



MINISTRY OF
EDUCATION & YOUTH



Sectoral Presentation 2023

EDUCATIONAL TRANSFORMATION

**IN
PROGRESS**

Wednesday, 17th May, 2023
Gordon House

Hon. Fayval Williams, MP
Minister of Education & Youth



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Acknowledgements

Madam Speaker, this year is my seventh year of making a contribution to Sectoral Debates. I am deeply appreciative of the honour and privilege granted to me by the people of St. Andrew Eastern to serve the national interest as a Member of Parliament in this Honourable House. I also wish to thank the Prime Minister, the Most Honourable Andrew Holness, for allowing me the opportunity to continue doing so as Minister of Education and Youth.

I could not carry out this task without the full support and encouragement of my family, the dedicated workers in the constituency of St. Andrew Eastern and my two very dedicated CPOs who go beyond the call of duty. To all of you, I express my heartfelt thanks.

Madam Speaker, I take this opportunity to also thank the team of senior officers and general staff at the Ministry of Education and Youth led by Mrs. Maureen Dwyer, Permanent Secretary (Acting) and Dr Kasan Troupe, Chief Education Officer (Acting) as well as other members of the Executive Management team, portfolio agencies and all who serve the Ministry of Education and Youth for their commitment and dedication in working to implement the Government's policies and programmes. Through the service and commitment of the central ministry, its seven (7) regions and the various entities, thousands of Jamaican children are being helped each year to take advantage of the opportunities that the public education system, with its 25,700 teachers, allows them to follow a pathway to personal, social and economic advancement.

Setting the Context

Madam Speaker, I was sworn in as Ministry of Education, Youth and Information on Sunday, Sept 13, 2020. It helps that I remind myself from time to time of this date because schools were shuttered. The Ministry of Health and Wellness reported on that day that Jamaica had a total of 3,933 confirmed cases of

COVID-19 virus. The age of persons who had confirmed cases ranged from 13 days to 97 years.¹ Primary and secondary schools, which had opened, every year, like clockwork on the first Monday of every September month stretching back to 1965 when the Education Act came into force remained closed.

My first meeting by the Wednesday of my first week, along with my then Minister of State, Hon. Robert Nesta Morgan, was with the JTA. My second meeting on that same day was with Dr. Parris Lyew-Ayee, Dr. Karen Webster Kerr, the Minister of State and the Ministry's team to discuss "Education and Covid" because the imperative was to get our children back in the face-to-face environment as quickly as possible. There was an urgency throughout the society. My third meeting on that same Wednesday was with the Honorable Prime Minister, Professor Orlando Patterson and my state minister to discuss Education Transformation.

Madam Speaker, even in the midst of COVID-19, Transformation of Education was an imperative.

Despite ChatGPT, Teachers Still Matter



Madam Speaker, the most important pillar of education transformation is our teachers. We salute the 1,000+ new teachers from all our teachers' colleges who were gathered at The Mico University College recently to receive their welcome into the profession.

¹<https://www.moh.gov.jm/covid-19-clinical-management-summary-for-Sunday-september-13-2020/>

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Madam Speaker, in UNICEF's August 2022 report entitled *Teachers Assess and Reimagine Jamaica's Education System*, 87.1% of teachers either strongly agreed or agreed that despite the issues confronting education and the socioeconomic issues and challenges facing Jamaica which impact the education system, they are still passionate about teaching. We want to acknowledge all in-service as well as our new teachers coming into the education system.

That's why, today, **Madam Speaker**, I am happy to report that 5,045 post codes have been approved by Cabinet for classroom teachers, senior teachers, master teachers, Health and Family Life Education (HFLE) teachers, numeracy specialists, teachers aide, teachers assistants and non-academic staff who have been teaching or working in the education system for many years without security of tenure, some for 5, 10 or more years. They will be regularized. We are doing a finalization of the data and then letters will be prepared.



On the non-academic side, there are many watchmen and women at our schools, cooks, secretaries, caregivers who will also be receiving letters with their post code information that will give them security of tenure in the education sector. We appreciate the work that you do at all rungs of the educational ladder. We know that when you are working in a position without a post code, your employment future is uncertain. Every position in government is supposed to have a post code. This ensures that you can obtain your pension and other benefits (increments, appointments, etc). Many in the education sector get to retirement without a post code and find it difficult to access their pension. Trying to regularize it at retirement can be frustrating and quite lengthy and leaves the employee without income post-retirement.

To the 5,045 education sector, academic and non-academic human beings who will be receiving post codes, we acknowledge and validate you.

The teaching profession still attracts many and so I say **Madam Speaker**, despite the advent of Artificial Intelligence (AI), with the most popular form of AI being ChatGPT, teachers still matter.

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Teaching, Curriculum and Teacher Training is one of the pillars of Education Transformation

Among the list of recommendations for this pillar, the Jamaica Education Transformation Commission Report calls on us to “Widely promote an education philosophy which sees learning as a collaborative interaction between teachers, students and the curriculum and pursue efforts to ensure widespread acceptance.”

What this means is that if you walk into any classroom you should see small groups of students working on projects. Projects don't have to be big and elaborate. It could be grade 1 students learning how to stack leggo's without them falling over. In that process, they are learning to count. They are learning about colors. They are learning about balance and height. They are interacting with each other, learning how to negotiate with each other for the different colors, learning how to agree on what they should build and more important learning how to disagree without hitting each other.

This is the essence of STEM. It is an interdisciplinary approach to learning. STEM education makes learning “real” and gives students opportunities to see the connection between the content they are studying and the application of that content in authentic and relevant ways.²

The Jamaica Education Transformation Commission Report calls on us to enlist Jamaicans in this collaborative way of engaging our students in order to see higher levels of reading and writing among our students.

Jamaica Teaching Council

Madam Speaker, the Jamaica Education Transformation Commission report and others before calls for teachers to be licensed. The Jamaica Teaching Council Bill is in the discussion phase in the Joint Select Committee of Parliament. Its intent is to raise the professionalization of teaching to higher levels.

²<https://www.nsta.org/nstas-official-positions/stem-education-teaching-and-learning#:~:text=STEM%20education%20is%20an%20experiential,college%20and%20career%20readiness%20proficiencies>

Curriculum

Madam Speaker the Ministry of Education continues to provide support to our teachers in curriculum implementation. Our Education Officers in the Curriculum & Support Services Branch have been steadfast in their monitoring and supervision of the National Curricula in all schools across the nation. Various strategies have been employed to provide support to focus on improvement in teaching and learning, such as differentiated instructions, STEM/STEAM integration and student-centred pedagogical practices.

We have instituted an online repository of educational resources, which supports teachers in their preparation, planning and delivery of the curriculum. This repository, **Madam Speaker**, includes a Lesson Plan Bank and other teaching resources currently totaling over 600 items with a further five hundred (500) lesson plans under review to be added before the end of this academic year.

At the school level, support and monitoring is provided through the Curriculum Implementation Team (CIT). **Madam Speaker**, this team comprises local stakeholders that contribute to the effective implementation of the curriculum. The team comprises the school administration, teachers, student leaders, business and civil community representatives, who all work together to ensure that the curriculum is implemented to fidelity at the local school level.

Madam Speaker, the approach that we have taken to education is an inclusive one. We see the importance of bringing everyone to the table. The business of education is everybody's business and the CIT represents that.

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Teacher Training

Across our teachers colleges we have 4,255 teachers-in-training across its 4 years. UWI, UTech and VTDI also provide teachers for the system. It is among the new teachers that the “education philosophy which sees learning as a collaborative interaction between teachers, students and the curriculum...” should take root. We encourage our teachers colleges to embrace this philosophy to help us to move the education sector forward.

Teachers’ Colleges of Jamaica (TCJ)
Enrolment Data Teacher Education
Academic Year 2022-2023
Years 1-4

College	Male	Female	Total
Bethlehem Moravian College	61	386	447
Church Teachers’ College	169	731	900
College of Agriculture, Science & Education	27	357	384
G.C. Foster College Education & Sport	99	95	194
The Moneague College	31	382	413
Sam Sharpe Teachers’ College	54	521	575
Shortwood Teachers’ College	115	735	850
St. Joseph’s Teachers’ College	27	465	492
Total for all Colleges	583	3,672	4,255

Professional Development and Teacher Empowerment



The Jamaica Teaching Council continues to provide the annual matrix of teacher training and empowerment opportunities for access by all teachers. The matrix for professional needs is informed by the outcomes of the appraisal of teachers, reports of the National Education Inspectorate and those of the Regional Directors. Professional development opportunities are provided

through various partnerships. Such partners include OAS/ITEN; UNICEF; CARICOM; Inter -American Development Bank; European Union; Commonwealth of Learning, Private sector Organizations include – Tip Friendly, JTA Credit Union, LASCO Group, Carlong Publishers, ZYQUAL (professional appraisal in the digital space); as they continue to be active partners in professional development. We would like to invite greater Private sector partnership at the level of the Quality Education Circles (QECs). The Jamaica Teachers Association has remained a key partner in professional development of teachers.

Working with QECs assure greater coverage in efforts to build competency and share successful experiences.

Teachers have accessed the Return to Happiness programme designed to reach and support teachers having challenges. We welcome the sustained participation of UWI in this respect.

The launch of the annual Beginning Teachers Synergy Conference, bringing all beginning teachers in one location for the closing of the Induction Programme that is offered primarily on line. Fifteen (15) teacher education colleges and departments involving one thousand and ninety-one (1091) beginning teachers participated in the one-day session. It engaged various presenters in discussions on what makes great teachers. as well as the need to develop one’s career path benefitting from the emerging new areas in education and professional practice.

The Master Teachers continue to excel in their support for teacher professional development. The Jamaica Teaching Council is strategically growing the Master Teachers corps as well as lead teachers as part of the quality infrastructure. Selecting and maintaining high quality Master teachers is a little more challenging but the Appraisal system will lead to overcoming the challenges.

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Madam Speaker, we at the Ministry of Education continue to purposefully design and support structures that facilitate the ongoing empowerment of our teachers. We continue to build and promote communities of practice to institutionalize and sustain quality educational practices at all levels of the system. At the QEC level, school administrators and teachers across groups of schools sharpen their craft as they meet and share their successes, challenges and ways to hurdle or navigate these challenges.

At the school level, Common Planning Time (CPT) has become a staple in all our schools; it is now fully institutionalized with a timetabled structure in each school. ALL teachers in our schools meet to plan their lessons together. **Madam Speaker**, what does this mean, it means that teachers are collaborating, sharing ideas, getting a better understanding of what they should teach, and what others are teaching, a better understanding how to integrate across various subject areas, and better knowledge and understanding of the students they teach. This practical approach to

teacher empowerment at the local level augurs well for the future of education in our country.

We also have the Most Honorable Prime Minister's Medal of Appreciation for Service to Education based on outstanding service through innovation and creativity, as well as active involvement in community development.

Key initiatives to be undertaken in 2023/2024 implementing the recommendations of the JETC's report

Madam Speaker, in keeping with the recommendations of the Jamaica Education Transformation Commission report, the Ministry has identified a number of initiatives with respect to the teaching profession for the 2023/2024 fiscal year including:

1. Completing the legislative processes that will enable the Jamaica Teaching Council Bill to issue professional licences in education.
2. Revise the Handbook for Appraisal of practicing educators.

Recognition and awards for professional excellence -Achievements

- Over 110 teachers received MOEY/LASCO /JTC Awards. The awards programme now reaches all 63 Quality Education Circles (QECs) and across early childhood, primary and secondary teachers
- 80 **excellent teachers** received trophies from Carlong Publishers
- TVET Teacher of the Year is now a part of the LASCO partnership programme

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PM's award for excellence in education

3. Collaborate with the teachers' colleges and departments to initiate action towards selection of candidates to become teachers in year three (3) of their education programme.
4. Accelerate and expand in-service training of teachers, continue to make in-service training accessible, trackable and contribute to career advancement- special attention to STEAM Education, human development underpinning values to provide the society that we want – continued attention to the education of boys and increasing digital opportunities.
5. Continue to recognize and expand the Excellent Teacher Awards to teachers in each Quality Education Circle.
6. Continue to add value to the JTC information in the Digital space.

Madam Speaker, the Teaching, Curriculum and Teacher Training is a major pillar of Education Transformation.

Technology & Infrastructure – A Significant Pillar of Education Transformation



Madam Speaker, I turn now to Technology & Infrastructure, a significant pillar of education transformation.

Earlier, **Madam Speaker**, in recounting my beginning days at the Ministry of Education and Youth in 2020, it was meant to give context and to remind us of where we were in the education sector then. The Digital Divide was wide, wider than the Black River in St. Elizabeth! As you know, **Madam Speaker**, the digital divide is the unequal access to digital technology, including smartphones, tablets, laptops and the internet.

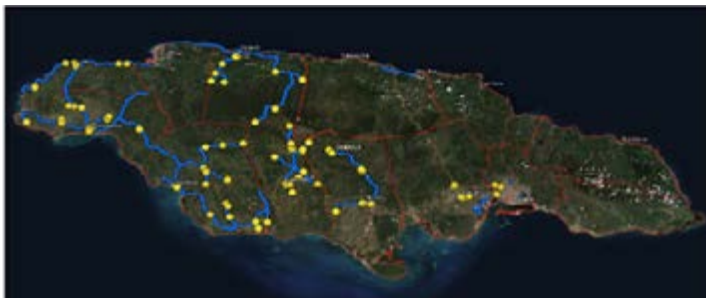
Today, **Madam Speaker**, in 2023, with the enormous efforts of this government, we are eliminating that digital divide. We are ensuring that our students, regardless of their socio-economic background, are fully equipped with devices, have access to e-resources including e-text books which are now included in our procurement, have computer labs in all our secondary schools with new laptops and proper broadband connectivity.

A total of 438 schools are currently connected and 252 are projected to be connected this fiscal year, for a total of 690 schools or 68% of schools. This has been possible through the concentrated, combined and focused efforts of the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation by way of NWA, Ministry of Science,

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Energy and Technology through e-Gov, e-Learning, USF and the parent Ministry, the Ministry of Education and Youth and the National ICT Advisory Council (NICTAC). We meet at 5 p.m. every Wednesday to ensure the work is on track for completion. That's the commitment of the persons involved. I applaud each and every person. You faithfully show up. Sometimes we are at the virtual meeting until 7 p.m. or after. This is dedication.

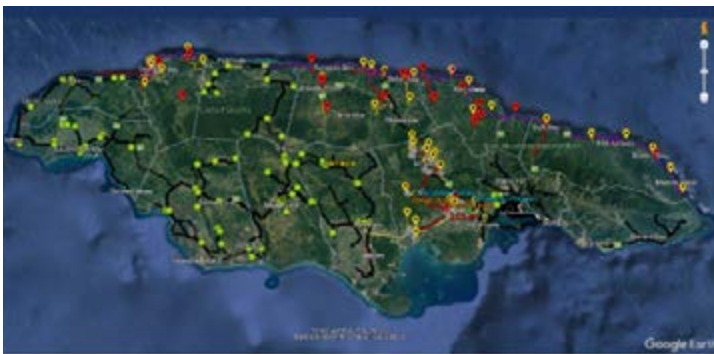
This next chart gives us data on the bandwidth utilization at the schools that are connected.



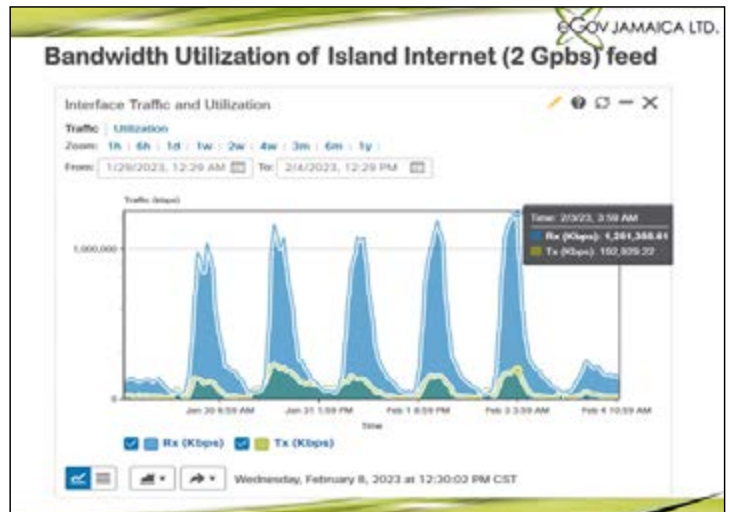
Schools that are already connected on the GOJ's fiber infrastructure.



Schools to be connected this financial year on GOJ's fiber infrastructure



This next chart gives us data on the bandwidth utilization at the schools that are connected.



No one can deny the efforts of this government to ensure our students, our teachers and our schools have the enabling environment for the rapid build out of the 21st Century skills that are so required now.

These 21st century skills include:

- Critical thinking – figuring things out; finding solutions to problems; asking why, why, why
- Creativity - seeing concepts in a different light, which leads to innovation
- Collaboration - getting students to work together, teaching them how to achieve compromises and get the best possible results from solving a problem
- Communication - how to effectively convey ideas among different personality types in their various classes and communities.

