

**NATIONAL COUNCIL ON EDUCATION**  
*56 Duke Street, Kingston, Jamaica*

Cover design:  
Jason McKenzie

Edited by:  
Ruth R. Morris, Education Consultant

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# Minister's Message

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The Ministry of Education recognizes the significant role being played by our School Boards in ensuring that our public educational institutions are effectively governed. Effective governance is a vital element of a high quality education system. It is important that our School Boards are equipped with the necessary tools to effectively execute their mandate.

I wish to commend the National Council on Education for the publication of this handbook which will serve as a guide for Board Members. School Boards play the critical role of ensuring responsible conduct, supervision and efficient operation of institutions. They ascertain that proper books of accounts and audits are maintained, fostering positive and productive relationships within the institution and with the wider community.

I take this opportunity to thank all those persons who have volunteered to serve on School Boards. Your task in guaranteeing that schools are effectively governed is not an easy one. Let us coalesce in a spirit of partnership and mutual respect as we knit fibres of prosperity and accountability – fibres that will lead to the transformation of our schools as we work together to improve the quality of educational services in our country. Thank you and God Bless.



Hon. Rev. Ronald G. Thwaites, M.P.

Minister of Education

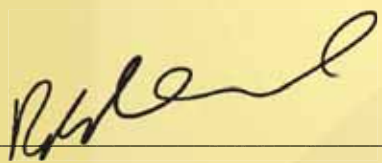
# Chairman's Message

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The revised governance procedures currently being introduced by the National Council on Education are designed to equip Boards of Management with the necessary expertise, skills and know-how to ensure a mutually respectful partnership among students, staff, parents and the community. The development of a Handbook for School Boards is a critical step in this direction.

Through extensive research with key stakeholders, this Handbook was carefully crafted to guide School Board members to better ensure compliance with the legal, regulatory and policy framework governing public educational institutions. Additionally, the Handbook seeks to heighten awareness that school boards are critical agents of effective schools and promote a common understanding of the role of the Board in school administration.

This Handbook has also been used to inform the training programme for school boards and is a user friendly and easily accessed reference tool. In our continuous pursuit to promote good governance within schools and facilitate improved student outcomes, we need all 'Hands on Board'.



Ruel Reid, C.D.

Chairman, National Council on Education



# Message from UNICEF

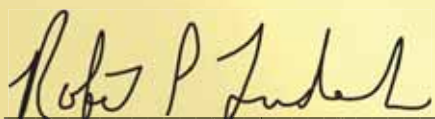
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We share the Government of Jamaica's commitment to ensuring our schools are child friendly spaces that fulfil the right of children to a quality education. A critical pillar of achieving child friendly schools is the governance of the institutions. In child friendly schools, active and meaningful engagement of stakeholders - students, families, and community members – is a central aspect of the governance framework. These are implemented as part of participatory and transparent governance processes.

Too often we disconnect the outcomes students achieve from the overall performance of schools and their boards of management. However, international best practices suggest that schools that are effectively managed are better able to meet the needs of students in a holistic way. It is in recognition of this that significant powers are given to school boards under Jamaica's Education Act. The Act allows for participation of the critical stakeholders and provides the legal basis for schools to engage stakeholders; this is not the case in every country.

However, legislation and policies are not enough; good governance does not simply happen. It is important that we recognize that good governance requires hard work and the building of appropriate skills and competencies. There must be an investment in ensuring that the responsible personnel are supported with the capacity building and support material required.

UNICEF is happy to partner with the National Council on Education as part of Jamaica's efforts to strengthen school boards. This Handbook is one critical step in the process to help us improve governance practices in the education system. We think this will be an important tool in helping school board maximise the legal authority given to them and, in so doing, fulfil their responsibilities to ensuring a quality education for all children.



Robert Fuderich  
Representative

# Acknowledgements

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The National Council on Education would like to acknowledge the contributions made by the following persons, who are members of the Steering Committee for the Operations Manual for School Boards:

## List of Members – Steering Committee

- Mrs. Ruth Morris Education Consultant
- Mr. Woodburn Miller Member of the Appeals Tribunal, former member of the Teachers' Service Commission and former Board Chairman
- Mr. Trevor Blake Board Chairman, Hampton High
- Mrs. Gloria Gascoigne Current Council Member, Director of Anglican Schools and former Principal, Waterford High
- Mr. Colin Blair Communications Specialist, Education System Transformation Programme (ESTP), MoE
- Ms. Claudia Spence Senior Education Officer, MoE
- Ms. Jean Hastings Director, ESTP, MoE
- Mrs. Molly Jacas Senior Education Officer, MoE
- Mrs. Ivy Cummings Board Member, Dinthill Technical High and former Senior Education Officer, MoE
- Ms. Freda Thomas Board Chairman, Randolph Lopez School of Hope
- Dr. Kenneth Russell Education Specialist, UNICEF
- Mr. Kelvin Knight Board Chairman, Kensington Primary
- Hon. Justice Lensley Wolfe Board Chairman, St. Jago High
- Ms. Nadine Molloy Principal, Buff Bay High

The Council would also like to acknowledge the contributions made by the members of staff from the various units within the Secretariat and the consultant, Trevor Hamilton and Associates who developed a preliminary draft of the handbook which was informed by the baseline survey on the status of effective governance in public educational institutions.

We thank you for your invaluable support. The feedback and comments you provided played a key role in the shaping of this handbook. We also thank the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) for providing financial and technical support which made the development of this handbook a reality.

This manual seeks to complement the Education Regulations (1980) to better ensure that school boards function effectively in performing their duties. We hope that this document will not only ensure that our schools are effectively governed but ultimately impact students' academic performance in a positive way.



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Merris Murray  
Executive Director  
National Council on Education



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# Foreword

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Governance is the execution of a set of responsibilities, practices, policies and procedures by the executive arm of an organisation. It entails providing strategic direction in ensuring that objectives are achieved through highly developed systems of accountability, management of risks and the effective use of resources. Like businesses, schools require good governance in order to operate effectively.

The School Board is the public face of the school, and plays an important role in establishing the culture, setting the tone, and defining the standards and personality of the institution for which it has ultimate responsibility. The true test of any Board is its effectiveness in promoting and sustaining performance standards designed to accomplish shared goals towards the achievement of the highest standard of student outcomes.

Consequently, all School Board Members should take time out to learn the characteristic features of the governance system in which they operate. It is also a good practice for each new Board to offer its members the opportunity to discuss and understand the governance structure to ensure that all Board members share ownership of the governance process. The Board should act as a team and, in so doing, make collective decisions. Members must at all times consider issues and concerns as a whole, despite the fact that elected members represent their constituents and will understandably, have different time tables, expectations and priorities.

As Jamaica's education system continues to adapt and transform to meet the global challenges, all members of School Boards are expected to contribute to that change, in order to safeguard the nation's future. As a Board member, you are responsible for the governance and management of the school to which you are appointed to serve, and, as such, you are accountable for improving the quality of education of all our children.

With the **Handbook for School Boards**, in hand, it is anticipated that you will be better able to provide the kind of leadership that will foster improved participation of all stakeholders and consequently, improved achievement of all learners.



1

Introduction





# Introduction

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In Jamaica education is a public good. The Government accounts for 93% of the enrolment at the primary level, 97% at the secondary level and 64% at the tertiary level (MOE, 2011). This public presence represents over 500,000 students ages 6 to 18 years, enrolled in 998 schools, served by approximately 25,000 teachers, school administrators, and non-teaching staff.

The Ministry of Education is the executive body responsible for the provision of education in Jamaica. Within the prescribed legislative framework, the Ministry promulgates policies, sets the strategic framework, designs educational plans and programmes, and provides resources to enable institutions, agencies and other bodies to contribute to individual advancement as well as national development. The Ministry's role is effectively accomplished through the execution of a range of functions through its divisions, agencies and administrative regions mandated to secure coherence with national developmental goals.

Complementing the functions of the Ministry are Boards of Management of public schools, responsible for the administration of the institutions for which they are appointed. School Boards account for approximately 10,000 members, representing the largest corps of volunteers in Jamaica. The National Council on Education (NCE) is the agency of the Ministry of Education with the legislative responsibility to nominate, for appointment by the Minister, suitable persons to serve on Boards of Management of government-owned educational institutions.

Boards of Management are legally constituted bodies which operate within a well defined legislative, regulatory and policy framework and are "responsible to the Minister of Education for the administration of the institutions for which they are appointed." (Education Regulations, Sec. 89.1) In this regard, the National Council on Education, in addition to its role as nominator, is mandated to provide training for Board members in the execution of their responsibilities.

In an effort to advance its Board training mandate, the NCE has developed the Handbook for School Boards, a user friendly reference guide to assist Boards of Management in undertaking their functions effectively and judiciously. Specifically the Handbook is designed to:

- Ensure compliance with the legal, regulatory and policy framework governing the operation of Boards of Management of public educational institutions;
- Reinforce the role of the Board in advancing the Ministry's strategic objectives and policy direction;
- Ensure a common understanding of the role of the Board in school administration;
- Heighten awareness of Boards of Management as critical agents of effective schools;
- Ensure coverage of all areas of management critical to effective school governance;
- Ensure consistency in the interpretation and application of all prescriptive and enabling pieces of legislation.

Training and access to information increase the Board's capacity to accomplish its responsibilities, overcome challenges, work together, build esprit de corps, and provide greater understanding of the importance of each member to the efficacy of the entire team. It is therefore imperative that each public school provide Board members with copies of the Education Regulations and The Handbook for School Boards, as well as with any other pertinent information. It is also expected that the Board will commit itself to continuous improvement by engaging in professional development and training of its members.







# 2

## Legislative and Regulatory Framework

In these Regulations – Board or Board of Management means the Board of Management of public educational institutions (Education Regulations, 1980, Part 1, Preliminary).

# Legislative and Regulatory Framework

## 2.1 Enabling Legislation

School Boards operate within a prescriptive and well defined legislative and regulatory framework, hence it is critical for school Board members to be conversant with the Education Act, the Education Regulations and all other related statutes, operational guidelines and memoranda influencing their relevance and efficacy. The main statutes governing the operation of Boards of Management of public schools are:

### 2.1.1 The Education Act, 1965

The Ministry of Education is the executive body responsible for the provision of education in Jamaica. The Minister of Education, empowered by the Education Act, 1965, has ultimate authority for policy formulation and the strategic direction of the education sector. Under Section 3 of the Education Act, the Minister of Education is empowered to:

- Promote the education of the people of Jamaica and the progressive development of institutions devoted to that purpose;
- Frame an educational policy designed to provide a varied and comprehensive educational service in Jamaica;
- Secure the effective execution of the educational policy of the government of Jamaica;
- Establish a coordinated educational system organized in accordance with the provision of the Act.

In addition to the major inclusions of the Act, four Schedules detailing the powers, constitution, composition and tenure of four entities were developed. The First and Fourth Schedules define the Teachers Service Commission and the Appeals Tribunal respectively.

### 2.1.2 The Education Regulations, 1980

Pursuant to Section 43 of the Act, the Minister is authorised to make regulations generally, for the proper carrying out of the purposes and provisions of the Act. The Education Regulations, 1980, is an attendant piece of legislation which inter alia:



- Prescribe the management and conduct of public educational institutions;
- Govern the admission of students and to public educational institutions and the discipline of such students;
- Specify, in respect of public educational institutions, the curriculum of study to be observed, the examinations to be taken by students, and such other matters as the Minister may think fit in relation to the grant of certificates of competency to students who pass such examinations;
- Specify the powers and duties of Boards of Management of public educational institutions.

The Act also stipulates that the Minister may cause all or any of the regulations made under this section to be bound in a book to be called the Code of Regulations. Thereafter, the Minister may, at such times as it may seem to him that by reason of any amendment in the Regulations, direct such amendment to be made or such re-printing to be done to the Code.

### **2.1.3 The National Council on Education (NCE) Act, 1993**

The National Council on Education (NCE) Act, promulgated in 1993, establishes a multi-sectoral Council as the main policy advisory body to the Minister of Education. The Act empowers the National Council on Education (NCE) with the legislative responsibility to, inter alia, provide policy advice to the Minister of Education; nominate persons for the purpose of appointment as members of the Boards of Management of public educational institutions owned by Government and design and implement training programmes for the benefit of members of the Boards of such institutions.

