

Abolition of JSEA a good step: educators

by

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THE Education Department's decision to abolish the Junior Secondary Assessment (JSEA) scheme in the next academic year is "a good step", local educators say.

The Department plans to replace the public examination with a scheme which allocates Form Four places based on a school's historical pass rates, *The Standard* reported yesterday.

Under the plan, next year's JSEA test should be the last one ever.

Mr David Cheung, principal of the Carmel English School and a member of the original working group set up to study the JSEA, said the plan "for the vast majority of schools is a good step."

Another member of the working group, Mr Peter Lee, praised the department for its decision to abolish the examination, saying the new system will provide "continuity of study."

"There is a guaranteed percentage of children who can stay in their own schools," Mr Lee, the principal of Caritas St Francis Prevocational School, said.

Legislative Councillor Yeung Po-kwan, principal of Ming Yin College, called the plan "one my fellow

Anxiety exam gets the axe early

THE controversial Junior Secondary Education Assessment (JSEA) scheme will be abolished in the next academic year — four years ahead of schedule.

The Assessment scheme — which consists of an examination to select those Form Three students who are allowed to continue

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principals should be satisfied with."

Under the new system, schools will be assessed for the number of students over the past three years who attained subsidised Form Four places.

The average of that total will be the number of students who will be allowed promotion each year under the new scheme.

For a school which had 80 percent of its Form Three students go on to Form Four in the past three years, 80 percent of its students will be promoted this year as well.

The Education Department's Assistant Director for Building and Systems, Mr Andy Liang, said

schools with low historical pass rates are generally schools with lower academic standards.

But as the number of available Form Four places increases, he pointed out, the number of students who continue their educations will also increase.

A department spokesman said it hopes that by 1991 there will be enough places for all Form Three students who want to continue on to Form Four.

In the meantime, however, competition for places among students will remain a fact of life.

The plan also means there will be competition among schools, since the department plans to change

allocation of classes to schools based on how many of their students get promoted to Form Four.

But some schools, which have six Form Three classes but only four Form Four classes, also have a high proportion of students getting subsidised places — meaning that not all eligible students can remain in their own schools.

Other schools, which are "symmetrical" because they have five classes each of Forms Three and Four, do not have as many eligible students, and will have to take in students from other schools.

The department plans to restructure some of the "asymmetrical" schools with good performance re-

ords into "symmetrical" schools. These schools would gain classes in the upper forms.

However, some "symmetrical" schools with lower standards could lose Form Four classes and become "asymmetrical".

If the consultative document released yesterday is accepted, 30 "symmetrical" schools will become "asymmetrical" and 30 "asymmetrical" schools will become "symmetrical".

The switch, set for September 1987, would be based on the schools' percentage of promotable students from 1983/84 though 1985/86.

Mr Wong Kam-cheung, principal of Sung Tsun Middle School, yesterday criticised the plan.