

5 May 2026

Education Bureau Circular No. 4/2026
Composite Support Grant for Non-Chinese Speaking Students

[Note: This circular should be read by

- (a) Supervisors and Heads of all government schools, aided schools (including special schools), caput schools and Direct Subsidy Scheme schools offering the local curriculum - for necessary action; and
- (b) Heads of sections - for information.]

Summary

This circular informs all government schools, aided schools (including special schools), caput schools and schools under the Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS schools) offering the local curriculum of the integration of the existing Additional Funding for Enhancing Support for Learning and Teaching Chinese for Non-Chinese Speaking Students and the Grant for Supporting Non-Chinese Speaking Students with Special Educational Needs, renamed as the “Composite Support Grant for Non-Chinese Speaking Students” (hereafter referred to as “Composite Support Grant”) starting from the 2026/27 school year and sets out the principles on its use and other relevant details. This circular supersedes the Education Bureau (EDB) Circular No. 8/2020 on “New Funding Arrangements for Enhancing Support for Learning and Teaching Chinese for Non-Chinese Speaking Students” dated 26 June 2020, EDB Circular No. 8/2014 on “Enhanced Chinese Learning and Teaching for Non-Chinese Speaking Students” dated 5 June 2014, and EDB Circular No. 9/2019 on “Grant for Supporting Non-Chinese Speaking Students with Special Educational Needs” dated 29 March 2019.

Background

“Additional Funding for Enhancing Support for Learning and Teaching Chinese for Non-Chinese Speaking Students”

2. EDB has all along been enhancing the measures to support effective learning of Chinese for non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students¹ and create an inclusive learning environment in schools. Starting from the 2020/21 school year, the scope of beneficiary schools of the Additional Funding for Enhancing Support for Learning and Teaching Chinese for Non-Chinese Speaking Students has been extended to include all public sector ordinary schools², special schools and DSS schools offering the local curriculum admitting NCS students.

¹ For the planning of educational support measures, students whose spoken language at home is not Chinese are broadly categorised as NCS students.

² Public sector ordinary schools include government schools, aided schools and caput schools, but exclude Caritas Chan Chun Ha Field Studies Centre, Ho Koon Nature Education cum Astronomical Centre and Arts & Technology Education Centre.

“Grant for Supporting Non-Chinese Speaking Students with Special Educational Needs”

3. To further support NCS students with special educational needs (SEN) to adapt to school life and make smooth transition through different learning stages, starting from the 2019/20 school year, EDB has been providing the Grant for Supporting Non-Chinese Speaking Students with Special Educational Needs to public sector ordinary schools and DSS schools offering the local curriculum admitting NCS students with SEN.

Overview

4. The target beneficiaries and usage of the existing Additional Funding for Enhancing Support for Learning and Teaching Chinese for Non-Chinese Speaking Students and Grant for Supporting Non-Chinese Speaking Students with Special Educational Needs are similar. Both of them aim at supporting NCS students in learning Chinese, as well as facilitating their early adaptation to the local education system and school life. To enhance the flexibility, effectiveness and synergy of resource utilisation in schools, as well as to streamline school administrative work, the two aforementioned funding will be integrated into the Composite Support Grant starting from the 2026/27 school year. The funding model will also be optimised to provide schools with more stable provision, allowing schools to plan and flexibly deploy their resources.

5. Under the optimised arrangements, public sector ordinary schools, special schools, and DSS schools offering the local curriculum admitting NCS students will be provided with the Composite Support Grant. The grant is applicable to NCS students pursuing the local curriculum in aforementioned schools. Schools may, with reference to their school-based circumstances and the diverse learning needs of NCS students, flexibly deploy the grant to provide NCS students (including NCS students with SEN) with more holistic support, facilitating their learning of Chinese and creation of an inclusive learning environment in schools.

Details

Grant Rate

6. The Composite Support Grant consists of three components: the baseline provision, the additional provision and the enrichment provision.

