



## **Ministerial Statement**

By

**Senator, The Hon. Crystal Caesar JP**

**Minister of Education**

### **Update on the Progress of the Public School System Transformation Programme**

**Wednesday, June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2026**

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**Madam President,**

I rise today to update this Honourable House on the progress being made in advancing the transformation of Bermuda's Public School System and to outline the deliberate steps being taken to strengthen delivery, stabilise our schools, and improve outcomes for every child.

At the beginning of the current academic year, the Ministry of Education undertook a careful review of the Public School System Transformation Programme. Following that review, we adopted a refined approach—one that balances long-term structural reform with the immediate need to ensure stability, clarity, and focus across our schools.

Our emphasis has been on strengthening the foundations of the system while continuing to advance transformational change. This includes reducing reliance on acting appointments, supporting school leadership, strengthening teaching and learning, and ensuring that school improvement efforts result in measurable gains in student achievement.

This approach recognises an important reality: educational transformation is not a single event or destination. Rather, it is an ongoing process of continuous school improvement and system-wide enhancement. Sustainable change must be thoughtfully paced, evidence-based, appropriately resourced, and centred at all times on the needs and success of our students.

**Madam President,**

I am pleased to report that meaningful progress continues across several key areas of the transformation programme.

First, work continues to advance the development of Signature Learning Programmes at Berkeley Institute, CedarBridge Academy, and Sandys Secondary School.

These programmes will play a central role in reshaping senior school education by creating pathways that better align with students' strengths, interests, aspirations, and future career opportunities. The work is being led by each school's leadership teams and supported by dedicated teachers who have been actively engaged throughout the transformation journey.

I am particularly pleased to note the substantial progress made on the new Media Centre at Sandys Secondary School. This facility will serve as an important resource in supporting the school's signature programmes, particularly those focused on Hospitality and Tourism, and will enhance opportunities for experiential and industry-connected learning.

**Madam President,**

The Ministry continues to support senior school transformation efforts through targeted investments in staff capacity and programme development. Funding has been provided to support teacher overtime and to recognise teacher leaders who are championing school-based transformation initiatives.

Each senior school submitted detailed proposals identifying priority areas requiring further development during the 2025–2026 academic year. This investment reflects our commitment to empowering school leaders and educators to develop sustainable, school-specific models of improvement that meet the unique needs of their students and communities.

**Secondly, Madam President,**

At the primary level, implementation of Parish School features continues to progress at Francis Patton, Purvis Primary, Harrington Sound, and Elliot Parish Schools.

These schools represent far more than the addition of Years 7 and 8. They are intended to strengthen learning communities, expand opportunities for students, and create more engaging, supportive, and developmentally appropriate learning environments. To support this work, dedicated resources, personnel, and equipment have been allocated to each participating school.

I would also like to extend my best wishes to the team of educators from Purvis Primary School who will travel to the United Kingdom this summer to visit an established dual-language school. This marks the second international professional learning opportunity provided to support Purvis' dual-language programme.

Having recently visited the school and met with the educators participating in the study visit, I was encouraged by their enthusiasm and commitment to strengthening bilingual learning opportunities for students. The knowledge and experience gained through this engagement will further enhance the programme and contribute to the school's feature continued development.

### **Thirdly, Madam President,**

The Ministry continues to advance the development of a reimagined special school model for Dame Marjorie Bean Hope Academy.

This important work is being led by a dedicated local educator with subject matter expertise and is focused on developing a modern, inclusive, and evidence-based framework to support students with specialised learning needs.

To date, this work has produced:

- A robust, research-informed foundation aligned with international best practice;
- A position paper outlining infrastructure requirements for the future school;
- Meaningful engagement with educators, parents, and multidisciplinary professionals; and
- A collaborative design model that promotes accountability, transparency, and shared ownership.

### **Madam President,**

Alongside the progress outlined today, the Ministry has taken responsible decisions to recalibrate certain aspects of the wider transformation programme to ensure that implementation remains sustainable, coordinated, and effective.

This is not a reduction in ambition. Rather, it is a strengthening of execution.

We are committed to ensuring that changes are thoroughly planned, adequately resourced, and carefully sequenced so that they deliver meaningful and lasting benefits for students, families, and staff.

Accordingly, the Ministry rescinded previously published timelines relating to future school openings and closures beyond September 2025.

This decision reflects our commitment to ensuring that infrastructure planning, educational design, workforce considerations, and operational readiness are fully aligned before additional phases of implementation are undertaken.

Put simply, we are choosing thoughtful preparation over rushed implementation. By doing so, we reduce the risk of unintended consequences and increase the likelihood of long-term success.

### **Madam President,**

It is also important to address a common misconception regarding school closures and anticipated cost savings.

The closure of a school does not automatically generate significant financial savings. Historically, when schools have closed, educators and staff have been redeployed throughout

the Bermuda Public School System. As a result, the majority of operating costs, particularly salaries and benefits, remained within the system and are redistributed rather than eliminated.

The Government has remained committed to retaining educators and supporting continuity within our schools. To date, staff wishing to remain within the public education system have been accommodated.

However, as student enrolment continues to decline, we must acknowledge that this approach may become increasingly difficult to sustain over the long term. These realities must be carefully considered as we continue to plan for the future of public education.

**Madam President,**

The work underway demonstrates this Government's unwavering commitment not only to achieving the long-term vision of transformation, but also to ensuring equity, support, and opportunity for every school, every teacher and every student today.

Transformation is not solely about the future state we seek to achieve. It is equally about strengthening the experiences and outcomes of students currently within our classrooms.

**In closing, Madam President,**

Progress is being made.

It is deliberate.

It is thoughtful.

It is grounded in evidence.

And most importantly, it is centred on the best interests of Bermuda's children.

We will continue this work with discipline, transparency, and determination. We will remain focused on delivering meaningful improvements in teaching, learning, and student achievement, while building a public education system that prepares every child to succeed in Bermuda and beyond.

The transformation of public education remains a priority for this Government, and we remain steadfast in our commitment to seeing that work through.

**Thank you, Madam President.**