## **2.2 Related Legislation**

### **2.2.1 The Child Care and Protection (CCP) Act, 2004**

The Child Care and Protection Act, 2004, is the legislative framework governing the care and protection of the country's children, in keeping with Jamaica's commitment to prescriptions of the international Convention on the Rights of the Child. Under the Jamaican law a child is referred to as any "person under 18 years." The CCP Act, 2004, provides protection for any person who falls in that age group, giving attention to special categories of children such as "Children in Need of Care and Protection", "Children in Conflict with the Law" and "Children with Disabilities".

Principals, teachers and other teaching professionals are classified as "prescribed persons" under Section 6, (1) of the Child Care and Protection Act, 2004. Prescribed persons under the law have a responsibility to discharge a duty of care towards children. A prescribed person who, in the discharge of



his/her duties acquires information that ought reasonably to cause that person to suspect that a child has been, is being, is likely to be abandoned, neglected or physically or sexually ill-treated or is otherwise in need of care and protection, shall make a report to the Children's Registry. Any person who contravenes this provision under the Act or commits an offence shall be liable to upon summary conviction before a Resident Magistrate to a fine not exceeding five hundred thousand dollars or to imprisonment to a term not exceeding six months or to both such fine or imprisonment.

### **2.2.2 The Early Childhood Commission (ECC) Act, 2003**

Pursuant to the Early Childhood Commission (ECC) Act, the Early Childhood Commission, a body corporate, was established in 2003, with responsibility to guide, influence and implement government's policies on early childhood development. The Early Childhood Commission is the agency of government empowered with overall responsibility for early childhood care and development in Jamaica and is the umbrella organisation for all standards, policies and regulations related to early childhood care and development. The functions of the Commission are to:

- Advise Cabinet through the Minister of Education on policy matters relating to early childhood care, and development in Jamaica, including initiatives and actions to achieve National Early Childhood Development goals;
- Assist in the preparation of plans and programmes concerning early childhood development;
- Monitor and evaluate the implementation of plans in respect of early childhood care, education and development;
- Analyze resource needs and submit recommendations for budgetary allocation for early childhood care and development;
- Supervise and regulate early childhood institutions.

### **2.2.3 The Early Childhood (EC) Act 2005 and Regulations**

Under the Early Childhood Act, and attendant Regulations, the Early Childhood Commission is authorised to prescribe the standards regulating the provision of early childhood care and development in Jamaica. The Act and Regulations describe the requirements that an Early Childhood Institution (ECI) must meet in order to be registered by the Early Childhood Commission, as a legally operating Early Childhood Institution.

Accordingly, operators of ECIs must comply with the provisions of the Act and its attendant Regulations. The "Policies and Standards for the Management and Administration of Early Childhood Institutions," developed by the Commission, outlines the national standards governing the operation, of ECIs.

### 2.2.4 Financial Administration and Audit (FAA) Act and Instructions, 1992

All public educational institutions are required to conform to the Financial Administration and Audit Act and Instructions, 1992, in addition to related circulars and guidelines issued from time to time by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Public Service and the Ministry of Education. (See Section 8 for details)

### 2.3 Other Legislation

A comprehensive set of laws/statutes governs the human resource management of public educational institutions including the statutes presented in the box labelled "Other Legislation".

#### OTHER LEGISLATION

1. **The Civil Service Establishment Act, 1976.**
2. **The Public Service Regulations, 1961.**
3. **Corruption Prevention Act, 2003.**
4. **The Public Bodies Management and Accountability Act, 2003 (amended 2010).**
5. **The Integrity Act, 1974.**
6. **The Contractor General's Act, 1983.**

### 2.4 Common Law

In addition to the afore-mentioned statutes governing the educational provision in schools, awareness of Common Law is critical to a comprehensive understanding of the legal framework impacting decision making. Common Law, also known as Case Law or "Judge Made Law," operates on the principle of precedent. Once a decision has been made by the court on how the law is applied to a particular set of facts, subsequent cases with similar litigation which come before the Court will be treated in the same manner. This is particularly important in litigation brought against the school. Important aspects of the Common Law relevant to the education system are:

- Duty of care owed by School Boards and employees in relation to care and supervision of students;
- Standard of care expected of a teacher in supervising pupils at school and protecting them from harm;
- Extent of a teacher's disciplinary authority;
- Vicarious liability.

### 2.5 International Law, Conventions, and Treaties

Jamaica is a signatory to a number of conventions and treaties relating to education to which all UN Member States are required to observe. The following three will be highlighted in this document:

### 2.5.1 Education for All (UNESCO)

The global agenda for the decade of the nineties was set at the World Conference for All, convened by UNESCO in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990, when 150 UN Member States including Jamaica, and 150 international organizations, launched the international initiative Education for All (EFA), to provide education to “every citizen in every society.” In support of this initiative a broad coalition of national governments, civil society, bilateral and multilateral donor agencies and non-governmental organizations embraced the cause and made a commitment to achieve the following six specific educational goals:

1. Expand and improve comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children;
2. Ensure that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, those in difficult circumstances, and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete, free, and compulsory primary education of good quality;
3. Ensure that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skills programmes;
4. Achieve a 50% improvement in adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults;
5. Eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieve gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality;
6. Improve all aspects of the quality of education and ensure the excellence of all, so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.



### 2.5.2 The Convention on the Rights of the Child

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) was ratified by UN Member States including Jamaica, in 1991. The CRC represents the first instrument to incorporate the complete range of international human rights, including civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights as well as aspects of humanitarian law. The articles of the Convention are grouped into the following three categories of rights:

- A. **Survival and Development Rights:** These are rights to the resources, skills and contributions necessary for the survival and full development of the child. They include rights to adequate food, shelter, clean water, formal education, primary health care, leisure and recreation, cultural activities and information about their rights. These rights require not only the existence of the means to fulfil the rights but also access to them. Specific articles address the needs of child refugees, children with disabilities and children of minority or indigenous groups.
- B. **Protection Rights:** These rights include protection from all forms of child abuse, neglect, exploitation and cruelty, including the right to special protection in times of war and protection from abuse in the criminal justice system.
- C. **Participation Rights:** Children are entitled to the freedom to express opinions and to have a say in matters affecting their social, economic, religious, cultural and political life. Participation rights include the right to express opinions and be heard, the right to information and freedom of association. Engaging these rights as they mature helps children bring about the realization of all their rights and prepares them for an active role in society.

### 2.5.3 The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were adopted in 2000 by 192 UN Member States, including Jamaica. The goals set out in Dakar are designed to enable individuals to realize their right to learn and to fulfil their responsibility to contribute to the development of their society by 2015. The following are the six goals to be pursued:

1. Eradicate poverty and hunger.
2. Achieve universal primary education.
3. Promote gender equality and empower women.
4. Reduce child mortality.
5. Improve maternal health.
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases.
7. Ensure environmental sustainability.
8. Develop a global partnership for development.



# 3

## Strategic Direction of the Ministry of Education

To provide strategic leadership and policy direction for quality education for all Jamaicans to maximise their potential, contribute to national development and compete effectively in the global economy (Ministry of Education Mission Statement).



# Strategic Direction

## 3.1 The Ministry of Education (MOE)

The Ministry of Education is the central executive body responsible for education in Jamaica. The Minister of Education, empowered by the Education Act (1965), is the Head of the Ministry and has ultimate authority for policy formulation and the strategic direction of the education sector. Accordingly, the Ministry of Education is the driving force for change, growth and development in education, entrusted with the responsibility for providing the legislative framework, policies, strategies, plans, and resources to advance its mandate.

The Permanent Secretary of the Ministry is the Accounting Officer with responsibility for the administrative functions of the Ministry and is supported by the Chief Education Officer who is responsible to provide the requisite technical expertise for effective service delivery.

The Ministry's Vision and Mission are effected through a number of policies, programmes and initiatives framed within eight (8) Strategic Objectives as presented below.

### MINISTRY OF EDUCATION STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1. Provide equitable access and/or attachment to a high quality education system for all Jamaicans 3-18.
2. Improve the standards and quality of Jamaica's education system by establishing a robust accountability framework for all stakeholders.
3. Improve learners' performance across the formal education system and the wider society to achieve universal literacy and at least 85% numeracy.
4. Provide a safe and secure physical environment which is conducive to learning for all learners in public educational institutions.
5. Build partnerships with donors, private sector partners, the community, parents, employers, and those committed to creating a strong education system to build the nation.
6. Provide a resource-rich environment supportive of all learners at all levels in public educational institutions by 2020.
7. Enable all learners in the education system to acquire high quality academic knowledge and marketable skills through integrated curriculum offerings.
8. Attract and retain well-qualified, certified and licensed teachers to fill the requirements of all educational institutions at all levels of the system.

## 3.2. Major Policies

### 3.2.1 Security and Safety Policy Guidelines (2008)

The Security and Safety Policy Guidelines are designed to engender a culture of security and safety in the general school population by promoting minimum behavioral standards and guidelines to which all schools are required to conform.

The Security and Safety Policy Guidelines, Section 1.1, define security and safety as a management function of the leadership of the school. In this scenario, the Principal is the chief security and safety officer responsible for planning and administering the day-to-day security and safety arrangements at the school within the policy framework stipulated.

The Security and Safety Policy Guidelines further state that the Board is, in turn, responsible to the Minister for ensuring that effective policies, programmes and measures are developed and successfully implemented for the safety of students, staff and school property. At common law, the Board also has a duty of care for the safety of students entrusted in the care of the school.

### 3.2.2 The Competence-Based Transition Policy (2009)

The Ministry of Education, in its thrust to raise the literacy level of the school-aged population to 100% by 2015, implemented the Competence-Based Transition Policy in 2009 to regulate the flow of children from the Primary to the Secondary level. This new direction links eligibility for sitting the Grade Six Achievement Test (GSAT) to certification in literacy on the Grade 4 Literacy Test, which functions as the standardised measure of literacy. The administration of the test will facilitate multiple sittings as presented below.

#### GRADE FOUR LITERACY TEST ADMINISTRATION CYCLE

1. In June, for all Grade 4 children (initial sitting).
2. In December for all children in Grade 5 not certified literate in the initial sitting (second sitting).
3. In June, for all children in Grade 4, plus the children who after the first and second sittings are still not certified literate.
4. In December, for all children in Grade 5 not certified literate in the initial sitting plus the children who after three attempts failed to be certified literate.



### 3.2.3 Compulsory Education Policy

The National Compulsory Education Policy is designed to support the mandatory engagement of all children between the ages of 3 to 18 years in a meaningful learning process and in a structured and regulated setting. The policy addresses regular attendance at learning institutions for all children as well as exposure to both academic and vocational programmes at the secondary level. The Career Advancement Programme (CAP) which is an aspect under this policy is currently being implemented.

#### 3.3 Achievement Targets

### 3.3 Achievement Targets

#### 3.3.1 Student Achievement Targets at the Primary Level

The 2010-2016 performance targets for the primary level are:

- Universal literacy on the Grade 4 Literacy Test by 2015;
- National numeracy rate of 85% on the Numeracy Test by 2015;
- Mean score of 85% in all subjects (Mathematics, Language Arts, Science, Social Studies and Communication Task) on the Grade 6 Achievement Test.

#### 3.3.2 Student Achievement Targets at the Secondary Level

- 54% of students sitting CSEC attaining passes in 5 or more subjects, including English Language and Mathematics;
- 100% of students sitting CSEC Mathematics and English Language;
- 40% of students at the secondary level certified at NVQ-J Level 1;
- 30% of students at the secondary level certified at NVQ-J Level 2;
- 30% of students sitting CAPE attaining at least Level 2.

