



Government of Bermuda
Ministry of Education
OFFICE OF THE MINISTER

New Year Message
The Minister of Education
The Hon. Dame Jennifer Smith DBE, JP, DHumL, MP

Thursday 29 December 2011

As we make preparations to welcome in a New Year, I want to take this opportunity to thank all of the Education Officers, Principals, Teachers, support staff in the public education system and the President, faculty and staff of the Bermuda College.

Their collective efforts have resulted in a successful 2011 year for Education.

For the first time in many years, report cards went home with primary school students at the end of the term on Friday 16 December. This was extremely important and ensured that parents had meaningful feedback on their student's performance.

Individual Education Programmes were introduced in September as part of an Alternative Education Programme and already we are seeing positive signs that the students involved are 'turning on' to education and responding to this form of intervention.

A special thank you to each of our private sector partners for the role they are playing in the lives of these students.

With the downturn in the economy, the Bermuda College has seen an increase in enrolment as individuals seek ways to re-tool to make themselves more marketable. The Division of Professional and Career Education (PACE) has launched initiatives to prepare students for rewarding entry-level careers and career advancement opportunities.

This year would not have been a success without the support of the Association of School Principals (ASP), the Bermuda Union of Teachers (BUT), the Bermuda Public Services Union and the Bermuda Industrial Union. Our Union partners have worked with us on behalf of students. We may not agree on everything, but there is a positive and committed partnership focused on what is best for our students and determined to put the proper framework in place to support them.

I have already publicly talked about the positive examination results, and I must highlight the Commissioner of Education, Mrs. Wendy McDonell, who has been in our schools throughout this past term working with teachers and principals to assist in instruction and have oversight of instruction. Because of the fact that the Permanent Secretary, Mr. Warren Jones, assumed day-to-day operational responsibility, the Commissioner has the flexibility to address teaching and learning hands-on.

There is still much to do in 2012, but I know that all of those involved in the education of our children are ready for the challenge.

To our principals, teachers, parents, students, Board of Education, Bermuda College Board, and Faculty, Ministry of Education staff and their families and friends, our adoptees and business partners and to all who have supported us during the year - God's Blessings for the New Year!

We look forward to another successful year in 2012.

Dame Jennifer Smith DBE, JP, DHumL, MP
Minister of Education