



Remarks by Senator Ruel Reid

Minister of Education, Youth and Information

At Press Conference on 2018 Nation Exit Exams

Mona Visitors' Lodge, University of the West Indies

11: 30 a.m. August 16, 2018

Good Morning Colleagues and members of the media.

It's my pleasure this morning to share with you highlights from the results and analysis of secondary level external examinations sat in May and June this year and administered through the Offices of the Overseas Examination Commission.

I will also be sharing with you plans for a new approach to a seven-year high school programme and a National School Leaving Certificate initiative for the upcoming academic year.

Overview

Ladies and gentlemen, the preliminary report and analysis of the Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE) and Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) exams showed that marginal to significant improvements were recorded for most subjects sat this year.

I am particularly pleased to note improvements in performance by Public Schools in CSEC Mathematics and English Language which recorded percentage passes of 57.8 and 75.4 per cent respectively. In fact an improved performance rate was also recorded for both subjects in private institutions as well.

1: Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE) Results for 2018

In this year's CAPE candidates were entered for 35 subjects. There was a total of 61,722 subject entries for Units 1 and 2. Of this number 58,512 (approximately 95%) were sat, with an average pass rate of 91% compared with 90.5% in 2017 where 56,498 subject entries were sat.

Unit 1 had a total of 43,322 subject entries, of which 40,919 (94.5%) were sat with a pass rate of 90.4%. Of the 18,400 subject entries for Unit 2, a total of 17,593 (95.6%) were sat with a pass rate of 92.4%.

Public schools accounted for some 86.4% (53,309) of the total subject entries for Units 1 and 2. Of this number 50,903 (95.5%) were sat, with an average pass rate of 92%, an increase of 0.1 percentage point over the previous year. Unit 1 had a total of 37,295 subject entries, of which 35,519 (95.2%) were sat with a pass rate of 91.5% representing 0.3 percentage point increase over the previous year.

Of the 16,014 subject entries for Unit 2, a total of 15,384 (96.1%) were sat with a pass rate of 93.2%, registering a 0.2 percentage point decrease when compared with 2017.

As was the case last year, there was improved performance in 23 subject areas. Logistic and Supply Chain Operations, Unit 1 and Performing Arts, Unit 1 had the highest percentage increases of 26.2 and 19.3 respectively. It should be noted also

that Applied Mathematics and Integrated Mathematics had percentage increases of 7.6 and 8.9 respectively when compared with 2017.

A total of 13,660 candidates were entered for both Units 1 and 2 from secondary level schools, which represent a 4.6% increase over the previous year. A total of 13,550 candidates were entered for Unit 1, a 4.4% increase over the 2017. For 2018, 7,604 candidates were entered for Unit 2, which represent a 3.6% increase over the previous year.

[More details are provided in the data sheets in the press kits and full reports will be posted on our website later today.]

2: Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) Examination Results for 2018

All Jamaica

In the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) Examination, Jamaican candidates were entered for 34 subjects in 2018.

A total of 63,428 candidates were registered to sit the examination, of which 37,875 (59.7%) were females and 25,553 (40.3%) were males. Some 1,135 fewer candidates were registered compared to 2017. Of those who entered, 59,580 (93.9%) candidates sat, of which 46,443 (78%) obtained grades 1-3. A total of 35,819 females sat and 28,217 (78.8%) obtained grades 1-3 while some 23,761 males sat and 18,226 (76.7%) obtained grades 1-3.

The results showed 248,414 subject entries, of which 232,840 (93.7%) were sat. Mathematics and English Language, with the largest numbers of entries and sittings, recorded percentage passes of 46.5 and 68.7 per cent respectively. When the average attainment rates for Mathematics and English Language were

compared with 2017 results, there were increases of 4.5 and 2.9 percentage points for Mathematics and English Language respectively.

Male students achieved higher percentage passes than females in three (3) subjects: Biology, 73.2% compared to 70.9% for females; Chemistry, 57.2% compared to 52.0% for females; Mathematics, 47.3% compared to 46.0% for females.