They also need to have Information literacy which is understanding facts, figures, statistics, and data. Our students need to learn how to separate facts from fiction and facts from opinions..

One teacher said “in an age of chronic misinformation, finding truth online has become a job all on its own. It's crucial that students can identify honesty on their own. Otherwise, they can fall prey to myths, misconceptions and outright lies.”

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And finally, our students must have technology literacy, that is “Understanding the machines that make the Information Age possible....because as computers, cloud programming and mobile devices become more important to the world, the world needs more people to understand those concepts.”

The Jamaica Education Transformation Commission report noted that “Several reports and studies, including the 2004 Report from the Task Force on Educational Reform, refer to not only the need to provide access to the internet in schools, but increasing the need to enhance the learning experience through the use of technology, to explore the use of technology for distance learning, and importantly, to ensure students are prepared to enter the world of work, no doubt requiring competencies in ICT.”

We are doing it.



Coding in Schools got off to a good start but hit a little bump; we are regrouping. To date we have 769 teachers fully trained in delivering coding skills (497 at the primary level and 272 at the secondary level). There are 32 schools at the secondary level that are integrating and delivering coding programmes currently. Other achievements include the development of a framework for the integration of coding in the National Standards Curriculum and the preparation of the integrated matrix. The instructional manual for teachers is to be done and continuation of training of teachers to scale in integration of coding in the other schools.

Teachers Trained

Levels	Number of Teachers Trained
Primary	497
Secondary	272
Total	769

As of May 12, 2023, eLearning delivered 16,053 e-vouchers for laptops to our teachers in primary and secondary schools. So far, 14,251 teachers have redeemed their vouchers.

We have loads of e-resources including e-text books, Google applications, Microsoft applications (word, excel, Teams, One Note, PowerPoint etc) in the system.

Teachers have access to a lesson plan bank with over 500 lesson plans ready-made for them and already mapped to the National Standards Curriculum which they can tailor to meet the needs of the students in the classroom.

500,000 licences were made available to our students, teachers, those in our community colleges and those in teachers colleges to download software for free that others have to pay for. Our students and teachers are encouraged to sign-in using their moeschools email and the goodies await them. All of our students have a moeschools email address.

The format is: first name.last name
john.brown@moeschools.edu.jm

No student doing school based assessment (SBA) should be complaining that they don't have access to Word.

Additionally, our implementing partner, e-Learning, confirmed that as of May 15th, 9,298 high quality laptops have been delivered to 173 high schools to replace aged computers in their computer labs.

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Here is an example of a handover of laptops for the computer lab at Ferncourt High School, my alma mater.



Madam Speaker, If I am overly dwelling on technology, it's because....



In seven years, the children graduating from primary schools today will be the new entrants into the workforce; some will go to higher education.

Are we in a hurry to get our students fully equipped with access to technology? Yes, but let me hasten to say that technology is only a part of the broader STEAM

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(Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics) education that all of our students must have.

Last week, I visited this classroom at Jamaica College with 3rd formers. They were being given a demo of technology that we plan to implement in our classrooms. These 3rd formers received a lesson on the human eye anatomy from a Master Teacher for Science from Immaculate Conception High School.

The Master Teacher for Science was in the virtual space, the students were in the classroom with a teacher's aide, the electronic board was in the classroom. The 3rd formers engaged with the Master Teacher as they learned about the anatomy of the eye. The students were excited at the possibilities.

I want us to think about this for a while. The Master Teacher for Science from Immaculate Conception High School could easily be engaging with students from Holy Trinity High School. The Jamaica Education Transformation Commission report calls on us to use technology to transform education. We have started!

Vision for School Infrastructure

Madam Speaker, I switch now to School Infrastructure, which is an important part of the education transformation. Many of our schools were constructed many decades ago and they served their purpose then. Today, we need a new vision of school infrastructure and we have to set out to rebuild or remake our schools that have fallen behind in their infrastructure development. It is not beyond us. It will take time but we want Jamaicans to keep this vision in mind.

Our aspirations are for our schools to be architecturally pleasing with lots of natural light streaming into the classrooms, for classrooms to have cooling or air-conditioning powered by renewable energy, of which we have plenty during school days, for there to be calming colours, pleasing classroom furniture and electronic boards rather than blackboards. Our schools should have properly equipped play fields for football

and netball and track and field. There can be other amenities such as tennis court or possibly swimming pools as alumni groups see fit but there must be a minimum provided by the government for all schools.

Here are just some examples. These pictures capture the essence of that vision. **Madam Speaker**, I know we already have schools right here in Jamaica that fit this vision, but just a few. We want a major transformation of our schools' infrastructure.



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Cristel House Jamaica



Entrance of Cristel House



Union Gardens Infant School

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Union Gardens Infant School



Innova School - Peru

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You see **Madam Speaker**, STEAM education means the infrastructure of our schools must be aesthetically pleasing as well. I believe schools should look better than the homes from which our students come. That's our vision. Yes, **Madam Speaker**, while we must maintain the existing network of schools, we have to transition to schools that beckon our students because of the design of the schools and pleasing nature of the classrooms, the playfields, the labs, and even the sanitary facilities. That is our vision of the physical infrastructure of schools.

To really transform the infrastructure of our schools, we must embrace the STEAM concept in the design of our schools. In the near future, **Madam Speaker**, Jamaicans will begin to see construction of schools with different designs than we are used to seeing. The location at Bernard Lodge, home of a future STEAM school, will be the beginning of that transformation of the infrastructure of education. The pre-construction work has already begun.



Current Maintenance and Infrastructure Needs

In the meantime, while we hold this vision in our minds and are working toward it, we know we have to attend to the immediate maintenance needs of schools now in 2023. For the first time, in the education sector we are making public a listing of all the maintenance work that happened last year, what's underway and what is expected in this fiscal year. The infrastructure budget of the MoEY for fencing, electrical works, emergency maintenance, larger infrastructure works is roughly \$1.5 billion this fiscal year just to keep the existing schools functional.

ELECTRICAL AND FENCING CAPITAL PROJECTS

Under the 2023/2024 Primary and Secondary Infrastructure Project (PSIP) a budgetary allocation of \$317 million was provided for electrical upgrading in 49 schools and construction of security fencing in 56 schools.



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2023/2024 Electrical upgrading Projects

Forty-nine (49) schools

Budget of \$244,000,000

• **Carried forward projects:**

1. Priory Primary & Infant
2. Tarrant High
3. Alston High
4. Little London Primary
5. Savanna-la-mar Primary
6. Holmwood Technical High
7. McGrath High
8. Seaforth High
9. Spanish Town High
10. Guys Hill High
11. Bridgeport High
12. Edwin Allen High
13. Jonathan Grant High
14. Charlie Smith High
15. St. Mary Technical

• **New projects for Design Consultancy**

16. Kingston Technical
17. Papine High
18. Oberlin High
19. Mona High
20. Holy Trinity High
21. Haile Selassie High
22. Mountain View Primary
23. Fair Prospect High
24. Brimmer-Vale High
25. Marcus Garvey Technical High
26. Brown's Town High
27. Aabuthnott Gallimore High
28. William Knibb
29. Somerton All Age & Infant
30. Bickersteth Primary & Infant
31. Knockalva Polytechnic College
32. Bethabara Primary & JH
33. Winston Jones High
34. New Forest High
35. May Day High
36. Black River Primary & Infant
37. Nain High
38. Aberdeen High
39. Maggoty High
40. B.B. Coke High

41. St. Elizabeth Technical
42. Santa Cruz Primary & Junior High
43. Glengoffe High
44. Cumberland High
45. Jose Marti High
46. Lennon High
47. Exchange Primary
48. Albert Town High
49. Cedric Titus High

FENCING PROJECT

Construction of security fencing projects

Fifty-six (56) schools

Budget \$73,000,000

• **Carried forward projects:**

1. Victoria Primary
2. Priory Primary & Infant
3. Kingston High
4. Eccleston Primary
5. Naggo Head Primary
6. Golden Spring Primary
7. Annotto Bay High
8. Parry Town Primary
9. Bridgeport Primary
10. Retirement Primary

• **New projects for Design Consultancy**

11. Jacks Hill Primary
12. Lawrence Tavern Primary
13. Rennock Lodge Primary
14. Airy Castle Primary
15. Amity Hall Primary
16. Prospect Primary
17. Thornton Primary
18. Robert Lightbourne High
19. Parry Town Primary
20. Annotto Bay High
21. Hoolebury Primary
22. Aboukir Primary
23. Daniel Town Primary
24. Adelphi Primary
25. Niagara All Age
26. Cove Primary
27. Bethel Infant
28. Paul Island Primary
29. Bethel Town Primary

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30. St. Paul Primary
31. Retirement Primary
32. Fairfield Primary
33. Plowden All Age
34. Mountainside Primary
35. Parottee All Age
36. Bartons Primary
37. Crescent Primary
38. Lluidas Vale All Age
39. Sargeantville All Age
40. May Pen Infant
41. Mount Airy Primary & Infant
42. Rock Primary
43. Rock River Primary
44. Salt Savannah Primary & Infant
45. Sanguinetti Primary
46. Smithville Primary
47. John's Hall Primary
48. Galina Primary & Infant
49. Windsor Forrest Primary
50. Mount Nebo Primary
51. Grateful Hill Primary
52. Brixton Hill Primary
53. Ebenezer Primary
54. Port Royal Primary
55. McAuley Primary
56. Mile Gully Primary

The goal is to increase the transparency of what we are doing at the Ministry of Education and Youth.

CRITICAL MAINTENANCE AND INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAMME

Madam Speaker, for financial year just ended, 2022/2023, critical maintenance and infrastructure works were carried out in 130 schools at a cost of three hundred and five million, two hundred and ninety thousand, six hundred and seventeen thousand dollars and sixteen cents (\$305,290,617.16)

For 2023/2024, a budgetary allocation of four hundred and forty million dollars (\$440 million) has been provided for the Critical Maintenance and Infrastructure Programme for repairs to sanitary facilities, electrical systems, roofs, termite treatment, and any other critical matters as well as for balance of payments of carried forward projects

and for other maintenance activities across the seven Regions.

The Major infrastructure works are as follows in Table 1:

Table 1

PROGRAMME	PROJECTS	SCOPE	STATUS
PSIP (Infrastructure)	Kingston College	Completion of computer laboratories, library/resource centre	Partial Completion inspection was achieved on August 5, 2022; Taking Over Certificate issued September 14, 2022
	Black River High	a. Construction of Classroom Block Phase II- Construction of 8 classrooms	a. Contract commenced October 27, 2021 for the classroom block. Works 90% completed. Practical completion achieved February 24, 2023.
		b. Construction of wastewater treatment facility	b. Construction of the Wastewater Treatment Facility contract commenced on October 24, 2022 and project is 50% complete as at March 31, 2023. The School will be able to remove the shift system for the upcoming academic year with the implementation of these projects.
	Edwin Allen High	Construction of Classroom Block	The Taking Over (Practical Completion) Certificate Inspection was issued on July 1, 2022, effective June 23, 2022. The Defects Liability period is 1 year.
PSIP (Infrastructure)	Bridgeport High	Construction of classroom Block - Construction of 8 Classroom Blocks including office and sanitary facilities	Cabinet approval was received & letter of award is to be issued to the contractor. Anticipate commencement of construction in May 2023.
	Exchange All Age	Construction of classroom block (5 classrooms)	Awaiting Parish Council Approval. Anticipated submission to Cabinet during May 2023
	Albert Town High	Construction of Classroom block - Construction of 5 classrooms, including administrative area, sanitary facilities, upgrading of existing sewage disposal system and external works	Awaiting Parish Council Approval. Anticipated submission to Cabinet during May 2023
	Cedric Titus High	Construction of classroom block- Construction of 4 classrooms, including 1 science lab, 1 industrial lab, 1 auto mechanic administrative area, sanitary facilities, upgrading of existing sewage disposal system and external works	Awaiting Parish Council Approval. Anticipated submission to Cabinet during May 2023

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PROGRAMME	PROJECTS	SCOPE	STATUS
PSIP (Infrastructure)	Albert Town High	Construction of Classroom block - Construction of 5 classrooms, including administrative area, sanitary facilities, upgrading of existing sewage disposal system and external works	Awaiting Parish Council Approval. Anticipated submission to Cabinet during May 2023
	Cedric Titus High	Construction of classroom block - Construction of 4 classrooms, including 1 science lab, 1 industrial lab, 1 auto mechanic administrative area, sanitary facilities, upgrading of existing sewage disposal system and external works	Awaiting Parish Council Approval. Anticipated submission to Cabinet during May 2023
	Padine High	a. Construction of classroom Block - Modification of existing building to accommodate change rooms, food preparation area, staff and student dining, sanitary facilities, external work & construction of two upper floors consisting of 14 classrooms and stairwells. b. Electricals for the completion of computer labs, library/resource centre c. Construction of wastewater treatment facility	Architect led Consultant to be engaged to do the development plan for the school. In the process of acquisition of lands to facilitate the re-development plans. Awaiting divestment decision by National Water Commission for lands identified for the project. Construction of the Wastewater Treatment Facility is awaiting Parish Council Approval
	Denham Town High School -	Demolition of defective structures and construction of classrooms, Laboratories, amenities	Architect led Consultant has been engaged to prepare designs & BQ's for the project. Letter of Award issued March 13, 2023
	Port Antonio High	a. Construction of classroom block and modification of existing buildings - Construction of a ten (10) classroom block, including for one (1) Integrated	Designs are being finalised for procurement in June 2023

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PROGRAMME	PROJECTS	SCOPE	STATUS
PSIP (Infrastructure)		science lab, one (1) music room, reading lab, art room, and renovation of existing facilities to accommodate canteen, tuck-shop, physical education and sports area, sanitary facilities b. River Training Works	
	Stony Hill Academy	Construction of classroom block	Architect led Consultant has been engaged to prepare designs & BQ's for the project. Letter of Award issued March 13, 2023
	Boundbrook Primary School	Construction of 4 classroom block	Architect led Consultant has been engaged to prepare designs & BQ's for the project. Letter of Award issued March 13, 2023
	Westwood High	Construction of multi-purpose facility	M-F-P Consultant to finalise designs to facilitate procurement for construction. Consultancy commenced March 20, 2023 with anticipated completion of 5 months.
	Holmwood Technical High	Construction of classroom Block - Construction of 10 Classroom Blocks including office and sanitary facilities	Parish Council approval received April 11, 2023. Awaiting Cabinet Approval. Anticipate commencement of construction in June 2023.
	Aberdeen High School	Construction of classroom block- Construct 2 classrooms, 1 Clothing & Textile Lab, 1 Wood Work and 2 Science Lab	Architect led Consultant has been engaged to prepare designs & BQ's for the project. Letter of Award issued March 13, 2023
	New Forrest High School	Construction of classroom block- Construction of 1 Science lab, 1 Electrical, 1 Auto Mechanic workshop, 1 IT, 1 Visual Arts, 1 Foods, 1 Clothing, 1 Technical Drawing	Architect led Consultant has been engaged to prepare designs & BQ's for the project. Letter of Award issued March 13, 2023
	Nain High	Construction of classroom block- 3 classrooms, IT, 1 Home Management room, 1 Visual Arts, 1 Electrical, 1 Auto Mechanics Workshop, 1 Computer room, 1	Architect led Consultant has been engaged to prepare designs & BQ's for the project. Letter of Award issued March 13, 2023

EDUCATIONAL TRANSFORMATION IN PROGRESS

PROGRAMME	PROJECTS	SCOPE	STATUS
PSIP (Infrastructure)		Cosmetology, 1 Welding lab	
	Belair High School	Construction of classroom block	Architect led Consultant has been engaged to prepare designs & BQ's for the project. Letter of Award issued March 13, 2023
	Newell High	Construction of classroom block	To be tendered June 2023
	Sydney Pagon High (Chairlift) -	Installation of Chairlift	To be tendered
	Dias Infant School	Construction of infant school	Designs being finalised
	Jonathan Grant High	Construction of classroom block	To be tendered June 2023
	Discovery Bay	Replacement School plant required	Lands being finalised to prepare project documents. Project to move to PSIP II for project development
PSIP TOTAL	\$648.924M		

a. Education Transformation Project (ETP)

The details for ETP are captured in Table 2 below:

Table 2:

PROGRAMME	PROJECTS	SCOPE	STATUS
ETP	Mt. Joseph High St.	3 rd & 4 th Form Block	Retendered March 23, 2023. Clarification deadline May 17, 2023. Submission date May 24, 2023.
		Installation of Chairlifts on existing blocks	
		Construction of Administrative Block	
		Auditorium	Consultant to prepare designs procurement commenced in the 2022/23 financial year and the submission deadline was March 17, 2023. Eight (8) bids were received and evaluation is on-going.