### 3.4 School Accountability Matrix (SAM)

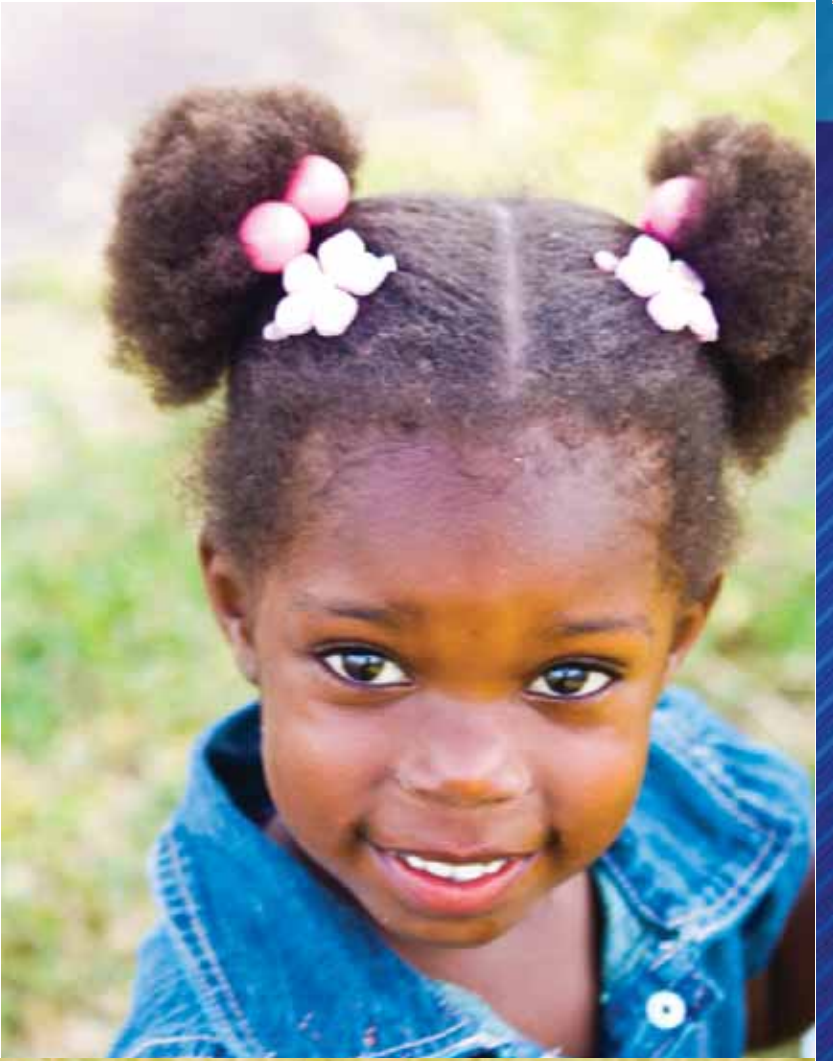
The School Accountability Matrix details the chain of responsibility for the various elements in achieving the targets set for 100% literacy by 2015. This is the approach mandated to hold all institutional stakeholders accountable for effective instruction of literacy skills in Jamaican schools at Grades 1-6. The chain of accountability reflected in the School Accountability Matrix (SAM) requires that each party contribute to the national target by ensuring that the school's target is met through diligent application to duty. The SAM is in keeping with the more detailed structure of accountability for reading literacy at the various levels of the Ministry and is displayed in Appendix 1.

The system of accountability designed to facilitate this goal is represented in the Accountability Matrix which follows. Consistent failure to achieve targets will ultimately result in job separation. Incentives will also be a part of the accountability system and outstanding performance will be rewarded.

### 3.4.1 Instructions

1. The School Accountability Matrix (SAM), documents are to be disseminated by the end of September each year.
2. The Regional Director with support from the Regional Literacy Specialist is responsible for ensuring that the SAM is properly disseminated and filed as detailed below.
3. Individual SAM should be filed with the following: the Board Chair, Principal, Regional Director, Regional Literacy Specialist , Literacy Support Officer, Deputy Chief Education Officer, Curriculum Support Services and Operations.
4. By the end of each term the school-based designated Literacy Co-ordinator is required to file a report with the relevant Regional Officer for review and assessment.
5. The National Coordinator will provide the necessary guidance and make recommendations for improvements or provide additional support, where necessary, to ensure that the school's targets are met.
6. The SAM is a working document for the class teacher, grade coordinator and literacy specialist.
7. The school's annual literacy growth rate will be stated on the matrix enclosed with this document.
8. The annual growth rate is determined per school, in order to satisfy the stated national target.







# 4

## Institutional Framework

The statutory system of public education shall be organized in three stages.... (The Education Act, 1965, Part 111).



# Institutional Framework

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## 4.1 Public Educational Institutions

Public educational institutions receive annual budgetary allocation from the public purse for administrative and operational expenses. The rules of engagement between the Ministry of Education and public educational institutions require that the beneficiary bodies adhere to government policies and guidelines regarding: accountability; governance and management; school administration; school supervision; fiduciary management; curriculum delivery and student outcomes. In this relationship, the Education Regulations prescribe that all public educational institutions shall be administered by a Board of Management, appointed by the Minister.

## 4.2 Student Enrolment

The Ministry, as provider of education, caters to over 500,000 students 3-18 years old in 998 public schools, excluding tertiary institutions as shown in the table in Appendix 2.

## 4.3 Teacher Supply

An adequate supply of teachers is an important element of quality assurance in the education system. At present the public education system is served by over 25,000 teachers as seen in Appendix 3.

## 4.4 Central Policy Ministry

Consequent on the recommendations of the Task Force on Educational Reform, 2004, the Ministry of Education is currently engaged in a comprehensive modernization programme, designed to achieve higher levels of performance, accountability and transparency. In order to achieve this objective, the modernized Ministry of Education will become policy-focused with responsibility for standards, quality assurance as well as monitoring and evaluation. The Ministry's critical operational functions will be devolved to agencies under the general policy direction of the portfolio Minister.

### **The Department of School Services (DSS)**

In keeping with the modernized agenda, a model for the management, co-ordination of delivery of

educational services at the regional level which has some degree of delegated authority is being proposed. The DSS, a department of the MoE, will have responsibility for the delivery of education support and improvement of services to schools. It will oversee a network of regional branch offices and operate as the executing arm of the Ministry for delivering supervision and support services to ensure that schools attain, and where possible exceed, the standards set by the Ministry. The improvements in school management based on the planned changes to the governance arrangements at the local, regional and national levels will provide the basis for increasing the use of data and evidence in policy and decision making and institutionalizing performance planning, target setting and evaluation. The role of Education officers will be transformed to focus on performance monitoring, the provision of expert support to schools and overall challenging of schools to higher levels of performance.

## 4.5 Portfolio Agencies/Bodies

### 4.5.1 The National Council on Education (NCE)

A corporate body established by statute in 1993, NCE's main role is to provide policy advice to the Minister of Education. Other functions of the Council, as stipulated by section 4 (1), of the National Council on Education Act, shall be to:

- Nominate suitable persons to the Boards of Management of public educational institutions.
- Assist in the preparation of plans and programmes in the development and maintenance of an effective formal educational system.
- Monitor the formal education system and provide policy guidance.
- Train Board members and principals in the management and governance of schools.
- Manage the Education Trust Fund in conformity with the NCE Act.
- Stimulate the development of education in Jamaica, whether by means of training programmes, competitions, exhibitions or otherwise, as the Council thinks fit.
- Perform such other functions relating to education as may be assigned to it by the Minister pursuant to the NCE Act or any other enactment.

### 4.5.2 The University Council of Jamaica (UCJ)

The UCJ's mandate is to increase the availability of high quality university level training in Jamaica through the accreditation of institutions, courses and programmes. The Council is empowered to grant and confer degrees, diplomas, certificates and other academic awards and distinctions on those who

have pursued courses approved by the Council at associated tertiary institutions.

#### 4.5.3 The HEART Trust/NTA (National Training Agency)

The HEART Trust/NTA is the facilitating and coordinating body for technical and vocational education, training (TVET) and workforce development in Jamaica. The Trust provides access to training, development of competence, assessment and certification to all working age Jamaicans. It also facilitates career development and employment services island-wide. Training is provided in the workplace (enterprise-based), through 28 formal TVET institutions and over 120 TVET special programmes. It also facilitates career development and employment services island-wide.

#### OTHER PORTFOLIO AGENCIES

1. The Jamaica Foundation for Lifelong Learning.
2. The Overseas Examination Commission.
3. Council of Community Colleges of Jamaica.
4. National Council on Educational Leadership.

#### 4.5.4 The Early Childhood Commission (ECC)

The Early Childhood Commission has overall responsibility for early childhood care and development in Jamaica. It uses an integrated approach to bring all policies, standards and regulations relating to early childhood care and development under one umbrella.

#### 4.5.5 Jamaica Library Service (JLS)

The JLS supports national development through the creation and support of knowledge-based society of culturally-aware lifelong learners by providing universal access to information. Currently, the JLS provides a public library network and a school's library network (managed under the aegis of the MoE) operating through 636 public libraries and 927 school libraries.

#### 4.5.6 Nutritional Products Limited (NPL)

NPL is a limited liability company mandated to provide the snack component of the School Feeding Programme. The company produces and distributes flavoured milk and fruit drink as well as baked solids (e.g. bun, bulla, and spice cake) to approximately 136,000 students in basic, infant, primary and junior high, all age and selected high schools island-wide.



#### 4.5.7 The National Education Inspectorate (NEI)

A major recommendation of the Task Force on Educational Reform was that a National Quality Assurance Authority (NQAA), be established to address the issue of performance and accountability at all levels of the education system. In line with this recommendation, the Ministry of Education formulated the policy and legislative framework for the establishment of an independent education inspectorate to address the issues identified and effect changes complementary to the transformation of the education sector. The NEI became fully operational in 2009.

#### 4.5.8 The Jamaica Teaching Council (JTC)

The Jamaica Teaching Council represents the Ministry's response to the Task Force recommendation to raise the profile of the teaching profession as a vital component towards increasing the achievement levels of children. Consequently, the Jamaica Teaching Council began operations in 2008 under the aegis of the Ministry of Education's Transformation Programme. The JTC was designed to develop an effective and efficient teaching service responsive to the changing needs of society, and to cause the teaching profession to continuously strive for excellence in raising aspirations and achievements that lead to beneficial educational outcomes for all learners. The targets set for the short term are the on-line registration of all practising teachers, the implementation of a licensing regime and the on-going professional development of teachers. To fulfil its mandate, the JTC will:

- Regulate the teaching profession through a system of registration and licensing against set standards and code of ethics.
- Build and maintain competencies to enable the on-going professional development of teachers.
- Raise the public status of teachers and the profession.
- Provide evidence to inform policy direction for the teaching profession.

#### 4.5.9 The National Education Trust (NET)

Established as a wholly government-owned company, limited by guarantee in 2010, NET is the executing agency for the GOJ's strategic objectives in enabling and maintaining investments in education. Responsibilities include: mobilizing and managing an education endowment fund and planning and executing a structured programme of construction and maintenance of educational infrastructure and facilities. The NET will act as the executing agency for loan and grant-funded education infrastructure and development programmes. The company will be the focal point for interfacing with the Jamaican diaspora on issues of education and national development and will co-ordinate and facilitate funding of educational development programmes to be executed by the Ministry of Education.

#### **4.5.10 Jamaica Tertiary Education Commission (J-TEC)**

J-TEC, which began operation in 2012, will be a regulatory body for the tertiary sector. The establishment of the J-TEC will allow for the rationalisation of a number of the oversight bodies with their roles and functions being incorporated under J-TEC, at which time they will cease to exist.

#### **4.5.11 National Parenting Support Commission (NPSC)**

The National Parenting Support Commission (NPSC) will be the implementing agency of the Government of Jamaica's National Parenting Support Policy (NPSP). The guiding philosophy of the NPSP is "... to encourage parents to recognize, accept and discharge their duty to ensure that the rights of children are always upheld and their best interests are always promoted."

#### **4.5.12 The Teachers' Service Commission**

Pursuant to Schedule IV of the Education Act, the Teachers' Service Commission was established as the body authorised to deal with the registration, disciplining, assessment of qualifications and any other matter of a professional nature referred to the Commission by the Minister. The Commission also functions as an advisory body to the Minister on matters relating to the appointment of principals, vice-principals and teachers to posts of special responsibility as well as on any other matter that the Commission may wish to bring to the attention of the Minister or which the Minister may refer to the Commission for advice and guidance in the discharge of any of his duties under the Act.

#### **4.5.13 The Appeals Tribunal**

The Appeals Tribunal, which is established under the Education Act, deals with matters relating to the right of appeal, by any person who is aggrieved by the refusal of the Commission to register that person as a teacher or by any decision taken by the Commission or by any disciplinary decision taken by the Board of Management of any public educational institution.



