



# Council on Professional Conduct in Education

Newsletter Issue No. 9

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## Annual Report on the Work of The Fourth Council on Professional Conduct in Education (May 2000 to May 2001)

PUN Tin-chi, Chairman

### The Three Functions of the Council

- (I) To advise the Government on measures to promote professional conduct in education
  1. In response to the Education Commission's consultation document on the *Review of Education System: Reform Proposals* published in May 2000, views and suggestions have been submitted on the establishment of the General Teaching Council (GTC).
  2. Views have been submitted to the Director of Education on complaint cases against the conduct of school supervisors and managers.
- (II) To draft operational criteria defining the conduct expected of an educator through consultation to gain wide spread acceptance of these criteria among all sectors of education community
  1. The Chinese and English versions of the Code for the Education Profession of Hong Kong (the Code) have been uploaded to the Council's homepage [<http://www.ed.gov.hk> (Frontpage → Teachers → Council on Professional Conduct in Education → Enter) or <http://ihome.hkedcity.net/pc1994>] for publicity and promotion purposes.
  2. The Code has been distributed to newly recruited and serving teachers via the Education Department.

3. Talks and seminars on professional conduct in education have been organized for students of HKIEd and serving teachers.

(III) To advise the Director of Education on cases of disputes or alleged professional misconduct involving educators

1. The Council has handled 17 cases, of which 11 have been completed with comments with advices sent to the Director of Education. For the remaining 6 cases, the Council is still examining them or preparing the reports.
2. The “Procedures of Handling Cases” compiled by the Council is being revised.
3. In June 2000, the Council summarized the case study reports of the past three terms to serve as a reference for future examination.

**Other achievements**

1. The Council has convened 10 General Assembly meetings, 8 Executive Committee meetings, 9 Case Study Sub-committee meetings and 6 Promotion Sub-committee meetings.
2. The Council participated in the Quality Education Fund Projects Exposition held between 9 and 12 March 2001 at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre and displayed information on its visit to the GTC for Scotland. In addition, the Council also held an exhibition at the HKIEd on 15 March 2001 and roving exhibitions in 4 districts in May 2001 to promote the professional conduct of educators.
3. CPC Newsletter Issue No. 8 has been published and distributed to teachers, educational bodies and teacher education institutions. Issue No. 9 will be available in June 2001.
4. The Council launched a new webpage in March 2001, which includes links to the websites of HKEducationCity.net, the Education Department, the Hong Kong Professional Teachers’ Union and the Hong Kong Federation of Education Workers to facilitate teacher colleagues, parents and the public to search relevant information.
5. In January 2001, a sharing session was held in the Hong Kong Teachers’ Centre (North Point), in which members of the Working Group on the Study of the Continuous Development of the Professional Ethics of Primary and Secondary School Teachers under the Education Commission of Guangzhou were invited to exchange views with the Council on the professional conduct of teachers in the two regions.
6. The Council has made an application to the Quality Education Fund to conduct the Promotion Campaign on Professional Conduct in Education.

The Third Quality Education Fund Projects Exhibition  
 Visit to the General Teaching Council for Scotland,  
 Relevant Educational Organizations and Schools

Summary of Findings of the Opinion Survey Conducted  
 at the Booth of the Council on Professional Conduct in Education (9 to 12 March 2001)

(Views on the establishment of the General Teaching Council (GTC) in Hong Kong.)

Of the 331 valid questionnaires received, 252 were completed by teachers.

