

# Hong Kong : Punish any students or teachers who join planned strike over national security law

Thursday 11 June 2020, by [HUI Sophie](#), [NG Kang-chung](#), [SUM Lok Kei](#) (Date first published: 11 June 2020).

## Contents

- [Vow to go after teachers \(...\)](#)
- [Punish any students or teacher](#)

## [Vow to go after teachers joining boycotts](#)

by **Sophie Hui (The Standard)**

<https://www.thestandard.com.hk/section-news/section/11/219892/Vow-to-go-after-teachers-joining-boycotts>

### **Secretary for Education Kevin Yeung Yun-hung**

Action will be taken against teachers taking part in class boycotts, Secretary for Education Kevin Yeung Yun-hung warns.

In a letter written to primary and secondary school principals yesterday, Yeung said teachers cannot take paid or no-pay casual leave for class boycotts, adding joining one is unprofessional. He was referring to plans by unions and student groups to hold a referendum on Sunday 14 over whether to strike and boycott classes to protest against the national security law Beijing is imposing on Hong Kong.

*"If teachers participate in class boycotts proposed by those groups, not only would they deliberately not perform their duties and be negligent in their work, they would also bring politics to the campus and they would demonstrate to students that expressing political demands by breaking the rules is right,"* Yeung said.

*"Schools should take disciplinary action, while the Education Bureau will follow up stringently,"* he added.

Yeung said schools should not allow students to boycott classes as well.

If there are student organizations egging youths to participate in illegal activities, class boycotts or other political events in the school, then schools should tell them to stop, Yeung said. *"Schools should handle the matter through its disciplinary and punishment mechanism if students proceed with the action."*

### **Hong Kong Secondary School Students Action Platform**

Isaac Cheng Ka-long, spokesman of the Hong Kong Secondary School Students Action Platform, said on Facebook that the government thought it can stop students expressing their views on the national

security law by threatening schools, teachers and students.

He urged them to join the referendum while thanking the government for helping them “promote” the activity.

## **Repression**

Meanwhile, police arrested 53 people, including Yuen Long district councillors Lam Chun and Ng Kin-wai, in Tuesday night’s rally in Central to mark the first anniversary of the anti-fugitive movement. The 36 males and 17 females were arrested for offenses like participating in unlawful assemblies.

Police warned people against participating in another planned assembly tomorrow 12. It was dubbed online as a “*religious gathering*” marking the first anniversary of when people surrounded the Legislative Council to stop the second reading of the fugitive bill.

Police said assemblies of religious nature would not be exempted from social gathering rules unless they take place in locations where ceremonies are usually conducted, such as churches.

Adequate force will be deployed in the area today while officers will take resolute action of enforcement, the said.

The protest call came as the government told lawmakers that it has cost the government HK\$66 million so far to restore public facilities damaged in the year-long unrest.

From June last year to last month, a total of 740 sets of traffic lights and at least 177 security cameras installed in government facilities and public places were vandalized, the government said. Some 60 kilometers of railings and 22,000 square meters of paving blocks of footpaths were removed, while about 1,320 litter bins and 130 recyclables collection bins were also damaged.

sophie.hui singtaonewscorp.com

## **Punish any students or teachers who join planned strike over national security law, Hong Kong education chief tells schools**

**by Ng Kang-chung and Sum Lok-kei (SCMP)**

<https://scmp.com/news/hong-kong/education/article/3088502/punish-any-students-or-teachers-who-join-planned-strike>

### **Secretary for Education**

Secretary for Education Kevin Yeung says schools should not allow youths to be exploited for political ends by organisers of the action.

But head of principals’ association says any problem with students should be dealt with through education.

Hong Kong’s education chief has asked schools to discipline any students or teachers who join a planned strike over Beijing’s imposition of a national security law on Hong Kong.

Pupils were being “*exploited*” for the political ends of the labour unions and student activists organising the action, Secretary for Education Kevin Yeung Yun-hung said in a letter sent to all primary and secondary school principals on Wednesday.

Such manipulation came at the expense of the students’ interests and prospects, he said.

The organisers are planning to hold a referendum on Sunday 14 on the proposed strike and will go

ahead if it receives 60 per cent backing. But Yeung dismissed the vote as meaningless with “no constitutional basis or legal effect” and asked schools to dissuade students from joining. Many younger students protested over the now-withdrawn extradition bill and joined the anti-government movement that followed last year, staging rallies outside campuses and staging a mass class boycott last September.

*“Any teachers taking part in class boycotts advocated by [the groups] are not only deliberately failing to perform their jobs and neglecting their duties but also purposefully bringing politics into schools,”* he said. *“It is a demonstration to students of an expression of political demands in breach of established rules.”*

Schools should take disciplinary action and the Education Bureau would “seriously” follow up any cases, he added. Neither should schools accept leave requests by teachers to join in the action.

Students should not chant slogans, form human chains, post slogans or sing songs containing political messages at school as that turns them into venues for expressing political demands, he said. *“If individual students refuse to comply with the instructions after repeated persuasion, schools should take appropriate counselling and disciplinary actions ... to maintain discipline and order,”* he added.

### **Referendum organisers**

The spokesman for one of the referendum organisers accused the education minister of creating “white terror”.

*“Now students are already not allowed to chant slogans or post slogans,”* said Isaac Cheng Ka-long of the Hong Kong Secondary School Students Action Platform. *“I can’t imagine what it will be like after the imposition of the national security law. The suppression by the government is exactly the reason why students need to make their voice heard through the referendum.”*

### **Association of the Heads of Secondary Schools**

Teddy Tang Chun-keung, chairman of the Hong Kong Association of the Heads of Secondary Schools, said he believed schools would not feel pressured by Yeung’s letter.

*“After a year [of social unrest], we are rather experienced now in dealing with activities in schools that are triggered by social events,”* Tang said. *“We have always asked students to avoid taking part in events that they do not fully understand. And our experience is that teachers rarely join class boycotts.”*

Asked whether he would punish students who joined the strike, he said: *“We can also handle students’ problems through education.”*

But he said schools might have difficulty explaining the national security law to students given it had not yet been drafted.

### **Opposition lawmaker**

Opposition lawmaker Ip Kin-yuen, who represented the education sector, said teachers should not punish students simply for having views different from the government.

*“Schools have no responsibility in explaining government policies,”* Ip said. *“Even [Chief Executive] Carrie Lam [Cheng Yuet-ngor] doesn’t know the clauses of the national security law. How can schools and teachers explain to students?”*

### **Pro-Beijing union**

But Wong Kam-leung, chairman of the pro-Beijing Federation of Education Workers, welcomed

Yeung's letter. *"It gives schools very clear guidelines on dealing with the issue, leaving no grey area,"* Wong said.