# 5

## Composition and Constitution of School Boards

Every ... public educational institution shall be administered by a Board (Education Regulations, 1980, Sections 70-75).



# Composition and Constitution of School Boards

For the purposes of Board Appointments public schools fall into two types, based solely on the ownership of the property in which the school is located as outlined by the following tables.

**Table 5.1**

## COMPOSITION OF BOARDS OF MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS

### 5.1.1 PRIMARY AND ALL AGE SCHOOLS (DENOMINATIONAL)

The Board shall comprise not less than nine (9) persons appointed by the Minister as follows:

- A. THE PRINCIPAL**
- B. NOMINATED MEMBERS**
  - Four persons including the Chairman nominated by the denomination.
- C. ELECTED MEMBERS**
  - One member elected by the Academic staff;
  - One member elected by a recognized local community group;
  - One member elected by the Student Council in the case of an all-age school;
  - One member elected by the Parent Teachers' Association.

**Quorum:** 3 and shall include the Chairman or Vice Chairman.

### 5.1.2 PRIMARY AND ALL AGE SCHOOLS (GOVERNMENT)

The Board shall comprise not more than eight (8) persons appointed by the Minister as follows:

- A. THE PRINCIPAL**
- B. NOMINATED MEMBERS**
  - Two persons including the Chairman nominated by the National Council on Education.
- C. Elected Members**
  - One member elected by the academic staff;
  - One member elected by a recognized local community group, or a church, citizen, or other service organization operating in the community served by the institution;
  - One member elected by the Student Council in the case of an all-age school;
  - One member elected by the Parent Teachers' Association.

Table 5.1 cont'd

## COMPOSITION OF BOARDS OF MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Tenure: 3 years

**Quorum:** 3 and shall include the Chairman or the Vice Chairman.

**Note: (a)** In the case where the school is leased from a Denomination, the Chairman shall be nominated by the Denomination which owns the property.

**Note: (b)** In the case of Primary and Junior High and Infant Schools, the composition of the Board shall be as that for Primary and All-Age schools.

Table 5.1 cont'd

## COMPOSITION OF BOARDS OF MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**5.1.3 SECONDARY SCHOOLS  
(DENOMINATIONAL OR TRUST)**

The Board shall consist of not more than nineteen persons appointed by the Minister as follows:

- A. The Principal**
- B. Nominated members**
  - Seven members including the chairman nominated by the Trust or Denomination.
  - One member nominated by the NCE
- C. Elected Members**

Seven members elected as follows:

  - one by the academic staff;
  - one by the administrative and clerical staff;
  - one by the ancillary staff;
  - one by the Student Council;
  - one by the Old Students' Association;
  - one by the Parent Teachers' Association;
  - one by a recognized local community group.
- D. Co-opted members**
  - Three (3) members nominated by the Board for their expertise.

**Quorum:** 7 and shall include the Chairman or Vice Chairman.

**Tenure:** 3 Years

**5.1.4 SECONDARY SCHOOLS  
(GOVERNMENT)**

The Board shall consist of not more than fifteen persons appointed by the Minister as follows:

- A. The Principal**
- B. Nominated members**
  - Four members including the Chairman nominated by the National Council on Education.
- C. Elected Members**

Seven members elected as follows:

  - one by the academic staff;
  - one by the administrative and clerical staff;
  - one by the ancillary staff;
  - one by the Student Council;
  - one by the Old Students' Association;
  - one by the Parent Teachers' Association;
  - one by a recognized local community group.
- D. Co-opted members**
  - Three (3) members nominated by the Board for their expertise.

**Quorum:** 7 and shall include the Chairman or Vice Chairman.

**Tenure:** 3 years



# 6

## Duties and Responsibilities of the Board

The Board of Management is responsible to the Minister for the administration of the institution for which it has been appointed... (Education Regulations, 1980, Section 89.1).

# Duties and Responsibilities of the Board

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## 6.1 The Board as Administrator

The School Board derives its authority from the Education Regulations. According to Section 89.1 of the Regulations, the Board is “responsible to the Minister for the administration of the institution for which it has been appointed and in discharging its responsibilities, the board shall be “responsible for:

- A. The conduct, supervision and efficient operation of the institution;
- B. Ensuring that proper books of accounts and other matters in relation to the assets and liabilities of the institution are kept in strict accordance with such financial regulations as may be prescribed for public educational institutions;
- C. Submitting to the Minister at such time and in such manner as may be prescribed such returns, statements, reports, forms and other documents relating to the conduct and maintenance of the institution;
- D. Arranging for the accounts of the institution to be audited by an auditor approved by the Minister;
- E. Appointing in consultation with the principal, the academic staff, the bursar, secretary-accountants and such other administrative and ancillary staff as are approved for the establishment of the institution;
- F. Dealing as prescribed with breaches of discipline, by or against members of staff and students of the institution;
- G. Dealing as prescribed with the appointment, termination of appointment, promotion, demotion, suspension from duty and other personnel matters in relation to members of staff of the institution;
- H. Approving the guidelines and sanctions concerning school behavior and such rights and responsibilities of students as may be worked out and approved in joint consultation between staff and students.”

Section 2 of the Regulations makes provision for the Board to delegate to the Principal, responsibility for selection of the academic staff, bursar, secretary, accountants and other administrative and ancillary staff, for subsequent appointment by the Board.



## 6.2 Administrative Responsibility of the Chairman

### 6.2.1 The First Order of Business

The Education Regulations, Section 88, details the administrative procedure relating to the calling and conducting of Board meetings. Accordingly, it is mandatory for school Board meetings to be held at least three times each academic year (September to August). The Regulations stipulate that the Chairman shall preside at the meetings of the Board, and, in the case of the temporary absence of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman shall preside. If both Chairman and Vice-Chairman are absent, and there is a quorum, the members present shall elect one from among them to preside at that meeting. The Minister may be represented at any meeting of a Board by such person or persons as he/she may authorize to represent him/her and take part in the meeting, but shall not vote on any matter.

#### NOTICE OF BOARD MEETINGS

1. **Prior notice of Ordinary Meetings shall be given not less than ten clear days before the date of the meeting.**
2. **Notice of Special meetings shall be given to every member and to every person whom the Board knows to be authorised by the Minister to represent him at such meetings**
3. **Notice of Special meetings shall be delivered by hand to each member of the Board or to his known address.**
4. **Notice of Special meetings shall be not less than forty-eight hours before the time arranged for the meeting.**

Chairmen of newly appointed School Boards are encouraged to call the first ordinary meeting of the Board within twenty one (21) days of receiving the instrument of appointment, to ensure that the mandatory notice period of ten clear days for general meetings is not breached. It is a good practice for currently serving School Boards to call the first Ordinary meeting for that school year, within the first fourteen days after the start of the school year, and should establish fixed dates for meetings during that school year. At that first meeting, the Chairman is expected to initiate and direct the appointments and elections of the positions and committees as outlined below.

### 6.2.3 Election of Vice Chairman

Consistent with the Education Regulations, the Vice-Chairman is elected by a majority of votes at a duly constituted Board Meeting for tenure of not less than one year and is eligible for re-appointment on an annual basis. In the absence of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman may legitimately preside at a Board Meeting. The Chairman may also delegate to the Vice-Chairman, the responsibility of Chair at a sitting of the Personnel Committee.

### 6.2.4 Appointment of a Personnel Committee

The Personnel Committee is a standing committee with functions prescribed by the Regulations. The Board must appoint a Personnel Committee for the purpose of facilitating inquiries into allegation of breaches of discipline by/or against members of staff or students. The composition of the Personnel Committee varies according to the type of public school.

### 6.2.5 Nomination of Persons for their Expertise

The Education Regulations, Section 70 and 71, make provision for the Board of Management to nominate three (3) persons for their special expertise to serve on the Board of Secondary Schools. The procedure is for the nominations to be done at the first duly convened and constituted Board meeting. Subsequent to the nomination of the three persons, the nominations are to be submitted through the National Council on Education, for appointment by the Minister of Education.

#### COMPOSITION OF PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

##### Public Schools (Government.)

1. The Chairman.
2. One Council Nominee.
3. Board Rep. of the category of accused person.

##### Public Schools (Denom./ Trust)

1. The Chairman.
2. One Nominee of the Denomination or Trust or the Board.
3. The REPRESENTATIVE on the Board of the category of accused personnel.

**Note: The quorum of the Personnel Committee is two (2), one of whom shall be the Chairman or Vice-Chairman.**

### 6.3 Other Elections and Appointments

Section 86 of the Regulations empowers the Board to appoint Committees to assist with critical issues, thus enabling it to focus on strategic planning, policy development, and financial management within the school. In this regard the Board should articulate clear expectations and policies to guide the effective operation of the Committees.

Consistent with this directive, the Board may elect standing as well as ad hoc Committees. An ad hoc committee serves at the will of the Board and is established for a specific purpose and serves for a specific period. Once the purpose has been achieved the committee is terminated. Standing Committees perform a mandatory function and remain intact for the period specified by the policy guideline or specific legislation. Two such Committees are the Finance Committee and the School Improvement Planning Committee.



The decisions of Committees are not final. Section 86 (2) of the Regulations requires Committees to “refer their decisions for confirmation by the Board.” A good practice is for School Boards to appoint such Committees to deal with broad areas such as communication, public relations, education, property, student and staff affairs, ethics, or any other on-going school Board business. These Committees may regulate their own proceedings and the Board may delegate to any such Committee the power and authority to act on its behalf.

#### 6.4 The Principal as Professional Head of the School

Schedule D.4 of the Regulations confers on the Principal the role of professional head of the school. Accordingly, the Principal is responsible for:

- A. Formulating, in consultation with members of staff, the curriculum, syllabus and time-table of the institution, within the general educational policy laid down by the Minister and by the Board;
- B. Planning and administering the day-to-day educational programme and supporting services of the institution and carrying out such policy decisions, as the Board may delegate, for the efficient and orderly conduct of the day-to-day administration of the institution;
- C. Ensuring that the objectives of the programme of the institution within the context of the national programme of education are clearly defined to all involved in the implementation of the programme;
- D. Evaluating and preparing reports on the performance of each member of the academic and administrative staff;
- E. Ensuring that the curriculum gives proper significance to national emblems and making provisions for the observance of respect for them;
- F. Giving directions about the expenditure of the funds made available to the institution within the general policy laid down by the board and outlined in the budget for the institution and being answerable to the Board for any failure to use such funds properly or to keep adequate control over their expenditure;
- G. Holding regular staff meetings to consider all matters relating to the work of the institution;
- H. Supervising the instruction in the institution and, assisted by the vice-principal, heads of departments and other persona holding posts of special responsibility, giving advice, guidance and professional assistance to the teachers and other teaching personnel;
- I. Recommending to the board, the appointment and promotion of members of staff and the demotion or dismissal of such persons whose work or attitude is unsatisfactory, but only after warning the member of staff in writing, giving guidance and assistance, and allowing a reasonable time for

improvement;

- J. Submitting to the Board, in the manner prescribed and at the required date or dates, a budget for the institution;
- K. Such other duties and responsibilities as may be prescribed by the Board or by the Minister.

The Regulations further stipulate that the Principal shall assume teaching duties, unless the particular circumstances and size of the institution make it impracticable for him to do so, on a regular basis. The Principal is also responsible for seeing to it that satisfactory arrangements are made for:

- The inspection of the premises and for the reporting of any repairs needed and any lack of attention being given by those members of staff who have been assigned responsibility for the care of the premises and their equipment;
- Maintaining the prescribed records for staff, student, accounting and the library, among others.

The Regulations, in making provisions for the absence of the Principal, states that where no post of vice-principal is provided, the duties of the Principal shall be performed by the person who is at the time authorized to discharge the responsibilities of Principal.

#### **The Teacher's Role as Educator**

Teachers are the front-line representatives of the education system. Their activities go beyond instruction and include encouraging students to pursue learning, maintaining classroom discipline, and evaluating students' learning and progress.