EDUCATIONAL TRANSFORMATION IN PROGRESS

Region 1				
2022/2023 CARRIED FORWARD PROJECTS				
ITEM	NAME OF SCHOOL	SCOPE OF WORKS & CONTRACT SUM	BALANCE ON CONTRACT	STATUS
REGION 1 - \$18,960,873.50				
1	Golden Spring Primary	Repairs roof and sanitary facilities - contract sum \$18,734,999.00	\$12,559,673.50	95% completed. (Part payment made)
3	Trench Town Primary	Re-sheeting of roof (Block A) – contract sum: \$6,401,200.00	\$6,401,200.00	95% Complete
REGION 2 - \$32,644,410.00				
4	Port Maria Primary	Repairs to infrastructure damage by flooding - contract sum \$10,210,800.00	\$1,074,600.00	100% Completed (Part payment made)
5	Port Maria Primary	Repairs reinforced concrete roof slab and waterproofing, Replacement of Windows – contract sum: \$16,081,250.00	\$16,081,250.00	25% Completed
6	Titchfield High (Phase 1)	Replacement of defective metal staircase - contract sum: \$6,837,250.00	\$6,837,250.00	35% Completed
7	Iona High	Emergency Rehabilitation of Administrative Block Damaged By Fire - Contract sum: \$9,885,624.00	\$697,000.00	100% Completed
8	Oracabessa Primary	Emergency Repairs to Damaged Sanitation Blocks - contract sum: \$5,570,000.00	\$5,570,000.00	40% Completed
REGION 3 - \$59,834,336.00				
9	Brown's Town Model Infant	Replacement of defective windows and doors in Classrooms, Electrical and plumbing, Construction of Play Area and Security Fencing - Contract sum: \$18,380,822.00	\$18,380,822.00	Project to commence
10	Runaway Bay Primary	Repairs to defective 'L' Shaped building and Replacement of Termite Infested Woodwork - contract sum: \$11,152,550.00	\$11,152,550.00	100% Completed
11	Steer Town Primary	Treatment of Termite Infestation. Repairs to Leaking Roofs and		
		Replacement of Termite Infested Woodwork – contract sum \$13,250,600.00	\$13,250,600.00	Project commence
12	Discovery Bay	Modification of existing building for two (2) additional classroom - \$17,050,364.00	\$17,050,364.00	Project to commence
REGION 4 - \$8,236,590.00				
13	Chamber Pen All Age	Major renovation and termite treat of main building - contract sum \$20,281,600.00	\$7,671,400.00	100% Completed (Part payment made)
14	St Paul Primary	Waterproofing of concrete slab roof on Admin/resource building – contract sum: \$565,190.00	\$565,190.00	100% Completed
REGION 5 - \$17,813,667.35				
15	Chantilly Primary	Re-roofing and renovation of the main classroom block consisting of the canteen to include but not limited to removal and replacement of termite infested boards and partitions, concrete work, tiling, welding works, electrical works, and pest control treatment - contract sum: \$10,403,973.60	\$6,231,973.35	95% Completed
16	Holland Primary	Renovation to student bathroom block to include but not limited to re-roofing, replacement of defective ceiling boards, plumbing and sewage works and electrical works. – contract sum: \$5,350,000.00	\$5,350,000.00	30% Completed
17	Aberdeen High	Rehabilitation of damaged infrastructure caused by freak storm to include Renovation and Re-roofing		
REGION 6 - \$9,421,250.00				
18	Spanish Town Primary	Waterproofing of roof slab – contract sum \$7,502,886.00	\$334,920.00	100% Completed
19	Port Henderson Primary	Repairs to Roof - contract sum: \$10,060,950.00	\$1,786,250.00	100% Completed (Part payment made)
20	Gregory Park Primary	Construction of security Fence - \$5,494,800.00	\$2,386,600.00	85% Completed (Part payment made)
21	Greater Portmore High	Fencing of section school - contract sum \$15,956,000.00	\$4,914,400.00	85% Completed (Part payment made)

EDUCATIONAL TRANSFORMATION IN PROGRESS

REGION 7 - \$14,844,674.70			
22	Garvey Maceo High	Waterproofing of roof and covering of corridor way - contract sum: \$6,266,961.00	\$6,266,961.00 100% Completed
23	Chapleton Primary	Proposed Clearance of Over Grown Vegetation & Installation of Windows and Doors - contract sum: \$5,997,477.60	\$5,997,477.60 15% Completed
24	Clarendon College	Proposed Repairs to roof of sixth form block & Administrative Block Roof - Contract sum: \$12,709,452.00	\$2,680,236.10 100% Completed
TOTAL:			\$161,755,801.55

TABLE 3

2023/2024 MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME - \$68M			
ITEM	NAME OF SCHOOL	SCOPE OF WORKS & CONTRACT SUM	STATUS
REGION 1			
1	Vauxhall High School	Heightening of security boundary fence	Project tendered, approved and contract to be awarded
REGION 4			
2	Irwin Primary	Termite treatment and repairs to roof repairs.	Site assessment done and estimate completed to go tender
3	Mannings High	Upgrade sewage disposal system.	Site assessment done and estimate being prepared
REGION 5			
4	Mile Gully High	Retro-fitting of existing space for computer lab	Project Tendered
REGION 6			
5	St. Jago High	Re-sheeting of roof Admin. and electrical repairs	Estimate being revised
6	Mt. Hermon Primary	Re-sheeting of roof and electrical repairs.	Site assessment done and estimate to be prepared
REGION 7			
7	Foga Road High	Completion of three Classrooms for Sixth (6 th) Form	Tender Report to be submitted Regional Procurement Committee

OTHER ACTIONS/INTERVENTIONS FOR SCHOOLS			
ITEM	NAME OF SCHOOL	SCOPE OF WORKS & CONTRACT SUM	STATUS
1	Clan Carthy Primary	Relocation of Service Entrance	Work commenced and stopped. Awaiting Kingston and St. Andrew Municipal Corporation approval to re-commence.
2	Retirement Primary	Fencing	On 2023-24 Fencing programme and at the pre-contract stage.
3	Homestead Primary	Paving of school yard, repairs to buildings and construction of entrance.	Site visited, assessed and estimate for paving of school yard completed and to go to tender Wednesday May 10, 2023. Other estimates to be completed. Structural engineer visited and assessed the southern boundary wall to determine the structural integrity.
4	St. Catherine High	Section of security fencing collapsed	Site visit and assessment made by Building Officer and estimate to be completed. However, the Ministry's structural engineer will visit to assess the structural integrity of the other adjoining walls.
5	Bustamante High	Security fencing issues	To be included in the fencing programme.

EDUCATIONAL TRANSFORMATION IN PROGRESS

2023 – 2024 CAPITAL PROJECTS (FENCING AND ELECTRICAL UPGRADING) - Additional Details

2023/2024 Primary and Secondary Infrastructure Project (PSIP)

- Westwood High School – Complete modification of Science Lab – project 95% completed. Additional work in progress, 15% completed

2023/2024 Electrical upgrading Projects - Forty-seven (47) schools

Budget of \$244,000,000.00

- Carry forward Renovation works projects: Tarrant High – project practically completed, additional work identified for completion of the project. Request for approval being finalized. Priory Primary & Infant – project practically completed, awaiting connection of the JPS upgraded service.

Little London and Savanna-la-mar Primary, McGrath, Alston, Seaforth, and Holmwood Technical High schools – Revision of bid documents completed, bid reference number assigned and the projects are to be retendered,

- Carry forward Consultancy for Works projects Work under the consultant contracts for Charlie Smith High and St. Mary Technical High schools are completed and the Final accounts are being finalized.
- New projects for Design Consultancy
 - Guys Hill and Spanish Town High Schools – work in progress 20% completed.
 - Glengoffe and Jonathan Grant High Schools – bid report completed and submitted to the Regional Procurement Committee for approval.
 - The term of reference and bid document for the procurement of the design consultants is completed and the projects are to be tendered for the following schools;

1. Kingston, Technical
2. Papine High
3. Oberlin High
4. Mona High
5. Holy Trinity High
6. Haile Selassie High
7. Fair Prospect High
8. Brimmer-Vale High
9. Marcus Garvey Technical
10. Browns Town High
11. Abuhnott Gallimore
12. William Knib
13. Somerton All Age & Infant
14. Knockalava Polytechnic College
15. Bickersteth Primary & Infant
16. Bethabara Primary & Infant
17. Black Primary & Infant
18. St. Elizabeth Technical
19. Santa Cruz Primary & Junior High
20. Aberdeen High
21. Nain High
22. B.B. Coke High
23. New Forest High
24. Winston Jones High
25. May Day High
26. Cumberland High
27. Bridgeport High
28. Jose Marti High
29. Lennon High
30. Edwin Allen High
31. Exchange Primary
32. Albert Town
33. Cedric Titus

FENCING PROJECT

Construction of security fencing Project at Fifty-six (56) Schools
Budget \$73,000,000.00

Carry forward Construction projects

- Papine High - work is completed, and the final account is being prepared.
- Priory Primary and Infant – the project is practically completed, additional works to allow completion are being verified.

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- Victoria Town Primary – the project is practically completed, and additional work in progress. 15% completed.
- Kingston High, Eccleston, Naggo Head, and Bridgeport Primary schools - bid documents completed and bid reference number assigned and projects are to be tendered

Fifteen (15) schools are carried forward for pre-contract activities,

- Land surveying services and designs are completed, and preliminary estimates are being prepared for the following seven (7) schools, Ebenezer, Mount Hannah, Mount Nebo, Grateful Hill, Brixton Hill, Golden Spring, and Galina Primary & Infant.
- Land surveying services are to be completed at Parry Town, McAuley, and Port Royal Primary.
- Designs are being completed for Johns Hall and Windsor Forrest Primary

Thirty-Six (36) schools are identified for pre-contract activities.

- Package 2: Annotto Bay High, Hoolebury, Aboukir, Daniel Town, Adelphi Primary, and Niagara All Age schools – Land surveying works are 20% completed.
- Package 5, Bartons, Crescent Primary, Lluidas Vale, and Sargeantville All Age – contract signed and the sites handed over to the Land surveyor. Work to commence.
- Package 4: Cove, Paul Island, Bethel Town, St. Paul Primary, and Bethel Infant schools – work in progress, 85% completed
- Package 6: May Pen Infant, Salt Savannah, Mount Airy Primary & Infant, Rock, Rock River, Sanguinetti, and Smithville Primary schools – work in progress, 20% completed.
- Fairfield, Mountainside Primary, Plowden All Age and Parottee All Age schools, - approval for the engagement of the Land surveyor, and contract document being prepared.

Terms of reference for the engagement of Land Surveying services completed, and bids are to be invited the week of May 1, 2023, for the following eight (8) schools:

1. Lawrence Tavern,
2. Jacks Hill Primary,
3. Rennock Lodge All-Age
4. Airy Castle Primary
5. Amity Hall Primary and Infant
6. Prospect Primary
7. Thornton Primary
8. Robert Lightbourne High
9. Spot Valley High
10. Homestead Primary

CAPITAL PORTFOLIO

For the 2022/23 financial year, the infrastructure development programme was designed to enhance the teaching and learning environment of our schools. All projects are designed to fulfil the plans for the elimination of the shift system, the reduction of overcrowding in schools and adequate provision of school places/spaces.

For the financial year, the Capital Portfolio consists of three (3) major programmes, namely the Primary and Secondary Infrastructure Project (PSIP), For the 2023/24 financial year, the National Education Trust (NET) priority areas as follows:

1. Infrastructure Development Policy and Codified Building Standards:

Given the changes in building standards, the requirement for conducive teaching and learning environments and the need to ensure that our school infrastructure is resilient, inclusive and climate smart, an appropriate policy is required to guide the sector. An infrastructure development policy is being drafted through a consultancy.

In addition, with the infusion of STEAM and ICT in the sector, NET has prioritised the development of the building standards under the Education System Transformation II (STEAM Project). Here we anticipate an infusion of Green Building standards, climate resilient infrastructure, renewable energy, water harvesting and sanitation, while focusing on mechanisms to reduce maintenance cost for schools.

EDUCATIONAL TRANSFORMATION IN PROGRESS

2. Strategic Infrastructure Development Plan:

In conjunction with the MoEY, NET is developing a comprehensive infrastructure development plan for the education sector. The plan is premised on the need to eliminate the shift system, provide 21st century teaching and learning environment, reduce overcrowding, provide additional quality school spaces and enhance the existing infrastructure of schools.

In addition, the Climate Resilient School Concept (Green School) has been integrated into the infrastructure development plans to ensure sustainable planning, design, construction, operation and maintenance of school buildings in Jamaica. “Green” or “sustainable” buildings use key resources such as energy, water, materials and land more efficiently than traditional buildings which are simply designed and constructed to building standards. Elements of green design being incorporated include renewable energy, efficiency and waste diversion.

The Strategic Infrastructure Development Plan incorporates the build out of new schools, expansion and upgrading of existing schools, construction of replacement plants and the integration of technology, climate resilient policy, the Disabilities Act and renewable energy and water harvesting. The demand for school spaces is one element driving the strategy for infrastructure development. Other key areas are as follows:

- Increased involvement in the early childhood sector by the Government of Jamaica;
- Streamlining of secondary education and training by way of an additional two (2) years at the secondary level.
- Provision of critical facilities such as science and ICT laboratories and workshops for technical vocational training;
- Implementation of STEAM methodologies and the provision of an environment conducive to STEAM education; and
- Enhancement of the school environment through the integration of alternative energy sources, water harvesting, green technology and climate resilient infrastructure.

STRATEGIES OF THE PLAN

b. Primary and Secondary Schools Infrastructure Project (PSIP) Phase I

The main purpose of the project is to improve schools’ infrastructure to enhance the teaching/learning environment and to create a more equitable and inclusive education system. This will be facilitated through the expansion and upgrading of the physical infrastructure of schools, including science laboratories, technical and vocational workshops, information technology laboratories, upgrading of the electrical systems and energy efficiency, installation of fixtures and facilities to support physically challenged students, improving the safety and security of the school property by fencing.

Madam Speaker, the target is the expansion of 23 primary and secondary schools, electrical upgrade to additional 48 schools and fencing in 56 schools.

For the 2022/23 financial year, NET completed work on three (3) expansion projects (Kingston College, Edwin Allen High and Black River High) and commenced work on the wastewater project for Black River High. Of note, the work at Black River will facilitate the removal of the shift system in the upcoming academic year.

For the 2023/24 financial year, under PSIP I, construction is slated to commence at Bridgeport High to facilitate removal of the shift system, Holmwood Technical High, Exchange All Age, Cedric Titus High and Albert Town High. Pre-contract activities will be undertaken at Nain High, New Forest High, Belair High, Denham Town High, Port Antonio High, Stony Hill Academy, Boundbrook Academy, Dias Infant, Westwood High, Aberdeen High, Papine High, Jonathan Grant High and Newell High.

The aim for projects in the design phase is to have all of them incorporating Climate Resilient features for green buildings and supporting smart technology. The design elements should provide for Water Harvesting, Energy Efficiency, Information and Communication Technology – ICT, Disabilities Access as per requirement of the Disabilities Act and be ADA compliant as well as

EDUCATIONAL TRANSFORMATION IN PROGRESS

incorporate features for improved natural ventilation and lighting as well as circulation spaces, for both internal and external facility.

Madam Speaker, the PSIP budget for the 2023/24 financial year is One Billion, Fifty-Eight Million, Six Hundred and Thirty-Seven Thousand Dollars (\$1.058 Billion).

c. Education System Transformation Project II STEAM Project

Madam Speaker, this project is designed to catapult the national strategy for education development through the mainstreaming of STEAM at the secondary level.

Timeline: - Estimated to be executed over eight (8) years.

Target: - 6 STEM and 1 Performing Arts Academies to be constructed

d. Infrastructure Project Development

NET is also developing other projects to meet the needs in the education sector. The priority projects for concept and project development are as follows:

• EARLY CHILDHOOD MODERNISATION INSTITUTION PROJECT

The MoEY intends to increase the number of early childhood spaces in the public school system through the provision of more Government operated early childhood institutions (ECIs).

Critical to this is the improvement of infrastructure, through upgrading, renovation and/or expansion of the physical infrastructure of schools. This includes, upgrading of utility systems: electricity, energy efficiency and data, water and wastewater systems and sanitary facilities, installation of fixtures and facilities to support access for persons with disabilities and improving the safety and security of school properties by fencing.

Madam Speaker, the first draft of the project concept was submitted to the Public Investment and Appraisal Branch (PIAB) of the Ministry of Finance and the Public

Service (MOFPS) for evaluation in September 2022, and in December the PIAB provided a checklist for completion to facilitate an evaluation of the project concept. Based on this review, the document was amended and the revised document was submitted to the PIAB's Assessment in February 2023 to facilitate inclusion on the next PIMC agenda.

In the month of March, follow up meetings were held with PIAB's PDSS UNIT on the concept proposal for the approval of upgrading of ECIs across the seven Regions.

• PRIMARY AND SECONDARY INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT PHASE II

Approximately 60 schools are targeted for major infrastructure expansion, which will include Greenfield facilities (new or full replacement of schools' plants) and Brownfield facilities (major expansion and renovation and rehabilitation of existing schools' plants).

• SPECIAL NEEDS INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

The concept for this project is to be developed in the 2023/24 financial year. The aim is to build, upgrade, renovate and rehabilitate the physical infrastructure of schools to support persons with disabilities in conformance with the Disabilities Act.

• 6th FORM INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

The purpose of the project is to:

- Improve and expand the infrastructure of secondary schools;
- Bring schools in line with the 21st-century teaching/ learning environment; and
- Create a more resilient, equitable and inclusive education system with focus to facilitate the extended access to secondary level education.

