



**Ministerial Statement**  
To The Senate  
By  
**Senator Owen Darrell JP**  
Junior Minister of Education

**Ministerial Statement**  
Update on School Reform – Beyond September 2022

**Wednesday, May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2022**

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**MADAM PRESIDENT,**

Today I would like to provide an update to the Senate and the listening public on the tremendous amount of work that is being done within the Ministry of Education, the Department of Education, and the Learning First Programme. It was in March that I last provided an update on the work going on within these groups but I am happy to say that there is still much work taking place and great things to report about.

**MATH INTERVENTION PROGRAM**

**MADAM PRESIDENT,**

One of the three Rs that form the foundation of learning in schools is, of course, arithmetic, more commonly known as Maths. While the methods have changed over time, their importance has not. As important as this core subject is, what we found was that our students were not performing at levels that were comparable with their peers around the world.

**MADAM PRESIDENT,**

A solution was needed, and a solution was found. In early 2018, through the efforts of the Principal and Math Teacher at Harrington Sound Primary School, a program offered through Primal Academic Innovations (PAI) was piloted at Harrington Sound Primary. The success of this year-long pilot was noted and in 2019, the Department of Education contracted Primal Academic Innovations to deliver a phased mathematics intervention

programme in the public school system. Primal Academic Innovations Ltd has a strong track record of transforming schools that have underachievement in mathematics into becoming centres of mathematics excellence.

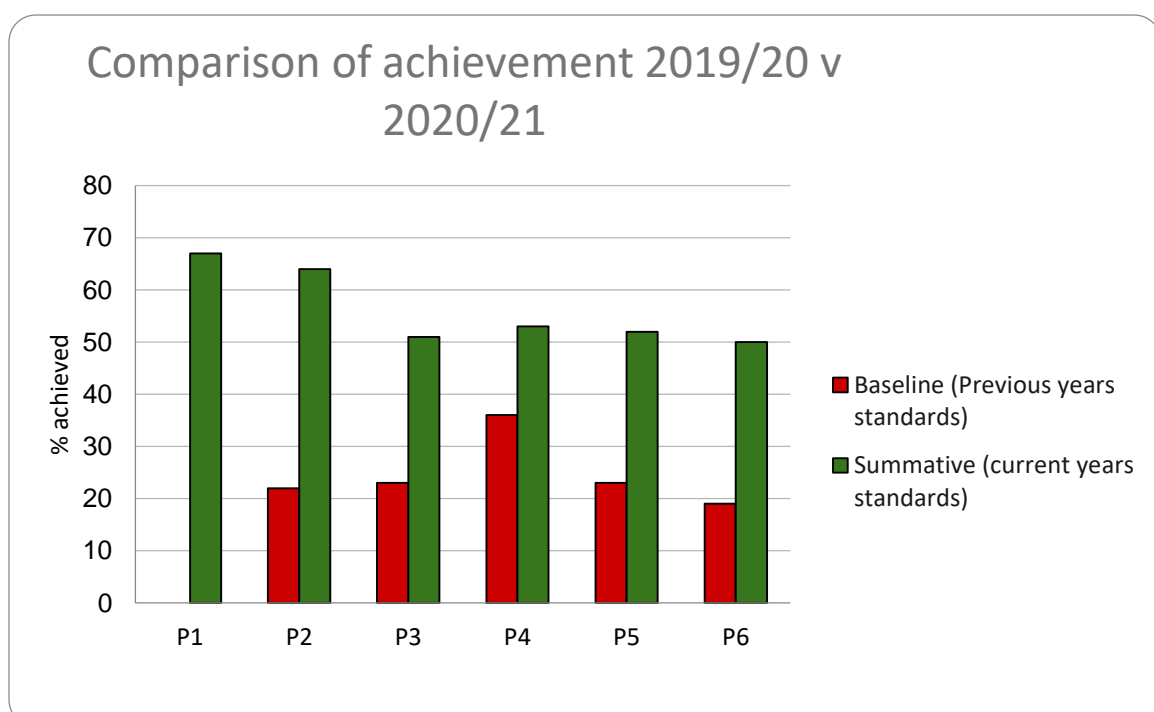
**MADAM PRESIDENT,**

PAI was tasked to improve the quality of teaching mathematics through training, resources, support, and leadership development. Their work included:

1. Training and coaching of teachers with low performing classes;
2. Curriculum development;
3. Assessment of materials for standards-based grading;
4. Guidance to schools falling behind due to COVID restrictions;
5. Development of teaching resources;
6. Assessment and analysis;
7. Guidance to math teacher leaders and school principals; and,
8. Monitoring student work to ensure standards increase

**MADAM PRESIDENT,**

The work of PAI has proven to be exactly what our system needed. From 2019 / 2020 compared to 2020 / 2021, the data has shown primary student outcomes have doubled and in some cases, tripled. These are outcomes that this government wants to see and will continue to build on.