(i) The Baseline Provision

7. Starting from the 2026/27 school year, schools will be provided with a two-tiered baseline provision based on the number of NCS students admitted. Details are as follows:

Public sector ordinary schools and DSS schools offering the local curriculum

Number of NCS students³	Full-year provision of the baseline provision for each school (\$)
1 to 9	230,000
10 or more	710,000

Special schools

Number of NCS students	Full-year provision of the baseline provision for each school (\$)
1 to 5	230,000
6 or more	710,000

8. The amount of the baseline provision will be adjusted in line with the annual Civil Service Pay Adjustment on a school year basis to facilitate schools' appointment of additional teaching/supporting staff. Any future adjustments to the amount of the baseline provision (if applicable) will be announced on EDB's dedicated webpage on education services for NCS students.

(ii) The Additional Provision

9. Apart from the baseline provision, public sector ordinary schools and DSS schools offering the local curriculum admitting 11 or more NCS students, and special schools admitting 10 or more NCS students and with NCS students taking an ordinary school curriculum will be provided with the additional provision based on the number of NCS students. Details are as follows:

School type	The number of NCS students for calculating the total provision of the additional provision	Full-year provision of the additional provision for each NCS student (\$)
Public sector ordinary schools and DSS schools offering the local curriculum ³	From the 11th student, capped at the 200th	5,000
Special schools with NCS students taking an ordinary school curriculum	From the 10th student, capped at the 200th	

³ For DSS schools offering both local and non-local curricula, its number of eligible NCS students includes only those taking the local curriculum.

(iii) The Enrichment Provision

10. For public sector ordinary schools and DSS schools offering the local curriculum³, if there are students with SEN among the eligible NCS students admitted, the enrichment provision will be provided at \$10,000 for each NCS student with SEN per school year, capped at the 50th such student.

Ambit

11. The Composite Support Grant should be used to strengthen the support for learning of Chinese for NCS students (including NCS students with SEN) and create an inclusive learning environment in schools. All schools provided with the Composite Support Grant are required to assign a dedicated teacher/team to coordinate matters relating to support for NCS students' learning of Chinese and the creation of an inclusive learning environment in schools to ensure that teachers and staff understand school policies and measures on supporting NCS students (including NCS students with SEN), to raise their cultural sensitivity, and support all NCS students to adapt to school life and make smooth transition through different learning stages. In addition to main classroom learning, schools can deploy the Composite Support Grant to provide other school-based complementary measures, such as arranging Chinese bridging programmes or Chinese remedial programmes after school hours and during holidays, strengthening communication with parents of NCS students and home-school cooperation, etc.

12. **Schools admitting a relatively small number of NCS students** (i.e. 1 to 9 NCS students for public sector ordinary schools and DSS schools offering the local curriculum, and 1 to 5 NCS students for special schools) are required to assess their NCS students' needs in learning Chinese timely. In tandem, they can optimise the use of their immersed Chinese language environment and implement the "Chinese Language Curriculum Second Language Learning Framework" ("Learning Framework")/the "Chinese Language Curriculum Second Language Adapted Learning Framework (for NCS Students with Intellectual Disabilities)" ("Adapted Framework")/adopt the "Chinese Language Assessment Tools for NCS students" ("Assessment Tools") and diversified school-based assessment methods as appropriate, with a view to setting appropriate learning targets for students and planning the support to cater for their learning needs. With reference to their school-based circumstances, schools may deploy the grant to appoint additional teaching/supporting staff, procure professional services and learning and teaching resources, and provide NCS students with additional in-class support (such as implementing pull-out learning and split-class/group learning in some of the Chinese Language lessons as appropriate) and/or after-school Chinese learning support.

13. **Schools admitting a relatively large number of NCS students** (i.e. 10 or more NCS students for public sector ordinary schools and DSS schools offering the local curriculum, and 6 or more NCS students for special schools with NCS students taking an ordinary school curriculum) are required to assess their NCS students' needs in learning Chinese timely and, based on the Learning Framework, adopt the Assessment Tools, which are in conjunction with the Learning Framework, to assess the learning performance of students each school year. They should also make reference to the expected learning outcomes at different learning levels

as set out in the Learning Framework and adopt a “small-step” progressive learning approach to set appropriate learning targets and plan the support for students. This includes adopting appropriate teaching strategies and learning and teaching materials, and arranging additional manpower to adopt diversified intensive learning and teaching modes (such as pull-out learning, split-class/group learning, increasing Chinese Language lesson time, co-teaching, learning Chinese across the curriculum, after-school consolidation, etc.) as appropriate according to the learning needs of students, with a view to helping students learn Chinese systematically.

