



**Ministerial Statement
To The House of Assembly**

By

**The Hon. Diallo Rabain, JP, MP
Minister of Education**

The 55th Annual Primary School Art Exhibition

Friday, February 28th, 2020

Mr Speaker,

This morning I rise before this Honourable House excited to share with my colleagues, about the excellent display of Primary School artwork that is currently being exhibited in the Bermuda Society of Arts Gallery, in City Hall. The official opening of the annual primary school art exhibition was on Friday, February 7th, at 5:30 pm. The Art Show was well attended as there were a few hundred attendees; that included students, teachers, principals, parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts, friends and many more – all viewing the tasteful display of Art.

Mr Speaker,

Each year, the artwork on display is inspirational and reflective of the talent we have within our public and private primary schools. The theme of this year's Art Show is "Freedom and Social Change". I'm not sure how the themes are chosen each year, but I will say that this theme acknowledges that socially the world, and indeed Bermuda is changing; and, this year our students took the opportunity to express their understanding of freedom and social change through art.

Mr. Speaker,

We all know that the arts have always been an integral component of education and embraced with continued integration in our children's learning experience. There are impacting benefits to engaging our students in art apart from giving them a platform to express themselves. Through art, our students build their confidence and self-esteem, they are motivated and inspired to explore and find their element of creativity. Art enhances student's cognitive processes, problem-solving ability, thinking and using a variety of symbols reflect their thoughts, ideas and feelings in a structured way.

Mr. Speaker,

All Government and private primary schools contributed to the Art Exhibition. As I walked the floor and viewed the artwork, I was totally amazed. The works ranged from the life of Sally Bassett to expressions of freedom. The colours were vibrant and eye-catching; and spoke to a mastery of the elements of art that students were taught during the course of the school year. To quote one of our public school art teachers: "Visual art remains a vital language for learning".

Mr Speaker,

I hesitate to ever speak about any single school in particular, but in this instance, I feel compelled to highlight the artwork by our students at the Dame Majorie Bean Hope Academy. Our students at Hope Academy are students with exceptional needs as they experience severe to profound multiple challenges to which Hope Academy provides intensive learning support, medical and therapeutic interventions. Their collection of artwork really captured my attention at the display. Their artwork very skillfully captured the theme of the show and left you with no doubt that they are aware of their every day challenges. One-piece, spoke to the

desire to have Freedom from Hurtful Perceptions, Limited Mobility and Limited Communication. Another student's work spoke to the desire to have Freedom of Speech, asking the viewer to "Please listen to my opinion"

Mr Speaker,

This is an art show not to be missed! Our primary school students have made us proud. We know that the artwork they have produced is a direct reflection of the dedicated art teachers in our schools who have taken the time to inspire our students and encourage them to create their best work. **Mr Speaker,** I am also pleased because similar to last year, some of the student's artwork will be selected, framed and displayed in one of Government Buildings spearheaded by the Government's Intellectual Properties Office.

Mr Speaker,

The Primary School Art Show will remain open until Tuesday, March 3rd 2020. However, next week Friday, March 6th, we will have the opening of our Middle and Senior School Art Show under the same theme "Freedom and Social Change". All 4 middle and the 2 senior Government schools, as well as all 6 private schools, will be participating. I encourage my Honourable colleagues and the general public to visit both art shows and experience the artistic talent of our students.

Mr Speaker,

In closing, let me thank all of our art teachers, School Principals, and the Department of Education's Officer for Arts and Leadership, Dr Shangri-la

Durham Thompson for their collaborative teamwork to produce this annual event. This year marks the 55th anniversary, and I look forward to many more to come.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.