**MADAM PRESIDENT,**

This math program aligns directly with Education Reform, which is to increase academic rigour and enhance the quality of teacher practice and systematic leadership. PAI will continue its great work as the program expands into our Middle Schools and Senior Schools. Over the next 15 months starting in September 2020, this will include:

1. Monitoring, training, and writing analysis for supporting the effective delivery of the maths mastery programme;
2. Assessment analysis and curriculum modification for identifying and closing gaps in student learning due to COVID and other disruptions;
3. A Math Mastery Summer School to equip Primary 3 to Middle 3 teachers with tools to close the achievement gap in math resulting from COVID;
4. Conducting an IGCSE math assessment gap analysis for all S2 students at the Senior School Level;
5. Development training for transitioning middle school teacher delivery to signature senior school curriculum; and,
6. Developing a cadre of strong mathematics teachers as experts in the subject knowledge and pedagogy of math associated with world-class teaching.

**SIGNATURE LEARNING PROGRAMMES FOR OUR SENIOR SCHOOLS**

**MADAM PRESIDENT,**

As we have discussed several times in this chamber, our Signature Senior Schools will include Signature Learning Programmes based on sectors of the economy and society. These Signature Learning Programmes will:

- help each and every student to follow their passions,
- build on their talents, and
- achieve their career and further education aspirations.

**MADAM PRESIDENT,**

In September 2022, incoming S1 students entering The Berkeley Institute and Cedarbridge Academy will be educated in a way that has never been done before. I am very pleased to share that the incoming S1 students will, in addition to their Core Curriculum, have access to:

- Signature curriculum which is relevant for our children, for Bermuda, and globally
- a model of teaching and learning which incorporates authentic, real-world learning experiences and meaningful projects, attentive to the differing needs of each and every child
- assessment which demonstrates what children have done and can do, as well as what they have learnt
- graduation requirements which ensure that children who leave with the Bermuda Signature School Diploma have the necessary experience, skills, knowledge, values, and relationships to take up jobs or apprenticeships in their chosen profession or trade and contribute to the requirements for entry into colleges and universities
- system policies, procedures, and frameworks that will support and sustain 21st-century learning.

**MADAM PRESIDENT,**

This has been achieved by collaboratively 'co-designing' our future schools and a school system with teachers, students, parents, and business and community leaders, informed by research on best practices worldwide and supported by our change partner Innovation Unit. I cannot thank those involved enough for their tireless work.

**WORKSTREAM CO-LEADS**

**MADAM PRESIDENT,**

Learning like I just described will require an education system with a different mindset. For these new learning models, teaching and schooling to be sustained, they will need to be nurtured and enabled by reoriented systems, policies and procedures. In addition to working on what happens inside the

school, workstream teams involving Principals, Teachers, Department of Education officers, and Partner Individuals and Organizations have been advancing the necessary changes to our system conditions. I now wish to highlight the work that has been advanced in just one of these workstream teams; the workstream focused on Learning Partnerships.

**MADAM PRESIDENT,**

Just as our community will be successful when education is successful, our system will also be successful with the community's involvement. The Signature Learning Partnerships Workstream has been working diligently to foster relationships between the Department of Education and each respective business to bring the real-world experiences that students will require. There is much to be gained from these partnerships not only for students but teachers as well. The Partnership team has described several opportunities for teachers to connect with partners through various opportunities like externships.

**MADAM PRESIDENT,**

Signature Externships are professional learning opportunities for teachers to connect the classroom to the workplace through explicit time spent in industry/sector environments and alongside professionals. This kind of engagement enhances not only teachers' professional development but their ability to teach students as they can bring real-world understandings that will motivate and excite students. This, **MADAM PRESIDENT,** is the kind of reimagining of education that will improve our system.