14. Special schools that admit 6 or more NCS students, and in which NCS students taking the special school curriculum should make reference to the Adapted Framework in setting appropriate learning targets for students, planning school-based curriculum and developing appropriate teaching materials to support their learning of Chinese. Besides, schools should use diversified school-based assessment methods and adopt the Assessment Tools flexibly based on students’ learning performance and school-based circumstances to keep track of the students’ learning progress and learning outcomes, with a view to assessing their learning effectiveness, providing effective feedback and planning appropriate support for the students.

15. Schools should be committed to creating an inclusive learning environment in schools, including strengthening the emotional, communication and social support for NCS students with SEN, and maintaining close communication and collaboration with parents of NCS students. Schools may deploy part of the grant to organise diversified cultural activities, appoint supporting staff of different races or procure translation services (such as translating school circulars or important matters on their school webpages), etc. as appropriate, with a view to encouraging NCS students to master the Chinese language through home-school cooperation. Besides, schools should strengthen professional training for teachers to enhance their professional capability for teaching NCS students and their cultural and religious sensitivity in taking care of NCS students.

Submission of NCS Students’ Information

16. The policy generally supports students of different races who learn Chinese as a second language (i.e. students whose spoken language at home is not Chinese) and take the local curriculum in schools. Schools are required to complete and return the form on “Estimated Number of Eligible NCS Students and NCS Students with SEN in the New School Year” (template of the form will be provided to schools by EDB) by the end of July each year. In addition, schools should submit via CloudSAMS accurate information of all students (including information of NCS students verified by schools) as at the reference date specified in the Enrolment Survey (usually in mid-September)⁴. Besides, schools are required to update and submit relevant information of the students with SEN (including NCS students with SEN) via the “Special Education Management Information System” (SEMIS) by the end of November each year after obtaining parental consent.

⁴ Provision of the Composite Support Grant for DSS schools will be determined by the number of NCS students admitted as at the end of September each year.

17. Schools are required to collect as early as possible information of the students concerned (including their spoken language at home, ethnicity, etc.) from parents, verify such information and update the relevant information of the NCS students on CloudSAMS. Schools are required to inform parents of the purpose of collecting the information, as well as the principles on providing additional support for NCS students' learning of Chinese and the relevant measures. In case a special case is identified when verifying the relevant information, e.g. parents of an ethnic Chinese student report that the student's spoken language at home is not Chinese, schools are required to look into the reasons and obtain relevant information where necessary so as to examine whether the case is in line with the intent and principles of the policy. Where necessary, schools are required to provide EDB with information about such special cases.

Disbursement Arrangements

18. EDB will disburse in advance the baseline provision⁵ to schools in August each year at the earliest according to the estimated number of eligible NCS students reported by schools. Subsequently, EDB will calculate the total amount of the Composite Support Grant each eligible school should be provided with in the school year based on the actual number of NCS students (including information of NCS students verified by schools) in the Enrolment Survey conducted in September each year as at the reference date specified therein (usually in mid-September)⁴ and the actual number of verified NCS students with SEN among them, and disburse the additional provision and/or the enrichment provision (if applicable) in April of the following year according to the actual number of NCS students. In case of a difference between the estimated number of NCS students reported by schools and the findings of the Enrolment Survey to the extent that the amount of the baseline provision has to be adjusted, EDB will disburse or claw back the difference concerned in April of the following year. For key issues and workflow regarding the disbursement of the Composite Support Grant, please refer to the [Annex](#).

