation
Business-School Partnership Programme	BSPP
Career and Life Planning Grant	CLPG
Career/Life Planning Masters/Mistresses	Masters/Mistresses
Centre for Special Educational Needs and Inclusive Education	CSENIE
Centre for Religious and Spirituality Education	CRSE
Department of International Education and Lifelong Learning	IELL
Department of Special Education and Counselling	SEC
Department of Social Sciences	SSC
Education Bureau, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region	EDB
Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination	HKDSE
Life Planning Education	LPE
Non-Governmental Organization	NGO
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization	UNESCO

Executive Summary

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1. Background

- 1.1 The “Review on the Effectiveness of the Implementation of Life Planning Education in Secondary Schools in Hong Kong” (Review) was commissioned by the Education Bureau, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (EDB) to the Education University of Hong Kong Advisory Team (Advisory Team). The purpose of this Review is to evaluate the effectiveness of Life Planning Education (LPE), and the “Business-School Partnership Programme” (BSPP).
- 1.2 The Review is designed in accordance with the terms stipulated in EDB’s tender document. The Review commenced in September 2017 and completed in February 2019. Meanwhile, EDB and the Advisory Team met regularly to deliberate on the rationale, design tools, implementation, data collection and report writing on the Review.
- 1.3 EDB issued a “Guide on Life Planning Education and Career Guidance for Secondary Schools” in the 2014/15 school year to promote LPE, and provided a series of supporting measures to schools. The supporting measures included to provide “Career and Life Planning Grant” (CLPG) for eligible schools to enhance the professional capacity of career guidance team. From the 2016/17 school year, schools may turn the CLPG into regular teaching post to promote LPE and related counselling services.
- 1.4 EDB has been providing parent education and career exploration activities since the 2014/15 school year. It is hoped that parents can be encouraged to support their children to participate more in activities related to LPE, so that future generations are able to pursue their life goals based on their interests and abilities. EDB launched BSPP in 2005 to foster cooperation between schools and corporations, which aimed to help provide diverse career exploration opportunities and support for students, helping them to grasp every opportunity arisen in the working world.

2. Objectives of the Review

The objectives of this Review are as follows:

- 2.1 To study and critically review the effectiveness of the implementation of LPE in schools and support services provided under BSPP, so as to provide recommendations for programme implementation;
- 2.2 To study the impacts of LPE and BSPP on different stakeholders using quantitative and qualitative research methods. Such stakeholders include secondary school students, secondary school teachers, parents and other stakeholders, if any; and

2.3 To conclude evidence-based recommendations to enhance student self-efficacy, teacher professionalism, and parental awareness in supporting student life planning.

3. The Target and Method of Review

- 3.1** The target group of this Review includes the following stakeholders: Principals, Career/Life Planning Masters/Mistresses (Masters/Mistresses), Secondary 3 to 6 students and their parents, and partners of the “Business-School Partnership Programme” (BSPP partners).
- 3.2** Various methods were used to collect first-hand data and information from stakeholders. These included surveys, focus-group interviews, and case studies. The use of quantitative and qualitative data help to explain the current state of the implementation of LPE, including the evaluation of the policy and implementation of BSPP. The Review provides suggestions on how LPE and BSPP should be developed.
- 3.3** For the survey, the Advisory Team distributed questionnaires to 506 secondary schools and 278 BSPP partners across Hong Kong. 155 schools participated in the review; 31% out of a total of 506 public sector secondary schools, including 139 mainstream, and 16 special schools. 102 BSPP partners, accounting for 37% of 278 BSPP partners replied to the survey.
- 3.4** The number of valid questionnaires collected includes:
- 121 questionnaires from Principals (including 105 from mainstream schools and 16 from special schools);
 - 130 questionnaires from Masters/Mistresses (including 113 from mainstream schools and 17 from special schools);
 - 20,964 questionnaires from students (including 20,767 from mainstream schools and 197 from special schools);
 - 2,693 questionnaires from parents (including 2,516 from mainstream schools and 177 from special schools); and
 - 102 from BSPP partners.
- 3.5** 7 mainstream schools, 1 special school and 2 BSPP partners were involved in the case study.
- 3.6** 30 focus group interviews were held, involving a total of 138 respondents. The participating stakeholders comprises 114 interviewees from 20 mainstream schools (10 Principals, 8 Masters/Mistresses, 22 teachers, 56 students and 18 parents), and 24 interviewees from 19 BSPP partners.
- 3.7** For the survey analysis, in a five-point scale with 1 for Strongly Disagree and 5 for Strongly Agree, 3.0 is considered as the mid-point. The Advisory Team proposed 3.5 to be considered as the reference mean in the level of perceived effectiveness.