Public Schools

Some 35,149 students from public schools were registered to sit the examination, of which 34,139 (97.1%) sat and 30,343 (88.9%) obtained grades 1-3. Some 470 fewer students were registered when compared to 2017. Of the candidates entered, 19,880 (56.6%) were females and 15,269 (43.4%) males. The number of females who sat was 19,490 with 17,731 (91%) being awarded grades 1-3 while the number of males who sat was 14,649, from which 12,612 (86%) obtained grades 1-3. In addition of the 34 subjects sat, 22 showed improved pass rates over 2017.

Males achieved higher percentage passes than females in two (2) subjects: Biology 75.1% compared to 73.8% for females, Chemistry 60.9% compared to 56.9% for females. There was no difference in performance between males and females for Additional Mathematics.

As I noted earlier, Mathematics and English Language, recorded percentage passes of 57.8 and 75.4 per cent respectively. When the average attainment rates for Mathematics and English Language were compared with 2017 results, there was a 7.6 percentage point increase in Mathematics and a 4.6 percentage point increase in English Language.

Overall, the highest percentage increase of 26.3 percentage points, was in English Literature There were also increases in the average pass rates for Additional

Mathematics (4.8 percentage points), Physics (9.8 percentage points), Technical Drawing (7.7 percentage points), Human and Social Biology (6.4 percentage points), Information Technology (6.3 percentage points), Biology (4.5 percentage points) and Chemistry (4.2 percentage points).

There were 21.8 percentage points decrease in Integrated Science and 7.4 percentage points decrease in Agricultural Science Single Award when compared with the previous year.

Four subjects had average pass rates of over 90%. These were Agricultural Science Double Award (95.3%), Electronic Document Preparation and Management (95.4%), Food, Nutrition and Health (90.1%) and Physical Education and Sport (96.3%).

3: City and Guilds 2018 Preliminary Results

In June 2018, a total of 20,835 entries were made for Certification in Mathematics. Of this number 14,225 entrants were from Grade 11 and 6,610 from the Career Advancement Programme (CAP).

Grade 11

From the 14,225 students who entered from Grade 11, some 2,677 were entered for Stage 1; 8,063 for Stage 2 and 3,485 for Stage 3. A total of 11,321 (79.6%) students sat the exam, with Stage 1 having 1,892 candidates, 6,493 from Stage 2 and 2,936 from Stage 3. At Grade 11 the overall pass rate for all three stages combined was 68.5%. Stage 1 had a pass rate of 72.6 per cent while Stages 2 and 3 had pass rates of 66.2 per cent and 70.9 per cent respectively.

Career Advancement Programme (CAP)

CAP entered 6,610 students comprising 1,277 for Stage 1; 2582 for Stage 2 and 2,751 for Stage 3. Some 4,511 (68.2%) of the entries were sat, with Stage 1 having

781, Stage 2 with 1,690 and Stage 3 with 2,040. For the CAP, the overall pass rate for all three Stages combined was 74.4 per cent. Stage 1 had a pass rate of 87 per cent; while Stages 2 and 3 had pass rates of 65 per cent and 77.4 per cent respectively.

Career Advancement Programme (CAP)

CAP entered 6,185 students, disaggregated into 483 students for Stage 1, some 2,444 students for Stage 2 and 3,258 for Stage 3. A total of 4,040 entries were sat, with Stage 1 having 235, Stage 2 with 1,494 and Stage 3 with 2,311.

The CAP overall pass rate for all three stages combined was 73.4 per cent. Stage 1 had a pass rate of 83.4 per cent while Stages 2 and 3 each had a pass rate of 72.9 per cent.

4: NATIONAL VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATION (NVQ-J) 2018

MOEYI and CAP Combined

A total of **17,142** entries for grade 11 and the Career Advancement Programme (CAP) were registered for Levels 1, 2 and 3 of the NVQ in June 2018. Of this number, **10,150** completed all components for certification and **4295 (42%)** were certified. There were **3515** more entries this year than in 2017. Overall 74 skill areas were sat of which Levels 1 had 29 entries and 2 had 45 entries.