Accounting and Financial Arrangements

19. As the Composite Support Grant is a purpose-specific grant, schools must ensure it is used for supporting NCS students' learning of Chinese and the creation of an inclusive learning environment in schools. Schools are required to manage their financial expenditure in a prudent manner, and keep income and expenditure records and related receipts and invoices for not less than seven years for inspections by EDB when necessary. In addition, aided schools (including special schools), caput schools and DSS schools are required to compile a separate ledger account for the Composite Support Grant to properly record income and expenditure items chargeable to the grant, adhere to the requirements regarding the submission of annual audited accounts set out in the relevant EDB circular memoranda and letters (and the annexes therein to prepare ledger accounts and annual accounts), and submit the annual audited accounts to EDB in accordance with the prevailing requirements. Otherwise, EDB may request the

⁵ As some schools may need more time to process information of newly admitted NCS students, the baseline provision will be disbursed to those schools after commencement of the new school year in September.

school concerned to refund to the Government the full amount of the grant disbursed. Government schools should charge the expenditure to a designated account in accordance with the prevailing financial guide; the grant concerned will be disbursed in the form of budget allocation and financial year-based, and the expenditure should not exceed the allocation.

20. The Composite Support Grant is complementary in nature. Schools may, based on their needs, flexibly deploy and make appropriate use of other government funding, including the Operating Expenses Block Grant/Expanded Operating Expenses Block Grant (for aided schools), Fee Subsidy (for caput schools), DSS subsidy (for DSS schools), Expanded Subject and Curriculum Block Grant (for government schools), Learning Support Grant (for supporting NCS students with SEN) and other resources (such as schools' own funds/non-government funds, and various education subsidy schemes provided by the Government or other community organisations), to achieve synergy from a complementary use of funds.

Surplus Retention and Clawback Arrangement

21. Schools should optimise the use of the Composite Support Grant disbursed each school year to provide timely support to the NCS students for the respective school year. Therefore, in principle, schools should not accumulate a substantial surplus. However, as schools may need to gain experience of supporting NCS students and NCS students with SEN, and adjust the support strategies and modes to meet the needs of various NCS students, they may retain part of the grant, with the accumulated surplus level capped at the total provision of the grant for the school year. Any surplus in excess should be returned to EDB. Based on schools' annual audited accounts, EDB will claw back any surplus in excess. Transfer of funds or unspent balance out of the Composite Support Grant to other accounts is not allowed. In principle, the arrangements for government schools are the same as those for aided schools, caput schools and DSS schools, except that the grant is financial year-based. Government schools may carry forward their surplus not exceeding the cap (i.e. the total provision of the grant for the financial year) to the next financial year. Any surplus in excess will lapse at the end of the financial year.

22. As for any unspent balances of the Additional Funding for Enhancing Support for Learning and Teaching Chinese for Non-Chinese Speaking Students and Grant for Supporting Non-Chinese Speaking Students with Special Educational Needs by the end of 2025/26 school year (i.e. as at 31 August 2026) (if any), schools can retain an amount not exceeding the provision of relevant grants received in the 2025/26 school year. The unspent balances may continue to be used in the 2026/27 school year in accordance with the established principles and requirements of the grants concerned. Schools are not required to complete additional school plans and school reports for the original grants. Nevertheless, the unspent balances must remain in the original ledgers and should not be transferred to the new ledger of the Composite Support Grant and/or other ledgers. At the end of the 2026/27 school year (as at 31 August 2027), aided schools (including special schools), caput schools and DSS schools should return any unspent balances of the Additional Funding for Enhancing Support for Learning and Teaching Chinese for Non-Chinese Speaking Students and Grant for Supporting Non-Chinese Speaking Students with Special Educational Needs to EDB according to the

annual audited accounts. For government schools, any unspent balances of the above two grants will lapse on 31 March 2027.

