



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
Office of the Attorney General and Ministry of Legal Affairs

OFFICE OF THE PERMANENT SECRETARY

Ref: 1/10/12 Vol.II

June 8, 2022

Ms. Jacqui Sampson-Meiguel
Clerk of the House
Parliament of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
Office of the Parliament
Parliamentary Complex
Cabildo Building
St. Vincent Street
PORT OF SPAIN

Dear Ms. Sampson-Meiguel,

Re: First Report of the Joint Select Committee on Social Services and Public Administration on an inquiry into the effects of the hybrid learning system on student performance in government and government-assisted schools during the revised COVID-19 restrictions


I refer to the Report stated at caption and to the findings and recommendations directed to the Office of the Attorney General and Ministry of Legal Affairs (“the Ministry”) on pages twenty-nine (29) to thirty-two (32) of the Report therein.

I also refer to Standing Orders 100(6) and 110(6) of the Senate and the House of Representatives respectively. Said Standing Orders obliges the Minister with responsibility for the Ministry to respond to any directed recommendations within sixty (60) days of the laying of the Committee’s report.

The Ministry humbly apologises for the delay of the submission of its written response and advises that said response is now enclosed.

I thank you for your kind consideration.

Yours sincerely,


Permanent Secretary
Office of the Attorney General and Ministry of Legal Affairs

Encl. (1)



**THE OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL & MINISTRY OF LEGAL
AFFAIRS**

Response to the

**First Report of the Joint Select Committee on Social Services and Public
Administration**

**An Inquiry into the effects of the hybrid learning system on student
performance in government and government-assisted schools during the
revised COVID-19 restrictions**



I. Introduction

The First Report of the Joint Select Committee on Social Services and Public Administration (“the Committee”) was presented in the House of Representatives on July 02, 2021 and in the Senate on July 05, 2021. In the said Report, the Committee resolved to inquire into the effects of the hybrid/blended learning system proposed by the Ministry of Education in response to the COVID-19 crisis in Trinidad and Tobago. The objectives of the inquiry are as follows:

1. To assess the effectiveness of the hybrid/blended learning system used by government and government-assisted schools in curriculum delivery.
2. To compare and contrast student performance using traditional versus hybrid/blended learning systems for similar time periods.
3. To examine the systems and methods used to monitor and evaluate student performance in the hybrid/blended learning environment.
4. To assess the readiness of the hybrid/blended learning system to adequately prepare students of external examinations.

Standing Orders 100(6) and 110(6) of the Senate and House of Representatives respectively, require the Minister with responsibility for the Ministry/body reported on by a Joint Select Committee to present to each House, a paper responding to the recommendations/comments contained in the said report.

This document is the Ministerial Response to the recommendations and comments as presented in the said First Report of the Committee, to be presented to the Parliament, through the Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs.

II. Recommendation and Response

During the Committee’s inquiry into the effects of the hybrid/blended learning system on student performance in government and government-assisted schools, the following recommendation that require a written response from the Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs was proposed:

Recommendation:

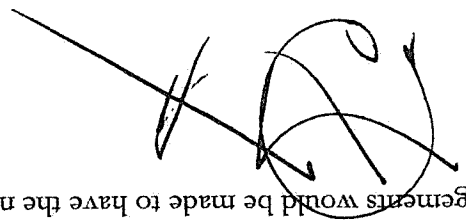
C. The Ministry of Education in conjunction with the Office of the Attorney General and Ministry of Legal Affairs needs to address legislative deficiencies with regard to the enrolment of Special Needs students in mainstream education as there have been challenges with interpreting the Education Act, Chap. 39:01.

Response

The Ministry of Education is responsible for the development of policy that treats with any legislative deficiencies in relation to the Education Act and/or any other matter connected therewith. When the policy is developed, it would be sent to the Cabinet of Trinidad and Tobago for its approval. Thereafter, the Office of the Attorney General and Ministry of Legal Affairs ("the Ministry") would make the arrangement to have the recommended changes drafted.

In this regard the Ministry of Education has indicated via email dated September 13, 2021 (attached) that it has developed an Inclusive Education Policy and an Education Policy Paper 2017-2022 (White Paper) which both include sections that treat with Special Education in Trinidad and Tobago. Although these policies have received the Cabinet's approval, the Ministry of Education is still engaged in inter-divisional discussions on same and is currently working towards narrowing its focus on the matter.

In consequence, the Legislative Drafting Department of the Ministry has not received any instructions for the drafting of the requisite legislative changes, if any. Once same is received by the Ministry, arrangements would be made to have the necessary drafting expedited.



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Senator the Honourable Reginald T.A. Armour, SC
Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs

----- Original message -----

From: Michelle Carter <michelle.carter@moe.gov.tt>

Date: 9/13/21 11:18 AM (GMT-04:00)

To: Solange De Souza <sdesouza@AG.GOV.TT>

Cc: Lisa Henry-David <Lisa.Henry-David@moe.gov.tt>

Subject: Re: URGENT: Response to Recommendation - First Report of the JSC SSPA on an Inquiry into the Effects of the Hybrid Learning System on Student Performance in Government and Government-Assisted Schools

Good Day Ms. De Souza,

Please let me first apologise for the delayed response.

The Ministry of Education is currently engaged in inter-divisional discussions on the matter.

We currently have our Inclusive Education Policy and the Education Policy 2017-2022 that has a section that treats with Special Education with reference throughout. This has been approved by Cabinet.

We are currently working on specific areas for communication to the Chief Parliamentary Counsel, such as identification of language that needs to be adjusted.

The MoE is in the process of preparing our documentation in accordance with the requisite standards before forwarding externally.

Regards,

Michelle Carter
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The Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

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