This will be facilitated through the upgrading, renovation and expansion of the physical infrastructure of schools for the sixth form programme.

EDUCATIONAL TRANSFORMATION IN PROGRESS

Timeline: - Estimated to be executed over five (5) years subsequent to the receipt of the relevant approvals.

Target: - 171 Secondary schools

• EDUCATION MAJOR INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

The purpose of the project is to improve the infrastructure of primary and secondary schools, to bring the school's infrastructure in line with the 21st Century teaching/ learning environment and to create a more resilient, equitable and inclusive education system.

This will be facilitated through the upgrading, renovation and rehabilitation of the physical infrastructure of schools including teaching and learning spaces and other supporting facilities, upgrading of the utility services; electrical systems, water systems, and data connectivity, upgrading of the sanitary and waste water facilities, improve energy efficiency, improving security and safety; fencing, improving access by the installation roadway, the installation of Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment (FFE) and to support persons with disabilities in conformance with the Disabilities Act.

Timeline: - Estimated to be executed over five (5) years subsequent to the receipt of the relevant approvals.

Target: - 550 Secondary and Primary Schools across the island

The Vastness of the Education System in our Context

Madam Speaker, the Ministry of Education and Youth serves 1,010 public primary and secondary schools, seven (7) Educational Regions, 14 Agencies and 10 Divisions. Collectively, these cater to over four hundred and ten thousand Students (410,000) students; Twenty-Five Thousand Seven Hundred (25,700) teachers and principals, supported by caregivers, administrative and ancillary staff across the sectors and institutions. When we include the 107,337 children in the early childhood sector, those numbers increase to 517, 337 students and 37,121 teachers and caregivers. Add tertiary or higher education to this and you see the enormity of the education sector in our context.

Budget of the education sector

The recurrent budget of the Ministry of Education and Youth for this fiscal year 2023/24 is \$143.6 billion dollars compared to \$118.5 billion dollars in fiscal 2021/2022.



2023-2024 Jamaica Budget

Head 41000 - Ministry of Education and Youth

\$ '000

Head 41000 - Ministry of Education and Youth
Budget 1 - Recurrent

Function/ Sub-Function/ Programme	Provisional Expenditure 2021-2022	Approved Estimates 2022-2023	Revised Estimates 2022-2023	Authorized by Law	Estimates 2023-2024	Estimates 2024-2025	Estimates 2025-2026	Estimates 2026-2027
Analysis of Expenditure								
21 Compensation of Employees	80,233,847.0	84,951,872.0	101,238,053.0	-	101,238,053.0	101,238,053.0	101,238,053.0	101,238,053.0
22 Travel Expenses and Subsistence	2,950,530.0	224,734.0	664,763.0	-	224,014.0	204,989.0	204,989.0	204,989.0
23 Rental of Property and Machinery	130,401.0	132,259.0	132,259.0	-	137,577.0	147,209.0	154,098.0	162,778.0
24 Utilities and Communication Services	1,665,606.0	1,599,368.0	2,099,368.0	-	2,600,113.0	3,771,459.0	4,179,197.0	5,167,301.0
25 Use of Goods and Services	4,119,079.0	4,071,523.0	4,921,141.0	-	5,192,042.0	5,696,729.0	6,037,607.0	6,274,589.0
27 Grants, Contributions and Subsidies	18,653,658.0	16,373,137.0	17,909,029.0	-	18,325,146.0	19,277,852.0	20,105,745.0	21,140,924.0
28 Retirement Benefits	10,815.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
29 Awards and Social Assistance	10,142,897.0	11,883,884.0	12,253,884.0	-	14,234,675.0	14,249,822.0	14,815,277.0	14,821,616.0
32 Fixed Assets (Capital Goods)	609,212.0	593,440.0	259,467.0	-	1,616,740.0	1,140,962.0	1,186,310.0	1,214,938.0
Total Budget 1 - Recurrent	118,516,045.0	119,830,217.0	139,477,964.0	-	143,568,360.0	145,727,075.0	147,921,276.0	150,225,188.0
Less Appropriations-In-Aid	400,000.0	605,000.0	605,000.0	-	630,000.0	605,000.0	605,000.0	605,000.0
Net Total Budget 1 - Recurrent	118,116,045.0	119,225,217.0	138,872,964.0	-	142,938,360.0	145,122,075.0	147,316,276.0	149,620,188.0

EDUCATIONAL TRANSFORMATION IN PROGRESS

Compensation of employees accounts for \$101.2 billion, up from \$80.2 billion, a 26% increase. Except for some anomalies that the JTA President brought to our attention recently, all teachers should be in receipt of the new compensation as well as the increase in April and their retroactive salaries.

Across the 7 regions, our regional directors continue to give leadership to the heavy lifting required to organize, scan and upload the electronic version of mountains of paper files into the Government's myHR+ platform to enable greater efficiencies and ease the burden on teachers when they want a pay advice or a job letter or to see how accurate is the information that the Ministry of Education and Youth has about their service in the education sector. By now everyone should be aware of the direct connection between central ministry efficiency and teachers' financial well being in the classroom.

Government Financial Management System (GFMS) in schools.

Additionally, **Madam Speaker**, the Ministry is moving to implement the Government Financial Management System (GFMS) in schools. A pilot will be done with the help of the Accountant General's Department (AcGD) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). This will improve the management of finances in schools.

The Jamaica Education Transformation Commission Report

Madam Speaker, the Ministry is committed to the transformation of education. As was announced last year, the Prime Minister named an Education Transformation Oversight Committee (ETOC). During the course of the past year, working in consort with ETOC headed by Dr. Adrian Stokes, the Ministry began the process of implementing recommendations from the Professor Orlando Patterson Jamaica led Education Transformation Commission Report. The Chairman has been meeting with the Ministry team on a weekly basis to ensure the work of the partners and the implementation team is moving ahead. Partners include the Mona School of Business that has been helping the Ministry to develop a costed

Implementation Plan and a Monitoring and Evaluation Learning Framework. The team and the Ministry have had a number of consultations with wide ranging stakeholders/groups before and after the draft plan and framework. The groups included principals, teachers, children, students, civil society groups, the International Development Partners and the private sector to get their views as we seek to decide the best means for implementation and the requisite resources including human, financial, technological resources, among others.

Madam Speaker, we are working towards the successful implementation process as education is the foundation on which all our creative and innovative skills are built and one which prepares our young people for the world of work and for life. A transformed education sector will undoubtedly contribute to a transformed Jamaican society.

To this end, the Ministry's mission of transformation must and will be predicated on providing a high quality administrative system that is responsive and effective and one that has greater accountability and relevance. It must be predicated on people who buy into and practice the tenets of respect, efficiency, high quality customer service, just to name a few good traits.

The JETC Report 2021 is divided into seven (7) broad thematic areas with over one hundred and ninety recommendations

1. Governance, Administration, Leadership and Legislation
2. Early Childhood Education
3. Curriculum, Teaching and Teacher Training
4. The Tertiary Sector
5. TVET in Jamaica
6. Infrastructure and Technology
7. Finance

EDUCATIONAL TRANSFORMATION IN PROGRESS

Over the last three decades, **Madam Speaker**, our people have become much more appreciative of the importance of the early years of a child’s education. Indeed, all of us can acknowledge that whatever learning gaps we see at the primary and secondary school level can be traced to inadequate support in the early years.

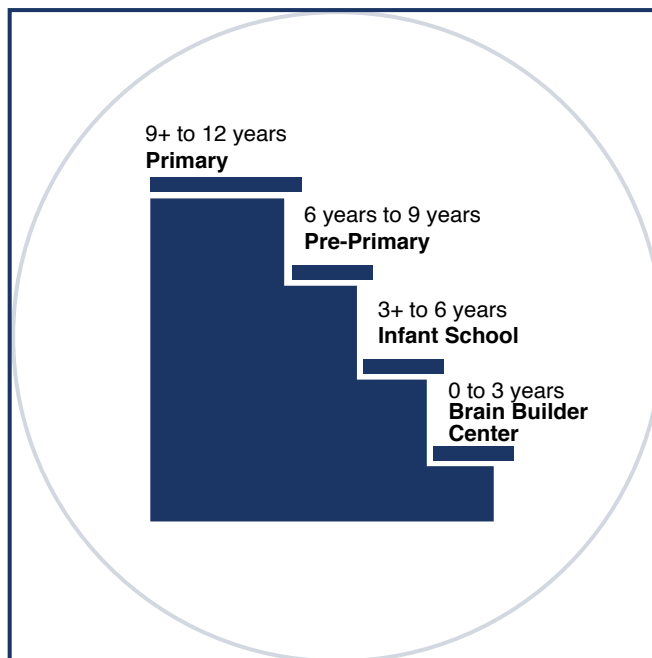
EARLY CHILDHOOD SECTOR

There are 2,319 early childhood institutions (ECIs) operating in Jamaica, classified as public/private, public, and private ECIs. Public/private ECIs are community owned ECIs such as basic schools that are supported by government subsidies. Public ECIs are owned and operated by the government - Infant Schools/ Departments, and private ECIs are privately owned and are not supported in any way by the government. There are 423 public ECIs and 1,896 private ECIs.

In ECC’s census for the academic year 2022/2023, total enrolment for the early childhood age cohort was 107,337 children. There were 11,421 early childhood practitioners (ECPs) and caregivers working in the sector.



Ages and Stages



It is important for parents to understand what happens at the various stages of their child’s development and what environment is best suited but more important, how they can influence their children’s educational success.

Brain Builder Centres - 0 -3 years (first one thousand days)

We continue to expand the Brain Builder Centers (BBC). The Brain Builder Centres are the MoEY’s on-going efforts to get more children into a structured environment at an earlier age than the legally required 3+ years. **Madam Speaker**, as a reminder and acknowledgement of the work of prior Ministers, the Ministry launched the Brain Builder Centre initiative in 2018 resulting from the 0-3 Strategy conceptual framework.

Research suggests that the first 1,000 days of a child’s life, from conception to 2 years, forms the foundation for optimum health and development. Without early intervention during this period, children’s health, social and cognitive capabilities are at risk of being

ENROLLMENT

Age Groups	Enrolment			
	Male	Female	Total	
0-11 Months		1345	567	1912
12-23 Months		1176	1198	2374
24-35 Months		4715	5049	9764
36-47 Months		14183	14141	28324
48-59 Months		16120	16120	32240
60-71 Months		15290	14686	29976
72+ Months		1540	1207	2747
Total		54369	52968	107337

Enrollment figures are based on the 2022-2023 ECI Census data.



Laying the Foundation - Early Childhood Education

Madam Speaker, the transformation of education requires that the society, as a whole, sees and appreciates education as a valued product that benefits the individual and the entire country. I believe all Jamaicans are seized of this and want the best education for their children.

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compromised. There is also brain research that shows that birth to age three are the most important years in a child's development. The work of trained practitioners in a Brain Builder Centre can cause children in this age range to reach developmental milestones faster. One of the main objectives of the initiative, **Madam Speaker**, is to widen access to quality early childhood education and services at no cost to parents. The centres welcome babies as young as three (3) months old.

Madam Speaker, the the 0-3 Strategy conceptual framework is premised on an analysis that also shows that children need services such as high quality and responsive parenting, based on a knowledge of child development, parenting education and support to ensure parents understand the importance of parenting on brain development; preventive and curative health care and anticipatory guidance; good nutrition; early stimulation and early learning opportunities; and protection from violence, abuse and neglect in all its forms.

Trained Practitioners in Brain Builder Centers

Madam Speaker, Brain Builder Centres have trained early childhood practitioners, provide the early stimulation, meaning activities that aid in developing motor skills, improving attention span, memory and curiosity of children. We encourage parents to seek out our Brain Builder Centers.

There are 127 Brain Builder Centers and we strongly encourage that parents get their children into an environment that allows them to explore and thus awaken skills and naturally develop abilities. Currently, we have 5% or 5,218 children in the 0 – 3 age range in our Brain Builder Centres. Others are in private day-cares which also provide valuable support for parent. We would like to see more children in Brain Builder Centres or Day-care facilities as we roll out more.

Madam Speaker, we are committed to building more Brain Builder Centres and continuing the implementation of this policy that the government launched five years ago and we are continuing to build on it. The plans are to expand the programme and 30 more centres are to be established in the 2023/24 financial year.

These are to be located as follows:

Kingston and St. Andrew -10

St. Catherine - 7

Clarendon - 4

St Mary - 4

St. Ann 2

St. James - 2

Manchester - 1

3+ - 6 Infant School

There is a requirement in law for parents to have their children in school once they turn 3 years of age. The choices available are the 423 government sponsored infant schools and departments of which we have or the 1,892 private early childhood institutions.

As you know, **Madam Speaker**, the Early Childhood Commission was conceived and started some 20 years ago to organize the early childhood sector so that we get better outcomes at the primary school level, secondary and tertiary.

The Jamaica Education Transformation Report calls on the government to have a bigger presence in the early childhood sector than it does now. We are moving apace to increase the number of Brain Builder Centers, increase the number of infant centers and infant departments and to work with the private providers to ensure standards are met.

We know that once the learning gaps open up in the early years of a child's life, the amount of work that we need to do to close it is tremendous. Therefore, for better learning and social and emotional development outcomes for children, we must make significant investment in the early years to establish a strong foundation for our children. That investment primarily comes in transitioning the early childhood sector so that we report higher numbers of early childhood institutions getting to certification year by year. Certification includes having trained practitioners, paying attention to safety and the needs of the children and allowing play in a stimulating environment.

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The Jamaica School Readiness Assessment

Madam Speaker, among the initiatives being used to help our children prepare for primary school is the Jamaica School Readiness Assessment, the Ages and Stages Questionnaire, Jamaica (ASQ-J) & Family Support Screening Tool (FSST). The suite of assessment relies heavily on astute professionals with sound knowledge of Early Childhood Development and who are committed to fulfilling the 3rd Internal Process of the National Strategic Plan which is early and effective screening, diagnostic and early intervention for at-risk children and households.

This year, **Madam Speaker**, 27,179 four-year-old children were assessed. Of this number:

- 17,161 or 63% of our four-year-old were deemed OK, not needing any intervention
- 7,673 or 28% were referred to 2nd-level screening ASQ-J.
- 2,345 or 9% are to be monitored in class because learning and behavioural problems were evident.



Madam Speaker, conscious of the value of early intervention, an Individual Learning Support Plan (ILSP) was developed to offer support to the children and their families. Further to this, an initiative is being developed by the ECC to support these families during the summer break before they transition to Grade 1. Emphasis will be on critical areas of greatest need.

OVERALL ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN

Categories	Total # Children	Percentage	Comments
Continue to Support the Children (No Action to be taken)	17,161	63%	Children who received this score will be supported without intervention.
Number of children to be Monitored in Class	2345	8.6%	Children who received this score will be closely monitored in the area(s) of concern.
Number of Children to be Referred for 2nd Level Screening ASQ-J	7673	28.2%	Children who received this score will be supported an individual intervention plan
Total	27179	100%	

CHILD BEHAVIOUR RATING SCALE

Categories	Total # Children	Percentage	Comments
Continue to Support the Children (No Action to be taken)	24361	89.6%	Children who received this score will be supported without intervention.
Number of children to be Monitored in Class	873	3.2%	Children who received this score will be closely monitored in the area(s) of concern.
Number of Children to be Referred for 2nd Level Screening ASQ-J	1945	7.2%	Children who received this score will be supported an individual intervention plan
Total	27179	100	

APPROACH TO LEARNING (SOCIAL EMOTIONAL)

Categories	Total # Children	Percentage	Comments
Continue to Support the Children (No Action to be taken)	23486	86.4%	Children who received this score will be supported without intervention.
Number of children to be Monitored in Class	1162	4.3%	Children who received this score will be closely monitored in the area(s) of concern.
Number of Children to be Referred for 2nd Level Screening ASQ-J	2531	9.3%	Children who received this score will be supported an individual intervention plan
Total	27179	100	

EARLY LITERACY

Categories	Total # Children	Percentage	Comments
Continue to Support the Children (No Action to be taken)	20,018	73.7%	Children who received this score will be supported without intervention.
Number of children to be Monitored in Class	1468	5.4%	Children who received this score will be closely monitored in the area(s) of concern.
Number of Children to be Referred for 2nd Level Screening ASQ-J	5693	20.9%	Children who received this score will be supported an individual intervention plan
Total	27179	100%	

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Early Numeracy			
Categories	Total # Children	Percentage	Comments
Continue to Support the Children (No Action to be taken)	19,370	71.3%	Children who received this score will be supported without intervention.
Number of children to be Monitored in Class	2049	7.5%	Children who received this score will be closely monitored in the areas of concern.
Number of Children to be Referred to 2 nd Level Learning (AL2)	5760	21.2%	Children who received this score will be supported an individual intervention plan
Total	27179	100%	

right environment for their protection and optimum development. Overall, at least 85% of all ECIs received a Permit to Operate. Resulting in the early childhood sector meeting the World Bank’s Monitoring Indicator.

Certificate of Registration: Nineteen (19) early childhood institutions have achieved a Certificate of Registration for the F/Y 2022-23. Overall, 302 early childhood institutions are certified (91 public and 211 private). This represents 13% of early childhood institutions in operation.