Evaluation and Accountability

23. As in the past, schools are required to observe the relevant circulars and guidelines on the use of public funds as issued by EDB when using the Composite Support Grant and be accountable for its use. In line with the principle of school-based management, schools receiving the Composite Support Grant are required to prepare the “Plan on the Use of the Composite Support Grant for NCS Students” (“Plan”) of the respective school year based on the stipulated objectives of the Composite Support Grant. The Plan shall be submitted to the respective Incorporated Management Committee/School Management Committee for endorsement and subsequently submitted to EDB by the end of November of the corresponding school year. To streamline school administrative work, template of the Plan will be provided to schools by EDB. Starting from the 2027/28 school year, the Plan includes reviewing the implementation and effectiveness of measures supporting NCS students (including NCS students with SEN) in the preceding school year and elucidating specific planning of the use of the Composite Support Grant and relevant support measures for the following school year. Schools may extract relevant parts related to school-based support measures of the preceding school year from the aforementioned Plan for the summary, and are required to upload a bilingual summary in both Chinese and English to the school website by the end of November each year for parents’ reference⁶. Schools should create an icon or provide a simple message in English in a prominent position on the homepage of their school webpages to facilitate parents in browsing the relevant information.

24. EDB will monitor schools’ use of the Composite Support Grant through various means, including examining the Plan and conducting professional dialogues and supervisory visits to provide schools with professional advice and support. EDB will also collect the views of schools’ major stakeholders through questionnaire surveys for reviewing the implementation of the support measures.

25. To enhance transparency of schools’ deployment of the Composite Support Grant to provide parents of NCS students with more comprehensive information on making school choices, as usual, schools provided with the Composite Support Grant are required to specify the schools’ additional support measures for enhancing NCS students’ learning of Chinese and the creation of an inclusive learning environment in schools, and providing emotional, communication and social support for NCS students with SEN in a separate column on “Education Support for NCS Students” and “Whole School Approach to Integrated Education” (if applicable) in the School Profiles. EDB encourages schools to keep disseminating relevant information through diversified channels, such as enriching the content of the School Profiles

⁶ Schools provided with the Additional Funding for Enhancing Support for Learning and Teaching Chinese for Non-Chinese Speaking Students in the 2025/26 school year are required to provide a bilingual school support summary in both Chinese and English on or before 30 November 2026, elucidating how they have supported NCS students’ learning of Chinese and created an inclusive learning environment in schools in the 2025/26 school year. The summary should be uploaded to their school webpages for parents’ reference. Schools should create an icon or provide a simple message in English in a prominent position on the homepage of their school webpages to facilitate parents in browsing the relevant information.

and school webpages, creating a prominent icon on the homepage of their school webpages directing to the English version of the School Profiles, or providing information of contact persons who are able to communicate in English/other languages so as to facilitate parents of NCS students in making enquiries and obtaining relevant information.

Briefing Sessions

26. EDB will organise briefing sessions on the Composite Support Grant for schools in May 2026. For details and enrolment of the briefing sessions, please refer to the [Training Calendar System](https://tcs.edb.gov.hk) of EDB (Website: <https://tcs.edb.gov.hk>) (Course ID: ECP020260014).



Enquiries

27. The latest information about the Composite Support Grant, guidelines on its use, and template of the Plan will be uploaded to the [dedicated webpage on education services for NCS students of EDB](https://www.edb.gov.hk/ncs) (Website: <https://www.edb.gov.hk/ncs>) timely.



28. For enquiries, please contact EDB:

Composite Support Grant (baseline provision and additional provision) : Non-Chinese Speaking Student Support and Education Commission Section (Team 1)
3509 8560 / 3509 7554 / 3509 8565
(for public sector ordinary schools and DSS schools offering the local curriculum and admitting 10 or more NCS students, and special schools admitting 6 or more NCS students)

Non-Chinese Speaking Student Support and Education Commission Section (Team 2)
3509 8569 / 3509 8572
(for public sector ordinary schools and DSS schools offering the local curriculum and admitting 1 to 9 NCS students, and special schools admitting 1 to 5 NCS students)

Composite Support Grant (enrichment provision) : Special Education Support 3 Section
3698 3732 (primary schools)

Special Education Support 4 Section
2307 0401 (secondary schools)

Chinese Language curriculum : Chinese Language Education Section
2892 5893 (primary schools and secondary schools)