In addition to responsibilities occasioned by a post of responsibility such as Principal, vice principal, head of department and teacher with special responsibilities, the Education Regulations 44 stipulate that a teacher's duties shall include:

- Developing lesson plans on a regular basis;
- Evaluating and testing students;
- Keeping adequate records of students' progress;
- Fostering of students' development on personal and social levels;
- Performing such other duties as may be required by the Principal or such member of staff as may have been delegated responsibility by the Principal.



## 6.5 Other Administrative Matters

### 6.5.1 Attendance at Meetings

Board members are expected to attend all Board meetings as well as meetings of committees of which they are members. In keeping with Section 79 (5) of the Regulations, any member who is absent for three consecutive meetings without justifiable cause shall be deemed to have vacated his membership on the Board. The Board, in turn, shall report the matter to the Minister and to the group which nominated that member.

An attendance register should be kept, and Board members sign when they attend meetings. If a member cannot attend a particular meeting, it is a good practice for that member, as soon as he/she becomes aware of the challenge, to notify the secretary of the Board, stating the reason.

### 6.6 School Visits

In addition to attendance at meetings, it is prescribed by the Regulations that members of the Board who are not normally present on the compound of the institution shall visit the institution at least once per term and make a report to the Board at the first meeting of the Board subsequent to the visit.

### 6.7 Minutes of the Board and its Committees

The Minutes of the Board are official records which provide information, inter alia, on the validity of meetings, decisions taken, directives issued, reports received, matters addressed and the status of resolution, a summary of all reports received as well as activities to be pursued and/or being pursued. Consequently, the Education Regulations stipulates that the Board is responsible for keeping in proper form, the minutes of all meetings of the Board and its Committees and of any hearing or enquiry conducted by or on behalf of the Board.

The Minutes of the Board are public documents and are subject to the Access to Information Act. Under the Education Regulations, the Minister of Education or anyone authorized by him/her may have access to the Minutes of a Board meeting on the Minister's request. A copy of the Minutes of each meeting shall be sent to the Minister as soon as possible after confirmation by the Board.

## 6.8 Reports

An important aspect of an effective school Board is reporting by Committees. All Committees inclusive of the Personnel Committee shall submit a report to the Board for action. This is in keeping with Section 86 (2) of the Regulations which states that:

*“Where any such committee carries out any duties in relation to any matter under powers delegated to it by the Board the committee shall refer its decision for confirmation by the Board at the first meeting of the Board held subsequent to the meeting of the committee at which the decision was taken”.*

It follows therefore, that the Principal as Chief Executive Officer shall report at all Ordinary Board meetings in order to inform the Board of the status of all activities for which he/she is responsible. The following are recommended elements of the Principal's report:

- Auditor's Report ( as applicable);
- National Inspection Report (as applicable);
- Report of visit by the Education Officer responsible for the school(as applicable);
- Critical Incident Report;
- School Improvement Planning status report;
- Student enrolment and attendance report;
- The Financial Report (schools without Bursars);
- Parent and community engagement;
- Special programmes, events, field trips etc.;
- Teacher deployment and recruitment;
- Personnel matters requiring intervention of the Personnel Committee;
- Curriculum, instruction and assessment. This should include student performance on National Assessment Programmes such as the Grade One Individual Learning Profile, Grade Four Literacy, Grade Six Achievement Test, and the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate Examination among others, where applicable;
- Professional development and in-service programmes/activities;
- Facilities management.



# 7 Responsibility of the Board for School Improvement Planning

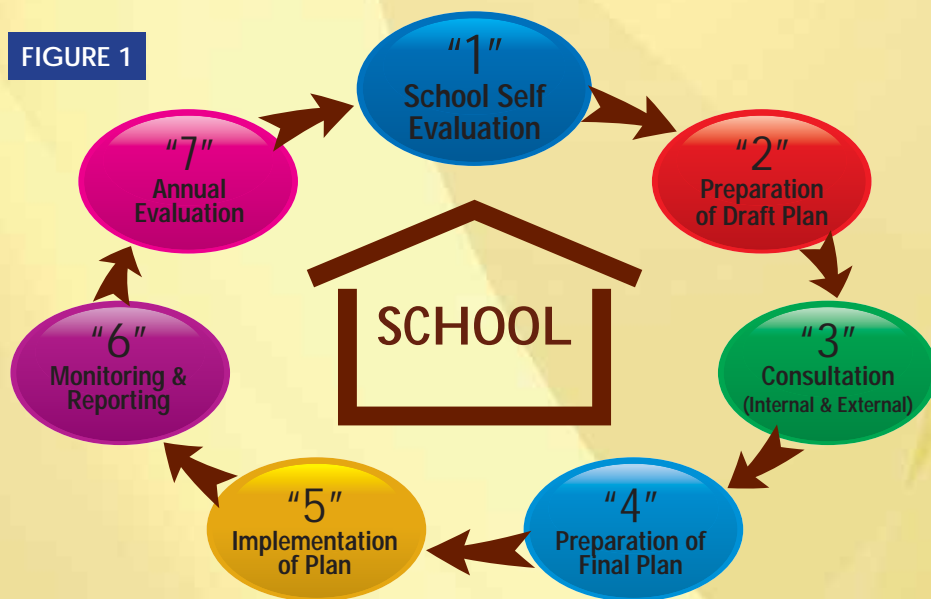
The Board is responsible for ... the efficient operation of the institution for which it has been appointed (Education Regulations, Section 89.1).

# Responsibility for School Improvement Planning

## 7.1 School Improvement Planning

School Improvement Planning is a systematic approach to planning, designed to improve the quality of student outcomes through the successful management of the educational experience. It is a collaborative process that brings the whole school community together in shaping the school's future through the consultation and participation of all stakeholders. This approach to planning fosters a sense of ownership by the entire school community and leads to a greater determination to achieve institutional goals. It also has the potential to promote a shared vision which mobilizes school communities into action.

The cyclical/continuous nature of the School Improvement Planning process engenders a culture of self evaluation and renewal within the school, as the school seeks to manage its resources to achieve optimal levels of performance. School Improvement Planning is mandatory for all public schools and represents a local response to regional and national priorities. It is a 'strategy map' which outlines the actions to be taken to achieve a set of outcomes within a specified time frame. Consistent with this thrust, the School Improvement Plan (SIP) of all public schools must be aligned with the Ministry of Education's eight (8) strategic objectives.





## 7.2 The School Improvement Planning Process

The School Improvement Planning process is the means by which the vision of the school is translated into reality through the delineation of priorities, targets, and action. It promotes effective resource utilization, co-ordination and programme implementation that will enable the school to achieve its goals. This collaborative and continuous process comprises seven (7) steps, graphically presented in figure 1:

## 7.3 School Self Evaluation (SSE)

The first step in the School Improvement Planning process is the School Self Evaluation, undertaken to identify the institution's strengths and weaknesses. It is a good practice for the school to undertake deep introspection to:

- Provide an annual snapshot of the school;
- Allow the school to identify its strengths and weaknesses in order to pursue options and identify strategies for improvement;
- Ensure that the school's goals are aligned with national priorities.

The SSE also involves an assessment of its performance relative to national and regional performances on standardised achievement examinations over a five year period. Critical to the analysis are factors such as average attendance rates, teacher qualifications and pupil/teacher ratio, student welfare and behavior, security and safety. Socio-economic conditions, access, geographic location of the school and other contextual factors must be taken into consideration.

## 7.4 The Planning Phase

The Tactical Planning phase follows the school's self evaluation and is the school's response to the achievement of targets related to the Ministry's Strategic Objectives. This process involves the identification of the school's development priorities, setting of goals and establishing time frames and other structures that will support effective implementation of the SIP. The Tactical Planning Phase of the SIP should cover a 3 year period. At this stage the SIP Committee will:

- Review the Vision and Mission;
- Set and Prioritize Goals;
- Set Targets.

### 7.4.1 Review of Vision and Mission

Arising from the School Self Evaluation, the SIP Committee will, through a consultative process, prepare a description of the long term direction of the school including the vision and mission statements as well as goals for improvement in priority areas.

### 7.4.2 Goal Setting

Goals are intended outcomes that move an organisation in the direction of its mission and should be measurable, challenging, realistic and time-bound. Goals must be established based on the findings of the Self Evaluation and are aimed at fulfilling the vision and mission of the MOE and the school.

Goals can be classified as mandated, complementary or innovative. Mandated goals are those that are set by the Ministry of Education in the Accountability Matrix. Complementary goals are those that assist the school in accomplishing the mandated goals while innovative goals are creative and specific to the school's situation. Schools should categorize and prioritize their goals accordingly. Goals should be phrased in terms of their outcomes rather than their actions and inputs so that performance can be measured in terms of that goal.

### 7.4.3 Example of Goals

- To build and strengthen community partnerships by 2012.
- To implement a performance based management system by 2011.
- To increase grade four mastery level in literacy and numeracy by 2013.
- To build teacher competencies in the teaching of Mathematics and Language Arts by 2012.
- To enhance the teaching learning process by 2012.
- To improve the playfield and its environs by 2013.
- To build teacher competencies in the teaching of Mathematics and Language Arts by 2012.
- To reward/ recognize high levels of teacher performance by 2011.
- To introduce high interest programmes for boys by 2013.

## 7.5 The School Improvement Planning Committee

Critical to the School Improvement Planning process is the pooling of available human resources to form the School Improvement Planning Committee. The School Improvement Planning Committee draws together a cross-section of stakeholders representing the various elements of the school community who have the school's best interest at heart. The School Improvement Planning Committee should comprise at least five persons but no more than ten. The constitution of the SIP Committee is decided by the Board at a properly convened and minuted meeting.



## 7.6 Composition of the School Improvement Planning Committee

- Chairman or representative of the Board of Management.
- The Principal.
- Representative of the Teaching Staff.
- Representative of the Non-teaching Staff.
- Representative of the Student Council.
- Representative of the Parent Teachers' Association.
- Representative of the local community and/or representative of Community Organisation.

## 7.7 Functions of the SIP Committee

The primary function of the SIP Committee is to provide support to the principal through the use of a tactical approach to developing a comprehensive School Improvement Plan. That is, a SIP that addresses the needs and aspirations of the students, staff and the wider school community.

The SIP committee carries out seven important functions in the School Improvement Planning process. They are:

1. Identification of Priorities - The SIP Committee receives the SSE and the recommendations for action from the Principal. It identifies the school's development priorities, sets goals and establishes timeframes and other structures that will support effective implementation of the SIP.
2. Analysis of Key Areas - The committee then assesses the feasibility of each development priority, the challenges in addressing the issues, the resources required and the indicators of success.
3. Preparation of Draft Plan - On the basis of the analysis, the Principal leads the committee in the preparation of the draft Plan.
4. Consultation on the Draft Plan - The SIP Committee consults with the internal and external stakeholders on the proposals outlined in the draft plan in order to prepare the final plan.
5. Preparation of Final Plan - The feedback from the consultation is used to prepare the final plan for the approval of the Board and subsequent implementation.
6. Monitoring - The Committee receives and reviews reports from the Principal on the implementation of the plan on a regular basis. It assesses the goal achievement to date, including enabling factors and challenges encountered.
7. Reporting - The Committee provides status reports on the progress of the implementation of the SIP along with proposals for any modifications to the action plan to the Board at least bi-annually.







# 8

## Responsibility of the Board for Financial Management

The Board is responsible to the Minister for ensuring that proper books of accounts are kept in strict accordance with financial regulations as may be prescribed for public educational institutions (Education Regulations, Section 89.1b).

# Financial Management Responsibility

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## 8.1 Fiduciary Responsibility

Under the Education Regulations, the School Board is the authorised agent entrusted with the responsibility for ensuring that proper books of accounts and other matters in relation to the assets and liabilities of the institution are kept in strict accordance with such financial regulations as may be prescribed for public educational institutions. In this regard, the Board is the guardian and protector of the overall assets and liabilities of the school and is mandated to institute measures to ensure that standards of effective governance inclusive of transparency, accountability and proper ethics are practised.

In carrying out its mandate, the School Board has a fiduciary responsibility to ensure that the institution's assets are safeguarded. A fiduciary duty or responsibility is characterized by a sense of good faith, loyalty and trust. In keeping with his/her fiduciary responsibility each school board member is required not to put his/her personal interests above his/her duty to the institution and should not profit from his/her position on the board. Other fiduciary responsibilities include:

- Duty of Care – an obligation to act prudently under all circumstances.
- Duty of Loyalty – an obligation to act in the interest of the school.
- Duty of Confidentiality – an obligation not to pass on confidential information without expressed consent.