CAPACITY BUILDING FOR THE ECD SECTOR

The ECC has designed training programmes to equip early childhood practitioners, caregivers, and teachers with strategies and best practices to help them engage their children for optimum learning and development. The training programmes provide continuous professional development for teachers; equip teachers with the current pedagogy and classroom management strategies. The objective of Internal Process 5 of the National Strategic Plan (2018-2023), is to increase the number of Early Childhood Practitioners trained in early childhood development who are qualified to effectively deliver the early childhood curriculum

The Early Childhood Sector Met the World Bank’s Monitoring Indicator

Inspection: ECIs are monitored to improve the quality of early childhood development as set out in the Early Childhood Act and Regulations of 2005 measured against the 12 Standards of Operation, Management and Administration for ECIs. **Madam Speaker**, at the end of February 2023, one thousand and thirty-nine (1,039) inspections were conducted across 7 regions. This academic year saw the return of normality to the early childhood sector since the past two years’ inspection of ECIs were interrupted due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Permits to Operate: **Madam Speaker**, for the 2022/23 financial year, eighty-six (86) ECIs were issued a permit to operate resulting in improvement of quality of early childhood institutions with which provide the

Registration Compliance: We also note that 99% of early childhood institutions in operation have submitted an application for registration. This has brought about an improved rate of compliance amongst early childhood institutions that achieve and maintain the regulatory standards. 100% of government early childhood institutions (Infant Schools and Departments) have complied in submitting an application. This effort was achieved by way of an aggressive initiative through registration call and issuance of registration packages to delinquent schools. Currently only 1% of all early childhood institutions in operation are non-compliant (28 delinquent non- government early childhood institutions). These ECIs are targeted by the field staff to ensure all apply within this financial year 2023-24.

Primary Education

Even as we strengthen the foundations of early childhood education, we are doing the same at the primary because this is where the rubber really meets the road.

Primary school begins with the Grade One Individual Learning Profile (GOILP) assessment, which is a follow-on to the Age 4 assessment I referenced earlier. The information from that assessment is generated at the primary school and sent to the Student Assessment Unit once the children start attending primary school so that we begin to create a profile of the student’s learning gaps in order to provide additional support.

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The Grade One Individual Learning Profile is then followed by the Grade 3 Diagnostic Test soon to be converted to the Grade 2 Diagnostic Test with any intervention needed to happen in the Grades 1-3 years. After that begins the high stakes Pep 4 for Grade 4, Pep 5 for Grade 5 and then Pep 6 for Grade 6.

Customized Education/Project Based Learning/STEM

The policy of the Ministry supports customised education guided by the level at which students are performing as informed by standardized, formative and summative assessments. In other words, teachers need to meet the students where they are. At every stage, there is information about the child's learning profile. We have much ground to cover in the interest of each child to fulfil our oft repeated phrase: **Every Child Can Learn. Every Child Must Learn.**

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

The Primary Exit Profile represents a new approach in the reporting of the scores while ensuring that the scores are aligned to the Competence Based Transition Policy and the Alternate Pathways for Secondary Education. One of the major goals of the National Standards Curriculum is to enable students to become critical-reflective thinkers, creative problem solvers, effective communicators and natural collaborators. These are some of the 21st century skills required. The Primary Exit Profile aims to assess these skills and competencies as outlined by the National Standards Curriculum.

Alternative Pathway to Secondary Education

Another feature of the PEP Individual Summary Report (which every child who takes PEP receives) is the specified pathway that each student is placed at the secondary level. There are three pathways at the secondary level:

Pathway I: A curriculum-based 7- year programme that will access the National Standards Curriculum at Grades 7 – 9, the Career Pathways at Grades 10-11 and the Sixth Form Pathways at Grades 12-13.

Pathway II: A curriculum-based 2-year transitional programme. Students will be provided with targeted intervention and support to enable their transition to Pathway I after two years. The students will then access the Career Pathways at Grades 10-11 and the Sixth Form Pathways at Grades 12-13.

Pathway III: Students will be instructed using a modified curriculum in the core subject areas. They will be provided with targeted instructional and assessment support throughout their 7-year programme of study. Based on their learning progress, students may transition to either pathways I or II during the period of Grades 7-9 and then access the Career Pathways at Grades 10-11 and the Sixth Form Pathways at Grades 12-13.

We know, **Madam Speaker**, that despite excellent training in pedagogy at our teacher training colleges, our teachers have differences in how they impart knowledge and develop students' skills set in the different subjects. Some teachers are stronger in the subjects they like, while there are weaknesses in subjects that are less liked. The new approach of having specialist teachers in our primary school classrooms is our flagship initiative to enable our teachers to be more effective across the board and ultimately to improvement academic performance.

The specialist teacher model is currently being implemented on a phased basis in Primary schools. Ninety per cent (90%) of the schools that were

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scheduled to implement the Primary Specialist Teacher Model have fully implemented the model at Grades 4 – 6. The Ministry is currently preparing to engage and train principals and teachers in the group of schools scheduled to implement in September 2023. Anecdotal information on the ground from stakeholders is positive with students smoothly transitioning to the new approach and teachers noting several benefits to planning and delivery associated with the new approach.

Since implementation is still in the infancy stages, we are unable to present student performance data to verify the impact of the approach on the system. We will rely on our national standardised assessment to track this. Nevertheless, the Ministry will continue to implement the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework designed to support the implementation of the programme, and will share this data once it is available.

As you are aware **Madam Speaker**, STEM has been embedded in the National Standard Curriculum since 2016 and represents an approach to learning that uses the knowledge, practices and dispositions of science, technology, mathematics and engineering in integrative ways through the process of inquiry into real world problems and searching for improved outcomes.

Through the efforts of the National STEM for Growth Committee, the private sector will be working with the Ministry of Education and Youth and other players to build out the STEM ecosystem in Jamaica. This will see a tighter synergy between the education and the private/public sector (workforce), improvements in infrastructure, pedagogical skills of teachers and resources for the teaching and learning process.

With the current efforts at the school level STEM is being infused using three approaches: Discrete STEM, Integrated STEM and Coordinated STEM. With the discrete approach, students are taught in each subject area (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) guided by the standards of the curriculum and external examination syllabi. Through integrated STEM, the principles of the discrete areas are pulled on to create projects to show how the knowledge and

principles are used in the real world and how to use these to problem solve (cross-disciplinary platform). Some of the outputs of this includes students creating toy cars, simple flashlights, model houses, simple irrigation systems, robots among other things. Through the coordinated STEM efforts are made to integrate STEM in the extra/co-curricular activities. All the subject clubs, robotic clubs, and subject based competitions such as TVET and career exhibitions are STEM education in action. Currently 41 schools to include 6 at the primary level and 6 teacher training institutions are being handheld to bring STEM into laser focus. The gains from this will guide how we scale the approaches in a more deliberate and targeted manner.

INTERVENTIONS TO ALLOW TRANSITION TO SECONDARY EDUCATION

Madam Speaker, whilst we support all schools, we have about 25% of the sector that needs deliberate and or targeted attention. Going forward, these schools will get added attention in the areas of leadership support, instructional learning support, learning resources and differentiated funding. These schools will literally be handheld to assure improvement. Some of the strategic areas from which they will benefit in more ways than others are outlined below:

Added technical and leadership resources at the Regional level: - we will activate staffing positions at the regional level to support school improvement as per the transformation of education targets. A pilot of the draft/new regional structure in one region will be done. This will see all the technical skill sets for school improvement being localized with special focus on the School Improvement Unit. Special focus will be maintained on the schools in the ZOSO areas.

400 school leaders trained across 10 cohorts

Leadership for Safer Schools (LSS): Funded by the European Union Spotlight Initiative, this course is designed to support school leaders in creating safe environments that will reduce school-related violence and gender-based violence. This course was designed

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AREAS OF FOCUS	ACHIEVEMENTS	COMMENTS
Student Reintegration	100% of identified vulnerable students reintegrated in schools	School age mothers, students for specialized interventions
Clinical services intervention (ISD) for vulnerable students	Clinical intervention process initiated for 180 students	each student to receive at least 8 sessions
Career Development Integration	Implementation of National Careers Awareness Week in all schools February 4-10, 2023	Theme: Conquer Your Future through Career Development

AREAS OF FOCUS	ACHIEVEMENTS	COMMENTS
School-wide Positive Behaviour Intervention (SWPBIS) For social and emotional development and support	SWPBIS Tier I Training conducted with 234 new school teams to exceed target of 120 new schools	81,000 additional students impacted
Mental Health Literacy (MHL)	<p>Mental Health Literacy Curriculum launched in October 2022 and mental health is being taught in schools</p> <p>Mental Health Literacy Training for HFLE teachers, guidance counsellors and school nurses conducted in 177 high schools. The outcome of this:</p> <p>531 school personnel trained (193 Guidance Counsellors, 170 Health and Family Life and 168 School Nurses)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 56 NEI schools impacted ● 16,049 students impacted from sessions facilitated using the MHL curriculum

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on the premise that interventions to reduce gender-based violence must be grounded in behaviour change brought about by the development of non-threatening school environments where the rights of children are respected and promoted. Some 58 School leaders have been trained.

Restorative Justice Practices

Madam Speaker, in May 2022, an MoU was signed with the Ministry of Justice to provide restorative practices training to parents, educators and students of 207 public, primary and secondary schools. At the end of March 2023, over 5,000 stakeholders in the education system were trained in restorative justice. **Madam Speaker**, restorative practices training is committed to equip stakeholders in the educational system with conflict management skills as a strategy to reduce the incident of violence in schools. For this fiscal year, both Ministries are committed to train an additional 30,000 students, parents and educators from 500 public schools. The MoU that has guided our relationship for the past year is currently being reviewed to provide an opportunity for students with behavioural issues that have led to them being suspended will benefit from a behaviour management intervention programme to be coordinated by the Restorative Justice Centre within the jurisdiction of the school.

Further, in October 2022, the Ministry launched the **End Violence in Schools “JUST MEDZ IT” Campaign**, which is a national call to action for every single Jamaican and organization to support our efforts to engender and sustain a culture of discipline and peace in our homes, schools and communities.

Madam Speaker, for the past two years the MoEY has been playing its part to support the efforts of the Government of Jamaica’s Citizen Security Programme targeting the seven (7) declared ZOSOs. In 2020, the MoEY, with technical support from the Citizen Security Secretariat of the Ministry of National Security, conceptualized its Twenty-five to Thirty-four Schools Strategy (now Citizen Security Plan of Jamaica) to provide targeted interventions in the seven ZOSOs.

Madam Speaker, the goal of this strategy is to improve the social, behavioural and academic outputs of students in particular those at high risk behaviour.

Some 25,000 students from 19 primary schools, 14 high schools and 1 CAP centre are targeted to benefit from this intervention. **Madam Speaker**, with this intervention, the Ministry is committed to improving students’ attendance and performance, delivery of education services, decrease in office disciplinary issues and increased students’ perception of school safety.

Madam Speaker, with the technical support provided by the European Union (EU) Technical Assistance team, we have provided targeted support in the areas of school governance, leadership and management, psycho social support to students and staff and interventions to address literacy and student attendance. The schools in the strategy are currently benefitting from case management services to medium and high risk students in partnership with the Ministry of National Security (MNS).

Madam Speaker, the Ministry, in collaboration with the Citizen Security Secretariat and the European Union, recently launched the Literacy Education Acceleration Programme (LEAP). This is a part of the Citizen Security Plan of Jamaica developed as part of national approach to provide support and opportunity to our most vulnerable students in seven declared Zones of Special Operations:

- Greenwich Town
- Denham Town
- August Town
- Parade Gardens
- Mount Salem
- Glendevon
- Savanna-la-mar

Three vital areas of focus for the Strategy are: Behaviour, Literacy and Attendance.

LEAP is aimed at addressing the identified literacy needs of students in targeted schools and the focus in this initial project in financial year 2023/24 will be on students in six high schools. It will provide targeted interventions to reignite students’ learning, memory, and ongoing literacy development. The schools include: Haile Selassie High, Norman Manley High, Kingston High and Holy Trinity High from Region 1 and Spot Valley High and Grange Hill High from Region 4.

We know that our schools are faced with different

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levels of literacy gaps, compounded by learning losses during COVID-19. We also know that low literacy can lead to behaviour problems in the classroom, low self-esteem and ultimately low employability later. The size of the literacy gap requires alternative approaches, and we are excited to see the significant improvement in literacy in these pilot schools. To this end the Ministry will be rolling out the programme in additional schools.

Madam Speaker, we have determined that a laser-like focus on improving literacy must be a priority. This should include teaching literacy across all content areas and special remedial attention for students with low reading levels. All students need first to be brought up to their grade reading level so that they can fully absorb content from other subject areas. Getting all students reading in primary schools creates a foundation for learning in secondary schools.

We also recognise that at the secondary level, many students need additional support. Hence, this programme is an important demonstration of a collaborative response to addressing the challenges faced by our educational institutions located in targeted volatile spaces.

Madam Speaker, we see the possibilities as we prepare to share the findings of our Safe School Perception Survey Report. **Madam Speaker**, perhaps this is one of the most important initiatives to have evolved out of the strategy. For the first time, the MoEY's Safety and Security programme will be guided by the views of over 11,000 responders from 331 schools that participated in the study. **Madam Speaker**, the findings from our Safe School Perception Survey will not only be instrumental to the MoEY but to other key Ministries, Agencies and Departments.

• Our Math and Literacy Coaches have targeted under-performing schools as per the diagnostic test and other national assessments dataset. This includes providing support for teachers through capacity building opportunities such as co-teaching, co-planning, demonstration lessons and support in the development of school based assessment tasks.

• **Madam Speaker**, the Ministry of Education and

Youth, takes seriously the issue of achievement for the maximisation of potential, among the nation's school aged population.

• As such, the Ministry has identified 244 schools island-wide for strategic, targeted intervention in key areas, including literacy, English, language arts, numeracy, mathematics, science, school leadership, teacher pedagogy, behavioural transformation, safety and security and parental involvement.

Madam Speaker, I am pleased to share that because of the data driven intervention mechanisms that have been deployed by the Ministry, we are already reaping success in key indicators for change. Teachers are demonstrating increased expert subject knowledge and pedagogy in literacy, numeracy and science. School leaders are manifesting nuanced and context oriented skills in educational management.

Madam Speaker, there are signs that thousands of students are displaying greater responsiveness to schooling and instruction and have consequently improved in their social behaviours and academic performance. As such, we are expecting improved performance in both national and regional examinations this year.

Public Education Services – Reading develops cognitive skills

Madam Speaker, the Ministry continues to reinforce the vital importance of reading to the development of the cognitive skills of our children and youth. Through the Jamaica Library Service (JLS), we continue to provide universal access to education to the Jamaica populace. The service is administered to the public through the Public and School Library Networks. The Public Library Network (PLN) meets the needs of the populace through a variety of programmes, services and activities offered in 111 public libraries; while the School Library Network (SLN) provides resource material, training and advice to 898 school libraries.

Madam Speaker, the JLS National Flagship Programme, which is the National Reading Competition

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2022 was successfully executed with a total of 1,835 library members (including 1,464 students) participated. This represented a 47% increase over the previous year where the COVID-19 restrictions had impacted participation.

Moving forward the JLS will implement initiatives aimed at Bridging the Digital Divide by improving library spaces/infrastructure and information technology capacity to enable development of digital, media and information literacy competencies for children, youth and older adults. In addition, the JLS seeks to expand on its Lifelong Learning initiatives through improved stakeholder engagement so as to promote the use of libraries as the centre of community engagement.

Parenting Support

Madam Speaker, parenting plays a vital role in the upbringing of our children. The Ministry, through the National Parenting Support Commission (NPSC), is making the thrust to greater parental involvement in the lives of our children. To this end, the NPSC continues to be the standard bearer of the implement parenting initiatives within the sector.

Parent Mentorship - The Parent Mentorship Programme is the NPSC's flagship programme. Parent Mentors are volunteers who are mandated to provide peer-to-peer support at the school and community levels. The NPSC has been collaborating with the Ministries, Departments and Agencies of Government to identify persons who are suitable to serve. Prospective Parent Mentors are screened by the Ministry of National Security to ensure they are persons of unquestionable good character. As at March 31, 2023, there are three hundred and thirty-two (332) parent mentors across all parishes of Jamaica.

Stay Connected - The Stay Connected Programme is now operating in secondary schools. It is designed to increase and maintain parental involvement throughout the adolescent years. The schools in which the programme was scaled up are: Norman Manley High, Cedric Titus High, Paul Bogle High and Clan Cathy High.

Parent Place - A Parent Place is a "one-stop shop" where parents can gather to learn, share information and connect to community resources. The Parent Place programme is seen as the 'universal access point' for parents of both school and community.

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The Parent Place provides parenting education sessions/classes, parenting information, and other activities to support the development of parents such as literacy training and skills training to ensure that parents have access to 21st century parenting.

Parenting Education Session - Parenting education targets the capacity building of parenting practices and behaviours. This forms a part of the Effective Parenting Intervention Framework (EPIF), which guides the strategies and approaches to enable effective parenting practices. A total of twenty-four thousand, seven hundred & ninety-five (24,795) parents have benefitted to date from parenting education sessions.