The Advisory Team adopted the mean of 3.5 as a reference point, albeit a certain degree of subjectivity in the interpretation. (Please refer to p.29 for details)

- 3.8** Cluster analysis was used to analyse the focus group interviews. The Advisory Team encoded the key concepts of the verbatim transcripts of the stakeholders interviews and then used qualitative data analysis software ‘QSR Nvivo12’ for conceptual cluster analysis.

4. Key Findings of the Review

4.1 School Level

4.1.1 Principals and Masters/Mistresses indicate that they value and have confidence in promoting LPE

The survey found that over 80% of the interviewed schools consider themselves having promoted LPE using a whole school approach. Yet, based upon the professional experience of the Advisory Team, different schools have different understandings on the whole school approach and thus have different developmental strategies, and implementation modes. Despite these differences, the degree of perceived importance which stakeholders attach to a certain policy is key when using a whole school approach. The survey data from Principals and Masters/Mistresses reflects the degree of perceived importance among different school stakeholders towards LPE. Firstly, the Principals’ view of schools’ overall value of LPE had a mean of 4.21. Masters/Mistresses evaluated their degree of perceived importance and level of commitment of LPE at a mean of 4.47. Their evaluation on the degree of perceived importance of the school management of LPE was 4.13, near to the mean of Principals’ self-evaluation. These are all higher than the reference mean of 3.5, as outlined by the Advisory Team. Moreover, the mean of the evaluations of interviewed Principals’ and Masters/Mistresses’ evaluations on the degree of perceived importance of school teachers on LPE was 3.65 and 3.54; higher than the reference mean of 3.5. In summary, it is observed that different staff generally agree with the idea of LPE. Yet, the degree of perceived importance and level of commitment of the programme implementers are higher than that of other teachers.

As for confidence in implementing LPE, Principals seem to have confidence in implementing LPE through different means in the future. The mean of 3.84 was higher than the reference mean of 3.5. Furthermore, in the focus group interview, most of the interviewed Principals and Masters/Mistresses expressed their confidence in promoting LPE in the future by whole school approach.

4.1.2 Increased Participation in Schools

Principals and Masters/Mistresses agreed that additional government resources aided positive changes in the implementation of LPE. For example: a greater

emphasis was given to life planning; more teachers received professional training; clearer goals were set; LPE was implemented more systematically; teachers-in-charge found it easier to encourage other teachers to help implementing LPE; cooperation with other stakeholders was strengthened; teachers were more confident to implement LPE activities and guide students. The mean rating of related positive aspects of these changes were 4.05 for the Principals and 3.93 for the Masters/Mistresses, higher than the reference mean of 3.5. It is observed that there is a degree of involvement and support for LPE. Interviewed schools and parents pointed out that schools had organized more life planning activities than they had in the past, and that parents' involvement was encouraged to increase communication and collaboration between schools and parents.

4.1.3 Broader Life Planning Concepts

When asked about macro-level LPE concepts such as “life planning helps young people explore their directions and build positive values and attitudes towards life”, the mean of interviewees' agreement was higher than the reference mean of 3.5. Different stakeholders generally agreed that LPE should include the cultivation of direction in life, personal interest and positive values, in addition to knowledge and preparation for career development.

4.1.4 The Size of Schools Career/ Life Planning Teams

Current school career/ life planning teams were generally composed of between 5-7 and 8-10 people, accounting for 47% and 35% of the total number of respondents respectively. The size of the teams indicates that they are important administrative units of schools.

4.1.5 More Varieties of Life Planning Activities and Increased Frequency of Organizing Activities

Since the implementation of LPE in the 2014/15 school year, there has been a 50% increase in 9 of the 12 LPE-related activities in most local schools. The most frequently-held were “Alumni Sharing”, “Individual Counselling”, “Workplace Visit”, as well as “Work Experience Programme”. Through case study and focus group interviews, it is observed that there was collaboration and cooperation between career/ life planning teams and other administrative groups (such as extra-curricular activity teams and guidance teams). This cooperation provides students with activities that were more diverse and relevant to their developmental needs.