1. Do you agree that a GTC should be established in Hong Kong?
  - A. Yes                315    (95%)
  - B. No                 16     ( 5%)
  - C. No comment    0      (0%)
  
2. Are you willing to pay the entry fee and annual fee if required?
  - A. Yes                206    (62%)
  - B. No                 23     (7%)
  - C. No comment 102    (31%)
  
3. In your opinion, how much annual fee should be charged? (in the range of \$10 to \$500)
  - [ \$100    (42)    (13%)
  - \$200    (47)    (14%)
  - \$300    (31)    ( 9 % ) ]

(204 responded to this question and 127 did not )

4. In your opinion, which issue(s) should be handled with priority after the establishment of the GTC?  
 (Please mark 1, 2, 3, 4 in order of priority)

(273 responded to this question and 58 did not)

	No response	1	2	3	4
A. Teachers' registration	58 (17%)	62 (19%)	43 (13%)	29 (9%)	139 (42%)
B. Formulation and enforcement of the code of conduct	58 (17%)	104 (31%)	81 (25%)	67 (20%)	21 (7%)
C. Review of the teacher education programmes	58 (17%)	55 (17%)	69 (21%)	97 (29%)	52 (16%)
D. Continuous professional development of teachers	58 (18%)	52 (16%)	80 (24%)	80 (24%)	61 (18%)

## **Brief Introduction of the Case Study Sub-Committee**

TSUI Wai-chuen,  
Chairperson of the Case Study Sub-committee

The aim of the sub-committee is to refine the case study procedures (work includes examining problems arisen in the course of case study as well as the issue of setting up a disciplinary mechanism). Comprising 14 members, the sub-committee has convened 9 meetings. The following are matters handled by the sub-committee during the year and their progress:

1. With the subvention of the Education Department, the sub-committee hired two law graduates from 26 June to 25 July 2000 to summarize the case study reports of the past three terms for members' reference. The whole project has already been completed.
2. In a number of sub-committee meetings, members held discussions on the revised edition of the "Procedures of Handling Cases" and relevant documents.
3. The fourth Council has handled a total of 17 cases with 6 cases still under examination.
4. The sub-committee will set up three ad-hoc groups to study the following issues:
  - a. publicity of the findings of case studies;
  - b. establishment of a disciplinary mechanism; and
  - c. provision of additional manpower for case studies.

The Fourth Council on Professional Conduct in Education  
Promotional Seminars/Activities

The Secretariat

Date	Organizing Bodies
9.8.2000	School of Early Childhood Education of the HKIEd (Teacher Training Programme)
11.8.2000	School of Early Childhood Education of the HKIEd (Teacher Training Programme)
14.10.2000	Queen Elizabeth School Old Students' Association Kindergarten
21.10.2000	Parkview-Rhine Garden International Pre-school
25.11.2000	Tsing Yi Rural Committee Kindergarten, Tivoli Anglo-Chinese Kindergarten
6.12.2000	Diocesan Boys' School
9.12.2000	Tai Po Merchants Association Kindergarten
23.12.2000	Tseung Kwan O Methodist Kindergarten
5.1.2001	The Hong Kong Chinese of Christ the Truth Kindergarten
2.2.2001	Pui Ying Secondary School
3.2.2001	Tai Po Merchants Association Cheung Hok Ming Kindergarten (Tseung Kwan O)
24.2.2001	North Point Methodist Church Kindergarten
15.3.2001	Student Affair Office of the HKIEd (Leadership Training Programmes-seminar on the professional conduct of teachers)
7.4.2001	Department of Education Studies of the Hong Kong Baptist University
11.5.2001	Chung Sing School(AM and PM), AD & FDPOH Leung Sing Tak School(AM and PM), Wa Fung School

Council on Professional Conduct in Education  
Regional Roving Exhibitions Cum Opening Ceremony

The Secretariat

To enable educational workers, parents and the public to have a deeper understanding of the Council on Professional Conduct in Education (CPC) and to draw their attention to the development of the education profession, the CPC held roving exhibitions in four districts in May this year. The CPC wishes to involve the community to promote local educational workers' professional development and enhance their professional image.

