



Joint Select Committee on Human Rights, Equality and Diversity

Public Hearing Summary

Friday November 01, 2019

Topic:

Inquiry into Boys' Academic Performance in Public Primary and Secondary Education.

Committee Members:

The following Committee Members were present for the public hearing:

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| • Dr. Nyan Gadsby-Dolly | Chairman |
| • Mrs. Glenda Jennings-Smith | Vice-Chairman |
| • Mr. Esmond Forde | Member |
| • Mr. Sean Sobers | Member |
| • Mrs. Hazel Thompson-Ahye | Member |

Witnesses who appeared:

Ministry of Education

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| • Mr. Harrilal Seecharan | Chief Education Officer |
| • Ms. Lisa Henry-David | Director, Educational Planning Division |
| • Dr. Dennis Conrad | Manager, Student Support Services Division |
| • Mr. Peter Smith | Director (Ag.), Education Research and Evaluation Division |
| • Ms. Ingrid Kemchand | Curriculum Coordinator, Curriculum Planning and Development Division |
| • Ms. Irma Bailey-Reyes | Behavioural Specialist – Interim Supervisor, Development Assessment Intervention Unit |
| • Ms. Natalie Robinson-Arnold | School Social Work Specialist |
| • Ms. Mary Bastien | Coordinator, Guidance and Counselling Unit |

University of Trinidad and Tobago

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| • Dr. Judy Rocke | Programme Leader, Centre for Education Studies |
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University of the West Indies

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| • Professor Jerome De Lisle | Director, School of Education |
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University of the West Indies and Applied Studies Limited (UWI-ROYTEC)

- Dr. Ronald Brunton Director, Academic Services

Key Issues Discussed:

1. The lack of progress made in closing the gender gap despite an increase in the overall performance of both boys and girls.
2. The need to improve the curriculum delivery in schools across Trinidad and Tobago.
3. The current challenges faced by school management which has an impact on the delivery of the curriculum.
4. The need for greater focus on tailoring teaching styles to meet the needs of each student; consideration given to the whole child approach which rules out the traditional treatment of society towards males.
5. The need for a systematic response which involves a focus on pedagogy to foster deep thinking and encourage the engagement of boys.
6. The need for gender sensitivity training so as to enable teachers to adequately respond to the needs of students and to furthermore, build on the strengths of each student.
7. The discontinuation of the Pilot Project of the MOE which commenced in 2010 for the transition of all co-educational (mixed) schools to same-sex schools following a post-analysis which revealed the absence of improvement in students' academic performance.
8. The significant difference in academic performance between denominational schools and co-educational (mixed) schools.
9. The need for parental intervention as the role of the parent is significant in achieving increased academic performance of boys.
10. The pertinent role of the social worker in academic performance of males.
11. The need for a school climate survey to identify the factors regarding the school climate on the performance of boys.
12. The socio-economic factors that affect the dropout rate of boys in schools and the need for the MOE to increase the number of social workers and guidance counsellors based on the dropout rate.
13. The need for the development a more robust Research Unit within MOE.
14. The need to increase the number of programmes which target young males at risk of gang involvement.
15. The need for a cultural shift in thinking of the teaching profession as a female gendered profession.

View the Hearing:

The hearing can be viewed on our YouTube page via the following link:

<https://youtu.be/GQwOvFzLzyA>

Contact Information:

You may contact the Committee's Secretary at jschumanrights@tparliament.org or 624-7275 Ext. 2288/2402.

Committees Unit
November 04, 2019