Education Bureau Circular Memorandum No. 71/2018

From: Permanent Secretary for Education

To: Heads of Government, Aided (including Special Schools), Caput and Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS) Schools

Ref: EDB(EID/ITE)/IT/PRO/247/4

Date: 28 May 2018

**Community Care Fund Assistance Programme –
Provision of Subsidy to Needy Primary and Secondary Students for
Purchasing Mobile Computer Devices to Facilitate the Practice of e-Learning
(Assistance Programme)**

Summary

This circular memorandum informs schools of the details regarding the captioned programme.   Schools which will implement "Bring Your Own Device" (BYOD) for e-learning in the 2018/19 school year are invited to participate in the programme.

Background

2.   The Education Bureau (EDB) has launched the Fourth Strategy on Information Technology in Education in the 2015/16 school year for using IT to enhance the effectiveness of learning and teaching.   One of the key measures is to establish WiFi campus for all public sector schools by phases to facilitate e-learning through the use of mobile computer devices.   Relevant works would be basically completed in the 2017/18 school year.   Schools have been positive towards implementing e-learning and using mobile computer devices for learning and teaching.   A number of schools have adopted the BYOD policy to further exploit the advantages of using mobile computer devices in learning.   As the development of BYOD may create financial burden on students from low-income families, the Community Care Fund (CCF) will implement the Assistance Programme, starting from the 2018/19 school year for three years, to subsidise needy primary and secondary students studying in public sector schools to purchase mobile computer devices to facilitate the practice of e-learning.

Details

3.   Since schools are at different stages of e-learning and would have their own policy and time-table for implementing BYOD, schools could participate in the Assistance Programme in any year during the three years' implementation period starting from the 2018/19 school year.

Eligible beneficiaries

4.   The beneficiaries of the Assistance Programme must fulfill the following requirements:

      (i)   studying in government, aided (including special schools), caput, Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS) primary or secondary schools; and receiving Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) from the Social Welfare Department or full grant/half grant of the School Textbook Assistance Scheme from the Student Finance Office of the Working Family and Student Financial Assistance Agency; and

      (ii)   studying in schools and classes implementing e-learning and adopting BYOD.

Use of subsidy

5.   The funding could be used to cover the cost of the following items:
    (i)   the mobile computer device;
    (ii) a mobile device management system to be installed on the device;
    (iii) basic accessories, depending on the needs for learning, may include screen shield, protective cover, detachable keyboard, stylus pen and mouse; and
    (iv) three-year warranty.

Level of subsidy

6.   For students receiving CSSA/full grant, subsidy will be provided to cover the full cost of the device and the items mentioned in paragraph 5 above.   In the first year of the Assistance Programme, the maximum subsidy for each student is $4,500.   In other words, the subsidy provided is the actual cost of the items or

$4,500, whichever is lower. For students receiving half grant, the subsidy provided is half of the actual cost of the items up to $2,250.   The maximum level of subsidy will be adjusted annually according to the movement of the Composite Consumer Price Index.

7.   During the three-year implementation period, each eligible student can receive the subsidy once for purchase of a mobile computer device which will be owned by the student. The subsidy cannot be put to other uses. When a student beneficiary is promoted to a secondary school or has changed to a new school using a different device and the original device could not meet the learning needs in the new school, the beneficiary could then be provided an additional subsidy for purchasing a new device. In such case, the student concerned is required to return the used device to the original school which may then use the device for teaching or on loan to other needy students transferred in during the school year.

Disbursement Arrangements

8.   When implementing BYOD, it has been a common practice that schools would determine the device specifications according to their pedagogical design, use of e-learning tools and resources, students' learning needs as well as parents' affordability.   To ensure students could acquire a suitable device as required, the subsidy will be disbursed to participating schools for purchasing the devices for their students.

9.   Schools that will implement BYOD in the 2018/19 school year are invited to participate in the Assistance Programme by completing the attached Application Form **(Annex)** and returning it to the EDB on or before **9 July 2018**. The EDB will disburse provisional funding to schools by the end of August 2018 according to their estimated number of eligible students provided in the Application Form.

10.   By the end of February 2019, the EDB will collect information from schools on the details of devices purchased and student beneficiaries for funding adjustment.   If the actual number of benefitted students is more than the estimated number of students provided in the Application Form, supplementary funding will be disbursed to cover the deficit in April 2019.   After February 2019, schools may also apply for further funding adjustment if schools need to

acquire extra devices for other eligible students admitted during the school year. Detailed arrangements of further funding adjustment will be issued under a separate cover in due course.

11.   For schools wishing to participate in the programme in the 2018/19 school year but could not meet the application deadline of 9 July 2018, they should submit their applications no later than the end of February 2019 so that funding could be disbursed in April 2019 as mentioned in paragraph 10.

