

2022



Teaching Service  
Commission  
Annual Report

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## Chairman's Remarks



**Mrs. Elizabeth Crouch**

The Teaching Service Commission began the year 2022 in a spirit of optimism and with considerable drive to achieve its stated goals and objectives. With the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic over, it appeared entirely possible that the year 2022 held the promise of being a more productive one for the work of the Commission.

### *Our Goals*

The Commission established several goals. These included addressing the recruitment, selection and filling of two critically important senior administrative and leadership positions in the Teaching Service, that of Chief Education Officer and Director of Schools Supervision. Equally important was ensuring the timely placement of

Heads of Department into more than one hundred secondary schools which were in dire need of the necessary academic leadership required to mitigate the dislocations and the educational gaps in teaching and learning caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

At the same time, given the restrictions placed on physical meetings and at a time of high levels of anxiety and uncertainty, reaching out and communicating with our stakeholders became vitally important. To this end, consultations with stakeholders in the Ministry of Education, the Tobago House of Assembly, the Denominational Boards and Trinidad and Tobago Unified Teachers Association (TTUTA) assumed heightened significance and several meetings were conducted throughout the year. These meetings sought to bring assurance to stakeholders that the work of the Commission was being effectively carried out. They were also central to providing information to these stakeholders about the need for the implementation of the digitalization of the processes of the Service Commissions Department (SCD). Indeed, the adoption of the practice of online working meetings with the Division of Education and the indications to Boards of the planned initiation of an online

application process for recruitment and selection formed part of this information sharing.

Additionally, with regard to the teachers and the general public, the Commission's communication's strategy took shape around the publication of quarterly e-newsletters which were posted to the WhatsApp platform for access and readership by teachers in general. These newsletters gave updates on the work of the Commission with regard to appointments, promotions, transfers and matters of discipline while including feature articles, opinion pieces and guest essays on issues in education for the upliftment of teachers and administrators.

The Commission also managed transitional arrangements after the departure of Dr. Olabisi Kuboni. She was succeeded by Mrs. Vidyawatee Lalla-Ramsammy who was sworn in by Her Excellency Paula Mae Weekes ORTT on November 17, 2022.

### *Our Challenges*

The Commission's greatest challenge however was the very small budgetary allocation for the year, which curtailed the Service Commissions Department's ability to fully support the work of the Commission.

*....the Commission's communication's strategy took shape around the publication of quarterly e-newsletters which were posted to the WhatsApp platform for access and readership by teachers in general.*

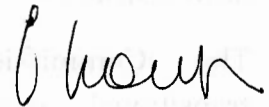
This was seen, for example, in the area of the funding of panels for interviews which is required in order to progress the selection process. As a consequence, a considerable strain was placed on Human Resource Advisers who had to carry out “normal duties” while undertaking weekly interviews to fill subject area positions in the schools. These officers were also as a consequence, unable to significantly advance the screening of the applicants for the office of Dean which while planned for 2022 had to be deferred to 2023.

Nevertheless, the Commission completed the year 2022 with a number of educational factors and structures in place primarily that of administrative leadership at the level of the Ministry of Education and academic leadership at the level of the school. Further, appointments and promotions increased by 53% and 188% respectively from 2021.

### *Conclusion*

In closing, I wish to take this opportunity to thank my fellow Commissioners for their hard work, dedication, steadfastness, resilience and spirit of excellence in all things.

I also thank the Director of Personnel Administration, Mr. Corey Harrison; the Deputy Director of Personnel Administration (Acting), Mr. Martel Waldron; the Executive Director of Human Resource Management (Acting), Mrs. Farya Mohammed-Basdaye; Ms Gail Pennie-Douglas, Secretary and the entire staff of the Service Commissions Department for their support in making this work possible.



**Mrs. Elizabeth Crouch**  
**Chairman**

## Executive Summary

The 2022 Report outlines the performance of the Teaching Service Commission (TSC) with respect to its constitutional mandate. It addresses the objectives set out in its action plan and indicates the challenges the Commission faced during the term.

**Section I** provides an introduction to the remit of the Commission in accordance with Section 125 of the Constitution of Trinidad and Tobago and a description of its membership. This section identifies the role of the SCD and the Director of Personnel Administration as the Commission's Secretariat and Principal Adviser.

**Section II** provides an overview of the goals and objectives which were achieved during the period.

**Section III** details the number and scope of the meetings carried out by the Commission. The Commission held twenty-three (23) meetings and considered eight hundred and seventeen (817) Notes. The Commission held one (1) special meeting as well as four (4) meetings with key stakeholders.

**Section IV** describes what the Commission has actually done by way of filling vacancies by way of appointments and promotions, the confirming of appointments and transfers.

**Section V** describes disciplinary matters considered and executed.

**Section VI** provides information on stakeholder engagements including its engagement with key stakeholders such as the Ministry of Education, the Tobago House of Assembly and the Denominational Boards. In this section, the Commission speaks to its communication strategy of engaging teachers using a quarterly newsletter. Four (4) newsletters including a Year in Review issue were published on the TSC's website as well as circulated via WhatsApp to teachers in Trinidad and Tobago.

**Section VII** deals with the issues and challenges faced by its budgetary allocation.

**Section VIII** presents the TSC's outlook for 2023.

# Section I

## 1.0 Introduction

This is the report of the Teaching Service Commission (TSC) for the period January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022. The Teaching Service Commission (TSC) was established under the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago (Section 124) and its mandate is stated in Section 125.

### 1.1 The Functions of the Teaching Service Commission

Section 125 of the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago states:

“Subject to the provisions of this Constitution, power to appoint persons to hold or act in public offices in the Teaching Service established under the Education Act, including power to make appointments on promotions and

transfer and to confirm appointments, and to remove and exercise disciplinary control over persons holding or acting in such offices and to enforce standards of conduct on such officers shall vest in the Teaching Service Commission.”

### 1.2 The Commission’s Core Values

Equity

Excellence

Transparency

Fair play



The Commission strove to ensure equity, excellence, transparency and fair play in exercising its constitutional functions and, in so doing recognized the need to maintain effective channels of communication with all its stakeholders.

### 1.3 Membership

The Teaching Service Commission (TSC) comprises a Chairman and not more than four (4) other members. The members of the Commission are appointed for a three-year term by the President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, after consultation with the Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition. On Tuesday October 6, 2020, Her Excellency Paula-Mae Weekes ORTT, President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago appointed Mrs. Elizabeth Crouch, Mrs. Claire Brathwaite-Alexander, Mr. Inshan Mohamed, and Dr. Olabisi Kuboni to the Teaching Service Commission. The fifth member, Dr. Martha Des Vignes was already a member of the Commission and continued to serve with the other four (4) members.

At the end of October 2022, Dr Olabisi Kuboni resigned from the Commission.