## 8.2 The Financial Administration and Audit (FAA) Act

In keeping with the stipulations of the Regulations, Section 89.1b, all public educational institutions are required to conform to the Financial Administration and Audit (FAA) Act (2010) which sets out the principles to be observed by public educational institutions in relation to the overall financial management of the school. The Act details the governance policy in respect of standards governing financial management, internal controls, and risk management strategies, among others. In order to carry out its duties in a responsible and efficient manner, it is mandatory for all School Boards to be



conversant with the legal and constitutional framework governing public assets and liabilities as well as the instructions and the regulations issued under the Act. In addition to the FAA Act (2010) the Board must be aware of and have access to the other related Acts and guidelines as presented below.

### 8.3 Other Statutes and Guidelines

1. Government of Jamaica Procurement Guidelines, 2006;
2. The Corruption Prevention Act, 2003;
3. The Public Bodies Management and Accountability Act, 2010;
4. The Integrity Act, 1974;
5. The Contractor General's Act, 1983;
6. Circulars and Memoranda from the Ministry of Education concerning financial management and control.
7. Circulars and memoranda from the Ministry of Finance, Planning and the Public Service regarding leave, financial management and control.

### 8.4 The Role of the Principal in Financial Management

The Principal is the Accounting as well as the Accountable Officer of the school. He/she is responsible for ensuring the safe keeping of the school's funds in accordance with the FAA Act and Regulations. The principal is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the SIP is supported by appropriate budget with realistic costing of activities;
- Prioritizing expenditure in accordance with cash flow;
- Monitoring the preparation and submission of the school's budget and financial statements;
- Ensuring accounting activities are in adherence with proper accounting procedures.
- Ensuring that subvention can adequately remunerate additional staff on establishment.

In secondary schools the Principal is assisted by the Bursar who carries out the following functions:

- Implements and maintains financial controls and procedures;
- Ensures adherence to the FAA Act, Education Regulations and directives from the Ministry of Finance and the Public Service and the MOE;
- Monitors expenditure and advises the Board and Principal of material variances;
- Ensures that the cash books are posted and balanced on a monthly basis;
- Provides support to the principal and heads of departments on the budget preparation process;
- Ensures that salaries are paid in accordance with directives from the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Education;

- Ensures that the payroll is accurately processed and all payments and returns are made within the required time frame;
- Ensures that all expenditures are consistent with the budgeted amount in each category;
- Ensures that all payments are made by cheques and are supported by the original bill and a completed voucher;
- Implements and manages an effective system to monitor the collection of auxiliary fees.

#### 8.4.1 Financial Reports

The Finance Committee, acting on behalf of the Board, shall ensure the timely receipt of the following reports from the Principal:

- Monthly subvention;
- Monthly reconciliation of bank accounts; and
- Annual audited accounts.



#### 8.5 Procedure for Opening a Bank Account

Public educational institutions are required to obtain permission from the Ministry of Finance and the Public Service through the Ministry of Education to open a bank account. A formal request must be



submitted to the Principal Finance Officer, MOE, requesting permission to open the account. The letter of request should contain the following details:

- A. The reason for opening the account;
- B. How much money the account will be opened with and the source;
- C. The name of the bank;
- D. The name of the branch;
- E. The location of the branch;
- F. The full name and title of each person who will be a signatory to the account;
- G. Type of account.

The signatories to each bank account should be classified in two categories or groups as follows:

1. Board members employed by the school e.g. Principal and academic staff representative.
2. Board members not employed to the school e.g. Chairman and Vice Chairman.

## 8.6 Withdrawals

Withdrawals from a bank account of every public educational institution shall be on the joint signatures of the Chairman of the Board or his/her nominee, the Principal of the institution and such other persons as may be appointed to carry out this function. Cheques must be signed by two authorised signatories, one from each category or group e.g. Principal and Vice -Chairman.

## 8.7 Accounting Records

### 8.7.1 Primary and All-Age Schools

At least two current accounts:

1. One in which grant funds are deposited, such as:
  - Sanitation grants;
  - Teaching supplies grant;
  - Special grants; and
  - Nutrition grants (school feeding and Programme of Advancement Through Health and Education (PATH)).

2. The other for the deposit of other funds received by the school, for example:
  - Donations and Sponsorships;
  - Canteen/tuck shop; and
  - Fundraising.

### 8.7.2 Secondary Schools

No more than three accounts

1. The Ministry of Education subvention which includes funds for the following:
  - Salaries and allowances for all categories of staff;
  - Sanitation grants;
  - Teaching supplies;
  - Special grants; and
  - Nutrition grants (school feeding and Programme of Advancement Through Health and Education (PATH)).
2. Fees Account
  - Fees collected such as tuition (GOJ's contribution) and auxiliary fees.
3. Development Account
  - Donations and sponsorships
  - Development funds
  - Fundraising



# 9

## Dealing with Breaches of Discipline

The Board of Management... shall be responsible for dealing as prescribed in these Regulations with breaches of discipline by or against members of staff and students of the institution (Education Regulations, Section 89.1f).

# Dealing with Breaches of Discipline

The effective handling of disciplinary matters by the school Board is fundamental to ensuring a safe and secure environment for students and staff. Consequently, every public educational institution is required by law to have school rules and the Regulations stipulate that each student is expected to obey the rules of the school he/she is attending. To ensure ownership and compliance with the school rules, it is critical that the rules are:

- Developed in consultation with the Board, staff, parents, students and the community;
- Clearly articulated; and
- Widely disseminated.

## 9.1 Breach of Discipline by Students

Section 30 of the Regulations confers on the Principal the authority:

1. To suspend from the institution for a period not exceeding ten (clear) days any student -
  - A. Whose conduct in his/her opinion is of such a nature that his/her presence in that institution is having or is likely to have a detrimental effect on the discipline of the institution;
  - B. Who commits any act which causes injury to any member of staff or to any other student in that institution;
2. Where a Principal suspends a student he shall forthwith-
  - A. Give notice of suspension to the Student Council and the parent or guardian of that student;
  - B. Make a report to the Board, stating the reasons for the suspension.
3. On receipt of the report by the Principal, the Board may request that the matter be further investigated through the Personnel Committee. The Committee should consist of the Chairman of the Board, a Council nominee and representative from the Student Council.

In the case of a very serious offence or breach of discipline the Principal is required to act expeditiously in order to ensure that the investigation by the Board is carried out within the ten days of the suspension as prescribed by the Regulations. Given the fact that the Regulations do not



specify school days, it is assumed, that the “ten days” should be treated as calendar days. After the investigation is carried out by the Personnel Committee and a report tabled at a sitting of the Board, the Board may:

- A. Reinstate the student with or without reprimand or a warning to the student and where appropriate to the parent or guardian of the student; or
- B. Suspend the student for a further period not exceeding five (5) school days beyond the period of suspension already given; or
- C. Instruct the Principal to exclude the student permanently from the institution.

It is not the practice to suspend or expel students at the primary level but any such action is at the discretion of the Board since there is no provision in the law for a student representative to sit on the Board of Management of Primary schools.

- 4. At any hearing by the Board into the conduct of a student who has been suspended, the student and parent or guardian shall have the right to be present, and, if aggrieved by a decision of the Board, may appeal to the Minister.

## 9.2 Breach of Discipline by Teachers

The School Board shall at its first sitting appoint a Personnel Committee to enquire into allegation of breaches of discipline by or against members of staff or students. Sections 55 to 62 of the Regulations outline procedures for addressing disciplinary matters in respect of a teacher and pursuant to the Regulations; a teacher may; have disciplinary action taken against him/her for:

- A. Improper conduct while in school (for guidance relating to improper conduct kindly refer to the Jamaica Teachers' Association Code Of Ethics which provides guidance with respect to standards of conduct for teachers who practise in Jamaica).
- B. Neglect of duty;
- C. Inefficiency;
- D. Irregular attendance;
- E. Persistent unpunctuality;
- F. Lack of discipline;
- G. Such other conduct as may amount to professional misconduct.

### 9.2.1 Investigation by the Personnel Committee

Where the Board receives a complaint in writing that the conduct of a teacher employed by the Board is of such that disciplinary action ought to be taken against the teacher, it shall, as soon as is possible, refer the matter to its Personnel Committee for consideration. Pursuant to the Regulations the Personnel Committee shall consider the complaint referred to it and if it finds the complaint trivial and that a hearing is unnecessary, report such findings to the Board immediately.

### 9.2.2 Conduct of Enquiry

If the Personnel Committee finds that a hearing should be held, written notice of not less than fourteen days before the hearing shall be given. The notice shall state the charges, the penalties which may be imposed if the charges are proven, date, time and place of the hearing. The person complained against has the right to bring a friend or his attorney to appear and make representations to the Committee at the hearing.

Where the teacher complained against intends to be represented by an attorney, written notice of not less than seven days shall be given to the Board. The Regulations also address the conduct of the hearing in the absence of the person complained against. (Appendices 4 and 5).

### 9.2.3 Outcome of the Enquiry

At the end of the enquiry the Personnel Committee shall within fourteen days inform the Board of the outcome of the enquiry and make recommendations for bringing the matter to completion. Subsequent to the report from the Committee, the Board shall within fourteen days give written notice containing the details to the Minister and the teacher.

### 9.2.4 Right to Appeal by the Teacher

A teacher who is aggrieved by the action taken by the Board may appeal to the Appeals Tribunal within twenty-eight days after the date of the action giving rise to such appeal.



# 10

## School Inspection Mandate

“The Minister may cause any educational institution to be inspected at such intervals as he may think fit by persons authorized by him in that behalf” (Education Act, Section 39.4).

# School Inspection Mandate

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## 10.1 The National Education Inspectorate (NEI)

The National Education Inspectorate (NEI) is the Ministry of Education's response to the national imperative to create a culture of accountability and improved performance in all sectors and at all levels. Consistent with this thrust, the National Education Inspectorate was established to operate, in the first instance, within the legislative framework which authorizes the Minister of Education to cause any educational institution to be inspected at such intervals as he may think fit by persons authorized by him in that behalf. The Minister shall cause a special inspection of any such institution to be carried out whenever it appears to him that such special inspection is desirable (The Education Act, 1965, Section 39).

Consistent with this mandate, the NEI is empowered to objectively assess the standards attained by the students in primary and secondary schools at key points in their education and to report on how well they perform or improve, as they progress through their schooling. The NEI is also charged with the responsibility to make recommendations to support improvement in the quality of the provision and outcome of all learners.

Under this arrangement, the NEI will inspect all schools at the primary and secondary levels. The cycle of school inspections will be determined by the Chief Inspector and/or as requested by the Minister of Education. The National Education Inspectorate will systematically issue reports, guidance, advice and assistance to School Boards, Principals, School Administrators Teachers, Education Officers and other related education professionals about effective practices, based on the accumulation of evidence from the school inspections against the effective school indicators framed in 8 key questions.



### KEY QUESTIONS

1. How effectively is the school led and managed?
2. How well does the teaching support learning?
3. How well do students perform in national and/or regional tests?
4. How much progress do students make?
5. How well does the curriculum meet the needs of the students?
6. How good is the students' personal and social development?
7. How effectively does the school use the human and material resources at its disposal?
8. How well does the school ensure everyone's security, health, safety and well-being?

The NEI is mandated to analyze and interpret the data generated from all inspections, and provide policy advice to the Minister of Education who will present to Parliament a state of the nation report on the education system.

The data on which school assessments are made and judgments arrived at are collected in two (2) phases: a Pre-Inspection phase and an On-site Inspection phase.

#### 10.2 Pre-inspection Phase

Prior to the on-site inspection, a pre inspection visit is conducted to undertake a range of data collection activities. This visit which usually lasts for about three hours provides an opportunity for the school to highlight any special features, issues and accomplishments through interviews with Board members, principal, academic and administrative staff, students and parents.

The views of students, parents and teachers are also canvassed as part of the inspection process through the administration of questionnaires distributed to schools during the preliminary inspection.

