

# Engaging the Legco



## Amid Covid-19 travel restrictions, Carrie Lam must keep her promise to help cross-border students

[Letter | Carrie Lam must keep her promise to help cross-border students](#)

As a concern group advocating for over 27,000 [cross-border schoolchildren](#), we have been deeply disappointed with the Education Bureau staff who have done virtually nothing to help this group of Hong Kong residents during the pandemic. Through the Legislative Council Redress System, we held a meeting with Ms Alice Mak Mei-kuen, the deputy chairperson of the Legco panel on education, on September 2.

Before our meeting, we invited parents of cross-border schoolchildren to voice their concerns through a WeChat blog and make suggestions on how the government can better support the children. The blog entry was overwhelmed by parents’ messages calling for more action from the governments of both Hong Kong and Shenzhen.

While the majority of them hope the government could exempt cross-border schoolchildren from the quarantine requirements, they also understand this is unlikely to happen in the near future. A more realistic solution, according to the parents, is to set up learning centres in Shenzhen where the children can take online classes together and learn more effectively through peer interaction.

Moreover, they suggested that the cross-border schoolchildren should be taught separately from their local peers as teachers often struggled to look after students online and offline at the same time.

During the meeting with Ms Mak, we summarised the parents’ concerns and suggestions, and asked the lawmaker to follow up with the Education Bureau. Ms Mak agreed that bringing the schoolchildren together for online lessons was a feasible proposal that the government should further explore.

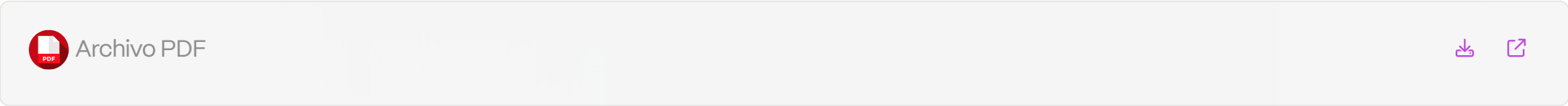
We also contacted International Social Service (ISS), an NGO with funding support from the government to serve cross-border schoolchildren. The ISS staff shared our concerns and expressed their interest in running learning centres for the schoolchildren if resources are available from the government.

On September 8, Ms Mak [raised this issue](#) during the Legislative Council question and answer meeting with Chief Executive Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor on our behalf. In response to her question, Mrs Lam promised that the Education Bureau would look into how to set up learning centres for the schoolchildren in Shenzhen.

We hope the bureau can take swift action and work with the NGOs such as ISS to create a more productive learning environment for those who cannot come to Hong Kong for school.

*Yichun Wang and Simon Wang, Kowloon Tong*

## A report circulated among Legco members and uploaded to the Legco website



## Recent engagement with Dr Wendy Hong