Parent Support Helpline - The Parent Support Helpline (PSH) was a response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This initiative was launched against the background of the NPSC’s implementation of the National Parenting Support Policy. This PSH aims to ensure continuous parental involvement throughout the education sector after the brunt of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. While the programme has scaled down, parents continue to benefit from the initiative.

The NPSC’s two (2) helplines continue to respond to the various levels of parental need. The PSH was also utilized to coordinate the adjustments required to move the country to some semblance of normality. In addition, it was used address matters concerning counselling support for parents; psycho-social first aid; support to access PATH benefits; support to cope with children with special needs; referral to external partners and assistance with back to school expenses.

Psychosocial Counselling – Parents referred through schools and support service agencies received counselling and psychosocial support. Issues addressed included financial, support to cope with a child with special needs and anger management

Madam Speaker, at least 97,000 parents have been trained in effective parenting practices across the seven (7) educational regions. We will not stop this process as we know the importance of parents playing a positive role in their children’s educational and social development.

Civics Education in Schools

Madam Speaker, Civics Education is important, not only to educate students about the structure and functions of government, the significance of national symbols and emblems, their rights, responsibilities and duties as citizens, but is also about the importance of virtues such as tolerance, fairness, care and concern for others. The programme promotes a culture of respect and encourages students to see themselves as integral to the success of their school, their community and country. Through the nurturing of gifts and talents and the facilitation of a fun-based yet reflexive learning environment, it is expected that learners will adopt the values and virtues that are deemed “good citizenship.”

Number of schools implementing CIVICS in schools			
REGION	NUMBER OF HIGH SCHOOLS	NUMBER OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS	TOTAL
REGION 1	7	26	33
REGION 2	5	19	24
REGION 3	19	66	85
REGION 4	7	27	34
REGION 5	11	26	37
REGION 6	8	35	43
REGION 7	7	28	35
TOTAL	64	227	291

Given that citizenship is developed, understood and applied within a specific cultural context, Civic Education must be transformational. To this end, Civics in the National Standard Curriculum seeks to:

- Resonate with the personal empowerment needs of our young people. Through an inclusive approach to education, learners will be able to critically and creatively think about their experiences that are shaping their identity and the perspective(s) they have of Jamaica. They will also be able to make decisions about how they are contributing to Jamaica’s profile locally and globally, how they can help to preserve all that is favourable and enable national development.

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• Fulfill the imperatives of Civics Education in the 21st century in general, and in particular the agenda of a nation on a mission to promote the principles, processes and values that are essential for the preservation, improvement and sustainability of our society. (MoEY Civics Curriculum, 2022)

Madam Speaker, schools in Jamaica have the basic requirements for exposing students to the fundamentals of Civics Education. One of the most important tools/resources that is available to schools, is the National Standards Curriculum Civics Curriculum Guide, with its co-curricular counterpart, the Culture in Education Programme. Supportive conditions include Culture Agents, who serve as mentors/coaches and leaders for various Jamaica Day initiatives. There are also competent teachers and scheduling framework for flexible arrangement of learning opportunities. In responding to the need for students to be exposed to Civics Education the following major activities were done:

1. Orientation of principals/school leaders (primary and secondary level) in December, 2022 to various approaches for enabling students to have dedicated sessions/focused learning experiences that are based on Civics Education. Principals conveyed interest and expressed their commitment to implement sustainable measures for exposing students to Civics for their development of social competencies, civic and other virtues.
2. The relaunching of the Civics Curriculum in December 2022. The teaching guides are now accessible in electronic format via the MoEY educational resources platform (educate.gov.jm). Printing of the curriculum guides for Grades 4-9 is currently taking place.
3. Provision of guidelines to school leaders on ways to organize for students' learning through the Culture in Education Programme, which is the co-curricular component of the Civics Curriculum. This programme entails the participation of schools and other organizations in the yearly Jamaica Day events. Jamaica Day 2022, had some 817 public primary schools and 190 secondary schools participating in various cultural events

and formal civic ceremonies (flag raising, reading of the declaration etc.)

4. Supporting schools in the selection/use of flexible schedules and collaborative teaching strategies to engage students. For example, rotating Civics and RE each term so that competent teachers facilitate the sessions independently and/or as teams.
5. Preparation of Culture Agents for their supportive role. Some 453 have been trained to assist schools in promoting a positive school culture through clubs and societies, civic events, and the mentoring of students as culture stewards.
6. Ongoing monitoring of schools as a part of the curriculum implementation process.

The Civics Curriculum may be found at

1. Ministry of Education Website
<https://moey.gov.jm/curriculum/>
2. PEP Website:
<https://pep.moey.gov.jm>

CHARACTER EDUCATION

Madam Speaker, in its effort to provide ongoing support to the holistic development of students, The Ministry of Education and Youth embarked on the development of a Character Education programme. Being embedded in the curriculum, the programme will impart essential values to improve the way students interact with teachers, their peers, and the wider Jamaican society, and will facilitate unity, civility, increased production and economic growth over a sustained period. To this end, the Character Education Task Force was formed in June 2021, tasked with the responsibility of designing and implementing Character Education, an instrumental initiative geared at impacting the psychosocial development of our children within the Jamaican Education System.

A common understanding is that Character Education is important in every aspect of a child's life, including the family, school and community. Berkowitz et al. (2017:37) define Character Education as a "set of psychological characteristics that motivate and enable one to function

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as a moral agent, to perform optimally, to effectively pursue knowledge and intellectual flourishing, and to be an effective member of society.” They also posit that effective education only takes place when a school fulfils students’ fundamental psychological needs – autonomy, belonging and competence. Given the need for a national focus, there are socio-cultural and other factors to be considered in framing a solution.

Consequent to the establishment of the Character Education Task Force, the following four (4) sub-committees were formed: (a) Research and Psychosocial (b) Communications and Public Relations (c) Monitoring and Evaluation and (d) Implementation. To provide research data to inform the development of a framework and relevant plan of action, a diagnostic study was conducted in October 2022 by Dr Herbert Gayle and his team to determine the valuation of character education by schools, parents, teachers, principals and employers. The study included seven hundred and two participants across six geo-social zones, four socio-economic backgrounds, and eight school types of the male and female genders. The research report was presented to the Character Education Task Force in January 2022. In April 2022 a Small Working team was created and given the responsibility to create the matrix (chronology of activities to be undertaken and the framework) for the Character Education programme.

Basically, the draft framework provides a Jamaican prototype for Character Education that draws on four (4) major sources of values/virtues and principles. These are (the):

- (a) Profile of the Jamaican based on Vision 2030
- (b) National Emblems
- (c) Draft National Education Philosophy
- (d) National Curriculum related Policies

Uniform Groups

Madam Speaker, in addition, as part of the thrust to prepare disciplined and well-rounded students, the Ministry of Education and Youth has taken steps to expand Uniform Groups in schools. Uniform youth

groups are recognized for their contributions in the efforts at molding sound moral character, love of country and a willingness to serve and lead. **Madam Speaker**, currently, there are 12 formally recognized uniform youth groups under the umbrella of the Uniform Youth Group Secretariat.

These are:

- The Jamaica Combined Cadet Force
- Boys Brigade and Girls Brigade
- The Scouts Association
- The Girl Guides
- The Pathfinders
- 4-H Club
- The Jamaica Junior Red Cross
- St John Ambulance
- National Inter-Secondary Brigade
- National Cadet Corps
- The Royal Cadet Mission Corps

Madam Speaker, the Financial year 2022-2023, saw the solidification of the relationship with the Uniform Group Secretariat (Chaired by Retired Lieutenant Colonel Oral Khan) for which regular meetings are held with the MoEY to discuss expansion and training and development plans for the groups.

Madam Speaker, the MoEY has taken a strategic approach to expansion and as such has developed along with the representative of all the Uniform Groups a strategic plan.

The establishment of uniform groups in schools requires adult leaders (these can be anyone who meets the criteria for leadership). Currently, there are 196 educators enrolled in a Uniform Group. The MoEY has conducted recruitment sessions which have resulted in 185 indicating that they will avail themselves of training to assist with the establishment or expansion of a group at the school where they are employed.

Uniform Groups in schools such as the Boys Scouts, the Jamaica Combined Cadet Force, Girl Guides, Jamaica Red Cross and 4H have islandwide establishments, with the other uniform groups.

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Uniform Groups have surpassed the pre-COVID-19 level (13,993), to have an enrolment of twenty-one thousand, five hundred and seventy-five (21,575).

Madam Speaker, two new organisations have submitted an application for establishing a Uniform Group. Those applications are being reviewed to ensure that they conform to the MoEY's Policy.

The groups continue to make an impact not only in our schools but at parish and national levels. They have participated in the Grand Gala, Float Parade, Remembrance Day Parade, the JCCF, Girls', the 10,000 Men and Family March (St Catherine & Portmore), Church Services, and the Prime Minister Youth Awards.

The MoEY, **Madam Speaker**, has included members of the uniform groups in activities/events including the first-ever consultation to discuss the National Students' Dress and Grooming Policy.

In addition, **Madam Speaker**, services provided through the network of officers who carry out care planning and management facilitated children in completing their medical checks, and subsequently, 90% of children in care across the regions have completed a medical check-up while 73% of the children in care possessed their basic documentations which includes birth certificates, Tax Registration Number, and Health passports/ immunization cards which are critical in maximizing children's developmental opportunities. The Agency continues to collaborate with the relevant stakeholders to support all children to obtain valuable documentation such as these upon entrance and throughout their tenure in state care.

Also, **Madam Speaker**, among the initiatives which we have escalated is the intervention for children living and working on the streets.

Current Action & Next Steps:

- Three community engagement fora targeting representatives from the eight (8) communities identified for early intervention.
- Initiated procurement services aimed at identifying technical expertise to provide community and family-based interventions and to work to find solutions that

will eliminate, if not, minimize children working on the streets.

School Feeding Programme Nutritional Support

Madam Speaker, the Government continues to provide support for children from our most vulnerable households through PATH.

For this year, the aim is to feed 180,171 students on the feeding programme which is apportioned accordingly:

	Number of Students
ECC Institutions and Brain Builders Centres	43,000
Infants up to Grades 3 at the Primary level	35,000
Primary, All Age and Primary and Junior High Schools up to Grade 9	34,371
Secondary schools	65,000
Wards of the State	2,800

Increase to all schools

There has also been an increase in the rates given to the schools at all levels:

Nutrition Support Subsidies for the Traditional Cooked Lunch Programme

	Prior allocation per meal	Current allocation per meal
Infants - Grades 1-3	\$120	\$150
Primary, All-age and Primary and Junior High Schools - Grade 4-9	\$150	\$200
Brain Builders Centres	\$40	\$100
Secondary Schools	\$150	\$200

The number of feeding days for the academic year will remain at 190 days, which is the number of school days in the academic year.

The increase took effect on April 1, 2023. Schools will see the increase reflected in their accounts once the scheduled tranches of the Grants are paid to schools. School administrators are reminded that the funding is disbursed to the schools to provide cooked lunches for students on the basis that once meals are prepared in large quantities, the schools will reap the benefits of economy of scale. Further, the meals for the students on the PATH are not to be provided at a profit margin and therefore should not be aligned to the cost that is charged for the regular lunches which are generally priced with a profit margin, even though minimal, at the school level.

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Increase in budgetary allocation

Madam Speaker, the per amount per child may look small. However, the quantum of what the government is providing is \$8.9 billion. This represents an increase of \$2 Billion over the prior year. This money is to provide cooked lunch at schools. While NPL will continue to provide the breakfast/snack component of the school feeding program.

Secondary Schools - Technical Vocational Training

Madam Speaker, For the 2022- 2023 academic year funds were disbursed to all secondary schools to support teaching and assessment of all TVET programmes. To note, grants were also disbursed to two (2) Special Education Institutions (Windsor School of Special Education and Edgehill School of Special Education).

A three (3) year TVET Expansion Plan was developed to see the start of improved support to primary and secondary schools across Jamaica beginning in the 2023-2024 financial year. This plan will be executed using five (5) strategies:

1. Inclusion of emerging skill areas and improvement of EXISTING TVET programmes
2. Equipping & Modernization of TVET Laboratories
3. Teacher Training & Development
4. Monitoring & Evaluation and Support for Teaching and Learning
5. TVET Leadership & Partnerships

Approximately \$400,000,000 has been earmarked for the first year of this plan.

Approx. 75 TVET labs have been audited to date following directives by CEO for a system wide audit to be conducted to determine the needs and fill gaps. Audits have revealed the system is in need of an overall to support new and emerging technology. Activity will continue in the new financial year.

A total of 97 primary school teachers have been fully trained in Project Based Learning. Training continues

with an objective to impact all primary school teachers within the public education system. (Over 250 primary school teachers have been previously exposed but not fully trained). This will augment and initiate the implementation of Resource & Technology and STEAM integration at the primary level.

Madam Speaker, 150 TVET teachers were engaged in capacity building workshops through HEART/ NSTA Trust in the areas of Masonry and Entrepreneurship and Product Development.

Collaborated with Commonwealth of Learning (COL) where 13 participants (teachers and principals) from five (5) schools were impacted in a Leadership for Open & Distance Learning in TVET course. This included a 5-days workshop to facilitate the development of a TVET Strategic Plan for each school. The overall objective is to continue collaborations with COL to assist schools in achieving some of the targets outlined in their plans.

Madam Speaker, as the process of transformation continues for the education sector, we look forward to working with the National Council on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (NCTVET) and the National Training Development Institute of Development (VTDI) that is now a public educational institution with the awesome responsible for growing the cadre of teachers of TVET in the education system.



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NCTVET

Madam Speaker, as the process of transformation continues for the education sector, we are pleased to announce that the Ministry has made strides in the merger of the National Council on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (NCTVET) to the Ministry of Education and Youth. The NCTVET continues to provide training and qualification certificates. For the period, 1,594 certificates were issued as well as 11,756 E-certificates. In a bid to meet labour market needs, the NCTVET has developed and published 60 Qualification Plans published (2021-2023) and 84 Job Qualification Plans published.

Madam Speaker as at March 30, 2023 the Vocational Training Development Institute (VTDI) recorded 2,389 certifications.

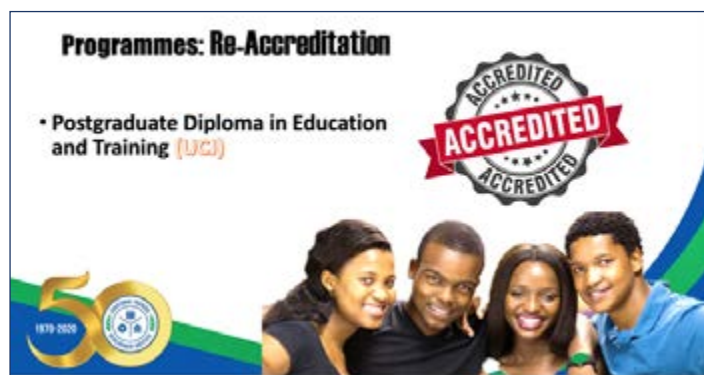
During the course of last year, the VTDI also finalised a number partnerships

- FHI360 - Equipment – iMAC Computers, tablets
- Repurposing of courses for online delivery
- Green room
- Training in psycho-social support

JAMPRO - The VTDI concluded its \$17million partnership with JAMPRO in March with the training of 501 trainee-trainers in 2022/2023 to support the BPO sector. Total trained per partnership exceeds 1100.

HUAWEI

- Over US\$100,000 in equipment
- Under the MOU, Huawei will also provide training in PV solar technician, IP certification, fibre optics technology and telecom frequency and technology.



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SIXTH FORM PATHWAYS PROGRAMME

An important publication recently said that “Jamaica has made a significant step in effectively raising the school leaving age to 18 years of age. This aligns with the most advanced TVET and education systems.”

Madam Speaker, I am very happy to report that the implementation of the seven years high school or Sixth Form Pathways Programme (SFPP) has been well received by students, parents and institutions across the country AND IT IS GOING WELL.

I am extremely pleased with this programme, **Madam Speaker**. It is creating opportunities for young people to continue with their educational pursuits and some to find a purpose and to have hope in the future. **Madam Speaker**, it really warms my heart when at the recently held Boys and Girls Championships a young man came up to me and thanked me for giving him this opportunity. **Madam Speaker**, this is a testament that we have done something right.

Madam Speaker, 24,245 students are enrolled this academic year (2022/2023). This is a 21% increase in enrolment over last year’s figure of 19,122. We will continue to monitor and look for new ways to engage students, especially those in the tertiary space who have demonstrated the aptitude for managing a more flexible arrangement where they can continue their education while being a part of the workforce on a part-time basis.

Currently, the programme is being offered in one hundred and sixty-seven (167) high schools and 40

tertiary/post-secondary centres for the 2022/2023 academic year. These students benefit from continued educational opportunities under Pathways 1 through 3.

Additionally, all students have the opportunity to pursue Mathematics and English at CSEC or City & Guilds if they were not initially successful at Grade 11. Each student enrolled in the SFPP is further provided with the opportunity to complete training and certification in Customer Service.

