

PPSMI: Let's be clear what soft landing means
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Page (Parent Action Group for Education) lamented that it had received feedback from parents that state education directors and district education officers have been influencing principals to choose Bahasa Malaysia (BM) over English in the teaching of the two subjects next year.

Page also expressed concern that decision-making by principals may be influenced by the incentive of promotions or threat of transfer.

I share the concern of Page regarding the interpretation and implementation of Teaching of Science and Mathematics in English's (PPSMI) "soft landing" by schools.

This is most unfortunate. Principals, teachers and officers at the district education offices, state education departments and Education Ministry should not have any personal agenda in carrying out the PPSMI soft landing.

First, let's be very clear about what "soft landing" should mean.

When the ministry decided to abolish the policy in 2009, we still had students following PPSMI.

To ensure that these students would not be disoriented overnight, "soft landing" was proposed and scheduled. The affected students can continue to finish their study of the two subjects in English until they reach Form Five.

Second, those who want to do the subjects in Bahasa Malaysia, Chinese or Tamil need to opt out of the soft landing. With soft landing, PPSMI should be in place and available as before, for all students caught in the transition. Schools must recognise this fact and act accordingly.

Third, with the above understanding, it is, therefore, wrong in logic for schools to offer options of English and BM, Chinese or Tamil to PPSMI students.

English need not be offered as option; it is the option for these PPSMI schools.

Only those who want to study in BM, Chinese or Tamil need to opt out of it.

Let the voice of parents be heard loud and clear. Let our children study in peace.

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