4.1.6 Specific Goals and Assessments identified in LPE

70% of schools participating in the survey said that they had included LPE as the major concern in the schools' Three-year Development Plan and Annual School

Plan. This arrangement helped schools to establish clear goals and evaluation criteria for LPE. In accordance with the requirements of the development plans, inspections and assessments were conducted during the school year to evaluate the implementation of LPE.

4.1.7 LPE's Relevance to Student Needs

Our survey found that schools progressively developed strategies, courses and activities according to the student developmental and learning needs. When implementing LPE, there were also clearly-established assessment criteria and indicators. Most of the schools in the survey had attempted to conduct life planning activities in line with the needs of students. The survey showed that schools try to incorporate different types of LPE activities, such as counselling services, work experience programmes, career planning lecture and alumni sharing.

4.2 Teacher Level

4.2.1 Perceived Usefulness of Lessening Teachers' Teaching Sessions

According to survey data, about 85% of the schools reduced the Masters/Mistresses' lessons by an average of 4.94 hours. More than 60% of the interviewed Masters/Mistresses regarded the reduction helpful for their implementation of LPE.

4.2.2 Supporting Staff to support Teachers in LPE Tasks

Many trivial administrative tasks emerged with the need to hold frequent LPE activities. Schools effective in implementing LPE also deployed other school resources to support its implementation, even after turning the CLPG into a regular teaching post. During focus group interviews, most interviewed Principals, Masters/Mistresses and teachers emphasized the importance of manpower, especially as life planning education involved a lot of administrative work. Additional staff such as teaching assistants and supporting staff were important for teachers to carry out LPE tasks.

4.2.3 Other Teaching Support

Resources were also used for organizing activities, procuring services and acquiring additional school facilities such as installation of counselling rooms, purchase of tablets, etc. It was also used to purchase the copyright of occupational aptitude tests, etc. The teaching support was helpful for teachers in LPE to some extent.

4.2.4 Increasing Teacher Training Quota

Additional government resources allowed more teachers to receive training. More than 70% of the Masters/Mistresses had received training related to LPE provided by EDB. Currently, in each school, an average of 2 team members of the life planning education team had received training.

4.2.5 Teaching Training made Teachers More Confident

Teachers were now more confident implementing LPE activities and had the confidence and skills to provide relevant guidance for students. The mean of their self-evaluation on their ability to implement LPE was, in a five-point scale, higher than the reference mean of 3.5. About 70% of the teachers agreed or strongly agreed that they were more confident and capable of implementing LPE.

4.2.6 Masters/Mistresses agreed with a Broader Life Planning Concept

According to the survey, nearly 90% of the interviewed Masters/Mistresses agreed that the concept of LPE should include helping teenagers find their direction in life, know about the pathways for further studies and career, understand the actual operation of the world of work, establish positive values, make responsible choices in accordance with their personal interests, abilities and orientation. Teacher concepts of LPE were no longer limited to providing information about further studies and career development, but also student growth and life values. Besides providing students with the information about further studies and career development, schools also begin to place importance on activities like individual or group counselling, experiential learning activities, self-awareness, and value building.

4.2.7 Career Masters/Mistresses believed that LPE should start to be implemented in Junior Secondary School Level.

Some Masters/Mistresses expressed their beliefs that LPE should be implemented from junior secondary school levels. Some of the schools started implementing LPE in S1 and followed through in the whole secondary school stage. However, upon summarizing the data from the focus group interviews, it shows that only few schools could manage this because of limited resources.

4.3 Student Level

4.3.1 The Difference in the Perceived Importance and Actual Participation of Life Planning

When compared with the responses of Principals, Masters/Mistresses and parents, the overall rating of LPE by students was relatively low, with a majority rating from 3.0 to 3.5. Student self-efficacy was rated highest, with a mean of 3.25, indicating that they considered themselves to benefit more by obtaining the skills and confidence from LPE. In contrast, the rating of the level of participation in life planning activities was the lowest, with a mean of 2.98 in the five-point scale.