The opening ceremony of the exhibitions, officiated by Mr. KH TONG, Deputy Director of Education, was held at 2:30 p.m. on Saturday, 5 May 2001 at the Atrium Gallery 1/F., Phase 3, New Town Plaza, Shatin, New Territories. Mr. TONG was invited to cut the ribbon at the ceremony with other guests including Mr. WAI Kwok-hung, Chairman of Shatin District Council, Mrs. Canny LAU, representative of the Committee on Home-School Co-operation, Mr. PUN Tin-chi, CPC Chairman, Mr LAM Wing-biu, CPC Vice Chairman and Mr. WU Siu-wai, Chairman of the Promotion Sub-committee of CPC. The ceremony was followed with students' performances.

The dates and locations of the four regional exhibitions are as follows:

5 & 6 May 2001	The Atrium Gallery, 1/F., Phase 3, New Town Plaza, 2-8 Shatin Centre Street, Shatin, New Territories
12 & 13 May 2001	Admiralty Station, MTR, Hong Kong
19 & 20 May 2001	Tsuen Wan Station, MTR, New Territories
26 & 27 May 2001	Kowloon Tong Station, MTR, Kowloon

Speech by Mr. TONG Kai-hong, Anthony,  
Deputy Director of Education at the Regional Roving Exhibitions  
cum Opening Ceremony of the Council on Professional Conduct in Education

Mr. Pun, distinguished guests, dear colleagues, parents, students, ladies and gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure today to attend the Regional Roving Exhibitions cum Opening Ceremony organized by the Council on Professional Conduct in Education (CPC). On behalf of the Education Department, I would like to extend our best wishes to the Council on this happy occasion.

Following the recommendation of Education Commission's Report No.5, the CPC was set up in 1994 with an aim to promote the conduct in the teaching profession. As a consultative body of the Department on the professional conduct in education, the CPC has made great contributions within its terms of reference over the last seven years by putting forward recommendations to the government on ways of enhancing the conduct in the profession, consulting its members on the code of conduct as well as giving advice to the Director of Education on handling disputes or alleged cases of misconduct involving educators. The CPC has spared no effort in taking concrete actions to promote the conduct and professional development among educators, and I believe, its efforts will surely help to enhance the professional conduct in education.

Parents in Hong Kong have always shown their concern about the education of their children, and education is one of the most important long-term investments made by the government. To achieve the best result, we would have to rely on an excellent workforce in the teaching profession. Therefore, teachers should be devoted to education and possess a high level of professionalism. Meanwhile, the tradition of showing reverence for our teachers should be widely promoted in the society. In recent years, members of the public, educators and the government have worked together to explore possible ways to enhance the professionalism and professional image of teachers with a view to gaining the respect and trust from the public at large. I firmly believe that it is the teacher who should assume the essential role of promoting, demonstrating and further developing the professionalism in the education sector.

To enhance teachers' professional status, we must ensure that all the practitioners work with professional conduct. In fact, each and every member of a profession should be aware of their professional ethics, and teaching ethic has been regarded as the "mother of civilization of a society." In delivery education to students, teachers not only need to transmit wisdom, impart knowledge and resolve problems for their students but also serve as their role model. As an example to the younger generation, teachers' bearing and manner have a far-reaching impact on their students. Therefore, teachers should possess a high level of professional conduct. The valuable experience of the CPC in this respect will surely help to lay a solid foundation for the future General Teaching Council.

In addition, I very much appreciate the effort the CPC has made in organizing various publicity and promotion activities to enhance the professional conduct among teachers. These activities include conducting seminars in schools and educational institutions, holding experience-sharing sessions and organizing related activities in collaboration with the Education Department and relevant bodies. The Exhibition that opens today is a good example. On the one hand, it enables educators, parents and members of the public to have a better understanding of the CPC and enhances their awareness of the development of the profession. On the other hand, it serves to promote the professional development and the image of educators through the participation of the public. To my knowledge, the CPC has already started off a number of promotion activities to disseminate the information on professional conduct. The Department will, no doubt, render its support as far as possible, if additional funding is needed for these activities.

In fact, there is much room for development in the function of the CPC, which requires Council members to explore. I sincerely hope that all the educators will continue their efforts to promote the conduct and status of the profession. May I also take this opportunity to call on parents and the public to give strong support to the Council?