On November 17, 2022, Mrs Vidyawattee Ramsammy was sworn in by Her Excellency, Paula Mae Weekes ORTT as a new Commissioner.

Members who served on the Commission in 2022:

- ❖ Mrs. Elizabeth Crouch - Chairman
- ❖ Dr. Martha C. Des Vignes - Member
- ❖ Dr. Olabisi Kuboni - Member (Resigned as at 31.10.22)
- ❖ Mrs. Claire Brathwaite-Alexander - Member
- ❖ Mr. Inshan Mohamed - Member
- ❖ Mrs. Vidyawattee Lalla-Ramsammy- Member (From 17.11.22).

*The TSC comprises a  
Chairman  
and not more than  
four (4) other  
members*

## Members of the Teaching Service Commission in 2022



**Front row (L-R):** Mrs. Claire Brathwaite-Alexander (Member), Mrs. Elizabeth Crouch (Chairman), Dr. Martha Des Vignes (Member)

**Back row (L-R):** Mr. Inshan Mohamed (Member), Mrs. Vidyawatee Lalla-Ramsammy (Member)

**Inset:** Dr. Olabisi Kuboni (Member)

## 1.4 Profiles of the Commissioners

### Mrs. Elizabeth Crouch - Chairman



Mrs. Elizabeth Crouch is an educator with forty-nine (49) years working experience in education with twenty-nine (29) of those as working experience as Principal at both the primary and secondary levels. She is a former Principal of St Joseph's Convent, Port of Spain. Mrs. Crouch was the founder of the School Leadership Center of Trinidad and Tobago and its President from 2000-2020. Mrs. Crouch was awarded the TT Public Service Medal of Merit (Gold) in 2007 and the Excellence in Education Award, Ministry of Education in 2012. She is a graduate of Hollins College, USA, with a B.A (Honors) History; the University of the West Indies with a Diploma in Education and the University of Toronto, with a Master's in Education.

### Dr. Martha Des Vignes - Member



Dr. Des Vignes has been an educator in higher education as well as an attorney-at-law for over 22 years. She is a Senior Tutor II and the Course Director for Civil Procedure and Practice I at the Hugh Wooding Law School where she facilitates the practical training on procedure and practice in civil matters in Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana, Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean States. Dr. Des Vignes also possesses a Ph.D. and a MSc. Degree in Conflict Analysis and Resolution from Nova Southeastern University, Florida with a concentration in organizational conflict, school conflict and conflict in health care. She is a certified mediator in civil and family matters as well as an experienced facilitator and trainer. Dr. Des Vignes has also served as a member of the Mediation Board of Trinidad and Tobago for two terms.

**Dr Olabisi Kuboni - Member**

Dr. Olabisi Kuboni is a retired Senior Lecturer of the University of the West Indies. Her last position in the University was as Head of the Open Campus' Graduate Programmes Department. In that capacity, she functioned as manager of student support and instructional design services. Earlier in her professional life Dr. Kuboni served as Educational Technologist in the School of Education, UWI St. Augustine, and before that, she taught Modern Languages at the secondary level. In December 2013, she was conferred the title of Honorary Fellow of the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) for her contribution to the advancement of open and distance learning in the Caribbean. Dr. Kuboni is the holder of a Ph.D. from the Open University United Kingdom.

**Mrs. Claire Brathwaite-Alexander - Member**

Mrs. Claire Brathwaite-Alexander has served in education for her entire working life and has functioned at all levels of the system. Her teaching career at the secondary level spanned thirty-five (35) years at the Bishop's High School, Tobago where she served as Principal for the last eight (8) years of her career. She served on the Methodist School Board of Management (primary schools) for two decades. In 2000, she took time off from the classroom to serve as Curriculum Development Coordinator for the Methodist Church in the South Caribbean District. She was also the District's Editor-in-Chief, coordinating the production of Sunday school materials written by Caribbean people. As Coordinator of the School Supervision Unit at the Division

of Education (Tobago House of Assembly) she led the development of the fledgling Early Childhood Care and Education unit. She has also functioned as part time lecturer at tertiary institutions. Mrs. Brathwaite-Alexander is the holder of a BA English, a Diploma in Education, a Post Graduate Diploma in Library Science (U.W.I) and a Master's in Education (Administration and Policy) at the University of Western Ontario.

**Mr. Inshan Mohamed - Member**

Mr. Inshan Mohamed has over twenty-five (25) years working experience at senior managerial levels in the public and private sectors. He previously held the position of Director in the Ministry of Social Development and Family Services for ten (10) years. He is currently a Managing Director and serves as Chairman and Executive member of several ASJA Committees. He has earned the title of Haji having performed the Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca. He is a graduate of the UWI, St. Augustine with a BSc. (Hons) Double Major in Economics and Management Studies. He also pursued his MSc. in Economics and was a former Tutor of the UWI, Department of Economics. He previously functioned as a Lecturer at Cipriani College of Labour and Co-operative Studies.

**Mrs. Vidyawatee Lalla-Ramsammy - Member**

Mrs. Vidyawatee Lalla-Ramsammy is a former Principal of the Couva South Government Primary School, in which she served for over fifteen (15) years. She was sworn in on November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022 as a member of the Teaching Service Commission by her Excellency Paula-Mae Weekes, President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. Mrs. Lalla-Ramsammy is the holder of a Bachelor of Education Degree, (First Class Honours) in Educational Administration and a Certificate in Education from the University of the West Indies. She has over four (4) decades of working experience in Education and also served as a Local School Board member and educational administrator. She possesses competencies in data driven decision-making in development, implementation and execution of performance-enhancing programmes.

## 1.5 Role of the Director of Personnel Administration

The Service Commissions Department (SCD) was established to provide Secretariat and supporting services to enable the Teaching Service Commission to discharge its constitutional responsibilities.

The SCD is headed by the Director of Personnel Administration (DPA). The DPA is the principal adviser.

As administrative head of the SCD, the DPA is responsible for the efficient conduct and work of the entire Department. To this end, the DPA has to ensure that the requisite capabilities exist within the SCD to support the Commission in the successful realization of its goals and objectives.

The Deputy Director of Personnel Administration and the Executive Director, Human Resource Management, Teaching Service Commission (TSC) represent the Director of Personnel Administration (DPA) at the meetings of the Teaching Service Commission.

The Executive Director, Human Resource Management presides over the Secretariat which provides administrative and advisory services that enable the TSC to effectively discharge its mandate.

*'As administrative head of the SCD, the DPA is responsible for the efficient conduct and work of the entire Department'*

# Section II

## 2.0 Overview

### 2.1 The Filling of Important Administrative Positions

The recruitment, selection and filling exercise for the office of Chief Education Officer took place during the month of January 2022. This represented a major achievement for the Commission as this office had not been filled for two (2) years having been the subject of a legal challenge.

