

**Response of the
Teaching Service Commission
to the**

**First Report (2011/2012) of the Joint Select Committee appointed to
inquire into and report to Parliament on Municipal Corporations and
Service Commissions**

**on a
Evaluation of the Service Commissions**

RESPONSES TO THE JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE

Recommendations following the public hearing on 25th February, 2011

(i) *Review of the Public Service Commission Regulations, 1966*

The Teaching Service Commission (TSC) Regulations have been drafted and are being reviewed by the newly appointed TSC. Thereafter, the Regulations will be submitted to the Prime Minister for approval.

(ii) *Delegation of particular functions to the Ministry of Education (MOE) with a measure of accountability*

Delegation of certain functions will take place following the approval of the TSC Regulations and the TSC (Delegation of Powers) Order. Training will then be conducted in the exercise of the delegated functions and a system will be implemented to review the application of the delegated functions for compliance. A list of matters to be delegated has already been created.

(iii) *Increasing the number of full time members of the Teaching Service Commission (TSC)*

This recommendation will be examined by the newly appointed TSC.

(iv) *Adequate staffing and resourcing of the Selection Centre*

The Selection Centre is currently housed in an unsuitable (*sick*) building and its relocation is actively being pursued. In the interim, the Centre is functioning with offsite staff and an onsite skeletal staff, pending its relocation. Thereafter, steps will be taken to adequately staff the Centre and outfit it with all necessary resources.

(v) *Review of the process of recruitment, selection, appointment and placement of teachers:*

- ***The creation of a system for the early identification and placement of teachers into positions which become vacant***

The TSC is currently reviewing the recruitment, selection and appointment process in the Teaching Service to enable among other things, the identification of vacant offices in advance of those vacancies occurring. In this regard, consideration is being given to issuing a Request for Proposal (RFP) for consultancy services in connection with the matter.

- ***Consideration of zoning teachers during placement in secondary schools***

Teachers are zoned during placement if vacant offices exist in the relevant schools.

(vi) *The MOE should consider a replacement for the disestablished position of Director of School Supervision*

An office of Director of Schools Supervision was created with effect from 17th July, 2014 by Cabinet Minute No. 1974 dated 17th July, 2014. Steps are being taken to fill the office.

(vii) *Review of how disciplinary matters are dealt with in order to increase efficiency and effectiveness. The following should be considered:*

❖ *Delegation to the Principal (in some instances) the power to initiate disciplinary proceedings against a teacher and in specified cases to take appropriate disciplinary action and report to the TSC. Principals should consequently be trained in basic industrial relations and matters of discipline.*

The Monitoring and Evaluation Unit of the Service Commissions Department facilitates training in the disciplinary process to employees of the MOE and other Ministries/Departments. Certain powers will be delegated to Principals and School Supervisors following approval of the TSC Regulations and the TSC (Delegation of Powers) Order.

❖ *The TSC and by extension the MOE should act on disciplinary matters expeditiously. The TSC should consider:*

- ***Establish investigatory tribunals to expediently determine and make recommendations for matters before them. Highly trained Investigating Officers should submit reports within 30-45 days.***

Disciplinary Tribunals aim to determine matters expediently; however, many matters are delayed due to frequent requests for adjournment from the Prosecution. In keeping with the Regulations, Investigating Officers are required to submit reports within 30 days and, if circumstances warrant an extension of time, such may be granted for a period not exceeding 30 days.

- ***Improve the timeframe for forwarding of child abuse reports by the MOE.***

The MOE has been directed to report all allegations of serious misconduct within twenty-four (24) hours.

❖ *Enforcement of a Disciplinary Code of Conduct for Teachers, especially in light of reports of sexual misconduct between teacher and student.*

This recommendation will be examined by the TSC.

❖ *Establishment of a system for Alternative Dispute Resolution to deal with occurrences of misconduct by Principals and Vice Principals.*

This recommendation will be examined by the TSC.

❖ *Creation of a database with regards to disciplinary matters to track delinquent and repeat offenders.*

The creation of a database to track disciplinary issues is engaging the attention of the Information Technology Unit the Service Commissions Department.

(viii) *Establishment of a Unit at the MOE to deal solely with school violence and school gangs. This Unit should collaborate with the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service (TTPS) to provide the necessary support, counselling and guidance to students.*

(ix) *Consideration of implementing a Code of Conduct for secondary school students to curb the increase of school violence and gang violence.*

(x) *Creation of a database for school violence and gang related matters only to track delinquent and repeat offenders who will be dealt with by both the MOE and the TTPS.*

The Committee's recommendations at (viii) to (x) fall under the remit of the MOE. The TSC will notify the MOE of the recommendations.