The following areas were entered at both Levels 1 and 2:

- Customer Service
- Data Operations
- Electrical Installation
- Furniture Making
- Motor Vehicle Repairs

- Plumbing
- Welding
- Warehousing
- Digital Animation
- Crop Production
- Carpentry
- Cosmetology
- General Construction

CAP

A total of **7,743** entries were registered for Levels 1, 2 and 3 of the NVQ in June 2018. Of this number, **5,477** entries were sat and **4,930** completed all components for certification. Of the number who completed, **2,553 (52%)** were certified. Overall **63** skill areas were sat; **21** at Level 1, **42** at Level 2, including Data Operations, Digital Animation, Electrical Installation, Plumbing, Furniture Making, General Construction, General Cosmetology and Motor Vehicle Repairs which were entered at both levels.

As you can see ladies and gentlemen, students have pursued a variety of subjects across the four sets of exams offered. This is promoting multiple pathways and students' ability to choose based on career interest and aptitude.

The provision of multiple pathways to secondary education recognises that students function at varying levels and multiple intelligences and have different basic learning needs. Education has evolved over the years, where emphasis is being placed on the acquisition of knowledge, as well as the development of skills and positive attitudes.

In Jamaica, education is being re-positioned as customised, diverse, relevant, equitable, outcomes-based and inclusive. The Pathways represent one such new approach to education that is being adopted with a design that is contextually relevant, but which bears features of some models used internationally with success.

Some countries that make use of pathways in education include Scotland, Finland, Canada and Singapore. In Scotland, the focus is on developing the young workforce through tailored learning pathways. There are also learning progression pathways that are connected to STEM Education. In Finland, there are different Educational Pathways in Vocational Education and Training for upper secondary to higher education. Canada uses educational pathways in an inclusive context to prevent students at risk from dropping out of school, progress to achieve standards of the national curriculum and for educational success based on requirements for graduation.

The approach has strong academic (learning support) and non-academic (financial, psychological and social support) components. Accessing pathways is voluntary but students are held accountable for the outcomes.

The Alternative Pathways to Secondary Education (APSE), in the Jamaican context, is an approach which signals the introduction of a guaranteed seven-year (Grades 7-13) programme of study whereby students can access education in a structured and regulated learning setting as is deemed necessary. The education process will therefore now place emphasis on the acquisition/development of skills that is confirmed by students' demonstrated competencies.

The approach will also serve as one of the means of strengthening the relationship between formative and summative assessment experiences that are provided for

children to make progress towards specified competencies and achieve attainment targets for their grade level.

K -13 Strategy

Against that background, I take the opportunity now to give more details on our 0-13 strategy.

In keeping with the mantra of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information (MOEYI) “Every child can learn, every child must learn”, we have drafted a Pathways to Education Policy which recognises that students have different learning needs and functions at varying levels. As such, instruction and the management of teaching and learning must be designed to provide support to students to realize their full potential.

The Ministry is therefore moving to ensure that the transformed education system provides students with learning opportunities through the pathways approach that should better prepare them for higher education and/or work.

The Policy aims to ensure that there is a seamless transition of students from birth to early childhood, primary, secondary and tertiary level along various pathways, where needs are identified, and the requisite interventions provided. Educational outcomes will be optimised as teachers use different methodologies and activities in ways that are developmentally- appropriate to meet the educational needs of all learners from birth to three years and beyond.

Based on the general trend of students’ interests and the need to provide an adequately trained cadre of tried personnel for the labour market, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information has therefore adopted a strategy to cater for those at the earliest stages of development – from conception to age 18 year olds in

schools and to further provide support for youth up to age 29 in keeping with the UNESCO's definition of Youth.

We believe there is value in focussing on the first 1000 days of the child's life. "First 1000 Days" which is calculated from the first day of pregnancy up to age 2+, is a period of rapid growth and development as during these early stages organs and tissues are being formed and trained. It is at this time that parents are provided with an excellent opportunity for shaping the long term health of their child by implementing nutritional and nurturing practices.

A child's brain forms 1000 new neural connections per second during the first 2 years of life. This pace of development is never repeated again in life.