This exercise was followed by the recruitment, selection and filling of the office of the Director of Schools Supervision, a crucial placement at a time when it was important that both teachers and pupils return to their physical classrooms subsequent to the dislocations caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and after two (2) years of on-line schooling.

The role of the school supervisors in ensuring full attendance and curriculum delivery was urgent and important and having a Director of Schools Supervision appointed in the office was deemed to be essential by the Commission.

At the level of the school, two hundred and ten (210) Heads of Department were placed in more than one hundred (100) secondary schools. Again, the Commission viewed this as a most necessary exercise as it was apparent that many learning gaps existed among the returning students which would have to be remediated by academic leaders.

*210 positions of  
Heads of Department  
were filled in 2022*

## 2.2 The Communications Strategy

The Commission sharpened its public presence by producing a quarterly newsletter, through which it sought to be transparent and accountable. Four (4) newsletters were published and disseminated to the public. See **Appendices I - IV**.

## 2.3 The Efficiency Initiative

During 2022, the Commission embraced a strategic remit that included Operational Efficiency as an important pillar of its work. It is against that background that the digitalization of the recruitment of primary school teachers in denominational schools was undertaken.

*'The Commission sharpened its public presence by producing a quarterly newsletter, through which it sought to be transparent and accountable'*



## Section III

### 3.0 Meetings

During the year 2022, the Commission held twenty-three (23) statutory meetings and one (1) Special Meeting as illustrated in **Table 1**. At statutory meetings, the Commission considers and decides upon Notes, which are prepared by the Secretariat with respect to the Commission's constitutional powers: appointments (including acting and temporary), promotions, transfers, confirmations and disciplinary matters. The decisions of the Commission at its meetings are recorded in Minutes which are confirmed at its subsequent meeting and form part of its permanent records.

The Commission also held fifteen (15) meetings to discuss the review of the Teaching Service Commission Regulations and the Delegation Order.

Statutory and Special Meetings held during the period 2022 are highlighted in **Table 1**.

**Table 1**  
Meetings of the TSC held during 2022

Year	No. of Statutory Meetings	No. of Special Meetings
2022	23	1

# Section IV

## 4.0 Appointments

### 4.1 Recruitment of Primary School Teachers

The recruitment and selection process for entry level primary school teachers is delegated to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education and the Administrator, Division of Education, Innovation and Energy (now Division of Education, Research and Technology), Tobago House of Assembly.

### 4.2 Primary School Teachers in Denominational Schools

As of September 30, 2021, the Commission decided to cease accepting unsolicited applications for entry into the Teaching Service. As of November 2022, a new process of recruitment of teachers into denominational primary schools was instituted.

The process would involve the placing of an advertisement in the public domain for the office of Teacher I. This advertisement addressed the vacancies which in November 2022, had been submitted to the Commission by the Association of Denominational Boards of Education for all of its membership. Two thousand and eighty-three (2,083) candidates applied on an online platform of the Service Commissions Department. This application process was designed to create a number of fields and categories for disaggregation, for example, religious denomination of choice, sex, and district of choice. The data captured served to provide invaluable feedback to the Boards, the Ministry of Education and the Commission with respect to primary school teacher applications in Trinidad.

The process involves the following:

- ❖ Applications are to be sent to the Boards in the first instance for their recommendations.
- ❖ Boards are expected to carry out interviews or conduct any of the processes they normally use in order to make their recommendations.
- ❖ Subsequently, Boards should return the recommended applications to the Ministry of Education. Recommended applicants are checked for eligibility and qualifications by the Ministry of Education and finally,
- ❖ All eligible and qualified candidates are called for interviews.
- ❖ The Teaching Service Commission has also designed a new interview instrument to capture three (3) important categories of teaching qualities. These include disposition towards children, knowledge of the primary school curriculum and knowledge of the Code of Conduct.
- ❖ At the interviews, the Secretary of the panel would clearly note the Faith of the candidate.
- ❖ Questions on the curriculum will be drawn up by the Commission with the support of the Curriculum Division of the Ministry of Education and carried out by a Curriculum Officer.
- ❖ Questions on the Code of Conduct would be drawn up by the Commission with the support of the Human Resource Officer of the Ministry of Education and carried out by the Human Resource Officer of the Ministry of Education.
- ❖ Questions on disposition towards children would be drawn up by the Commission and carried out by persons of impeccable character recommended by Denominational Boards.
- ❖ Thereafter a priority list will be drawn up indicating all successful candidates.
- ❖ Boards are then free to interview persons from this list and will be able to select candidates of their choice for placement.

**Table 2** illustrates the number of candidates who were successful at interviews for the office of Assistant Teacher (Primary). For the period under review, there were no interviews for the office of Teacher I (Primary).

**Table 2**  
Number of candidates interviewed and successful for the office of Assistant Teacher (Primary)

Year	Office	No. of persons interviewed	Successful candidates placed on OML
2022	Assistant Teacher (Primary)	86	70

### 4.3 Recruitment of Secondary School Teachers

As of September 30, 2021, unsolicited applications are no longer accepted in the Teaching Service. Applications will be accepted only in response to advertised vacancies.

For the office of Teacher in secondary schools, during the period January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022, a total of three hundred and eighty (380) persons were interviewed in the various

subject areas with two hundred and thirty-two (232) persons being placed on the Priority Lists. These interviews were conducted on the basis of the existing applications of candidates prior to the cutoff date of September 2021.

Tables 3 and 4 provide details on the number of candidates interviewed, number of candidates successful and the subject areas for which interviews were held.

**Table 3**  
Number of persons interviewed and successful for the office of Secondary School Teacher

Year	No. of persons interviewed	Successful candidates placed on OML
2022	380	232

**Table 4**  
Summary on the outcome of interviews held in various subject areas for the year 2022

No	Subject Area	Number of persons interviewed	No. of Successful Candidates
1	Agricultural Science	25	16
2	Auto and Diesel	4	2
3	Biology	23	12
4	Business ( <i>Principles of Business, Principles of Accounts, Management of Business, Accounting</i> )	28	16
5	Chemistry	18	11
6	Clothing and Textiles	7	1

Table 4

Summary on the outcome of interviews held in various subject areas for the year 2022

No	Subject Area	Number of persons interviewed	No. of Successful Candidates
7	Computer Science/Information Technology	14	9
8	Dance	4	4
9	Economics	12	7
10	Electronic Document Preparation and Management (EDPM)/ Office Administration (OA)	1	1
11	Electrical and Electronic Technology	8	4
12	Electrical Installation	1	1
13	English	29	22
14	Food and Nutrition	13	7
15	Geography	14	11
16	Mathematics	34	16
17	Mechanical Engineering Technology	11	5
18	Music	21	17
19	Physical Education	10	6
20	Physics	19	9
21	Social Studies	25	10
22	Spanish/French	28	23
23	Technical Drawing	4	4
24	Theatre Arts/Drama	18	12
25	Visual Arts	9	6
<b>Total</b>		<b>380<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>232</b>

<sup>1</sup> The data in this table reflect revisions from previously published data.