Last but not the least, may I wish the roving exhibitions a success and all of you here good health and happiness. Thank you.

Regional Roving Exhibitions Cum Opening Ceremony  
Speech of Thanks by the Chairman, Mr. PUN Tin-chi

Dear Deputy Director Mr TONG, Mr. WAI, Mrs. LAU, honourable guests, dear colleagues, parents, students, ladies and gentlemen,

Today the Council on Professional Conduct in Education is organizing its first regional roving exhibitions. We are glad that the Deputy Director of Education, Mr TONG Kai Hong, has kindly accepted our invitation to be our officiating guest of this opening ceremony and that Mr WAI Kwok-hung, Chairman of the Sha Tin District Board, and Mrs. Canny LAU, representative of the Committee on Home-School Co-operation have kindly agreed to be the guests of our ribbon-cutting ceremony. The Buddhist Ho Nam Kam College has also sent its lion dance team to our ceremony to add to our fun. Then there is the oriental dance performance put up by the Sha Kok Estate Wai Yan Kindergarten, the Taekwondo performance by the Jockey Club Ti -I College, the western dance performance by the Caritas Fanling Chan Chun Ha Secondary School and the percussion performance by the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals Tsui Tsin Tong School. These performances have indeed added colour to our exhibition. On behalf of all the committee members of the Council on Professional Conduct in Education, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to them!

The Council on Professional Conduct in Education was established in 1994. It has been 7 years since this Council was set up. But I guess that not too many members of the community know this Council. This may, to some extent, be due to its long name. In fact, I am afraid that even among teachers, only a few can state its name correctly. Therefore, let us just call it "Conduct Council", which will make it easier for us.

Names apart, the functions of this Council are rather limited. This may be partially attributable to its not being widely known. At present, the Conduct Council is only a consultative committee of the Director of Education. Its terms of reference designed by the Director of Education include the following 3 areas only :

1. to advise the Government on measures to promote professional conduct in education;
2. to draft operational criteria defining the conduct expected of an educator and through consultation to gain wide spread acceptance among all sectors of the education profession; and
3. to advise the Director of Education on cases of disputes or alleged professional misconduct involving educators.

Despite its limited terms of reference, the Conduct Council has brought into play its most important functions. Based on the “Code for the Education Profession of Hong Kong” prepared in 1990, the Conduct Council has done a lot of publicity, promotion and case study work. These include visits to kindergartens, primary schools, secondary schools and the Faculty of Education in universities where we introduce to them the functions of the Conduct Council and the contents of the “Code for the Education Profession of Hong Kong”. Our work also covers study of several tens of cases of alleged misconduct of teachers (including principals) and, based on the results of such study, making various recommendations to the Director of Education. You can read the detailed reports of our work on the display boards. We hope that through this exhibition, more people can get to know the Conduct Council and its work.

The professional conduct of teachers has been the subject of concern of the Conduct Council and is closely related to parents and students. We all hope to upgrade the professional standard and the professional conduct of teachers. However, in order to achieve this aim, our job should not stop short of simply drawing up certain professional codes and handling some complaint cases. We have to guarantee that each and every teacher will be given appropriate pre-service training so that they can measure up to the professional standard required. We should also guarantee that serving teachers who have obtained their professional qualifications will continue to regularly take up professional studies, so that their professional development can keep abreast with the times. We must also guarantee that teachers who have breached the Code on Professional Conduct will be properly guided and punished so as to maintain the standard of the professional service. Furthermore, we must also facilitate the communication between the teaching profession and the community so that the community can understand the requirements of teaching and learning and that our students can learn and grow up in a healthier and happier environment.

