

**11 October 2021**

**Education Bureau Circular No. 11/2021  
National Flag, National Emblem, National Anthem and Regional Flag**

[Note: This circular should be read by –

- (a) Supervisors and heads of all kindergartens, primary and secondary schools (including special schools) – for action; and
- (b) Supervisors and heads of private schools offering non-formal curricula and heads of sections – for information.]

## **Summary**

This circular serves to provide the latest guidelines on the following matters, and information on relevant curriculum resources and support measures for schools' reference:

- (1) display of the national flag<sup>1</sup> and regional flag<sup>2</sup>;
- (2) conduct of a national flag raising ceremony; and
- (3) inclusion of the national flag, national emblem<sup>3</sup> and national anthem<sup>4</sup> in primary and secondary education.

## **Details**

2. The national flag, national emblem and national anthem, being symbols and signs representing our country, as well as the regional flag and regional emblem<sup>5</sup>, being symbols and signs representing the Hong Kong Special

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<sup>1</sup> Referring to the national flag of the People's Republic of China.

<sup>2</sup> Referring to the regional flag of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China.

<sup>3</sup> Referring to the national emblem of the People's Republic of China.

<sup>4</sup> Referring to the national anthem of the People's Republic of China.

<sup>5</sup> Referring to the regional emblem of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China.

Administrative Region (HKSAR), should be respected. Fostering students' sense of national identity is a key learning goal of primary and secondary education. Enabling students to understand the development of their own country in different aspects, such as history, culture, economy, technology and political systems and laws, as well as cultivating in them a sense of belonging towards the country are the educational obligation of schools, which is also part of moral, civic and national education (MCNE). Kindergartens should, having regard to young children's abilities, help them acquire an initial understanding of the national flag, national emblem and national anthem of their own country, so as to foster a sense of belonging to the country and a sense of national identity among them from an early age.

### **National Flag, National Emblem and Regional Flag**

3. The Law of the People's Republic of China on the National Flag (National Flag Law) and the Law of the People's Republic of China on the National Emblem (National Emblem Law) were listed in Annex III to the Basic Law as early as on 1 July 1997 and were applied locally on the same day through the enactment of the National Flag and National Emblem Ordinance (NFNEO). The Regional Flag and Regional Emblem Ordinance (RFREO) was also enacted in the HKSAR on the same day.

4. Having regard to the amendments to the National Flag Law and the National Emblem Law endorsed by the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress on 17 October 2020, the HKSAR implemented the applicable provisions of the two amended national laws locally through amendments to the NFNEO. The amended NFNEO came into effect upon gazettal on 8 October 2021. The spirit of the NFNEO is to safeguard the proper use and preserve the dignity of the national flag and national emblem which are the symbols and signs of our country, so as to promote respect for the national flag and national emblem, enhance the sense of national identity among citizens and promoting patriotism.

5. For the full text of the amended NFNEO and the RFREO, please refer to the following webpage:

[elegislation.gov.hk/hk/A401](http://elegislation.gov.hk/hk/A401)

[elegislation.gov.hk/hk/A602](http://elegislation.gov.hk/hk/A602)

6. Pursuant to Article 7A of the amended NFNEO, the Education Bureau (EDB) has included the national flag and national emblem in primary and secondary education. All primary and secondary schools (including special schools) must educate students on the history and spirit of the national flag and national emblem, the regulation of displaying and using the national flag, and the etiquette to be followed in a national flag raising ceremony.

### **National Anthem**

7. The National Anthem Ordinance (NAO), which was enacted having regard to the Law of the People's Republic of China on the National Anthem listed in Annex III to the Basic Law, was gazetted and came into effect on 12 June 2020. The spirit of the NAO is to respect the national anthem, and there should not be any public and intentional acts to insult the national anthem or use it in an improper way. The EDB has included the national anthem in primary and secondary education according to Article 9 of the NAO. All primary and secondary schools must provide opportunities for students to learn to sing the national anthem, and understand its history and spirit, as well as to observe the etiquette to be followed when playing and singing the national anthem. For the full text of the NAO, please refer to the webpage ([elegislation.gov.hk/hk/A405](http://elegislation.gov.hk/hk/A405)).