Through personal face-to-face contact, these visits allow the NEI to begin to establish a relationship of trust with senior members of staff of each school and to build confidence in the integrity and professionalism of the NEI. During the preliminary visit, schools are also required to provide the NEI with, inter alia;

- A. Minutes of Board meetings;
- B. The current School Improvement Plan;
- C. The organizational structure of the school;
- D. The list of the teaching staff, showing which subjects and/or age groups they teach and any

management responsibilities they have;

- E. The timetable detailing: start and end time with appropriate breaks, time allocation per subject, staff deployment and space utilization;
- F. Completed School Self Evaluation instrument;
- G. Current report on any outstanding aspect of the school's work.

### 10.3 On Site Inspection

During the on-site inspection, the NEI Inspectors spend between 2 to 3 days at any one school depending on the size of the school. Inspectors spend approximately 60% of the time observing the teaching and learning dynamics. Sixty percent of that classroom observation time is spent observing Mathematics and English Language while the remainder of the time is spent observing other areas of the curriculum.

During the remaining 40% of the time, Inspectors are engaged in:

- A. Observation of the school management processes;
- B. The examination of samples of students' work in different subjects and across different age groups in the school;
- C. Informal interviews with staff, in particular senior managers and others with responsibility for leading different aspects of the school's work;
- D. The analysis of documentary evidence, such as schemes of work and teachers' lesson plans, and minutes of meetings.

The Inspectors also conduct interviews with staff, principals, vice principals, guidance counsellors and senior teachers as well as students.

#### 10.3.1 Board Specific Indicators of Effectiveness

Key Question: How effectively is the school led and managed by the Board, the Principal, the Senior Management Team and Middle Leadership? Critical to the outcome of any school inspection is the performance of the school on the governance and leadership component of the assessment. It is therefore important for all School Boards to be conversant with the requirements to be satisfied, in order to create an effective school. The four variables related to this indicator are:



- Leadership;
- Self Evaluation and Improvement Planning;
- Governance;
- Relations with Parents and Community.

### 10.3.2 Leadership

According to the Inspectors Handbook, effective leadership is epitomized in schools where the leadership is dynamic and inspirational, has a clear vision for the future which directs and guides staff and students. The school focuses on improving students' achievement and well-being. The staff share a common purpose and the leadership holds the staff accountable for their performance. The school is successful with all groups of students, including those who do not respond well to school or have difficulties learning. The Inspector's assessment of the Leadership and Management variable is focused on leadership qualities: vision, direction, guidance; culture and ethos; instructional leadership; relationship with staff and systems of accountability.

### 10.3.3 Self Evaluation and Improvement Planning

Effective schools embed a systematic and rigorous self-evaluation in all their practices. Staff appraisal is rigorous and staff development well planned and highly effective. Schools with well developed systems of self evaluation are those in which there are systematic and robust processes of continuous review, and where the information is used to accomplish clear and ambitious goals. Self evaluation and improvement planning systems are appraised by examining the methods and frequency of the school review process.

### 10.3.4 Governance

The three key features of school governance are the strategic and advisory role of the Board, operational support provided by the Board in the management of the school, and systems of accountability. The Inspectors Handbook defines an effective school as one in which the Board of Management has a positive influence on the school and plays a significant and strategic and advisory role in leading the school's development. The school leadership is rigorously held to account for its performance. In the best scenarios the School Board makes a significant contribution to the leadership of the school and its successes.

### 10.3.5 Relationship with Parents and Community

The Relationship with Parents and Community variable includes three dimensions; communication with parents, parents' involvement in their children's learning, and how the life of the school links with the local community and agencies. This variable is operating optimally where there is evidence that the school has a strong educational partnership with parents who are actively involved in many aspects of school life and play an important role in decision-making. The school has productive links with the local community and uses them to enrich the curriculum and strengthen teaching and learning. The school capitalises on the expertise and resources in the community to improve its performance and benefit students. Methods for communicating between home and school are well established.

### 10.3.6 Relationship with The Department of School Services (DSS)

The Department of School Services will provide support to schools in developing and implementing the School Self Evaluation Report. The DSS will also conduct desk reviews of the schools targeted for inspections within a particular time-frame. It will also, in collaboration with the school boards, review draft inspection reports and provide feedback to the NEI with respect to factual inaccuracies. The DSS will also be responsible to assist the School Boards to develop action plans in response to the NEI's recommendations and monitor them to ensure implementation and compliance.



# 11

## Nomination Procedures

The procedures are designed to standardize the nomination process based on acceptable governance practices and allow for wider participation of persons in the governance of public educational institutions.

# Nomination Procedure

In 2009, the National Council on Education (NCE), in collaboration with the (MOE), revised the procedures for the nomination of persons to serve on the Boards of Management of educational institutions owned by the government. The long term goal of this initiative is to create a national pool of qualified personnel to serve as Chairmen and Board members.

Under the new arrangement, no member shall serve beyond three consecutive terms on any one Board without prior approval from the NCE. The Council also reserves the right to review the performance of each nominated member, in order to determine eligibility for re-appointment after each term of office. Ideally, no member shall serve on more than two School Boards at any one time unless approved by Council.

## 11.1 National Pool of Volunteers

To advance the process, an extensive public education programme was implemented to solicit volunteers. This includes issuing a formal call for volunteers as well as the sensitisation of key stakeholders such as community groups and professional bodies, inclusive of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Jamaica (ICAJ) and the Jamaica Civil Service Association. Other bodies include Service Clubs and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as the Private Sector Organisation of Jamaica (PSOJ). Additionally, volunteers are solicited by way of consultations, letters, posters/flyers, media interviews and the establishment of a toll-free number to facilitate on-going enquiries about the process.

### CRITERIA FOR BOARD CHAIRMEN

#### 1. Educational Qualifications

Applicants applying to serve as Chairmen shall have:

- Secondary/Vocational education
- Three years experience in supervisory management
- Proven track record in supervision and management

#### 2. Other Attributes

- A deep interest in education and nation-building
- Excellent negotiating, inter-personal and conflict resolution skills.



Volunteers are required to submit the requisite application forms accompanied by detailed curriculum vitae, a reference letter and a passport-sized photograph signed by a Justice of the Peace. The application form should bear the signature of either a Justice of the Peace, a Notary Public or a Minister of Religion. The necessary background checks and due diligence will be conducted by the NCE to determine if the applicant has satisfied all the criteria. The names of all applicants who have satisfied the criteria, as stipulated, will be entered into a pool of volunteers from which the selection will be made. For “other nominated members,” the minimum educational requirement is that persons be literate and numerate.

### **11.1.1 Fit and Proper Person**

All members must satisfy the “fit and proper person” criterion, that is, they must be persons of sound mind, have not been convicted of an offence under the Offences Against the Persons Act, the Child Care and Protection Act, the Sexual Offences Act, or an offence of fraud or dishonesty.

### **11.2 Criteria for the Nomination of Existing Board Members**

The existing cadre of Board members, who satisfy the criteria to serve, are encouraged to complete the application forms for automatic entry into the “Pool of Volunteers.” The requirement for the form to be signed by a JP, Notary Public or a Minister of Religion will be waived for existing members except in special circumstances which may require investigation.

### **11.3 Procedure for Re-appointment**

An extended notice period of at least six months will be issued to the school as well as Board Members prior to the termination of tenure. This will allow for the timely identification of elected members for the new School Boards. A Review panel established to recommend persons from the pool of volunteers will be given a three month notification period. This will facilitate the timely review, identification and submission of recommendations for nominations and subsequent appointment. Nominations will be made to coincide with the current schedule of the cyclical appointment of School Boards as presented in Table 11.1. Boards of Management in Region 5 were the first School Boards to be nominated under the new framework.

Table: 11.1

**SCHEDULE OF CYCLICAL APPOINTMENT OF SCHOOL BOARDS**

REGION	# of Schools	Tenure
1	174	Jan. 1, (Cycle 1, Year 1) to December 31, (Cycle 1, Year 3)
2	123	April 1, (Cycle 1, Year 1) to March 31, (Cycle 1, Year 4)
4	165	Jan. 1, (Cycle 2, Year 2) to December 31, (Cycle 1, Year 4)
5	162	April 1, (Cycle 2, Year 2) to March 31, (Cycle 2, Year 5)
3	150	Jan. 1, (Cycle 3, Year 3) to December 31, (Cycle 3, Year 5)
6	223	April 1, (Cycle 3, Year 3) to March 31, (Cycle 3, Year 6)

Note: School Boards are appointed only in January and April of any given year.



# 12

## Barriers to Effective Governance

The School Board is the public face of the school, and plays an important role in establishing the culture, setting the tone, and defining the standards and personality of the institution for which it has ultimate responsibility.

# Barriers to Effective Governance

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School Boards are local governance in action and as such are required to operate within a climate in which their roles and responsibilities are clearly articulated and understood; the parameters and the rules of engagement are defined and a healthy respect for all players is promoted. Consistent with this general direction, an effective School Board is essentially a support team to the school.

## 12.1 Barriers to Effective Team Work

School Boards, in pursuit of their mandate to provide quality education, are required to operate as a corporate body established to provide strategic direction to the entire school community. Notwithstanding this, however, Boards, are often plagued with several inhibiting factors which compromise their effectiveness. In school governance, the team work principle is one of the most abused areas, manifested at the following three discrete levels of management:

- A. Chairman versus Principal – The Chairman is actively involved in the day to day operation of the school.
- B. Principal versus Board - The Principal assumes the role of the Board and excludes the Board from strategic planning activities.
- C. Chairman versus Board Members – The Chairman excludes all or selected Board members from decision-making and strategic planning.

In an effort to safeguard the team work principle, the Board must, as a matter of priority, familiarise itself with the functions of Boards of Management of public schools as well as the functions of the Principal, as prescribed in the Education Regulations, in its effort to reject the notion of the supremacy of any individual (Chairman or Principal). Additionally, the Board must recognise that each member on the Board has equal legal status. This is especially important for schools with Student Council representatives, where there is the tendency for Boards to exclude the Student Council representative from meetings convened to discuss “delicate” matters. This is a serious breach of procedure and Boards are cautioned to avoid this practice.



To advance the concept of “equal status,” Boards are encouraged to develop a Code of Ethics which, though not legally binding, provides a shared respect for the rules of engagement within the appropriate legal framework. The following are critical areas to be addressed in any Code of Ethics for School Boards:

- Equal rights of each member;
- Corporate decision-making;
- Corporate responsibility;
- Fidelity;
- Integrity;
- Openness;
- Respect;
- Confidentiality and;
- Transparency.

#### Role Conflict

A lack of clarity regarding the roles and responsibilities of the board and the Principal is a major barrier to effective school governance in Jamaica. An effective governance model not only requires members of school boards to be clear about their roles and responsibilities but also to execute these functions well. Whereas the School Board is responsible to govern and in so doing guides policy and monitors implementation, the Principal is responsible for the management of the school's day-to-day operation. School boards are encouraged to forge positive relationships which can lead to the development of harmonious culture or an *esprit de corps*.

### 12.2 Barriers to Effective Conflict Management

Conflict is defined as a sharp disagreement or collision of ideas, values or interests or competition for status, power or resources. Conflict, when mismanaged, can threaten relationships, systems and institutions. The broad-based representation of School Board constituents provide a potentially fertile ground for conflicts, often fuelled by a break-down in communication and the refusal of opposing voices to coalesce around a common direction. While internal conflict is inevitable, it need not be viewed as

only a negative process. Conflict has both productive and destructive potential. It can be the impetus for constructive change if it is managed appropriately.

Generally, conflict can be managed through 5 acceptable approaches:

1. **Ignoring the conflict** – this can have detrimental consequences, for both the individual and society, if left unaddressed for prolonged periods and may erupt in violence.
2. **Avoiding the conflict producing situation** – this is possible only when the disputants have the resources to remove themselves from the conflict-producing situation.
3. **Negotiation** – a voluntary dispute resolution, in which parties, or their representatives, attempt to resolve existing differences of interests and values through persuasive communication designed to effect a compromise. Negotiation is the process by which most conflicts are resolved.
4. **Mediation** - a voluntary dispute resolving process in which a third party facilitates and coordinates the negotiations of disputing parties. The mediator does not have the authority to impose a decision on the disputants; instead the mediator guides the disputants through a discussion of their problems, the issues that will need to be resolved, and alternative solutions for the resolution of the dispute.
5. **Arbitration** – a dispute resolving process in which parties voluntarily present their dispute to an empowered third party who has the power to make a decision that is binding on the disputants. This can be done in or out of a court setting. Arbitration is most commonly used in labour/management and consumer disputes.