In addition, as at September 2023, high school cadets upon reaching Grade 12 will have access to the Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ) Cadetting Infantry Level 3 course.

Hospitality & Tourism Management Programme

Madam Speaker, the Hospitality & Tourism Management Programme is a two-year course with 308 students in 14 high schools. This is a joint initiative between the Ministry of Education & Youth and the Ministry of Tourism. This summer, a four-week internship opportunity with the Sandals Group has been arranged for the students and a two weeks’ industry furlough for their teachers. These opportunities will no doubt increase the capacity of teachers to deliver the programme to international standards, while ensuring that students are sufficiently exposed to industry practices. We thank the Ministry of Tourism for partnering with us to enable these opportunities for continued human capacity development and nation building.

Work Experience Programme

Madam Speaker, the Work Experience Programme has been expanded to include students pursuing varying occupational courses at Grades 10 and 11 in all secondary level institutions offering Pathways 2 and 3. This is mission critical to the strengthening of the industry exposure requirement for skills acquisition and preparedness for the world of work.

- Presently 98 high schools across all seven Regions participate in the work experience programme.

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- As at the end of the 2022/2023 financial year 9,951 students completed 80 hours of work experience in public and private sector entities.
- Two schools of special education in Region 1 began participating in the Work Experience Programme as at the current academic year.

Children and Youth

Madam Speaker, the Ministry is committed to ensuring the well-being, holistic development and safety of our children and youth and I am pleased to announce that Cabinet has approved the development of a National Children's Policy. This Policy will revise the National Policy on Children, which was developed in 1997. It will provide a comprehensive framework in relation to children's issues in Jamaica, by bringing together the relevant existing policies, national plans of action and programmes, and provide a framework for the development and coordination of new policies, programmes and legislation.

In our continued efforts to improve the strategic planning and execution of activities in the best welfare of our children, **Madam Speaker**, I wish to bring to your attention the National Plan of Action for an Integrated Response to Children and Violence. This National Plan is a signal to the world of Jamaica's commitment towards ending all forms of violence against children.

Madam Speaker, we signalled that commitment in 2016 when Jamaica became a signatory to the Global Partnership to end Violence Against Children and became the only country in the Caribbean to become a Pathfinder Country. This, **Madam Speaker**, means that we commit to be a model country in our efforts to ending violence against children. Through this National Plan of Action, the framework is in place to gather and analyse data that will enhance efficiencies in providing services to our children.

The Government of Jamaica (GOJ) recognizes that violence against children is a fundamental violation of their human rights, and that failure to adopt, revise and implement legislation in the best interest of the child constitutes a serious breach of the commitments made in respect of the rights of the child. Against this background, the MOEY has identified several pieces

of legislation for review and amendment, to ensure more comprehensive protection and redress under the law for children and families of children affected by violence. These are as follows:

i. Child Care and Protection Act

The Ministry is currently carrying out a comprehensive review of the Child Care and Protection Act (CCPA) and of the Child Care and Protection (Children's Homes) Regulations, 2007, and consequential amendments to connected legislation in order to better safeguard the rights and welfare of Jamaica's children.

The review process is at the stage now where we are engaging with stakeholders to get feedback on the draft Cabinet Submission to facilitate submission to Cabinet for approval to issue drafting instructions to the Chief Parliamentary Counsel.

ii. Child Care and Protection Act – Section 24

Amendment to Section 24 of the CCPA will see the abolition of correctional orders for child non-offenders in respect of a child brought before the court deemed beyond parental control. This, therefore, will result in a repeal of the section (24) and replacing this facility with new provisions under Section 8 and 14 of the Act.

Cabinet has already issued approval for drafting instructions to the Chief Parliamentary counsel and the amendment is currently underway.

iii. Children (Adoption of) Act

This piece of legislation is old and not able to provide adequate provision for children with regards to adoption. Hence the intention is to repeal and replace the Children [Adoption Of] Act, 1958, in order to improve the adoption process, as well as to incorporate the relevant provisions of the Hague Convention on the Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption.

The Cabinet Submission has been drafted and has been circulated for stakeholders' comments.

iv. Children Guardianship and Custody Act:

The Children Guardianship and Custody Act was enacted in 1956 and brought into effect in 1957 and comprised the primary legislative mechanism for the determination of rights of custody or guardianship in relation to a child.

The review of the legislation will ultimately result in a repeal and replacement of the Act. The Ministry also intends to enact a separate legislation – entitled the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction Act and comprised primarily of the changes introduced into the Children (Guardianship and Custody) Act via the Children (Guardianship and Custody) (Amendment) Act, 2017 – to give effect to the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction, 1980.

Over the years, the Act has been amended periodically, including changes made to, inter alia, include the Children (Guardianship and Custody) (Amendment) Act with the sole purpose of bringing into effect the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction, 1980.

This Convention, to which Jamaica is a signatory, sets out an inter-country procedure for making applications across jurisdictions in instances in which a child has been abducted and moved out of the jurisdiction within which they have been habitually resident (or retained in a jurisdiction in which they are not habitually resident). Amendments to the legislation, which were made in 2017, sets out the application process for returning a child who has been wrongfully removed from one country in which they were habitually resident to another country, in a manner that breaches a custody arrangement or any other right of access.

Notwithstanding these updates, there are several areas of the Children Guardianship and Custody Act that can be further updated to more seamlessly and strategically address the issues facing families seeking a determination by the court as to the child's custody or guardianship. This includes families impacted by violence or separating in non-amicable circumstances. Furthermore, the various types of access, custodial

rights decided by the court and the various other orders that the judiciary can issue would need to be articulated in order to comprehensively address matters related to child custody.

The Cabinet Submission has been drafted and circulated for comments from stakeholders.

Children's Policy and Plans

i. National Children's Policy

Madam Speaker, I am pleased to announce that Cabinet has approved the development of a National Children's Policy. This Policy will revise the National Policy on Children, which was developed in 1997. It will provide a comprehensive framework in relation to children's issues in Jamaica, by bringing together the relevant existing policies, national plans of action and programmes, and provide a framework for the development and coordination of new policies, programmes and legislation.

Cabinet has approved the development of the new policy and the Ministry is in the process of setting up the steering committee and engaging the relevant technical expertise to lead in the development of the policy.

ii. National Plan of Action for an Integrated Response to Children and Violence (NPACV)

In our continued efforts to improve the strategic planning and execution of activities in the best welfare of our children, **Madam Speaker**, I wish to bring to your attention the National Plan of Action for an Integrated Response to Children and Violence. This National Plan is a signal to the world of Jamaica's commitment towards ending all forms of violence against children. **Madam Speaker**, we signaled that commitment in 2016 when Jamaica became a signatory to the Global Partnership to end Violence Against Children and became the only country in the Caribbean to become a Pathfinder Country. This, **Madam Speaker**, means that we commit to be a model country in our efforts to ending violence against children. Through this National Plan of Action, the framework is in place to gather and

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analyze data that will enhance efficiencies in providing services to our children.

We must give special recognition to our international partners, specifically UNICEF, for providing funding support for the initial stage of the implementation of the Plan. Implementation is ongoing and the Ministry will continue to do so in this new fiscal year.

As we are all aware, **Madam Speaker**, May is Child Month. The theme for Child Month is: Children need our love and protection...Get Involved! The Ministry of Education and Youth is showing our love and appreciation for all our children this month in various ways.

The activities will focus on the creative abilities of our children, provide additional opportunities for them to share their views of issues that affect them as well as educate the public on some of the rights of the child that we as a nation, have committed to ensure. Let us use this opportunity, well.

Our Youth Stakeholders

Madam Speaker, many things are also taking place in our interactions with our youth stakeholders. Here are some of our actions:

Re-Development of Youth Programmatic Inventory Gap Analysis

- Survey instrument drafted
- Survey approved and distributed to stakeholders
- Youth serving organizations are currently completing the survey

Mobile YIC implementation to date as follows:

- 74 Mobile YIC intervention conducted across communities within 11 parishes.
- To date over 3,500 participants attended the Mobile YIC sessions.

Community Youth Engagement Strategies

Four (4) Youth Innovation Centre (YIC) “Pon di Corna” initiatives targeted to assist unattached youth in underserved communities were held impacting a total

of 379 persons. Service by youth empowerment officers and added to YIC database. Referrals, counseling, training, upskilling and certification with HEART NSTA and Jamaica Youth Business Trust provided.

Westmoreland YIC hosted a job fair in November 2022 and provided over 200 job opportunities.

Some 141 females from vulnerable groups participated in Microsoft Word training at online workshop held on November 28/29 2022.

Behaviour modification initiatives established for at-risk youth

Some 262 youth trained and certified in YIC Youth Skills Training certification programmes such as Entrepreneurship, “Make up Artistry”, Customer Service and Digital Skills

18 virtual and 250 physical Youth jam sessions held. Youth jam sessions held to date impacting a total of 8,435 youths (357 females and 94 males) including 49 unattached youth. Session topics include:

- Critical thinking skills
- Dealing with hurt
- Emotional intelligence
- Employment and interview skills
- Encouragement during the process
- Job placement
- Juvenile delinquency
- Let’s talk molly
- Personal development
- Resume writing
- Stress management
- Your choice can make or break you
- Youth and crime
- Youth issues 101
- Youth violence

National Secondary Students Council (NSSC) - approximately 650 student councillors and their staff advisors were trained. Topics included (Advocacy, Staff Advisors, and Public Speaking).

Youth Month

Over 10,000 youth were impacted under Youth Month and over thirty (30) activities were undertaken island

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wide. These include:

- The National Youth Month Church Service
- The National Youth Policy Secondary Schools Tour
- The Joint Installation of the Student Governance and Leadership Programmes.
- Youth “Pon di Corna” Initiatives.
- The Around the Table Series
- Interventions with the Jamaica Library Service.
- The Westmoreland Youth Parenting Exposition Ceremony
- Global Night, November 20, 2022
- The National Youth Council AGM November 19, 2022.
- The National Youth Parliament of Jamaica November, 28, 2022.
- The National Youth Leaders’ Summit
- The MoEY/ Microsoft Digi Girls Day Digital Literacy Training for females

The Prime Minister National Youth Awards for Excellence

The PMNYA strives to recognize and encourage all the hard work of the young Jamaicans who continue to achieve outstanding contributions to national youth development. 160 applications were received for nominations and 60 nominees were shortlisted and interviewed.

A total of 19 young people received the PM Youth Awards, across 14 categories. The PM Youth Awards was partly sponsored by the HEART Trust NSTA, where the recipients received over \$100,000.00 in grants and bursaries.

The Jamaica Union of Tertiary Students has been engaged in a series of high level discussions on matters linking to the work and travel programme reimbursement, reintegration of Jamaican students studying in Ukraine as well as the tertiary reform and funding.

The National Youth Parliament (NYPJ) Selection - 214 Applications were received of which 100 were selected and recommended to the 2022 cohort

Child Protection and Family Services

Madam Speaker, the Child Protection and Family Services Agency plays a critical role in supervising children in state care and responding to critical incidents involving the welfare of children across the nation.

A total of four thousand and thirty-two (4,032) visits were made across the CPFSA regions to engage children in care and their families to provide intervention services in keeping with the care and protection needs of children and families served. These visits are conducted to engage children and families in various placement programmes such as foster care and family reintegration, Residential Child Care Facilities, and children on Supervision Orders. Additionally, visits to healthcare institutions for health check-ups are also facilitated. The statistics outline that school visits accounted for a majority of 27%, followed by other visits which accounted for 22% of the visits. The visits in the other category are those completed by going to the hospitals and facilitating medical and health care checks. The third highest number of visits were those to Residential Child Care Facilities which accounted for 18% of the visits and visits to foster care homes and to clients on Supervision Order each accounted for 13% of the visits while family reintegration visits accounted for 8%.

In addition, **Madam Speaker**, services provided through the network of officers who carry out care planning and management facilitated children in completing their medical checks, and subsequently, 90% of children in care across the regions have completed a medical check-up while 73% of the children in care possessed their basic documentations which includes birth certificates, Tax Registration Number, and Health passports/ immunization cards which are critical in maximizing children’s developmental opportunities. The Agency continues to collaborate with the relevant stakeholders to support all children to obtain valuable documentation such as these upon entrance and throughout their tenure in state care.

Also, **Madam Speaker**, among the initiatives which we have escalated is the intervention for children living and working on the streets.

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Current Action & Next Steps:

- Three community engagement fora targeting representatives from the eight (8) communities identified for early intervention.
- Initiated procurement services aimed at identifying technical expertise to provide community and family-based interventions and to work to find solutions that will eliminate, if not, minimize children working on the streets.

Establishment and operationalization of the Therapeutic Centre

This is a major project being undertaken by the CPFSA in collaboration with the Jamaica Social Investment Fund with funding from the Caribbean Development Bank. The Centre is being established to increase the CPFSA's capacity to respond to the increasing demand for psychological services for children in care and those who access the services presenting with mild to severe mental and behavioural challenges. The construction phase of the project is 98% complete.

A team is currently working on the details to have the space furnished and staffed to be made fully operational by the 3rd quarter of 2023.

National College for Educational Leadership (NCEL)

Madam Speaker, the Ministry remains steadfast in the training of school leaders through the National College for Educational Leadership (NCEL). For the 2022/23 period, the college has undertaken a number of training in various areas.

Effective Principals' Training Programme (EPTP) – Round 1:

Designed for sitting principals to improve their efficiency in leading instruction and improving operational efficiency. 24 principals trained; 23 principals assessed.

Aspiring Principals' Programme (APP): Offered in partnership with The University of the West Indies. Designed to equip aspirant school leaders with the knowledge, competencies and dispositions needed prior to their ascension to principalship as they will endeavour to improve student outcomes through effective leadership of community, instruction and organisation. Cohort 8 - 80 participants awarded the

Professional Qualification for Principalship (PQP); Cohort 9 - 73 participants enrolled.

Leadership and School Policy (LSP): Designed by NCEL to expose school leaders to policies and priorities of the Ministry of Education and Youth to guide their practices and decision-making within the context of the education system. 105 school leaders trained in 2 cohorts.

Child-Friendly Schools Leadership Programme (CFS): Developed in partnership with UNICEF Jamaica, this course is designed to equip school leaders with the knowledge and dispositions needed to ensure that their school contexts are promoting child-friendly principles in keeping with those promoted by UNICEF. 195 school leaders trained

Strategic Middle Leadership Initiative (SMLI) - Designed for middle leaders to better support top leadership within the context of schools. Participants are exposed to:

- Leadership for personal growth and development
- Leadership for capacity building
- Leadership for teaching and learning
- Leadership for teaching and learning – Teacher Supervision and Evaluation
- Leadership and student behaviour management

Governance, Administration, Leadership and Legislation

The Ministry continues the process of advancing the legislative agenda providing technical/legal support in relation to:

1. The Jamaica Teaching Council Bill, which is now before a Joint Select Committee (JSC) of Parliament that is reviewing the Bill for subsequent tabling in Parliament.
2. Child Care and Protection (Amendment) Act - issued drafting instructions to and received draft Bill from the Chief Parliamentary Counsel in relation to the proposal to abolish the use of Correctional Orders for child none-offenders and to repeal Section 24 of the Child Care and Protection Act and to amend section 8 and 14 of the said Act. The draft Bill was submitted to stakeholders and the Attorney General's

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Chambers (AGC) for comment.

Awaiting revised draft Bill in light of comments received with a view to forward same to the AGC for no objection to proceed to the Legislation Committee of Parliament.

3. Education (Amendment) Act and Regulations - issued drafting instructions to and received draft Bill from the Chief Parliamentary Counsel in relation to the criteria for appointment as principal in a public educational institution. The draft Bill is in the process of being settled by the Ministry in keeping with policy directions and will thereafter be submitted to the AGC for no objection to proceed to the Legislation Committee of Parliament.

4. Signing of the Development and Funding Agreement between the Government of Jamaica (acting through the Ministry of Education and Youth) and the Abu Dhabi Future Energy Company PJSC – Masdar, a private joint stock company organized and existing under the laws of the United Arab Emirates, to undertake the development, building and commissioning of the Solar Photovoltaic facilities at the Caribbean Maritime University situate at Palisadoes, Kingston.

The five (5) key initiatives to be undertaken in the 2023/2024 Financial Year. The provision of technical/legal support to effect the passing of the:

1. Jamaica Teaching Council Act;

2. Child Care and Protection (Amendment) Act in relation to the proposal to abolish the use of Correctional Orders for child none-offenders and to repeal section 24 of the Child Care and Protection Act and to amend section 8 and 14 of the said Act.

3. Education (Amendment) Act and Regulations in relation to the criteria for appointment as principal in a public educational institution.

4. Issuance of drafting instructions to the Chief Parliamentary Counsel with a view to the passing of the University Council (Amendment) Act and the Overseas Examination Commission (Amendment) Act to give effect to Cabinet's approval via Cabinet Decision No. 11/22 dated March 21, 2022 in relation to the transfer to the University Council of Jamaica of external quality assurance functions performed by the National Council on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (NCTVET) to approve and accredit institutions offering technical and vocational education and training and to keep a register of all such institutions AND the conduct of tests by the NCTVET to be performed by the Overseas Examination Commission.