### **Display of National Flag and Regional Flag and Conduct of National Flag Raising Ceremony**

8. Starting from 1 January 2022, all primary and secondary schools (including special schools) must display the national flag on each school day (except for inclement weather conditions such as tropical cyclones and/or heavy persistent rain), as well as the New Year's Day (1 January), the HKSAR Establishment Day (1 July) and the National Day (1 October), to show their respect for the country and enhance the sense of belonging towards the country among teachers and students. Schools should display the regional flag alongside the national flag if there are adequate flagpoles. In case of special circumstances where special arrangement for the display of the national flag and/or regional flag has to be made<sup>6</sup>, schools should pay attention to the press release of the Government.

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<sup>6</sup> For example, the Government announces flying the national flag at half staff owing to the occurrence of unfortunate events.

9. To promote national education and to help students develop a sense of belonging to the country, an affection to the Chinese people and enhance their sense of national identity, primary and secondary schools (including special schools) must conduct a national flag raising ceremony weekly (except for school holidays during which no such ceremony can be held<sup>7</sup>). The national anthem should be played and sung in a national flag raising ceremony. Schools are also required to conduct a national flag raising ceremony on the New Year's Day, the HKSAR Establishment Day and the National Day, or on the preceding/following school day of the above days. Schools are strongly advised to conduct a national flag raising ceremony on important days and special occasions<sup>8</sup>. All participants should observe the relevant etiquette when attending a national flag raising ceremony to show their respect for the country, and the symbols and signs representing the country, as well as to demonstrate their good quality as nationals.

10. As far as conditions permit, kindergartens should, having considered factors such as availability of space, facilities and environment, follow the requirements of primary and secondary schools on displaying the national flag and regional flag and conducting a national flag raising ceremony, so that students can learn about the national flag and national anthem of their own country from an early age. For kindergartens which are not able to display the national flag on each school day and conduct a national flag raising ceremony every week due to the constraints of space, facilities, environment, etc., if they have movable flagpoles, they should conduct a national flag raising ceremony when holding celebration activities for the New Year's Day, the HKSAR Establishment Day and the National Day. Besides, kindergartens are strongly advised to conduct a national flag raising ceremony on important days and special occasions<sup>8</sup>. International schools, as well as other private primary, secondary schools and kindergartens offering solely non-local curricula are also encouraged to refer to the requirements mentioned in paragraphs 8 to 9 above, and arrange for displaying the national flag and regional flag, as well as conducting a national flag raising ceremony based on the actual school circumstances, in order to enable students of different ethnicities or nationalities to learn about the culture and history of the country where they live. All participants should also observe the relevant etiquette when attending a national flag raising ceremony to show their respect for the country where they are in.

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<sup>7</sup> Such as summer vacation and long holidays at Christmas, Lunar New Year and Easter.

<sup>8</sup> Such as the first day of a school year, open day, graduation ceremony, swimming gala/sports day, school anniversary events, National Constitution Day and Chinese Culture Day.

## **Education on National Flag, National Emblem, National Anthem and Regional Flag**

### Curriculum resources and support measures

11. To cultivate students' sense of national identity is one of the key learning goals of primary and secondary education. The learning contents about the national flag, national emblem, national anthem and regional flag have long been incorporated into different subjects (such as General Studies at the primary level, Music, Chinese History as well as Citizenship and Social Development) and MCNE under the local curriculum. The EDB has also been providing schools with relevant curriculum resources and teacher professional development programmes. To support the school sector in enabling students to learn about and respect the symbols and signs representing the country (including its history and spirit, the regulation and etiquette of its use), to sing the national anthem and to observe the etiquette when the national anthem is being played and sung, the EDB has continuously provided curriculum support measures, which include the following:

- i. The Learning and Teaching of the National Anthem: Supplement to the Music Curriculum Guide (Primary 1-Secondary 3) (the Supplement) was compiled and uploaded to the EDB website ([www.edb.gov.hk/en/music\\_supplement](http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/music_supplement)) in June 2020.  Schools offering the local curriculum should adopt the Supplement in full and teach students to sing the national anthem and observe the relevant etiquette when the national anthem is being played and sung;
- ii. Reminders would be provided to schools offering local curriculum that they should strengthen the link between learning and teaching through relevant subjects/curriculum areas, such as kindergarten education, General Studies at the primary level, Chinese History at the secondary level, Liberal Studies/Citizenship and Social Development at the senior secondary level, as well as MCNE and introduce the national flag, national emblem and regional flag in class where appropriate, as well as teach students about the history and spirit of the national anthem, national flag and national emblem, the regulation of displaying and using of the national flag, and the etiquette to be followed at a national flag raising ceremony so as to enhance students' learning effectiveness;

- iii. Teacher professional development programmes would be provided so as to enhance the understanding among teachers on how to make good use of flag raising ceremonies in schools (including the points to note while raising and lowering the national flag and regional flag in schools; knowledge of the national flag and regional flag, as well as the etiquette for performing a flag raising ceremony, playing and singing the national anthem) to promote national education in schools;
- iv. The “National Education One-stop Portal” online resources platform ([www.edb.gov.hk/en/neosp](http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/neosp)) has been established to facilitate teachers and students to browse and search diversified resources related to the Constitution, the Basic Law and national security education, the national flag, national emblem and national anthem, etc. to support learning and teaching; and 
- v. The “Getting to Know the National Flag, the National Emblem, the National Anthem and the Regional Flag” theme-based resources webpage of the EDB ([www.edb.gov.hk/en/nationalsymbols](http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/nationalsymbols)) will be updated/   
enriched on an ongoing basis to provide primary and secondary schools offering local curriculum with relevant learning and teaching resources, including brief descriptions of the national flag, national emblem, national anthem and regional flag, as well as points to note, relevant materials and useful links regarding the raising and display of the national flag and regional flag in schools and the national emblem. The English version of the webpage is available for the reference of international schools and other private schools offering solely non-local curricula.

The learning and teaching resources on the national flag, national emblem, national anthem and regional flag have been uploaded to the EDB website (**refer to Annex**) for schools’ reference and use.

12. At the kindergarten level, singing the national anthem and raising the national flag are learning activities to help young children understand the country. Schools may help young children recognise HKSAR as a part of the country, and acquire an initial understanding of the country and the Chinese culture, thereby developing a sense of national identity. As for international schools and other private schools offering solely non-local curricula, they may, in light of their own circumstances and students' background, flexibly adopt strategies and devise appropriate teaching contents and learning activities, so that students of different ethnicities or nationalities can learn about the culture and history of the country where they live, and respect that the national flag, national emblem and national anthem are symbols and signs of the country they are in. At the same time, this can also enhance the sense of national identity among the local students of these schools.

#### Information on national flag, national emblem, national anthem and regional flag

13. For brief descriptions of the national flag, national emblem, national anthem and regional flag, please visit the website of the Protocol Division of the Government Secretariat ([www.protocol.gov.hk/en/flags.html](http://www.protocol.gov.hk/en/flags.html)). For teaching resources on understanding the national flag, national emblem, national anthem and regional flag, please visit the webpage of the MCNE Section of the EDB ([www.edb.gov.hk/en/nationalsymbols](http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/nationalsymbols)).



#### Raising and lowering of national flag and regional flag

14. Schools should note the proper way of raising and lowering the national flag and regional flag, and ensure that the flags are always in good condition. For points to note when conducting a national flag raising ceremony and other relevant information, please follow the regulations as stipulated in the amended NFNEO and the RFREO, and visit the “Getting to Know the National Flag, the National Emblem, the National Anthem and the Regional Flag” theme-based resources webpage ([www.edb.gov.hk/en/nationalsymbols](http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/nationalsymbols)).



15. For further information on the daily display of the national flag and the weekly conduct of a national flag raising ceremony as required under the amended NFNEO, please refer to the Frequently Asked Questions and Answers on National Flag, National Emblem, National Anthem and Regional Flag, which can be accessed via the following path:

EDB Homepage ([www.edb.gov.hk](http://www.edb.gov.hk)) > School Administration and Management > Administration > [About School](#)



16. This circular supersedes Circular No. 9/2020 dated 18 June 2020.

### **Enquiries**

17. For enquiries, please contact the respective Senior School Development Officer or Senior Service Officer.

Dr Verena LAU  
for Secretary for Education

## Learning and Teaching Resources on National Flag, National Emblem, National Anthem and Regional Flag

More learning and teaching resources on the national flag, national emblem, national anthem and regional flag will be uploaded to the EDB website. For details, please check out the following webpages or scan the QR codes on the right.

