

12.5

24-10

\$8.5m plan for more Chinese school books

THE Chinese Textbook Committee is to ask the Government to grant \$8.5 million to subsidise publishers to produce textbooks for secondary schools.

And if a plan worked out by the committee is approved, the first Chinese publications could be ready in 18 months.

Chairman Mr Szeto Wah announced the plan at the opening of the 29th Hongkong Federation of Students.

He said the plan was worked out by a sub-group and would be tabled for discussion at the next committee meeting in a fortnight.

Mr Szeto said the proposals included the format of subsidising publishers, subjects needed to have Chinese textbooks and the setting up of a specialist committee to ensure the standard of the publications.

The sub-committee had identified about 14 subjects and for each of them, not more than three publishers would be invited.

He said the subjects were those having less than three versions of Chinese editions.

Mr Szeto said \$450,000 would be allocated for each subject. That means, if three publishers applied, then each would get one-third of it.

There will be no restrictions on the number of subjects a publisher could apply for.

The chairman said the committee would discuss with the Attorney General whether there was the need to set up legislation

stating that the publishers had to give a certain deposit to make sure they could produce the publications on time.

Besides a committee to ensure the standard of the publication, Mr Szeto said another special group would be set up mainly to study the standard of Chinese language used in the books.

Meanwhile, Mr Szeto, who is also a Basic Law Drafting Committee member, said he would hold talks on recent reports that China did not want direct elections in the coming meeting this week in Guilin.