Special Educational Needs Section
2892 6524 / 2892 6418 (special schools)

Cliff HUI
for Permanent Secretary for Education

Key Issues and Workflow Regarding the Disbursement of the Composite Support Grant for Non-Chinese Speaking Students

Period	Key issue
By end of July	<u>Submission of information</u> Schools are required to submit the completed form on “Estimated Number of Eligible Non-Chinese Speaking (NCS) Students and NCS Students with Special Educational Needs (SEN) in the New School Year”.
July to September	<u>Collection, verification and update of students’ information</u> - Schools are required to collect as early as possible information of the students concerned (including their spoken language at home, ethnicity, etc.) from parents, inform parents of the purpose of collecting the information, as well as the principles on providing additional support for NCS students’ learning of Chinese and the relevant measures. - Schools are required to verify and update the relevant information of the NCS students on CloudSAMS. Where necessary, schools are required to provide the Education Bureau (EDB) with information about special cases. - Schools are required to submit accurate information of all students (including information of NCS students verified by schools) as at the reference date specified in the Enrolment Survey (usually in mid-September)¹ via CloudSAMS.
August to December	<u>Disbursement of baseline provision</u> EDB will disburse the baseline provision to schools in August each year at the earliest according to the estimated number of eligible NCS students in the new school year submitted by schools. As some schools may need more time to communicate with parents of newly admitted NCS students to collect and verify these students’ information, the baseline provision will be disbursed to those schools after commencement of the new school year in September.

¹ Provision of the Composite Support Grant for NCS Students for schools under the Direct Subsidy Scheme will be determined by the number of NCS students admitted as at the end of September each year.

Period	Key issue
By end of November	<u>Submission of “Plan on the Use of the Composite Support Grant for NCS Students”</u> Schools are required to submit the “Plan on the Use of the Composite Support Grant for NCS Students” endorsed by their Incorporated Management Committees/School Management Committees. <u>Submission of information of NCS students with SEN</u> Upon obtaining parental consent, schools are required to update and submit the information of students with SEN (including NCS students with SEN) via the “Special Education Management Information System” (SEMIS).
April of the following year	<u>Disbursement of additional provision and enrichment provision (if applicable)/adjustment to baseline provision (if any)</u> EDB will disburse the additional provision and/or enrichment provision to eligible schools (if applicable) and disburse or claw back the amount of the baseline provision (if any) according to the actual number of NCS students (including information of NCS students verified by schools) as at the reference date specified in the Enrolment Survey (usually in mid-September)¹ and the actual number of verified NCS students with SEN (if any) among the NCS students.
September (for secondary schools)/ May of the following year (for primary schools)	<u>Update of School Profiles and information on school support measures</u> - Schools are required to specify the schools’ additional support measures for enhancing NCS students’ learning of Chinese and the creation of an inclusive learning environment in schools as well as providing emotional, communication and social support for the NCS students with SEN in the column “Education Support for NCS Students” and “Whole School Approach to Integrated Education”, if applicable, in the School Profiles. - Schools may provide both the Chinese and English versions of their webpages, create a prominent icon on the homepage of their school webpages directing to the English version of the School Profiles, or provide information of contact persons who are able to communicate in English/other languages so as to facilitate parents of NCS students in making enquiries or obtaining relevant information.

Period	Key issue
By end of November of the following year	<u>Upload of school support summary to school webpages</u> Starting from the 2027/28 school year, schools are required to upload to their school webpages a bilingual school support summary in both Chinese and English for parents' reference. The summary elucidates how the schools have supported NCS students' learning of Chinese and created an inclusive learning environment in schools as well as how the schools have provided emotional, communication and social support for the NCS students with SEN in the preceding school year.²

² For schools provided with the Additional Funding for Enhancing Support for Learning and Teaching Chinese for Non-Chinese Speaking Students in the 2025/26 school year, they are required to upload to their school webpages a bilingual school support summary in both Chinese and English on or before 30 November 2026 for parents' reference. The summary elucidates how the schools have supported NCS students' learning of Chinese and created an inclusive learning environment in schools in the 2025/26 school year.