#### 4.4 Appointments/Promotions - Administrative Offices: Delinked Offices

Appointments/promotions of all persons to the Teaching Service are made on the basis of merit. Merit-based appointments/promotions continue to play an essential role in ensuring that applicants are hired, and can advance, based solely on their abilities. Applicants must first satisfy the stipulated requirements of the respective office before they are interviewed for suitability. The TSC has designed and

implemented assessment instruments/tools for each position for which it interviews. The instruments are aligned with roles and responsibilities required of the positions and the attributes the potential candidate should possess. Once a candidate is successfully assessed and interviewed, he/she is placed on an Order-of-Merit List from which he/she can be appointed or promoted.

**Table 5** shows the total number of teachers interviewed for appointments/promotions to administrative offices in secondary and primary schools during the period 2022.

**Table 5**  
**Summary of Promotional Interviews for Administrative Offices in**  
**Secondary and Primary Schools during the year 2022**

Office/ Range/Grade	No. of candidates interviewed	No. of offices filled
Chief Education Officer (Range 68)	7	1
Curriculum Officer (Range 59D)	62	6
Director Schools Supervision (Range 64)	5	1
Head of Department (Secondary) (Grade 5)	Interviews were completed in December 2021	210
Principal (Primary) (Grade 7)	75	Interviews were completed in December 2022 and Fillings were to commence in 2023
Re-Interview of Vice Principal (Primary) (Grade 5)	14	1
<b>Tobago:</b>		
❖ Principal (Primary) (Grade 7)	8	3
❖ Principal (Secondary) (Grade 8)	4	2
❖ Vice Principal (Secondary) (Grade 7)	2	1

The appointments of officers in offices of Chief Education Officer and Director of Schools Supervision are featured below.

**Newly appointed Chief Education Officer, Dr. Peter Smith - April 11, 2022**



From left to right: Mr. Corey Harrison (Director of Personnel Administration), Mrs. Elizabeth Crouch (Chairman of the Teaching Service Commission), Dr. Peter Smith (Chief Education Officer), Mr. Kurt Meyer (Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education).

**Newly appointed Director of Schools Supervision, Mr. Aaron Ramrattan - October 25, 2022**



From left to right: Mr. Corey Harrison (Director of Personnel Administration), Mrs. Elizabeth Crouch (Chairman of the Teaching Service Commission), Mr. Aaron Ramrattan (Director of Schools Supervision), Mrs. Lenore Baptiste- Simons (Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education), Dr. Peter Smith (Chief Education Officer).

**The Administrative Offices in the Teaching Service are as follows: -**

Secondary Schools:	Primary Schools:
❖ Principal (Secondary)	❖ Principal (Primary)
❖ Vice Principal (Secondary)	❖ Vice Principal (Primary)
❖ Head of Department (Secondary)	❖ Head of Department (Primary)
❖ Dean (Secondary)	❖ Senior Teacher (Primary)

**The Delinked Offices in the Teaching/Education sector are as follows: -**

Delinked Offices in the Teaching/Education Sector	
❖ Chief Education Officer	❖ Curriculum Coordinator
❖ Director of Curriculum Development	❖ Curriculum Officer
❖ Director, Educational Planning	❖ Guidance Supervisor
❖ Director of School Supervision	❖ Guidance Officer II
❖ Director Educational Research and Evaluation	❖ Guidance Officer I
❖ Director of Educational Services	❖ Technical/ Vocational Education Supervisor I-II
❖ Director Operations	❖ School Supervisor III
❖ Chief Examiner	❖ School Supervisor II
❖ Assistant Director, Educational Research and Evaluation	❖ School Supervisor I
❖ Education Facilities Planner	❖ School Supervisor I (Technical)
❖ Educational Testing Officer II	❖ Supervisor Technical Teacher Training
❖ Educational Testing Officer I	❖ Supervisor of School Publications
❖ Education Research Officer	❖ Supervisor School Broadcasting
❖ Evaluation Officer	❖ School Publication Assistant
❖ Education Broadcasting Officer II	❖ Education Extension Officer I - II
❖ Education Broadcasting Officer I	❖ Education Liaison Officer I - II



Table 6 provides information on appointments made to offices in the Teaching Service, including the de-linked offices.

**Table 6**  
**Appointments in the Teaching Service and De-Linked Offices**

Appointments	No. of appointments
Promotions	328
First permanent appointments/ Acting appointments	1,896 <sup>2</sup>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,224</b>

## 4.5 Other Activities Related to Appointments

During the reporting period, the Commission also considered and approved temporary appointments, confirmation of appointments and transfers to other positions which impact on the efficiency of the Teaching Service. See details in Table 7.

**Table 7**  
**Other activities related to appointments**

Other activities related to appointments	No. of appointments
Temporary	1,978
Confirmation	618
Transfers	345

<sup>2</sup> The data in this table reflect revisions from previously published data.

# Section V

## 5.0 Disciplinary Matters

The TSC is mandated to maintain the disciplinary standards of our teachers. The disciplinary process in the Teaching Service is guided by Regulations 84 - 114 of the Public Service Commission Regulations as adopted by the Teaching Service Commission and the Education (Teaching Service) Regulations: Part VIII, Code of Conduct. Additionally, the Commission is cognizant of the constitutional provisions set out in Section 125 of the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, "to remove and exercise disciplinary control over persons holding or acting in such offices and to enforce standards of conduct of such officers...".

During the reporting period, there was a total of seventy-three (73) matters referred to the Commission for its attention.

**Table 8** provides a breakdown of disciplinary matters considered for the period 2022.



**Table 8**  
**Breakdown of Disciplinary Matters**

Category	Matters before the Commission in 2022
Court Charges	2
Allegations of Misconduct/ Appointment of Disciplinary Tribunals	23
Reports of the Disciplinary Tribunals	9
Referral of Disciplinary Charge to Disciplinary Tribunals	6
Status of Disciplinary Tribunals	1
Abandonments	8
Interdiction from duty	2
Policy Decision	1
Lifting order of Suspension/Interdiction/ Retirement on Grounds of ill-health	4
Imposition of Penalties	6
Allegations of Misconduct/ Request to cease to report for duty	1
High Court Matters	2
Request from Ministries on Guidance on Disciplinary Matters	3
Representations	1
Extension of time for Investigating Officer to submit Investigator's report	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>73</b>

The Commission notes that there are numerous issues in effectively disposing of disciplinary matters, including the length of time taken for court charges to be determined and the length of time taken before matters are heard before Disciplinary Tribunals. The Commission has also expressed concerns with respect to some operations of Disciplinary Tribunals mainly, the referral of live

matters before a Disciplinary Tribunal to the Commission for guidance, the conduct of the prosecution in matters involving children and the protection of children when providing evidence. Notwithstanding these issues, the Commission continues to work on improving the standards of discipline within our nation's schools.