Conflicts tend to surface when a school is undergoing transformation or as a result of unaddressed issues or insufficient, or lack of information and unmet expectations. If handled correctly, conflicts can lead to greater clarity, better communication, mutual understanding and ultimately a wider range of potential solutions. School Boards should establish procedures which will allow them to manage conflict in a productive way, inclusive of norms for interaction which emphasize respect, openness, honesty and commitment.

*Effective conflict resolution can make a difference between positive and negative outcomes. By adopting sound conflict management skills, the School Board will ensure that the schools' problems are swiftly resolved in the best interest of the institution. The capacity of the School Board to successfully resolve conflicts depends on its members' ability to:*

- Manage stress quickly while remaining alert and calm, while reading and interpreting verbal and nonverbal communication;
- Control emotions and behaviour in a non-threatening manner;
- Focus on the verbal and non-verbal feelings being expressed;



- Be aware of and respectful of differences and;
- Avoid disrespectful words and actions.

### 12.3 Barriers to Effective Decision Making

Indecision is a potential barrier to effective governance. Indecision may arise when a Board is faced with a difficult situation for which there is no immediate solution. It may arise when members fail to make unpopular or difficult decisions, or when an important decision is delayed due to the absence of critical information, or when conflict arises over what the Board wants to do. In situations where members feel strongly about the decision to be made, discussion can become heated and even hostile. When faced with such situations, members are encouraged to listen attentively to other viewpoints and avoid the temptation to micro-manage.

Indecision may also occur where Board members have limited knowledge of the Ministry's strategic and policy direction. It is a good practice for a School Board to commit to continuous improvement by engaging in professional development and training of its members. Training increases the Board's capacity to accomplish its responsibilities, overcome challenges, and work together. Training builds *esprit de corps*, and provides a greater understanding of the role and responsibilities of each Board member.

### 12.4 Barriers to Effective Home-School-Community Relationship

Effective School Boards recognise parents and the wider school community as critical to their survival. In this scenario, all stakeholders are respected and treated as valued partners who bring important perspectives and often untapped potential to the relationship. The establishment and maintenance of productive relationships, among members of the community and the School Board, will inevitably broaden the Board's capacity to meet the varied needs of all students. An effective Board should implement structured programmes designed to:

- Embrace parents as critical members of the planning and decision-making team;
- Establish open communication channels between internal and external stakeholders;
- Partner with stakeholders in advancing community development programmes;
- Share in the social and economic life of the community;
- Encourage community support for the schools, through financial goods and services, and volunteer contributions;
- Encourage active participation of businesses and organizations in the life of the school;
- Encourage community organizations and businesses to sponsor incentive programmes for students, teachers and parents;

- Provide a harmonious and welcoming school climate for parents and community;
- Implement programmes designed to strengthen parental involvement in the education of their children;
- Provide opportunities for students to be involved in community service and;
- Provide life-long learning opportunities for members of the community.

No school can flourish in a vacuum. Any school operating in disregard of its relationship with its clientele is a failing school. Failing schools promote a closed-door policy in which all persons external to the school are treated as outsiders. Most apparent in failing schools are the following danger signs:

- Inactive Board of Management;
- Ineffective Principal and staff;
- Absence of a shared vision and mission;
- Vandalised buildings and dirty surroundings;
- Underachieving students;
- Low levels of student attendance;
- Empty benches;
- Disinterested and detached parents;
- Inactive Parent-Teacher Association;
- Absence of effective communication channels between the school and the community and;
- Lack of support from community organisations and the private sector.

It is not unlikely for persons serving on Boards to live outside of the school community. In these instances, it is imperative that each Board make a deliberate effort to familiarise itself with the culture and ethos of the community before engaging in its formal role as policy formulator and strategic planner.



# 13

## Conclusion

Where there is effective governance students are well served and their learning enhanced.

# Conclusion

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Effective governance of public educational institutions is a vital element of a high quality education system. Like businesses, schools require good governance in order to operate effectively. Research has shown that “where there is effective governance in schools, students are well served and their learning enhanced.” Research has also shown that there is a negative correlation between poorly governed schools and positive student outcomes.

Given the important role that school Boards play in ensuring effective governance and leadership, it becomes imperative that Boards are empowered to create an environment which promotes the highest standard of learning. It is against this background that the Handbook for School Boards; **All Hands on Board**, has been developed to provide a working understanding of the legal, regulatory and policy framework governing the operations of public educational institutions in Jamaica.

School Board members are therefore encouraged to familiarize themselves with the content of the handbook, with a view to improving the overall governance of schools, as together we partner with the Ministry to:

**“Become a customer centred performance oriented education system producing globally competitive socially conscious Jamaican citizens”.**



# Appendices

Appendix 1

**SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY MATRIX**  
**SUBJECT: LITERACY**

Name of School: \_\_\_\_\_ Region: \_\_\_\_\_

School Size: \_\_\_\_\_ Pupil Teacher Ratio: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Decile Ranking: \_\_\_\_\_ Policy mandated by: \_\_\_\_\_

Hon. Minister of Education

POLICY GOAL/ SCHOOL TARGET	CURRENT STATUS			ACTION	AUTHORI- ZATION	PROCESS OWNER	IMPLE- MENTATION SUPPORT	SCHOOL IMPLEMEN- TATION	IMPLE- MENTATION TARGET (NAMES)
	Mastery	Near Mastery	Non- Mastery						
100% Literacy at Grade 4 by 2015				Provision of resources	CEO, PS	DCEO, CSS	MSU	Principal	Name: ----- Teacher/ Literacy Support
Annualized National Target: <u>7%</u>				Development of School Literacy Plan	National Literacy Coordinator	Regional Support	TEO Primary/ SEO Primary	Principal/ Grade Coordinator	Class Teacher
				Evaluation/ Assessment of Instruction	National Literacy Coordinator	Regional Support	TEO Primary/ SEO Primary	Principal/V.P./ Grade Coordinator/ SBAC	Class Teacher/ Literacy Support
Annual School Target 1st Sit- ting: _____				Assessment of student performance	Regional Literacy Support	Principal	Literacy Specialist	SBAC/Grade Coordinators	Grade: ----- Class Teacher

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_ Sanctioned by: \_\_\_\_\_ Endorsed by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chief Education Officer Permanent Secretary Board Chairman

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

NOTE: Schools ranked below decile 6 are deemed in need of critical care.

<sup>1</sup> SBAC – School Based Assessment Coordinator, TEO – Territorial Education Officer, MSU – Media Services Unit, CEO – Chief Education Officer, PS – Permanent Secretary, DCEO CSS- Deputy Chief Education Officer Curriculum Support Services



## Appendix 2

## ENROLMENT SUMMARY BY SCHOOL TYPE (2010/2011)

SCHOOL TYPE	Number of Schools	Number of Shift Schools	Enrolment Infant	Enrolment Grade 1-6	Enrolment Grade 7-13	Total Enrolment
Infant	32	0	13,768	-	-	13,768
Primary	595	25	-	194,282	-	195,214
All Age	111	9	-	34,475	4,332	29,931
Primary & Junior High	86	31	-	35,155	12,946	45,373
Secondary High	148	41	-	-	198,985	198,985
Technical High	14	1	-	-	20,867	20,867
Special	10	0	-	2471	0	2,471
Agricultural High	2	0	-	-	359	359

## Appendix 3

## TEACHER QUALIFICATION BY LEVEL (2010/2011)

LEVEL	Untrained University Graduates	Untrained Secondary Level Graduates	Trained University Graduates	Trained Instructors	Trained College Graduates	Untrained Tertiary Level Graduates	Grand Total
Infant	9	28	354	2	355	3	751
Primary	180	385	5,178	14	4,733	117	10,607
Secondary	1,275	616	6,464	189	4,745	513	13,802
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,464</b>	<b>1,029</b>	<b>11,996</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>9,833</b>	<b>633</b>	<b>25,160</b>

Source: Statistics Unit, Ministry of Education

\*(Primary level schools includes Grades 1-6 in All Age, Primary & Junior High)

## APPENDIX 4

CIRCULAR NO. 14/86

File No. G78/01

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION  
2 NATIONAL HEROES CIRCLE  
P.O. BOX 498  
KINGSTON

August 14, 1986

TO: CHAIRMEN OF SCHOOL BOARDS  
BOARDS OF MANAGERS  
PRINCIPALS OF PUBLIC EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

RE: CHARGES AGAINST TEACHERS FOR DISCIPLINARY OFFENCES

Further to my circular No. 4/86 of April, 1986, I now bring to your attention another fundamental issue in the matter of charges of disciplinary offences against teachers. It has become customary for Boards to charge teachers with the categories listed in Regulation 55 of the 1980 Education Regulations. It must be clearly noted that these are categories of charges, and not charges themselves.

In order to pursue any charge/charges effectively, the details of the offences must be spelt out. Thus a teacher may be charged with irregular attendance, but the charge should state:

YOU ARE HEREBY CHARGED WITH IRREGULAR ATTENDANCE HAVING BEEN ABSENT BETWEEN SEPTEMBER, 1985 & JULY, 1986 ON THE FOLLOWING DATES WITHOUT LEAVE (and the dates must be listed).

Similarly, if a teacher is being charged for persistent unpunctuality, the dates and time of late arrival at school must be stated in detail. The same goes for any other charge.

Failure to list the charges in detail makes it easy for the teacher to win an appeal against any disciplinary action taken by the Board, since the teacher can legally claim that he is ignorant regarding the charge and is therefore unable to prepare a proper defense. This is therefore an



appeal to Boards to ensure that the charges are not stated as categories, but are spelt out in detail so that there can be no doubt in the mind of the teacher being charged as to what the charge/charges are.

Please bear in mind that the Schools Services Division or the Ministry is at all times ready to assist any Board to ensure that discipline is upheld and maintained in the school system. If in doubt about any course or action, please do not hesitate to contact senior officers of this Division.

.....  
For Permanent Secretary

## APPENDIX 5

CIRCULAR NO. 4/86

File No. G785/017

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION  
2 NATIONAL HEROES CIRCLE  
P.O. BOX 498  
KINGSTON

April 7, 1986

TO: Chairmen of Boards of Public Educational Institutions  
Principals of Public Educational Institutions

SUBJECT: Enquiries into complaints about the conduct of Teachers and consequent  
decisions taken by Boards

The Ministry of Education has been experiencing much difficulty in obtaining detailed information on the procedure followed where enquiries are held into the conduct of teachers and consequent punitive measures are decided on by Boards.

Attention is therefore being drawn to Regulation 57 (6) of the Education Regulations, 1980 which states:

The Board shall, within 14 days after it has received this report of the personnel committee, give written notices containing details of its decision to the Minister and teacher.

Boards not complying with this Regulation leave themselves in Jeopardy of having their decision countermanded upon appeal by the teacher against whom the Board has taken its decision.

Boards are therefore implored to observe this Regulation in its entirety and are hereby advised to send to the ministry under registered mail or delivered by hand within the stipulated fourteen days the following details:

- A. Minutes of the Board Meeting at which the decision was taken to refer the complaint against the teacher to its personnel committee.
- B. A copy of the letter to the personnel committee to the teacher stating in detail the charges in



respect of which the hearing will be held; the date, time and place of hearing; the penalties which may be imposed if the charges are proven, and the right of the accused person to be represented at the hearing.

- C. The written report of the personnel committee on its findings from the enquiry and its recommendations based on these findings (which should be submitted to the Board within fourteen days after the inquiry).
- D. Minutes of the Board Meeting at which the findings and recommendations of the personnel committee are discussed.
- E. A copy of the letter communicating to the accused teacher the decision of the Board

The prompt submission of these details to the Ministry of Education will enable early action to be taken by the Appeals Tribunal in cases where the accused teacher appeals against the decision of the Board.

The letter containing these documents should be addressed:

Attention: Director Schools Services

The Permanent Secretary  
Ministry of Education  
P.O. Box 498  
Kingston

The co-operation of the Board of Management is sought in these regards and will thereby assist in ensuring that fairness as well as discipline is maintained in the education system.

.....  
For Permanent Secretary