Accounting Arrangements

12.   Participating schools should validate the balance at the end of the school year for returning any surplus, which could not be carried forward to the next school year.   In this regards, the EDB will claw back any surplus at the end of the school year, based on the financial report provided by the school.

13.   The relevant funding for the Assistance Programme should be deployed for the specific purpose and participating schools should compile a separate ledger for it.   Schools are also required to keep records, including original official receipts and related documents.   In addition to the amount of expenditure, the list of benefitted students and the expenditure items should be provided to the EDB for audit purposes.   Aided (including special schools), caput and DSS schools should observe the requirements as stipulated in the relevant circulars and letters calling for preparation and submission of audited annual accounts.   For government schools, the funding will be disbursed in the form of an allocation. The expenditure should be charged to a designated account and should not exceed the allocation in the respective financial year.   Any unspent balance of the allocation will lapse in the respective financial year.   In case of deficit as a result of the unit cost of the device being higher than the maximum level of subsidy, schools should use non-government funding to cover the deficit.   All schools should refer to the prevailing ordinances, regulations and circulars in handling matters related to procurement of goods and services and handling of accounts, etc.

Application

14.   Interested schools are requested to submit the completed Application Form by mail to the following address or by fax (Fax no.: 2382 4403):

Information Technology in Education Section
Education Bureau
Rm E420, 4/F, East Block
EDB Kowloon Tong Education Services Centre
19 Suffolk Road, Kowloon Tong, Kowloon

Briefing sessions

15.   We will organise three identical briefing sessions on the Assistance Programme on (i) 5 June 2018, am; (ii) 5 June 2018, pm; and (iii) 7 June 2018, am.   Schools are invited to nominate a maximum of two representatives to attend the briefing sessions and enroll through the Training Calendar System (TCS) [Course ID: EI0020180261].

Enquiry

16.   Schools can visit the website http://www.edb.gov.hk/ited/ccfap to obtain more information including relevant reference documents and professional development programmes.   For enquiries, please contact the IT in Education Section at 3698 3670.

(Y T LAU)
for Permanent Secretary for Education

c.c. Heads of Sections – for information

Community Care Fund Assistance Programme – Provision of Subsidy to Needy Primary and Secondary Students for Purchasing Mobile Computer Devices to Facilitate the Practice of e-Learning (Assistance Programme)

Application Form (2018/19)
(Please return this Application Form to EDB <u>on or before 9 July 2018</u> by mail or by fax)

To: IT in Education Section, Education Bureau
      (Fax: 2382 4403)

My school will implement "Bring Your Own Device" (BYOD) for e-learning in the 2018/19 school year and would like to apply for the Assistance Programme, in accordance with the requirements stated in the Education Bureau Circular Memorandum No. 71/2018.   Details are as follows:
*(Please fill in all information in block letter, put a ✓ in the appropriate box and delete whichever is inapplicable where marked with *)*

Part A: School Particulars

School Name: _____

School Code: ☐☐☐☐☐☐

School Type: ☐ Primary   ☐ Secondary   ☐ Special

Finance Type: ☐ Government   ☐ Aided   ☐ Caput
                              ☐ Direct Subsidy Scheme

School Contact: Tel:_____ Fax:_____ Email: _____

Address: _____

Teacher In-charge: Name (English) : *Mr/Ms _____
                              Name (Chinese): _____ Post Title: _____
                              Tel: _____ Email：_____

Part B: Implementation Details

(1) My school will implement BYOD for e-learning in the 2018/19 school year and has conducted the following(s)
   (Please put a ✓ in the appropriate box, and more than one option can be selected)

   ☐My school has advised parents to acquire mobile computer device for students to conduct e-learning in my school via the following channel(s):
      ☐ 2018/19 Textbook list   ☐ School Circular/School Letter
      ☐ School Website   ☐ Others *(Please specify)*_____
   ☐My school has established "Acceptable Use Policy"[1] for students' use of mobile computer devices in learning.

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[1] "Acceptable Use Policy" is a policy for governing students' use of mobile computer device, wireless network and information, listing out acceptable and unacceptable acts.

(2) The estimated number of eligible students for participating in the Assistance Programme in the 2018/19 school year:

2018/19				
Level	No. of Classes Implementing BYOD	Estimated No. of Eligible Students		
		Receiving Comprehensive Social Security Assistance	Receiving **Full** Grant of the School Textbook Assistance Scheme	Receiving **Half** Grant of the School Textbook Assistance Scheme
Total				

(3) The BYOD implementation plan of my school in the following school years:
(for the EDB's reference in planning future support measures)

2019/20		2020/21	
Level	No. of Classes	Level	No. of Classes

Declaration: I hereby declare that all information given in this application form is accurate. I understand that if I willfully give any false information, any subsidy approved will be withheld and any payment made shall be refunded to the EDB.

Signature of Principal   : _____

Name of Principal (English)   : *Mr/Ms_____

Name of Principal (Chinese)   : _____

Date   : _____

School Chop