Further, the Commission continues to give increased attention to those disciplinary matters involving the abuse of children including physical and sexual abuse cases that have arisen in recent times especially in primary schools. The Commission is also equally attentive to the regularity and punctuality records of teachers especially in cases where officers accumulate more than four thousand (4,000) late minutes annually.

### 5.1 Public Service Appeal Board

The Public Service Appeal Board was established under Section 130 of the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. The Public Service Appeal Board handles appeals for any decision that was given by a Service Commission, or any person to whom powers of the Commission have been delegated, as a result of disciplinary proceedings brought against a public officer. According to the Constitution, the Appeal Board consists of a Chairman, who is appointed by the President after consultation with the Chief Justice and two (2) other Members, who are also appointed by the President after consultation with the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition.

*The Public Service Appeal Board handles appeals for any decision that was given by a Service Commission, or any person to whom powers of the Commission have been delegated, as a result of disciplinary proceedings brought against a public officer.*

The Chairman must be a Judge or former Judge or a citizen of Trinidad and Tobago, who has held office as a Judge of a Court having unlimited jurisdiction in civil and criminal matters in some part of the Commonwealth or a Court having jurisdiction in appeals from any such Court.

**Table 9** illustrates Appeal Matters in 2022.

**Table 9**  
**Public Service Appeal Board**

Appeals	No. of Matters
No. of appeals pending before the Public Service Appeal Board with respect to disciplinary charges at the beginning of 2022.	1
No. of Matters filed before the Public Service Appeal Board as at December 31, 2022.	3
No. of Public Service Appeal Board matters concluded in 2022.	3

The three (3) matters, which were completed in 2022, were all decided in favour of the Teaching Service Commission regarding imposition of penalties.

## 5.2 Freedom of Information

The Freedom of Information Act (1999), gives members of the public a general right (with exceptions) of access to official documents of public authorities. The Teaching Service Commission received two hundred and twenty (220) Freedom of Information requests in 2022. Table 10 provides a breakdown of the nature of such requests, of which one hundred and thirty-seven (137) were finalized.

**Table 10**  
**Freedom of Information Requests**

Nature of Requests	No. of Requests
Information/Copy of Documents	14
Position on Seniority List/Order of Merit List	8
Request for Information	193
Scores from Interviews	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>220</b>

# Section VI

## 6.0 Stakeholder Engagement

The TSC values ongoing engagement with its stakeholders. Through such meaningful engagement, the TSC is able to foster better working relationships. The Commission is of the view that all stakeholders in the education system should be given an audience to explore areas of commonality in approaches, ideas, policies and practices in order to promote better working relationships and also to attain effective solutions to existing problems.

During the year 2022, the Commission met with the undermentioned stakeholders to discuss various issues. The first meeting took place in February of 2022 and the second in October 2022. Both were virtual meetings. Two (2) reports were published, one for each engagement and they were published on the Commission's website as well as shared with stakeholders.

### 6.1 Denominational Boards, Trinidad

The Teaching Service Commission hosted two (2) virtual sensitization meetings with Denominational Boards of Trinidad on February 23, 2022, and October 5, 2022. The Association of Denominational Boards of Education indicates the following membership: Anglican; Anjuman Sunnat-ul-Jamaat Association; Arya Pratinidhi Sabha; Catholic Diocesan; Dominican Sisters; Dominican Fathers; Fundamental Baptist Mission of T&T; Kabir Panth Association; Holy Faith Sisters; Holy Ghost Fathers; London Baptist; Methodist; Miracle Ministries; Moravian; Presbyterian; Sanatan Dharma Maha Sabha; Seventh Day Adventist; Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny; St Barbara's Spiritual Shouter Baptist; Society Working for the

### Denominational Boards (cont'd)

Advancement of Human Aspiration; and the Trinidad Muslim League.

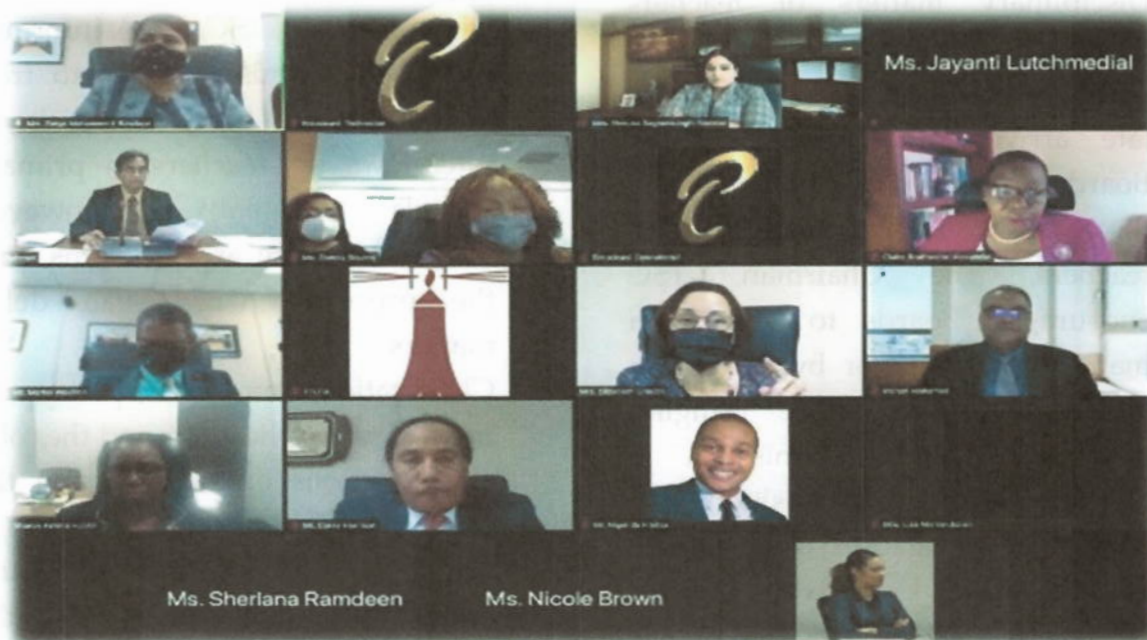
Issues discussed were:

- ❖ Digital transformation of the TSC which will allow for: E- Recruitment and Selection, virtual tribunals and the digitalization of teachers' records.
- ❖ Several changes in the conduct of business amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ❖ Timely submission of the following by Denominational Boards: staff reports, special reports that are to be attached to applications for promotion in the administrative offices of the Teaching Service and recommendations of persons to be promoted to administrative offices.
- ❖ Disciplinary matters of teachers including the alarming rate of sexual and physical abuse in schools and the late arrival of teachers. Several Boards informed of outstanding disciplinary matters against their teachers. The Chairman, TSC encouraged Boards to treat with matters internally or by mediation where necessary before bringing these matters to the Commission.
- ❖ Enquiry into the legal position with respect to delegation of discipline matters. The Executive Director, HRM, TSC (Ag.), advised that discipline matters were under the remit of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education.
- ❖ The review of the TSC Regulations is ongoing and Boards and other stakeholders would be invited to comment on the draft document upon completion. The Executive Director, HRM, TSC (Ag.), advised that the Commission stands ready to provide training for Boards with respect to the Regulations.
- ❖ Plea for the appointment of Deans (Secondary) given their pivotal role to students in the development of human social needs, emotional and mental health issues and learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ❖ Lengthy process for filling of offices, from the advertisement to appointment stages. The Executive Director, HRM, TSC, (Ag.), informed that the Commission tries to treat with approvals from the results of interviews for teachers in primary schools urgently, however, sometimes there are problems with the processes which can delay matters.
- ❖ Clarification on the policy of unsolicited applications and the roles and functions of the TSC and the Ministry of Education.
- ❖ The process of administrative and subject area interviews and the format of virtual interviews.

### Denominational Boards (cont'd)

- ❖ The process of acting appointments of teachers.
- ❖ Requests by Boards for the re-advertisement of the offices of Principal, Vice Principal, Senior Teacher and Head of Department.
- ❖ Delayed confirmations of teachers' concerns expressed by Boards that although teachers had completed medical examinations and obtained satisfactory staff reports, they had not been confirmed in their appointments.
- ❖ Medical examinations of teachers. There were concerns raised that some teachers were not being sent for medical examinations. The Executive Director, HRM, TSC (Ag.), advised that it was the responsibility of the Ministry of Education to send teachers to be medically examined once the officer had completed two (2) years continuous service. Once a recommendation for confirmation was received and the officer satisfied all the conditions for confirmation, the said recommendation would be processed and submitted for the Commission's consideration.

## 6.2 Joint Select Committee



Appearance before the Joint Select Committee on April 12, 2022



### Joint Select Committee (cont'd)

There was one (1) meeting with the Joint Select Committee of Parliament. Issues discussed were:

- ❖ The impact of the TSC's decision to advertise positions solely based on vacancies on the in-flow of applications and the existing backlog of applications.
- ❖ The composition of disciplinary tribunals and whether its proposed reduction in size had expedited the processing of disciplinary matters.
- ❖ Information exchange between the Commission and the Ministry of Education in an attempt to more effectively execute the common interests and objectives of both entities.
- ❖ The current working arrangements of the Teaching Service Commissioners and the legal and administrative steps required to implement working on a full-time basis.

## 6.3 Consultations with Tobago Stakeholders



Inset left to right: Dr. Olabisi Kuboni (Commissioner), Mr. Inshan Mohamed (Commissioner), Mrs. Claire Brathwaite (Commissioner), Mrs. Elizabeth Crouch (TSC Chairman), Dr. Martha Des Vignes (Commissioner), Mr. Corey Harrison (Director of Personnel Administration) and Mr. Martel Waldron (Deputy Director of Personnel Administration) (Ag.).

### Consultations - Tobago (cont'd)

The Commission carried out consultations in Tobago in January 2022. These consultations involved the Tobago House of Assembly, the Division of Education, Denominational Boards and TTUTA. Matters discussed included:

#### Denominational Boards, Tobago

- ❖ Issues pertaining to the filling of the offices of Principal and Vice Principal of both secondary and primary schools.
- ❖ Commencement of digital transformation, including the digitalization of teachers' records, virtual interviews and virtual tribunals which would speed up processes, allow for the quicker retrieval of data and efficient handling of issues and challenges.
- ❖ Submission of Regularity and Punctuality reports in respect of Tobago teachers to the Division of Education, Research and Technology (DER&T) for onward transmission to the Commission.
- ❖ The lengthy process of appointments in the Teaching Service. The DPA suggested that information be submitted a year in advance so that succession planning would alleviate the problem of teachers retiring with limited replacements.

- ❖ Upgrading of teachers. The DDPA (Ag.), advised that in many instances when recommendations are made there are discrepancies regarding vacancies or other matters. As such, recommendations cannot be completed.
- ❖ Acting appointments in the Teaching Service.
- ❖ Government assisted status given to some schools under Denominational Boards.
- ❖ Indiscipline by teachers at schools.
- ❖ Contract teachers in Tobago's school system.
- ❖ Recruitment into the Teaching Service.
- ❖ Communication amongst various agencies.
- ❖ School Establishments and Seniority Lists.

#### Division of Education, Research and Technology, Tobago House of Assembly (DER&T)

- ❖ Commencement of digital transformation, including the digitalization of teachers' records, virtual interviews and virtual tribunals which would speed up processes, allow for the quicker retrieval of data and efficient handling of issues and challenges.
- ❖ Tracking of discipline matters by the TSC.

### Consultations – Tobago (cont'd)

- ❖ Submission of Regularity and Punctuality reports in respect of teachers in Tobago to the TSC. The Chairman, TSC indicated that data with respect to teachers with four thousand (4,000) or more late minutes should be forwarded to the Commission while late minutes of under four thousand (4,000) should be dealt with by the Division.
- ❖ The DER&T informed of a project to correct the Establishments of secondary schools, which revealed that many schools did not have a record of their established positions, resulting in the employment of a large amount of contract staff.
- ❖ Improving communication between the DER&T and the Commission.
- ❖ The communication capacity of the DER&T, including the use of the Teams platform, emails, cell phones and WhatsApp.
- ❖ Communication between the DER&T and the Denominational Boards.
- ❖ Lengthy periods for the resolution of issues, leading to the mistrust by teachers.
- ❖ Backlogs with respect to interviews for teachers and appointments of all positions.
- ❖ The need for training of the staff of the DER&T.
- ❖ Government assisted status. The DER&T informed that the Note for Cabinet regarding schools that are carded to gain government assisted status was forwarded to the Office of the Prime Minister, Tobago.
- ❖ Increased productivity and delivery of quality education.
- ❖ Necessary information needed when submitting recommendations for appointments to the TSC.
- ❖ Transfers within the Teaching service.

### Trinidad and Tobago Unified Teachers Association (TTUTA), Tobago Division

Issues discussed were:

- ❖ Commencement of digital transformation, including the digitalization of teachers' records, virtual interviews and virtual tribunals which would speed up processes, allow for the quicker retrieval of data and efficient handling of issues and challenges.
- ❖ Several changes in the conduct of business amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ❖ Submission of Regularity and Punctuality reports in respect of teachers in Tobago to the TSC.

