

## Comments & Suggestions on the School Segment

### (A) ALLOWING LOCALS TO ATTEND INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS

1. Minimizing leakage - Based on anecdotal evidence, a fair number of Singapore students study in international schools based overseas, because current regulations do not allow these students to enrol in international schools located in Singapore. Many of these students then continue to pursue their studies overseas (e.g. in foreign universities). Allowing international schools in Singapore to enrol local students could minimise this leakage.
2. National education requirements - One reason for requiring Singaporeans to enrol in the public schooling system is in the interest of national education. If need be, international schools in Singapore can incorporate national education and bilingual requirements into the curriculum, so as to enrol Singaporean students.
3. Cross-fertilization of ideas and practices - A more open environment would allow cross-fertilization of best practices between the MOE school system and that of the international schools. Furthermore, Singaporean students would benefit in terms of exposure to a different learning environment and the international student body.
4. Enhanced feeder effect into the local universities - If local students attend the international schools, more international students could be encouraged by their local friendship groups to attend the local universities, and this could raise the admission standards of each cohort.
5. Social integration - Lifting the restriction on local students would open doors and allow second chances for local students who do not do well in the public schools, as they may be able to do better under the international schools' curriculum. At the same time, while the international schools are open to accepting some of these students, they would like to enrol a fair cross-section of the local student population, in the interest of diversity and to enhance the integration of the international schools with Singapore society.

### (B) GROWING THE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS SEGMENT

6. Economic importance of the schools segment - One of the Education Workgroup's recommendations is to grow the education industry's contribution to the GDP by attracting substantive numbers of full fee-paying international students to study in Singapore. The schools segment could be a key component of this strategy insofar as a more open environment would allow a larger number of international schools to anchor in Singapore, enrol local students as a 'Baseload' which would in turn allow the schools to attract international students to Singapore. At the same time, the local public schools could be given more leeway in attracting full fee-paying international students. Another advantage of a vibrant schools segment is that it serves as a feeder into the other educational institutions in the education ecosystem, e.g. the IHLs, commercial and speciality schools.
7. Enhancing the international schools' competitiveness - High land costs have translated into higher fees as compared to other boarding schools in the region. There may be a need to relook at land pricing for the international schools, to help them compete more effectively.
8. Better utilization of public schools' facilities - Schools, especially those that are single session, should be allowed to rent out their facilities to international schools and other

education service providers in the afternoons and during school vacations.

**(C) ALLOWING TOP LOCAL SCHOOLS TO SET UP PRIVATE SCHOOLS**

9. We should leverage on the reputation of our top schools (e.g. Raffles Institution, Raffles Girls School, The Chinese High School, Anglo-Chinese School, etc) and allow these schools to establish private schools targeted at full-fee paying international students. Currently, as part of Singapore's talent attraction strategy, MOE offers scholarships to foreign students. Majority of the international students studying in our public schools are paying government subsidised fees. Every year, our local public schools have to turn away many international applications. Through these private schools, Singapore will be able to capture more international students on a full-fee paying basis.