5. Jamaica Tertiary Education Commission Act.

Legacy Policies

Madam Speaker, the Ministry has taken an inclusive approach in our policy development process with over 20 consultations conducted impacting over 5000 persons island wide. Consultations were held with the school boards, principals, teachers, students, parents, Education Officers, senior management team of the Ministry and a host of others. In particular, **Madam Speaker**, for the National School Nutrition Policy, consultations were had also with canteen concessionaires, Heart Foundation of Jamaica, Jamaica NAJ, and school vendors. **Madam Speaker**, I can positively state that there was strong buy-in from all the groups and vendors were supportive of the initiative. Our six (6) legacy policies are at various stages of development and all are expected to be approved in this Financial Year.

These Policies are:

- The Student Dress and Grooming Policy - Awaiting Attorney General's Chambers' (AGC) response
- Special Education Policy - Awaiting AGC response
- The National Safe School Policy- To update and finalize the document with the comments from stakeholders

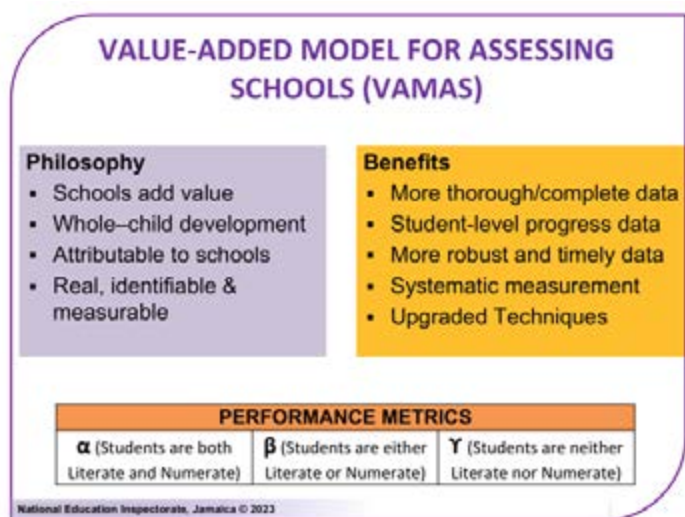
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- The National School Nutrition Policy- Awaiting the final submission to be done by a consultant. To date, seven (7) major consultations have been held with key stakeholders.
 - The Language Policy – Cabinet Submission is being prepared
 - Higher Education Policy - Policy draft along with the Cabinet Submission being reviewed.
- It is hoped **Madam Speaker**, that all six legacy policies will go through the policy development stages smoothly and in a timely manner and all will be finalised and approved for this Financial year.

School Assessments - NEI

Madam Speaker, the Ministry through the National Educational Inspectorate continues to assess the standards attained by students in public primary and secondary schools; report on how well they perform or improve, as they progress through the school; and make recommendations to support improvement in the quality of the provision and outcomes for all learners. For the year under review the NEI inspected 132 schools and 159 inspection reports were published.

Madam Speaker, the Inspectorate has been utilising the Value Added Model for Assessing Schools (VAMAS) and assessed 150 schools in 2021/2022 and 2022/23



School Governance



Ensuring that school boards are appointed on time continued to be a priority for the Ministry through the National Council on Education. This is in keeping with the organisation’s governance functions. Under the cyclical appointment process, the tenures of school boards in three educational regions that became due for reappointment. These were Region 3 (St. Ann and Trelawny), Region 6 (St. Catherine) and Region 7 (Clarendon). We are pleased to advise that 97% of the new Boards were appointed before the end of the tenure of the outgoing Boards in Region 3, with 12% in Region 6 and 30% in Region 7. Continued efforts are being made to achieve the 100% target.

Launch of the School Board Platform

On June 29, 2022, the School Board Platform was launched for uploading minutes of meetings. In keeping with the accountability framework, school boards are now required to upload confirmed minutes of board meetings as part of a wider strategy to support schools in their quest to improve student performance.

The platform is designed as an effective tool to provide greater support to our school board chairpersons and members who have wide-ranging functions. This is aimed at improving the accuracy of their decisions in keeping with the legal and regulatory framework. The event was streamed live on the NCE’s Facebook Page and the MoEY YouTube Channel. A video was developed to provide information on the protocol of uploading Board meeting minutes.

- (ii) Partnerships in School Governance

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Inter-ministerial Twenty-five to Thirty-four Schools Strategy

A partnership was forged between the Ministry of Education to provide support to schools operating in Zones of Special Operations (ZOSOS). This was in response to a request from the Director of Safety and Security in Schools Programme to create a training manual for 34 school boards operating within ZOSOs. A special focus of the intervention is the development of a training manual for the school boards. In this regard, the NCE has been working collaboratively with the National College for Educational Leadership (NCEL) to develop the training modules. A survey will be conducted to determine the most critical areas of need.

(iii) Training of School Board Members

The NCE conducted a two-day training session on October 11 & August 24, 2022, for members of boards of management of public educational institutions in Regions 4 (St. James, Hanover & Westmoreland) and Region 5 (St. Elizabeth and Manchester). The training was conducted in keeping with the organisation's legislative mandate to train school boards. Approximately 600 Board members participated in the workshops. The topics presented were:

- Legal & Regulatory Framework Governing School Management;
- Promoting Positive Ethos;
- Administrative/Human Resource Management;
- Fiduciary Responsibilities with special emphasis on Financial Management;
- Policy Dialogue on Building.

Policy Advice

National Education Sector Plan 2021, The COVID-19 Pandemic and Transformation of the Education System In keeping with the Council's policy advisory role, the National Education Sector Plan (NESP), in response to the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Jamaica Education System was also finalised. The NESP, which consists of six sections, provides workable solutions to address not only the challenges presented by the pandemic such as learning loss, but also to tackle long-standing issues in terms of access to equitable

services, particularly at the secondary level, and student underperformance overall. The document will also serve as a useful resource guide to not only teachers, principals, and students but also parents.

(iii) Review of the Jamaican Education Transformation Commission (JETC) Report; A Transformed Education System, 2021

The Council conducted a comprehensive review of the JETC Report, 2021 and provided comments on the over 300 recommendations as outlined in the document. The actual assessment was done by teams of persons with the requisite background working with each of the eight areas of recommendations presented by the JETC. Three primary criteria were utilised to guide the assessment of the recommendations - relevance, appropriateness and achievability. The assessment of the JETC report was also completed and submitted to the MoEY in September 2022.

(iv) Education Act, 1965 and Education Regulations, 1980

In collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Youth, the NCE facilitated seven consultations with key stakeholders on the proposed amendments to the Education Act, of 1965 and the attendant Regulations, of 1980. Key stakeholders included; Jamaica Teachers' Association, Principals, the Education Officer Corps, and the Ecumenical Community, among others.

Higher Education (Tertiary) Sector


Madam Speaker, the Jamaica Tertiary Education Commission (J-TEC) continues to provide regulatory oversight of the country's higher education sector. It operates under five (5) core business processes.

1. Assessment & Placement of Qualifications
2. Registration of Institutions
3. Providing Information and Public Education
4. Developing Policy and Research Papers
5. Developing Standards

As it relates to assessing & placing qualifications, 498 qualifications were submitted across nine institutions. 394 listed. For the period, 9 Institutions were registered and 12 institutions received capacity building. A Financing Model has been developed for the National Higher Education policy and is currently being tested.


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The J-TEC Bill is still being reviewed
National Qualifications System Policy (NQSP) –
Awaiting feedback from AGC and MoFPS



Main Focus Areas for 2023-2024

1. NQSP
2. J-TEC Bill
3. Ratification of UNESCO Conventions
4. Workforce Certification/PLAR
5. IESALC (Greater visibility to the Caribbean)
6. Participation in International Fora



The University Council of Jamaica (UCJ)

- Established by an Act of Parliament in 1987.
- National External Quality Assurance Agency for higher education in Jamaica
- The mandate is to oversee the quality of higher education and training provided by institutions.

Our tertiary sector has well over 100,000 students. We know that tertiary education delivers better job prospects and higher wages. We know that there are many who would like to pursue tertiary degrees but can't scale the financing hurdle, meaning they need funding not just to pay tuition but also to pay room & board and other costs. We are in the process of completing a policy for tertiary education that speaks to funding tertiary.

Madam Speaker, We want our tertiary sector to forge stronger ties with businesses to understand the needs of businesses so there is better alignment with those they are graduating and the job market.

We want to see our tertiary sector identifying and solving more of society's problems with their innovations.

I call on UWI, CASE, CMU, UTech, GC Foster College, our teachers colleges, our community colleges and the many private institutions offering higher education to do all that you can, especially in your offerings, to increase the number of students who can access tertiary education.

Tertiary Students' Assistance Programme

Madam Speaker, increased access to higher education is a critical component to ensuring that Jamaica is able to realize and sustain the desired levels of economic growth and development. The Ministry of Education and Youth has not just focused on ensuring that programmes offered particularly by publicly funded higher education institutions are aligned to our growth agenda, but has continued to invest significant resources through scholarships, grants and the Jamaica Values and Attitudes (JAMVAT) programme to support particularly vulnerable students in paying tuition fees. During the 2022/2023 financial year in excess of \$523M was spent on these initiatives with 158 students being awarded scholarships, 997 benefiting from JAMVAT and 1,149 students receiving grants ranging in value from \$100,000 to \$300,000.

Since the inception of the scholarship programme the Ministry has provided scholarships for 1,411 students including 718 who pursued programmes in secondary mathematics education and 229 in chemistry and physics education. 824 students have completed their programme of study and are currently serving their bond – including 790 teachers.

COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Notable Achievements for 2022/2023 Financial Year
In fulfilling its functions to the community colleges network, the Council of Community Colleges of Jamaica (CCCJ) noted the following achievements:

• ISO 9001:2015 Certification

The Council continues to update its processes in

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accordance with its ISO 9001:2015 certification. In October 2022, the National Certification Body of Jamaica (NCBJ) conducted CCCJ's first ISO 9001:2015 Surveillance Audit. The Council was able to retain its ISO 9001:2015 certification, proving that its processes are of the highest quality.

• Return to Face-to-Face Conference/Examinations

The COVID-19 pandemic halted the Council's face-to-face examinations and marketing activities as of 2020 March, moving both online. In the 2022/2023 Financial Year, we were able to administer Final Examinations using dual modality (online and face-to-face). The CCCJ's annual conference, our flagship event for not only marketing the community colleges brand but also engendering collaboration among local and international higher education institutions, also resumed. Conference 2022 attracted over 250 attendees and raised over J\$ 1.7 million in contributions while celebrating CCCJ's 20th year in operation.

• Signing of MOUs

The CCCJ signed Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with regional and international community colleges such as Hudson Valley Community College in New York, Anguilla Community College as well as Canadian colleges through the Emerging Leaders in the Americas Programme (ELAP). These Memoranda facilitate resource sharing and international research and scholarship opportunities for learners in CCCJ member institutions. To date, ELAP accommodated eight (8) applications from students in CCCJ programmes for 2023/2024 scholarship opportunities and one (1) staff member participated in the Canada-CARICOM Faculty Leadership Programme.

An MOU between CCCJ and the Ministry of Education and Youth, signed 2022 May 02, allows CCCJ to manage the Occupational Associate Degree (OAD) Programme in public and private higher education institutions. Also of note, is our signed MOU with the Jamaica Manufacturers and Exporters Association (JMEA) which allows students pursuing the Associate of Science in Agro-Processing to do internships with JMEA members.

• Review of OAD Curricula

After inheriting the OAD Programme from the Centre of Occupational Studies, CCCJ undertook an extensive review of OAD curricula to ensure that they meet local and international standards as well as to allow compliance with our indigenous quality assurance processes.

• Public and Private Sector Agreements

The CCCJ welcomes partnerships with local and international organisations in the public and private sector to boost support for member colleges. In the 2022/2023 Financial Year, the Secretariat and member colleges benefitted from donations of personal protective equipment and five (5) Microsoft Surface Learning Hubs from the FHI 360 Advance Programme. Through this programme, FHI 360 also provided scholarships for twenty-two (22) students pursuing Associate of Science Degrees in Agro-Processing and Business Management in CCCJ member institutions.

Key Initiatives for 2023/2024 Financial Year

Madam Speaker, for the upcoming Financial Year, the CCCJ plans to engage in:

- Implementation of new three-year Strategic Plan (2023-2026)
- Robust marketing of programmes in collaboration with MoEY and HEART/NSTA Trust to increase intake in technical and vocational education and training (TVET) programmes.
- Hosting of World Federation of Colleges and Polytechnics' (WFCP) World Congress 2024, with interest in attracting educators in the higher education TVET sector from around the world.
- Implementation of new organisational structure, pending budgetary approval from MoEY, thus increasing the Council's effectiveness.
- Strengthening alliances with local entities such as HEART/NSTA Trust, Jamaica Tertiary Education Commission (J-TEC), the University Council of Jamaica (UCJ) and MoEY as well as international higher education organisations.

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Madam Speaker, the University Council of Jamaica (UCJ) is mandated to oversee the quality of higher education and training provided by local and international institutions. This is done by ensuring the academic standards for these institutions, and accreditation of their programmes. For this period, two (2) institutions were granted Stage I registration and another two (2) institutions granted Stage II registration. 3 new programmes accredited and 23 programmes re-accredited. **Madam Speaker**, the low number of new programmes is due to more institutions applying for and receiving institutional recognition. Three (3) institutions were engaged for institutional accreditation. For this year, five (5) new programmes are targeted for review for accreditation and 25 programmes targeted for review for re-accreditation.

Conclusion

Madam Speaker, I will end where I started. We are gratified in having done the work to sort out the 5,045 post codes for our classroom teachers, senior teachers, master teachers, Health and Family Life Education (HFLE) teachers, numeracy specialists, teachers aide, teachers assistants and non-academic staff who have been teaching or working in the education system for many years without security of tenure, some for 5, 10 or more years. They will be regularized. We are doing a finalization of the data and then letters will be prepared.

We welcome 1,000+ new teachers to the education sector. Teachers Matter.

We will spread the gospel of collaborative interaction between teachers, students and the curriculum to ensure wide-spread acceptance. It will deliver children who can read, write and understand more than simple sentences.

We will complete the licensing regime for teachers.

We have and will continue to recognize and reward excellent teachers.

Technology and infrastructure will be a major focus. We have a new vision for the design of our schools.

We will continue to roll out broadband connectivity to our schools. Having completed the upgrade of all computer labs in all our high schools, we will turn now to upgrading the TVET labs. The budget is \$400 million dollars this fiscal year.

Under the TVET Expansion Plan, 55 high schools will be specially targeted for increased funding and resourcing to ensure students are exposed to industry standards.

Coding in Schools will be scaled up.

JSRA - aligns the assessment data with the Grade One Individual Profile to track and sustain the focus on student success especially those who need remedial attention. We commit all of our efforts to the 10,018 four-year old that have been identified as needing support to prevent them from struggling in primary and high school.

Madam Speaker, we commit to reinstating all those things we know that work but were interrupted by COVID-19:

Proficiency Pathways – Refocus on the proficiency pathway at the primary level, deliberate resourcing of Project-based learning/STEM at the primary level to ensure improved students' performance

Alternative Pathways for Secondary Education – Refocus on Alternative Pathways for Secondary Education to strengthen the implementation of customized learning at the secondary level

Our Basic Learning Recovery

Strengthening Numeracy and Literacy Support

Launch of the Literacy Summer School with a STEM focus for our grade 4 students..

Continue the roll-out of our Specialists Teacher Model with intense focus on our underperforming schools.

Psychosocial – provide more mental health support –

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tele-counselling, fully funded clinical service, increase of posts in schools and the establishment of the student support team approach at the school level.

Special Education Support – Increase the infrastructure, assessment, placement and Teaching and Learning support at all levels.

Teacher training and Monitoring of learning through collaboration and increased use of the blanketing approach as a regional supervisory strategy.

Nutritional support – provision of increase in funding to schools, tracking the impact of lunch and transportation support on learning/attendance. We are pleased that \$2b was added to school feeding this fiscal year.

EMIS – roll-out of the EMIS and data protection support for school as per the Data Protection Act. This will enable attendance and academic tracking

Strengthen safety and security in schools through the provision of CCTV Cameras, deployment of DoDs, training of DoDs, expansion of uniformed groups and improved coordination of the clubs and societies portfolio in schools, coordinated behaviour management support, restorative Justice Training, and the continued implementation of the activities aligned to the inter-ministerial school support strategy.

Provision of teaching resources - provision of curricula, guidelines to inform timetabling, textbooks, ebooks,

promoting the use of elearning resources to include the lesson plan bank, the archived lessons, televised learning and the educate jamaica learning platform and creating funded access to e-teacher substitution arrangements.

Provide resources to ensure school maintenance and the provision of furniture to improve the learning environment in schools.

Administer all summative/national exams in a timely manner to facilitate high school placement and make data available to informed teaching and learning. Special focus will be given to strengthen the development and use of formative assessments in schools.

Madam Speaker, I am grateful for the opportunity to contribute to the on-going transformation of education in Jamaica and I say to our students, our parents, our teachers, in fact, all Jamaicans, we need your support.

We are committed to the value proposition of education, which is:

To prepare our students for whatever the future may bring.

Thank you, **Madam Speaker**.

NOTES



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