



*Government of Bermuda*

Ministry of Education and Economic Development

To the House of Assembly

By

**Dr. the Hon. E. Grant Gibbons, JP, MP**

Minister of Education and Economic Development

***'Middle School Leadership Training'***

Date: Friday, May 30<sup>th</sup> 2014

---

**Mr. Speaker,**

I rise this morning to inform this Honourable House of the recent Middle School Leadership training that was hosted by the Department of Education, from May 13<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> 2014.

Honourable members will be aware that two of the key strategic priorities of the Department of Education are to:

- Improve the Quality of Teaching and Learning in the Classroom; and,
- Strengthen and Distribute Leadership

Improving teaching and learning in the classroom will happen by building the content knowledge of every teacher, raising expectations and providing teachers and administrators with coaching, professional development, and guidance.

The Department will continue to strengthen leadership by working with school leaders to increase their ability to lead change, and improve instruction and everyday operations. This means ensuring that all school leaders know what good instruction looks like and can build capacity for good teaching in their schools.

**Mr. Speaker,**

Honourable Members may also recall that the 2014/15 Budget for School Improvement and Staff Development was substantially increased by more than 80% in order to place greater emphasis on professional development this school year.

As part of this effort, 20 of our Middle School Leaders were engaged in a four day practical training programme entitled ‘Leading for Change in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century’.

The training sessions were delivered by a team of professional educators from the Professional Development Division of the firm Pearson Inc., which is based in the U.S. This firm has a proven track record of working closely with school administrators and leaders to support teacher development and enhance performance and learning in the classroom.

**Mr. Speaker,**

The leadership training consisted of two components.

1. Instructional Leadership: involved middle school Principals, Deputy Principals and Teacher Instructional Leaders receiving training on developing a middle school vision, and designing classroom instruction to promote student engagement and learning outcomes. Emphasis was placed

on ensuring an effective leadership team and the utilization of a standard based instructional framework that promotes rigor and student engagement.

2. Observation, Assessment and Feedback: involved the facilitators visiting each of our five middle schools to partner with Principals and their teacher leaders with walk-throughs to practice their teaching. A lesson observation tool was used outlining effective lesson components.

The facilitators performed an assessment of the use of learning tools and instructional methods. The walk-through proved to be extremely beneficial as the leadership teams from each middle school obtained immediate feedback about their observed performances.

**Mr. Speaker,**

The training also provided the opportunity to incorporate the 16 Characteristics of Effective Middle Schools, as developed by the Association for Middle Level Education (AMLE).

**Mr. Speaker,**

I have been informed that the overall feedback from the participating educators was very encouraging. One of them commented that he had been *"intellectually stimulated, personally motivated, and systemically encouraged by the wealth of leadership information."*

**Mr. Speaker,**

Improving teaching and learning is an area that the Department of Education will continue to focus on during the upcoming academic school year. Professional development will be a key part of our education system and we are committed to

ensuring that this culture is established in all schools and at every level for the benefit of our students. It also directly supports two of the priorities outlined in the *Blue Print for Reform*.

**Mr. Speaker,**

In closing, I would like to thank the team at the Department of Education for their continued efforts in supporting our educators in the public school system; in particular, Mrs. Terry Cox, Assistant Director for the Eastern Zone of schools who organized the professional development training for the Middle Schools.

I would also like to thank the middle school Principals and their instructional leader teams for making this a worthwhile initiative for school improvement and student achievement.

Thank you, **Mr. Speaker**