4.3.2 Beneficial towards Self-understanding and Future Planning

Students agreed that LPE gave them a better understanding of their personal interests and abilities, different paths in pursuing higher education and career-related information. Students who had participated in life planning activities rated their personal abilities relatively higher than those who had not. However, the ratings of items like “pursuit and realization of future goals”, and “evaluation in LPE and the confidence in setting personal goals” were relatively lower, with an overall mean rating of 3.16, which was below the reference mean of 3.5.

4.3.3 Teachers as the Main Source of Information and Support

More than 70% of student respondents received life planning information from teachers, which was regarded as the most helpful source of information about life planning education. The survey also indicated that, when advisory services for life planning education were needed, a majority of the students preferred to seek advice from Masters/Mistresses and class teachers initially, whereas friends, classmates and parents were their second choice.

4.4 Parent Level

4.4.1 Increased Understanding towards Life Planning among Parents

Parents basically agreed to the idea of life planning. Their ratings to the 5 descriptions of the concepts of life planning, ranging from increasing the understanding of teenagers about the paths for further studies or future career to developing their positive values were higher than the reference mean of 3.5. In general, parents were satisfied with the LPE provided by schools, with an average mean near to the reference mean of 3.5 in the five-point scale. Parents were able to understand more about the choices their children made on further studies and/or future career, and were more willing to encourage their children to make informed and responsible choices through participating in life planning activities organized by schools. Moreover, as reflected by the observations at focus group interviews, a majority of the interviewees agreed that their experience in schools’ life planning activities helped them acquire the most up-to-date information on further studies and career, and thus helped them support their children.

4.4.2 Parents' Relatively Low Participation Rate

The mean parents rated for schools' life planning activities was near to the reference mean of 3.5. However, parents rated their ability to participate in school life planning activities at a mean of 2.66, which is lower than the reference mean of 3.5. Parents generally agreed with, and were satisfied by, the life planning activities provided by the schools. However, the rating for participation is low. Reasons revealed in the focus group interviews include the fact that parents could not participate in the activities for personal reasons or being occupied by work or the nature of the activities.

4.5 Level of BSPP Partners

4.5.1 BSPP Partners agreed with the Concept of Life Planning

BSPP partners agreed with the concept of life planning. 70% of the surveyed BSPP partners agreed or strongly agreed with LPE including "career guidance", "workplace experience", "understanding the direction of life", "understanding oneself" and "establishing life values". In respect of each component in the concept of LPE, the mean was higher than the reference mean of 3.5.

4.5.2 BSPP Partners Were Willing to Continue Supporting BSPP

Over half of surveyed BSPP partners joined the Programme to cultivate young people's interest to enter the trade or industry, introduce trades, industries and companies to students, teachers and parents, serve and contribute to the community. The surveyed BSPP partners were willing to continue participating in the Programme. Over 90% of respondents would recommend it to their counterparts in the same trade and encourage them to join. On the whole, the average satisfaction rate towards BSPP was higher than the reference mean of 3.5. In addition, more than 50% of the surveyed BSPP partners planned to provide more support to students by increasing the number, types, and modes of activities in the future. In sum, the surveyed partners held a positive attitude towards BSPP and were willing to offer support. Most of the interviewed BSPP partners regarded the Programme as a win-win, saying that both their own corporations and the students benefit.

4.5.3 BSPP Partners Agreed with Their Own Performance

Most of the surveyed BSPP partners organized talks, workshops, workplace visits, work experience programmes, etc. for students, and considered them to be successful. Work experience programmes were regarded as the most successful activity by most of the surveyed BSPP partners. More than 60% of the surveyed

BSPP partners pointed out that students' positive responses and engagement in the activities by their observation were accountable for an event to be considered successful. The BSPP partners also said they had made efforts to host activities to arouse student interest, offering advice and answering inquiries, and so on. The mean of the above items in the five-point scale was higher than the reference mean of 3.5.

4.5.4 BSPP was recognized by Principals and Masters/Mistresses

Other school stakeholders held a positive view of BSPP. According to the survey, nearly 50% of the Principals and Masters/Mistresses agreed that the Programme was one of the important resources provided by the government. The Masters/Mistresses agreed that it was helpful to students; the mean was higher than the reference mean of 3.5. The 8 schools in the case study valued the external resources from BSPP as an important online platform enabling students to gain more opportunities for experience. Focus group interviews also further underlined that most of the Masters/Mistresses, teachers and Principals surveyed thought that BSPP should continue and be expanded to benefit more students.

