

**Ministry of Education**

**PRESS STATEMENT**

**Throne Speech – Education Reform**

**The Hon Diallo V. Rabain, J.P., M.P.**

**Minister of Education**

**Thursday, 12 November 2020**

**1:00 p.m.**

**Good Afternoon Bermuda**

This afternoon, I will provide an overview of the Ministry of Education’s Throne Speech priorities and areas of focus.

This year’s Throne Speech’s theme: Rebuilding Bermuda with Bermudians at Heart communicates the basis and foundation of all of the Government’s legislative priorities for this session of the House of Assembly. At the heart of rebuilding Bermuda is public education. The Government acknowledges that:

***Bermuda’s young people must feel the investment of their homeland in their success.***

As detailed in the Throne Speech, this legislative year we will continue the Education Reform with legislative changes required to advance the phasing out of middle schools and the introduction of a 2-tier system with primary and signature schools. The System will also benefit from reformed governance and greater accountability with the creation of an Authority to lead all aspects of performance management in Public Education.

Bermuda, Education Reform is underway. Teams from the Ministry of Education, the Department of Education, the Board of Education, Bermuda First, teachers, students and members of our community are working together to transform public education to meet the educational and vocational needs of our students.

Already, under the umbrella of **Education Reform,** the following will be the priority for this upcoming legislative session. These are:

**1. School Buildings Realignment Consultation Process** led by members of the Ministry of Education with input from the Learning First Program and Innovation Unit. The realignment of our schools is necessary to remove the middle school system to create a 2-tier system of Primary and Senior Signature schools which will include a signature school for students with exceptionalities and one for alternative education to support students’ behaviour and mental health needs. Consultation with the general public will begin later this month to start the discussion around the structural realignment necessary for a reformed Bermuda Public School System.

**2. The Learning First Programme** led by the Governance Team, Innovation Unit and the School Redesign Teams will. Their focus will be on the internal structure and the Learning Environment. Learning First is our recently launched programme to collaboratively design an improved school system with a focus on varied types of learning experiences. The Redesign Teams will start the research aspect later this month by interviewing first students, teachers and principals or school leaders to obtain critical data about their experiences in public school education. They will be collecting data around what is working well, challenges encountered, improvements needed for the System, parental engagement, and community and business engagement.

**3. The Governance Structure and Accountability Team** is led by the Board of Education with input from Bermuda First and Innovation Unit. Their focus is on creating an Education Authority for overseeing public education to lead all aspects of performance management in public education.

The work has started! Education Reform is taking place and moving along. We are transforming education to provide a public school system that produces students equipped for vocational, academic or business careers of their choosing.

These next phases will involve the necessary collaboration to ensure the voices of our stakeholders, are part of the foundation of Education Reform. We intend to keep the guiding principles of transparency, inclusivity, and engagement to the redesign of the public-school system to produce a system the Bermudian public deserves.

I invite everyone who is impacted in any form by the public education system to consider and share their views on the proposals for a transformed public education system when launched this month.

There is a lot of work to be done. We will continue to make the improvements and the changes necessary to bring Education Reform, and what is best and required to every day build a better, fairer and stronger education system for our children and Bermuda’s future.