However, the above ideals cannot be realized by the present Council. That’s why we have all along called on the Government to set up a professional association for teachers with full-fledged functions and legal status. The Chief Executive has twice indicated in his Policy Address the Government’s commitment to set up a “General Teaching Council”. We should be happy with this move. However, after the Government has made such commitment, there is little real progress. The preparation work of the General Teaching Council has been at a standstill. This has worried us a lot. We hope that through this exhibition, we can again arouse the people’s concern in establishing the General Teaching Council so that it can materialize at an early date. It is hoped that the Deputy Director, Mr. TONG, can fully understand our vision and help us realize it as soon as possible.

Lastly, on behalf of all the committee members of the Conduct Council, I would like to thank all those who attend our opening ceremony today.

## How Should We Go About Doing it in the Professional & Independent Way?

LEUNG Ping wa

After having taken part in the work of the Council on Professional Conduct in Education for three terms, I came to understand the complications involved in setting up the General Teaching Council. This understanding originated from two sources: one is the visit to Ontario College of Teachers in Toronto, Canada as well as the visit to the General Teaching Council for Scotland; the other is my involvement in handling the complaint cases in the past few years. This time I shall share with you my findings during such visits.

### **The Establishment of the Teachers Union can also Reflect Society's Mistrust of Teachers**

“The Ontario College of Teachers” is in the nature of a very strong supervisory body. It mainly adopts a distrustful and monitoring attitude towards teachers. The regulations of their association embody the spirit of regulating the behaviour of teachers, for example, only slightly more than half of its members can be directly elected by teachers and the remaining members should mainly be appointed by the Government. People will be shocked by the wide powers of investigation into the misconduct of teachers by the association. The investigating officials can, without previous application, enter the flats of the teachers under complaint to collect evidences.

Such background has something to do with the teachers' unpopular actions in the past. Because there was no objective mechanism for assessing and improving teachers' remuneration, very often teachers had to rely on organizations like the Teachers' Union to initiate industrial action to fight for their benefits. So much so that the impression of teachers on the community became increasingly bad. They even incurred the public's aversion. Furthermore, by tradition Canadians only regard teaching as an ordinary occupation. They have no special respect for or dependent feeling on teachers. It is understandable that the Canadian Government set up a professional organization with tighter controls to regulate the standard of the teachers' competence and to maintain their professional conduct by forces outside the profession. As a result, parents are satisfied and feel more at ease regarding this mode of running the teachers' association, but the teachers are greatly unhappy about this arrangement and find it disgusting.

### **The Professional Status of Teachers Cannot Be Inevitably Raised by Establishing the Professional Union**

The development of the General Teaching Council for Scotland also follows this trend. This Council was set up as early as 1965. At that time, the social status of teachers in Scotland was quite high: teachers were highly regarded by the community. This Council

aimed to maintain the professional standard of the members working in the profession and to disallow people without proper training to perform teaching duties. Even so, according to the views of the members of the General Teaching Council for Scotland and the local teachers, the social status of teachers over the past few decades has not improved accordingly. Instead, their social status has been coming down day by day.

According to my observations, there are two reasons for this: one reason is that in the past the Council has not made an effort to require the teachers to take up continuous learning. Thus while the overall academic standard of the populace in Scotland has been upgraded, that of the Scottish teachers has not correspondingly improved. The second reason is that there has been no reasonable increase in the teachers' remuneration as has been the case of other self-employed people in Scotland. Therefore, they cannot free themselves from the image of poor teachers: quite a number of them having worked for ten to twenty years as teachers still cannot purchase their own flats. Their standard of living is worse than that of employees taking up ordinary jobs and is far much worse than that of doctors, lawyers, accountants and other professional people. That is why the wastage rate of teachers has been quite high. A lot of teachers having been teaching for more than 10 years would rather quit working and take care of their children at home or change their jobs. This also explains why the local teachers do not have a strong desire to continue their studies. Under such circumstances it can be foreseen that the teaching profession in Scotland cannot be further developed or upgraded. During our visit, the General Teaching Council for Scotland was undergoing reforms including the reduction in the number of directly elected teacher representatives on the Council and formulating the requirements of continuous professional development for teachers. This trend is exactly the same as the request of the Provincial Government of Ontario to step up control over the teachers.