5 Conclusion

5.1 Achievement of initial success for implementation of LPE

According to the survey, the averaged mean rating of the different aspects among all stakeholders except students was higher than 3.5. Principals and Masters/Mistresses valued LPE most and agreed that teachers generally valued LPE. In addition, they expressed the importance of additional resources provided by the government in recent years. They had positive feedback towards BSPP. The Programme received much support from schools and BSPP partners. It was considered as one of the important resources for schools, gaining recognition from students and teachers.

Although the mean of student ratings was not as high as those of other stakeholders, it was still higher than the mid-point mean for checking initial effectiveness (i.e., 3.0), which can thus be regarded as a positive result. Among all, students rated their self-efficacy the highest. Students believed that they were more capable of handling issues about their prospects and knew more about their own interest after the implementation of the LPE.

The results of the survey showed that stakeholders applied broader concepts in LPE and that their participation in life planning activities increased. The survey and focus group interviews showed that although the implementation of LPE varied from one school to another, a whole school approach was still emphasized in general. A majority of the schools included LPE as one of their major concerns. Schools showed flexibility in allocating resources to cater for student needs. However, it was found from the focus group interviews that schools encountered

difficulties when implementing LPE, including a poor participation rate in some activities because students, parents and a small number of teachers still prioritised public examinations, and neglected the importance of long-term life planning.

To conclude, our findings showed that LPE is well-structured in its implementation and is supported by school policies. It gradually received recognition from teachers, students and parents. Based on this outturn, we conclude that LPE in Hong Kong secondary schools has achieved initial success.

5.2 Parts to be Strengthened in LPE

Students gave high rating to their mastery of requisite information through LPE, while the rating on their mastery of higher-level learning such as life planning was relatively low. This showed that although the increase in school activities related to LPE helped students gain more information about further studies and career development, it could not help them fully plan their long-term life goals.

Regarding teaching modes, as shown by the data of teacher survey, Masters/Mistresses believed that individual counselling was the most helpful activity for students, followed by work experience programmes. Similar results were also found from the focus group interviews with parents. As such, schools need a range of different strategies and activities to enhance LPE.

Given the discrepancy between the perceived importance and real participation in life planning activities as mentioned, both parents and students believed that life planning was important and its activities were helpful. Nonetheless, the participation rate was still relatively low. Many students and parents still thought that public exam results were the top priority; success was defined as getting into universities/taking ideal subjects. This may be one of the reasons affecting the participation rate of LPE activities. Many students expressed that the life planning activities of schools tended to be theoretical, while the career information disseminated at school focused heavily on socially-recognised tertiary education programmes, academic subjects and occupations. The other reasons for students' low satisfaction included superficial information and insufficient individual guidance. In view of this, only with the provision of multiple pathways can students be helped to adapt to the diverse demands in the 21st Century. This may also help to bring changes to the deep-rooted beliefs mentioned above and realize the ideas of life planning fundamentally.

Despite schools attempt to increase resources to assist career/ life planning teams, Masters/Mistresses still expressed frustration with their heavy administrative workload. Principals in turn were frustrated by the allocation and use of resources, and inadequate manpower. As such, increasing the number of teachers and improving the allocation of resources are still the challenges to the implementation

of LPE.

5.3 Good Practices of Implementation Strategies

5.3.1 Life Planning Education built on Students' Whole Person Development and Life Education

A majority of the Principals and Masters/Mistresses agreed that LPE was based on the whole person development of students. They agreed that its main objective was to assist students in finding their life direction, as well as to establish positive values and outlook on life. The mean of the above items was higher than the reference mean of 3.5.

Case studies showed that in schools with effective LPE, the Principals and Masters/Mistresses both attached great emphasis on student whole-person development, and closely linked this with LPE. Many of the interviewed Principals and Masters/Mistresses underlined that values, life education, character building, and personal growth were core elements of LPE.

Some schools took whole-person development as the guiding principle of LPE. One of the case study school responded that it had a clear school-based life planning curriculum for S1 to S6 students, tailor-made to promote life education and value cultivation at different stages of development. The school also emphasized school atmosphere, the pastoral roles of class teachers, and helping students at different levels to put life planning into practice. The Advisory Team believes that the development of LPE rooted in positive values cultivation through teaching and learning and school ethos and student support could help nurture student talents, an important step of implementing LPE.