**Consultations – Tobago (cont’d)**

❖ TSC approvals of DER&T recommendations. The DDPA (Ag.) informed that there can be a number of issues that are related with the non-completion of same such as, problems with vacancies and non-submission of up-to-date Staff Reports.

❖ The cessation of unsolicited applications for recruitment into the Trinidad and Tobago Teaching Service.

**Meeting with TTUTA, Trinidad**

In addition to these meetings, the Commission also met the newly appointed executive of TTUTA on November 16<sup>th</sup> 2022.

**Meeting with the newly appointed TTUTA Executive – November 16, 2022**



The Teaching Service Commission exchanged greetings and ideas with the newly appointed TTUTA executive on November 16<sup>th</sup> 2022. Inset: Mrs. Claire Brathwaite-Alexander (TSC Commissioner), Mrs. Elizabeth Crouch (TSC Chairman), Mr. Martin Lum Kin (President of TTUTA), Dr. Martha Des Vignes (TSC Commissioner), and other members of the TTUTA executive team.

## 6.4 Ministry of Education



TSC meeting with stakeholders from the Ministry of Education in 2022

The Commission had several engagements with its foremost stakeholder, the Ministry of Education during the year 2022. These included meetings with the Minister of Education, the Honorable Dr. Nyan Gadsby-Dolly; the Permanent Secretary, Mrs. Lenor Baptiste Simmons; the Chief Education Officer, Dr. Peter Smith and various teams from the Ministry during which critical issues affecting the education system were discussed. These included digitalization of operations, staffing issues, matters of discipline and the recruitment process at the primary school level.

The following were discussed:

- ❖ Filling of the office of Head of Department (Secondary).
- ❖ Screening and shortlisting for the office of Dean (Secondary) by the team created by the staff of the Ministry of Education and TSC.
- ❖ Filling of the offices of School Supervisor III and II. The Chairman announced the advertisement of the offices and the online application process.
- ❖ The advertisement for the offices of Principal and Vice Principal.
- ❖ Issues observed in Special Reports.
- ❖ Filling of the offices of Curriculum Officer.

### Ministry of Education (cont'd)

- ❖ Inconsistencies between the records of the Ministry and the TSC in respect of offices, for example, the Curriculum Planning Division has offices of District Curriculum Coordinators, which are not on the Commission's records.
- ❖ Interviews in subject areas for 2022.
- ❖ Filling of the office of Guidance Officer I.
- ❖ Filling of the office of Chief Education Officer.
- ❖ Review of the recruitment and selection process for the offices of Assistant Teacher/Teacher 1 (Primary) including guidelines and stricter oversight of the process.

## 6.5 E-Newsletter

The Commission utilized the communication tool of an e-newsletter during 2022 in order to achieve transparency in its operations, communicate its goals and intentions to teachers and administrators and to provide to its readership both an educational experience as well as an opportunity for reflection on the issues in the education sector.

Quarterly newsletters were prepared by an editorial team comprising the Chairman, Mrs. Elizabeth Crouch, Commissioners Mr. Inshan Mohamed and Dr. Martha Des Vignes as well as the Corporate Communications Officer, Ms. Leah Lewis. Each newsletter was structured around a theme. Feature articles were written by Commissioners as well as retired educators. The publications were distributed to teachers via WhatsApp as well as through the Service Commission Department's website.

They were also circulated to school boards and to members of the public. A total of four (4) newsletters were produced with the December issue being one which highlighted the year's achievements.

The use of the e-newsletter reflects not only the strategic planning of the Commission but also the intent of the Service Commission Department's communication plan 2017/2018. It is hoped that in 2023 these methods of engaging our stakeholders would be expanded to include webinars as well as conferences and meetings with key personnel in education.

It is anticipated that these methods of outreach to our stakeholders in a transparent and open fashion will continue and will redound to the benefit of the relationship between the Commission and its clients. **Appendices I - IV** provide details.

# Section VII

## 7.0 Issues and Challenges - 2022

The Commission experienced a number of challenges during the year 2022. These challenges can be summarized as follows:

- ❖ **Disruptions:** COVID-19 continued to negatively impact the work of the Commission. Sick leave, self-quarantine and rostering caused interruptions in the workflow of the Department.
- ❖ **The Budget:** (See Table 11 and Figure 1) The Commission's work was affected by a very small budget. This was particularly true with respect to the establishment of panels for interviews.
- ❖ **Digitalization:** The key issue of the need to digitalize records was also affected by the pandemic and so this work proceeded slowly as the Department developed a program of training and retraining of officers to manage the digitalization of records.
- ❖ **Working Strategically:** The Commission had undertaken a strategic remit exercise to better deal with the uncertain circumstances brought about by the impact of the pandemic. This exercise meant that priorities had to be established and goals stretched out over the short and long term. It proved imperative that the Commission align its goals with the resources and operations of the SCD so that incremental achievements could be realized.

**Table 11**  
**Budgetary allocation for the period 2017 - 2022**

Year	<u>Fees:</u> <i>(used for Legal fees, Stipend for Interview Panels)</i>	<u>Other Contracted Services:</u> <i>(used for assessments or psychometric testing and other services)</i>	<u>Promotion Publicity and Printing:</u> <i>(used for press releases, advertisements, Annual Reports)</i>	<u>Hosting of Conferences, Seminars and other Functions:</u> <i>(used for hosting conferences, retreats and workshops)</i>
	\$	\$	\$	\$
2017-2018	60,000.00	0.00	10,000.00	0.00
2018-2019	60,000.00	0.00	10,000.00	0.00
2019-2020	115,000.00	3,000.00	10,000.00	5,000.00
2020-2021	65,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2021-2022	99,912.50	0.00	0.00	0.00