#### How should the Hong Kong General Teaching Council go from here?

Hong Kong is upholding the Chinese traditional spirit of respect for teachers and their instructions. The community and parents still respect and trust teachers. The social image and status of teachers cannot be said to be low. In a relative sense, their remuneration is higher than that of their counterparts in Canada and Scotland. But how long will this situation last? At present, society has rising expectations of the professional competence of teachers and has stepped up the request to monitor their competence. This situation is completely different from the bygone days when people unconditionally accepted and trusted teachers. But when we establish the General Teaching Council in Hong Kong, we should learn from the experiences of the professional teachers' associations in these two places so as to avoid making the same mistakes again.

**Promotion Campaign on Professional Conduct in Education  
(From September 2001 to March 2002)**

In commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the promulgation of the Code for the Education Profession of Hong Kong (the Code), the Council on Professional Conduct in Education (the Council) has applied for funding under the Quality Education Fund to conduct the Promotion Campaign on Professional Conduct in Education. Details of the Campaign are as follows:

**(A) Aims of the Campaign**

1. To enhance educators' knowledge of and support to the Code with a view to promoting the professional conduct in education; and
2. To widely promote the functions of the Council among educators with a view to expediting the establishment of the General Teaching Council (GTC).

**(B) Activities**

1. Forums (to be held from October to December 2001)

To commemorate the tenth anniversary of the promulgation of the Code, the Council will conduct forums on professional conduct in education at the Teachers' Centre, which will cover a series of in-depth discussions, reviews and interflows. Teachers and people interested in the issues, members of the past four terms of the Councils as well as representatives from related educational bodies, parents and students will be invited to take part in the activities. Views collated at the forums may be displayed on the newsletters and homepage of the Council for publicity and promotion purposes. The activities aim to stimulate sharing among education colleagues, to gain their recognition and draw their attention to the Code.

2. District-based seminars and exhibitions (To be held in January and March 2002)

Through the four Regional Education Offices, the Council will conduct seminars and exhibitions on important issues concerning professional conduct, where professionals in various fields will be invited to be guest-speakers to stimulate discussions and reflections among educators. Besides, exhibitions will also be held at the same venues to enhance education colleagues' understanding of the functions of the Council and the professional conduct in education. Findings of the survey and research may also be released at these seminars.

3. Survey, research and briefing session (To be held from September 2001 to March 2002)

The Council will employ researchers to help conduct survey and research on the following areas: development of the profession in the ten years after the promulgation of the Code, cases handled by the Council, the current situation of the case study work, main issues concerning the professional conduct of educators, as well as the latest development and experiences of the promotion of conduct among teachers in other areas. The study aims to improve the case study procedures of the Council and give full play to the role and functions of the Council. Findings of the survey and research will be released at the district-based seminars and published in the special issue on the tenth anniversary of the promulgation of the Code.

4. Students' project competition and presentation ceremony (To be held from September 2001 to March 2002)

Winning entries of the project competition for primary and secondary students will be uploaded to the homepage of the Council for publicity and promotion purposes. The presentation ceremony provides an opportunity to promote the professional conduct of educators. Teachers may also share their glorious duties and obligations with students during the function.

A photo taken during a sharing session on the professional conduct of teachers between members of the Council and members of the Working Group on the study of the Continuous Development of the Professional Ethics of Primary and Secondary School Teachers under the Education Commission of Guangzhou.

### **Solicit Contributions to our Newsletter**

To draw the attention of education colleagues to matters concerning the profession, a new column 'Letters from Colleagues' will be added to our newsletter. Education colleagues or bodies are invited to contribute articles of words ranging from 500 to 1000. Messages to be published in the next issue should be delivered to us before 30 September by fax (2891 8476), e-mail (address: eocpc@ed.gov.hk) or by post (address: Room 1106, 11/F, Wu Chung House, 213 Queen's Road East, Wan Chai, Hong Kong.)