5.3.2 Whole School Approach

Many of the interviewed schools promoted whole school approach through leadership and school management. The whole school approach highlighted the overall implementation process, and set clear goals for success and evaluation, by placing LPE as one of the major concerns of the school. Teachers were aware of the school's emphasis on LPE and its direction of development, which in turns helped them develop a shared mission and vision in delivering LPE.

In some other cases, schools attempted to accelerate the collaboration of various panels, different personnel and administrative groups, to promote LPE to both teachers and students. Most schools boosted whole school approach by enhancing the cooperation among subject panels. The connection between the career/ life planning team and subject panels provided information and strategies to integrate the elements of LPE into various subjects.

A number of schools made full use of class teachers by enhancing their level of involvement in LPE. Their roles as frontline counsellors increased student opportunities to access life planning information and individual support, and eased the frontline work of Masters/Mistresses. The involvement of the class teachers expanded the scope of teachers' assistance in LPE and encouraged school-wide participation, which in turn helped promote the overall development of LPE.

5.3.3 Resource Allocation

Schools used different strategies to support the implementation of LPE, focusing on increase in manpower. About 70% of the surveyed schools turned CLPG into regular teaching post. Moreover, most Principals first chose to add additional teaching posts. Some schools, which were more effective in implementing LPE, allocated resources, including CLPG to recruit designated counsellors, and set up life planning counselling rooms to provide individual or group counselling for students.

In regards to the school the usage on CLPG and external resources, principals and Career masters/mistress has pointed out certain rationales that should pay more attention, such as enhancing the importance and understanding of LPE, demonstrating schools are concretely supporting LPE to various stakeholders, and expecting to cater the needs from teachers, students and parents directly.

5.3.4 Strengthen Networks and pull in External Resources

A majority of the Principals and Masters/Mistresses thought that the effect on launching LPE by the schools themselves was limited; they thought the schools need to connect with different stakeholders inside and outside the schools to use resources to enhance its effectiveness. Schools which participated in the case study used their own context to strengthen their networks to assist students in life planning. These were strengthened by participating in BSPP and co-operating with other government departments, non-governmental organizations, churches, school sponsoring bodies, business corporations, and etc.

6 Recommendations

Based on the overall analysis of the results of surveys, case studies, and focus groups, as well as the professional experience and expertise of the Advisory Team, we make the following recommendations:

6.1 Place Life and Values Education at the core of Whole Person Development, and use this to Reshape the Concept of LPE

As stated in the EDB's guidelines related to life planning, the content of LPE must

include value education and personal growth/development. The main objective of LPE is to help students find their life direction and establish positive values and outlook on life. At the same time, as far as students are concerned, an integral life education is indispensable in assisting them with grasping the future development trends of society and high-level life planning skills. Therefore, the Advisory Team suggests that student growth should be taken into consideration for the future development of LPE, and include the elements of life education and personality cultivation as well as the skills needed in the 21st Century.

6.2 Encourage adopting Whole School Approach to promote LPE

LPE involves the overall growth and development of students, and the participation of the whole school is the key to effective implementation of LPE. A whole school approach helps implement LPE by raising its importance among all teaching staff through the participation of the school management; incorporation of life planning education in school development plans; well-defined roles and division of work; involvement of all teaching staff, including class teachers, subject panel heads, and administrative teams.

As whole school approaches may come in different modes, the Advisory Team suggests that EDB invite schools with effective LPE implementation to become “seed schools” and establish a professional learning community. This allows schools to exchange ideas and learn from each other. Schools can learn from successful experiences in different projects, collaborate with other education organisations, launch a professional learning community to nurture “seed schools” and strengthen the school-based support to schools for the implementation of LPE.

6.3 Increase Resources Allocation

Principals and Masters/Mistresses expressed that the biggest difficulties in promoting LPE were heavy administrative workload, shortage of manpower and excessive number of lessons. Parents would like to have more communication with teachers to guide their children in life planning. In addition, they expressed their wish to consult specialists who could provide counselling services for their children. Teachers also believed that individual and group counselling were beneficial to student life planning. The Advisory Team notes that most schools that promoted LPE effectively employed dedicated counsellors and allocated resources to set up a life-planning counselling room to provide individual and group counselling for students. Such implementation in schools could aid the arrangement of individual and group counselling, thus promoting teacher-student and parent-teacher communication.