Reduced cognitive development is largely irreversible and may have a negative impact on a child's personal as well as social development. It is therefore important for a nation to understand that a full range of health, nutrition, early education and social services development programme that provides holistic development for children within the early childhood sector is grossly important to prevent the social problems of a country in years to come. The children who are properly nurtured and fed during the first 1000 days should fit into a society and become productive citizens.

So in the first phase of our strategy the focus is on:

1. Conception to Age 3 months to 3 plus years – Early Intervention/stimulation, pre-education and development
2. Age 3 years to 5 years – Early Childhood
3. 6 years to 12 years – Primary Education

4. 13 years to 18 years – Seven years of secondary schooling. The additional two years have been added to secondary through the traditional sixth form and the Career Advancement Programme. The policy directive is that students at the end of grade 13 leave with the equivalent of an associate degree (CXC associate degree, Occupational associate degree etc.)

5. Age 19 to 29 – Various opportunities at the post-secondary and tertiary level including programmes offered through HEART Trust – NTA, HOPE and LEGs as national strategies.

In addition we are adopting a new approach to support tertiary education to channel more resources in areas in line with industry needs and to support national development goals.

Full Establishment of Seven-Year High Schools

In addition, ladies and gentlemen, as of September 2018, the Ministry will move towards providing seven years of schooling at the secondary level. This will be made possible through the full implementation of the Career Advancement Programme (CAP) in all secondary schools with expanded capacity in Community Colleges, Teachers Colleges, Universities and other Private institutions.

The Ministry will also provide greater support to the traditional sixth form programmes that is currently in some schools. Through the CAP a total of 20,000 more students will be enrolled at the grade 12 and 13 levels.

Associate Degrees

Effective September 2018, the grades 12 and 13 programmes will be structured so our students can leave with an associate degree. These degrees will include the

CAPE, City and Guilds Engineering as well as the occupational Associate degrees which is available in 16 subject areas.

This means that each student will exit grade 13 with an associate degree and therefore can now move into the tertiary sector to do two additional years to complete their full degree programmes. Under the Joint Committee for Tertiary Education (JCTE) the College Credit Programme on High Schools Campuses will be implemented.

This is to build capacity and partnerships within the secondary schools as the students prepare to move on to tertiary institutions.

National Schools Leaving Certificate

Ladies and gentlemen, a narrative has developed that the minimum requirement for entry level jobs is five subjects at the secondary level. In fact any student with five subjects would be qualified to move into the universities.

So we are seeking to refocus how we treat the various proficiencies which students obtained in the CSEC and how these may be useful for some entry level jobs.

If we look for example at the United States, there is a difference between a request for SAT scores for college entry and the standard for a high school diploma.

So in our case we should be considering the five CSEC subjects as Jamaica's equivalent to the SAT for four year college courses while CAPE is for the three year university programme. So five CSECs should not be the minimum

requirement asked for by employers but a matriculation standard for CAPE and which allows students to move on to do their degrees in universities.

Our aim is to have a seamless programme up to grade 13 as we are doing with the CAP. In the UK for example there is a menu just as we have it. Students could choose any of these options and the NSLC comes in at grade 13.

Under the NSLC students would be required to have at least one skill area and their behavioural skills but it would not limit them doing the exams. Persons would not be limited if they move into the tertiary institutions at grade 11. The National Qualification Framework will be used to assist in establishing the equivalencies.

We are also in discussion with the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ) to have a National Assessment / review at age 18.

I want to emphasise we are not discounting the five CSEC subjects but they would not be the minimum standards required for some just entering the workforce. Minimum standard for the NSLC will be below the five CSEC

In addition, under the College Credit programme persons will move into college without the CSEC

The seven year programme is an opportunity for the associate degree and then the NSLC. Students should complete at least seven years to receive the National School Leaving Certificate. At any other stage the student can be provided with a report or a transcript.

The policy for payment of CSEC and CAPE subjects will have to be revised to cover other subjects. The key is to keep the student attached.

Ladies and gentlemen, the times require a flexible, agile education system and we must help our students through more flexible modalities.

Thank you.