



Joint Select Committee on Human Rights, Equality and Diversity

Public Hearing Summary

Friday May 17, 2019 at 10:37 a.m.

Topic:

Inquiry into the sexual harassment in the Education Sector in Trinidad and Tobago with a specific focus on students.

Committee Members:

The following Committee Members were present for the public hearing:

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| • Dr. Nyan Gadsby-Dolly, MP | Chairman |
| • Mr. Esmond Forde | Member |
| • Mr. Rushton Paray | Member |
| • Mr. Kazim Hosein | Member |
| • Mrs. Hazel Thompson-Ahye | Member |

Witnesses who appeared:

Ministry of Education

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| • Mrs. Lenor Baptiste-Simmons | Permanent Secretary |
| • Ms. Sharon Ashman-John | Deputy Permanent Secretary |
| • Professor Dennis Conrad | Manager, Student Support Services |
| • Ms. Darlene Smith | Guidance Officer II |
| • Ms. Naima Hosein | Director, School Supervision and Management Division |
| • Ms. Natalie Robinson-Arnold | School Social Worker |

Teaching Service Commission

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| • Dr. Fazal Ali | Chairman |
| • Mrs. Joanne Joseph-Hannays | Member |
| • Ms. Anoushka Ramsaran | Senior State Counsel, Service Commissions Department |

National Parent Teachers Association

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| • Mrs. Raffiena Ali-Boodoosingh | President |
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7. The recommended provision of non-adversarial/ alternative dispute resolution methods to resolve cases of sexual harassment given the sensitive nature of the case.
8. The zero percent success rate for matters submitted to the Disciplinary Tribunal of the Teaching Service Commission involving a student's allegations of sexual harassment against a teacher.
9. The lack of monitoring of re-instated teachers who were previously the subject of a complaint allegation of sexual harassment.
10. The unwillingness of parents and students to provide evidence and appear as witnesses in the sexual harassment cases at the Disciplinary Tribunal of the Teaching Service Commission.
11. The recommended development of a Multi-Agency Protocol including the Ministry of the Attorney General and Legal Affairs, Children's Authority of Trinidad and Tobago, Ministry of Education, Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, Trinidad and Tobago Prisons Service, Director of Public Prosecutions, Teaching Service Commissions, Judiciary and Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government to deal with the issue of sexual harassment and protecting child witnesses in the Court setting.
12. The need for additional education and sensitization of students on what constitutes sexual harassment and the avenues available for redress within the National School Code of Conduct.
13. The recommendation of the USC Associated Student Body that the school environment should be student friendly, the complaints process should be efficient and short and a student handbook containing the sexual harassment procedure should be distributed in schools.

View the Hearing:

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

<https://youtu.be/veP0gwT056U>

Contact Information:

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

Committees Unit

May 20, 2019