Learning and teaching resources	Brief description	QR code
Web-based Resource Platform “National Education One-stop Portal”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● This platform provides teachers and students with a one-stop solution to access the teacher professional development programmes, reading materials, video clips and online games related to the Constitution, Basic Law and national security education, as well as the national flag, national emblem and national anthem.</li> <li>● Website: <a href="http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/neosp">http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/neosp</a></li> </ul>	
“Getting to Know the National Flag, the National Emblem, the National Anthem and the Regional Flag”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● This web page provides learning and teaching resources, including brief descriptions of the national flag, national emblem, national anthem, and regional flag as well as points to note while the national flag and regional flag are being displayed in schools, relevant information and useful links.</li> <li>● Website: <a href="http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/nationalsymbols">http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/nationalsymbols</a></li> </ul>	
Infographics Series: the National Flag, the National Emblem, the National Anthem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● This collection aims to give students an easy-to-understand overview of the origin and spirit of the national flag, national emblem, and national anthem.</li> <li>● Video: <a href="https://www.edb.gov.hk/en/nationalsymbols_infographics">https://www.edb.gov.hk/en/nationalsymbols_infographics</a></li> </ul>	
Examples of Learning and Teaching Strategies / Learning Activities on the National Anthem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The learning elements related to the national anthem are included in the curriculum of kindergarten education, General Studies for primary level, Chinese History and Liberal Studies/Citizenship and Social Development for secondary level, Music for primary and secondary levels, as well as MCNE. Teachers are provided with teaching strategies/examples of learning on the national</li> </ul>	

<b>Learning and teaching resources</b>	<b>Brief description</b>	<b>QR code</b>
	<p>anthem. Students could gain knowledge of the national anthem, develop a sense of national identity and show full respect to our country.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Website: <a href="http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/NA_samples">www.edb.gov.hk/en/NA_samples</a></li> </ul>	
<p>Audio Picture Book “Our National Flag, National Anthem and Regional Flag”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● This resource, in the form of an audio picture book, brings out the importance of respecting the national flag, national anthem and regional flag, and also the necessary etiquette and attitude during the raising of the flags, as well as the playing and singing of the national anthem when celebration activities are being held on important days and special occasions.</li> <li>● Video: <a href="https://emm.edcity.hk/media/1_mh1zs4tu">https://emm.edcity.hk/media/1_mh1zs4tu</a></li> </ul>	
<p>Audio Picture Book “The Display of the National Flag and the Regional Flag”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● This resource, in the form of an audio picture book, aims to enable students to understand the knowledge and the proper way to display the national flag and regional flag so as to raise their awareness of the national symbols as well as cultivate in them a sense of belonging towards the country.</li> <li>● Video: <a href="https://emm.edcity.hk/media/1_yyqhr3da">https://emm.edcity.hk/media/1_yyqhr3da</a></li> </ul>	
<p>“Little National Affairs Experts” Interactive Quiz Game Resource Pack (Chinese version only)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The resource pack introduces quiz games by phases to help students of different key stages to learn about the Constitution, the Basic Law, national security, the national flag, national emblem, national anthem and regional flag in a relaxing and interesting atmosphere so that they can deepen their understanding of our country and develop a sense of national identity.</li> <li>● Website: <a href="https://www.edb.gov.hk/ne">https://www.edb.gov.hk/ne</a></li> </ul>	
<p>Educational Video “The Symbols of our Nation and Hong Kong SAR: the National Flag, the National Anthem and the Regional Flag”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● This resource, in the form of a video, brings out the importance of respecting the symbols of our nation and Hong Kong SAR – the national flag, national anthem and regional flag. The video introduces the history, spirit, musical features and standard scores of the national anthem, as well as the design and meaning of the national flag and regional flag.</li> <li>● Video: <a href="https://emm.edcity.hk/media/1_xeue6mgg">https://emm.edcity.hk/media/1_xeue6mgg</a></li> </ul>	