**MADAM PRESIDENT,**

As the largest and most varied employer in Bermuda, I am pleased that the Government of Bermuda has truly embraced the idea of being a Signature Learning Partner. There is no Government Ministry that our Signatures do not touch. There is no Department that does not have something to offer our students, and I am pleased to say that they are all motivated to provide learning opportunities for our students.

**MADAM PRESIDENT,**

I am excited about what these partnerships will mean for our students and the Government. I wish the same level of excitement for businesses in the community. There is still time to get involved and be a partner. Whether you are a Mom and Pop small business or a large business with dozens of employees, you can support and provide opportunities for students and or teachers. I encourage everyone to reach out to [www.learningfirstbda.com](http://www.learningfirstbda.com) to figure out how they can be a part of Education Reform.

### **BEYOND SEPTEMBER 2022**

**MADAM PRESIDENT,**

On April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022 the Minister of Education announced the Parish Primary Schools and the next Signature School we anticipate opening for our young people in the academic year, starting September 2023. These are:

- The Francis Patton Parish Primary School site
- The Purvis Parish Primary School site
- The Hospitality & Tourism and Education Services Signature School (at a site to be confirmed).

**MADAM PRESIDENT,**

In addition to the work needed for the anticipated introduction of two Parish Primary Schools and another Signature School, the work at the Signature Schools opening in September 2022 will continue. Work is needed to build the Health & Social Care and Financial & Insurance Services Signature Learning for the years S2 and S3 at the Berkeley Institute and the Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) and Trades & Professions for the years S2 and S3 at CedarBridge Academy. Additionally, we will expand the features of Signature Schooling into the core curriculum at both Senior Schools.

**MADAM PRESIDENT,**

The Ministry of Education is establishing School Transformation Teams to participate in the designing, prototyping, and implementation of new models of teaching, learning, and schooling. The School Transformation Teams will bring together education professionals, parents, businesses, and community members who are passionate about redesigning Bermuda's public schools to best prepare young people for a purposeful and thriving future. Again, I urge anyone interested in collaborating to build an improved school system for Bermuda to visit [www.learningfirstbda.com](http://www.learningfirstbda.com) and express an interest in joining a School Transformation Team.

### **EDUCATION REFORM IMMEDIATE NEXT STEPS**

**MADAM PRESIDENT,**

Over the past 26 months, those involved in Education Reform have been incredibly busy and there has been little time to rest. Across the remainder of May and June, we will induct and onboard the new School Transformation Teams, bring the teachers involved in delivering the new Signature Learning Programmes together across two weeks for a learning and planning immersion, and continue to engage each and every teacher across the island in professional learning on the features of our transformed system.

**MADAM PRESIDENT,**

To enable this, the Commissioner of Education recently announced to parents and the school community that we are bringing forward the end of the school year. The last day for students will be 24 June 2022 rather than 29 June 2022 as published on the Academic Calendar. This was not an easy decision to make and required the Department's senior leadership team and the Ministry of Education to weigh up the advantages and disadvantages in terms of children's learning, the inconvenience to parents and families, and the longer-term vision we have for learning.

**MADAM PRESIDENT,**

The continued transformation of our school system is a complex and challenging undertaking that requires the engagement of each and every educator across our school system. These extra 3 days at the end of the term will allow our schools to work with undivided attention, ensuring that we are even more prepared for the next design and implementation phases.

**MADAM PRESIDENT,**

We understand the disruption that this unexpected closure may cause and have connected with our colleagues at the Department of Youth and Sport. They will commence their summer camps a week early and start on Monday, June 27th. Registration for camps will be online only starting on May 25th. Please note that spaces at the camps are limited, and To help parents and guardians manage this adjustment to the school year there is no charge for this first week of summer camp. More information on the summer camps can be found in the Scoop newsletter sent from the Commissioner of Education to every family last Thursday, May 19<sup>th</sup>, and on the Youth and Sport website.

**MADAM PRESIDENT,**

Transforming an education system is no easy feat. It has required and will continue to require sacrifices from each and every one of us. I wish to thank our parents and families, the teachers and leaders across the system, and members of the community for their continued support and effort to improve the quality of education for our students.

Thank you, **MADAM PRESIDENT.**