Therefore, the Advisory Team suggests that apart from the additional regular teaching post presently provided, the EDB should review if a recurrent grant,

subsequent upon the introduction of the Life-wide Learning Grant, be allocated to support schools in LPE in connection with life education. The amount of the Transitional Career and Life Planning Grant could be taken for reference for the proposed recurrent grant. EDB can also encourage schools to use the Quality Education Fund or other funding to increase the resources for LPE for the benefit of students.

6.4 Improve Professional Development Courses

6.4.1 Teacher Training

The Advisory Team believes teachers should be provided professional training with respect to their administrative roles and positions, and tailor-made courses to meet their individual needs. For example, teachers can be stratified into Masters/Mistresses, life planning education/ career guidance team members, subject panel heads, class teachers and general teaching staff. The training can focus on the parts of LPE that teachers are less confident in promoting, such as the development and application of more effective teaching and learning strategies to promote LPE; the development of teaching materials and tools; courses catering for different student needs. With a view to integrating life planning education with subject learning and value education effectively. For teachers in general, the training would strengthen the knowledge of basic concepts and increase their awareness of LPE.

For long-term strategies of teacher training, prospective teachers should be equipped with relevant professional knowledge of life planning education. The Advisory Team suggests that EDB develop a regular professional development programme which should be comprehensive and systematic, incorporated as a required part of teachers' in-service training to enhance teachers' skills in curriculum leadership and implementation, in-school training and supervision. The Advisory Team also recommends organizing schools into professional learning communities and aiding exchanges among schools and teachers through the establishment of a school learning platform.

6.4.2. Parent Training

Parents generally believed that they lacked knowledge about further studies and careers. Parents' expectations and opinions were found to have an impact when children made their career choices. The Advisory Team believes that parent training in supporting students in career and life planning must be strengthened, such as continuing to change parents' beliefs towards career and life planning; improving their knowledge and skills; improving communication with their children; understanding about life planning and value education. This will achieve better coordination between parents and schools, and enlist parent support for the

multiple pathways of students. Parental participation in LPE may be achieved by cooperation with parent-teacher or alumni associations, strengthening the role of class teachers, dissemination of information and provision of training with specific and practical content.

6.5. Assist Students to Access Diversified Study and Career Options

More than 70% of the students thought they were incapable to proceed to their preferred subject disciplines or tertiary institution. This is a major factor hindering the way to their ideal further studies and career options. In addition, more than 20% of the students reflected that the tertiary institutions could not provide them with their preferred field of study and school LPE did not meet their needs.

The Advisory Team suggests that the government strengthen student understanding of multiple pathways and give them concrete support. At the same time, in line with the direction proposed in the Policy Address, the following consideration can be made for the curriculum of LPE: In the formal curriculum, consider integrating LPE with school-based Life Education, Moral and Civic Education or Religious and Value Education to broaden the connotation of LPE; Strengthen the arrangement of informal curriculum, and increase site visits and workplace experience programmes to help students learn in real situations; Strengthen the “hidden curriculum”, i.e., schools’ overall culture, teacher-student relationship and the degree of emphasis all teaching staff place on LPE. The government should strengthen its support for schools and help schools to provide students with more real work experience and opportunities to understand the development of the world.

6.6. Expanding the BSPP

BSPP is positively acknowledged and received by all stakeholders. Many Principals and Masters/Mistresses thought that the Programme should be expanded to add more places in respect of welcoming trades and industries and invite more corporations to be partners. They also wanted to reinforce the support to schools such as strengthening the functions of the online platform so that schools could handle information more systematically and help the participation of teachers and students.

BSPP partners wanted EDB to strengthen its coordinating role, including strengthening the communication between BSPP partners and schools. They also suggest EDB collaborate with more NGOs to use their respective strengths so that LPE can be more diversified and comprehensive.

To this end, the Advisory Team suggests the government consider increasing support to BSPP, expand the scale of the Programme, invite more corporations of different trades and industries to join the Programme, and strengthen its

coordinating role. In the long run, the existing platform may be enhanced to stimulate the interflow of information between schools and BSPP partners to share collaborating experiences, and arrange activities so that the entire Programme can be more effective.