

School sports scheme proves winner

Jane Cheung

Twenty-three schools could receive grants of up to HK\$350,000 to organize sports programs for their students.

The scheme is the second phase of the three-year School Sports Programme Coordinators that was launched in 2012 with 15 schools participating.

The Home Affairs Bureau said each school will be assigned a retired athlete as a coordinator.

A spokeswoman said the decision to expand the scheme to 23 schools is due to the success of the first two years, during which 384 sporting events were organized for 86,000 students.

Yan Chai Hospital Wong Wha San Secondary School principal Kelvin Yau Siu-hung said the sports coordinator assigned to the school in 2012 was retired track athlete Wong Wing-sum, who not only organized sporting events for her students but also for the Tseung Kwan O district, citing a track competition involving more than 300 students from 27 secondary schools, held in her first year at work.

Another sports coordinator was retired



Wong Wing-sum and Samuel Leung are both retired athletes hired as sports coordinators.

triathlon athlete Samuel Leung Ching-yin, 32, who served at the Chinese YMCA College from September 2012 to June this year. He said students became more interested in exercising after he established a gym room at the school.

“The students realized that exercising helped them gain confidence and encouraged them to work out,” Leung said.

Yau agreed that as retired athletes, the sports

coordinators had a positive influence on the students and were very good role models.

Miko Tang Yuen-yi, a Secondary Six student at Wong Wha San school, said Wong was more than a coordinator. “She was our coach during training and a friend who encouraged us at other times,” Tang said.

Wong said the program not only benefited the schools but also the retired athletes.

Before joining the program in 2012, she worked at a bank for 1½ years after graduating with a bachelor’s degree in business.

“I found the banking job boring and not challenging,” Wong said. “I was so happy when the Hong Kong Sports Institute offered me the job because I could finally work in a field in which I am interested, and make use of my professional knowledge at the same time.”

Wong said the scheme is a very good channel for retired athletes to re-enter the labor market.

“The scheme not only offered me a job in which I was interested, but it also equipped me with administrative skills. In addition, it also subsidized my certificate course studies.”

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