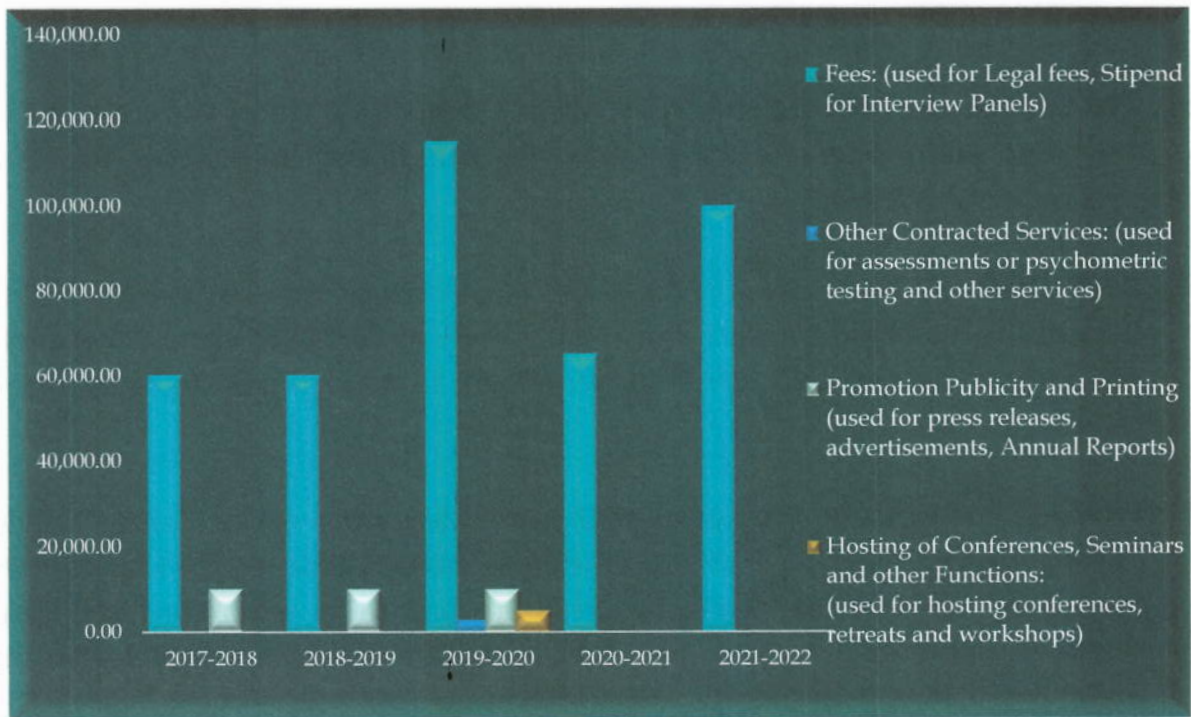


Figure 1: Budgetary allocation for the TSC for the period 2017 - 2022



## Section VIII

### 8.0 Plans and Programs for 2023

- i. The Commission will complete the selection and filling of the position of Deans (134) Secondary. These positions are of vital importance to the well-being of the thousands of students in the secondary school system who faced the trauma associated with two (2) years of online schooling and in many instances, no schooling at all. Their emotional and social needs are now paramount and the Commission aims to select those officers who are best suited to help and form adolescents who have been out of school for close to two (2) years.
- ii. The Commission is reviewing the draft Teaching Service Regulations and will undertake to write a policy paper to accompany the draft Regulations 2023. A two/three-day retreat is planned to begin this exercise.
- iii. The Commission will meet with Schools Supervisors for training in doing the work of investigating officers and in the preparation of special reports for those officers who are seeking promotion.
- iv. The Commission will focus on the needs of primary schools. Emphasis will be placed on filling the offices of Teacher I (Primary), Principal (Primary) and Vice Principal (Primary). The Commission views this process as urgent, given the poor SEA results of 2021 and 2022.



## Acknowledgement

In conclusion, for their valuable assistance during the year under review, the Commission wishes to express its gratitude to:

- ❖ The Director of Personnel Administration, Mr. Corey Harrison;
- ❖ The Deputy Director of Personnel Administration (Ag.) Mr. Martel Waldron;
- ❖ The Executive Director, Human Resource Management (Ag.) Mrs. Farya Mohammed- Basdaye;
- ❖ The Secretary to the Commission, Ms. Gail Pennie - Douglas
- ❖ The entire staff of the Teaching Service Commission Secretariat; and
- ❖ The stakeholders who continue to contribute to the development of education in Trinidad and Tobago.

## References

Parliament of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. (2022, April 12). *Appearance before The Joint Select Committee of Parliament.*

## Appendices

- Appendix I:** TSC Online Teaching Service Commission Newsletter Volume 2. Issue I March 2022
- Appendix II:** TSC Online Teaching Service Commission Newsletter Volume 2. Issue II June 2022
- Appendix III:** TSC Online Teaching Service Commission Newsletter Volume 2. Issue III September 2022
- Appendix IV:** TSC Online Teaching Service Commission Newsletter Volume 2. Issue IV December 2022
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Volume 2, Issue 1  
MARCH  
2022



## TSC ONLINE

### TEACHING SERVICE COMMISSION NEWSLETTER



#### *Inside* **THIS ISSUE**

- Managing the Selection of HODs Amidst the Pandemic
- TSC Tobago Consultations
- Denominational board meetings
- Navigating the Education Act
- Embracing the Challenge
- Quarterly achievements of the TSC for the period JANUARY – MARCH, 2022

Greetings from the Teaching Service Commission for the New Year 2022!

We wish to extend to you, our teachers and school administrators, our full support and encouragement as you are about to return to physical school in April. We aim to support your return with nine goals for this year including very importantly, a push for the digital transformation of the operations of the Service Commission Department and the recruitment of officers for the key posts of School Supervisor I and III, Principals and Vice Principals, Guidance Counsellor and Dean. All of these interviews will be conducted virtually.

#### **VIRTUAL CEREMONY**

The Commission proposes to host a congratulatory virtual ceremony for all successful Heads of Department in the coming term.

Our best wishes for a successful and productive school year!



#### *Editorial Team:*

*Ms. Leah Lewis  
Mr. Inshan Mohamed  
Mrs. Elizabeth Crouch  
Dr. Mortha Des Vignes*

*Mrs. Elizabeth Crouch*  
CHAIRMAN  
TEACHING SERVICE COMMISSION

## MANAGING THE SELECTION OF HEADS OF DEPARTMENT AMIDST THE PANDEMIC

By Commissioner Mrs. Claire Brathwaite - Alexander

Stop and think for just one quick moment. If you had to generate a list of the top ten words or phrases associated with the COVID 19 pandemic and education during the last two years, what would those words be? If you suggested: **unprecedented, new normal, adaptive leadership, hybrid, remote learning, virtual, reset, digital transformation, platform and (my personal favourite) pivot**, you would be among the vast majority of persons. For many of us, these buzz words have lost their resonance, but it is almost impossible to contemplate the 2021 recruitment process for Heads of Department without referencing most, if not all, of these terms.

In truth, it would not be an exaggeration to say that during the pandemic the unsung heroes of the Service Commissions Department (SCD) gave deep significance to these terms and made "one giant leap" in the recruitment process. The need was obvious. Learning loss and lockdowns threatened education as we knew it. Schools urgently required instructional leaders to lead curriculum implementation, authentic assessment, student engagement and to empower and involve parents in the learning of their children.

In essence, Heads of Department had to be recruited and installed in schools, post haste. The details, however, seemed insurmountable: 557 candidates to be interviewed and assigned, selection panels for several subject clusters to be established and prepped, reams of paperwork to be generated and dispatched, literally scores of interview rooms to be identified for what might well be a full year of use and staff to be assigned to man all these processes. Extraordinary challenges also existed. The country was on lockdown. Staff would have to collaborate to realize this mammoth task at a time when isolation was



the order of the day. Interviewers would need to work as a team. Everywhere, staff morale was low as persons confronted the daily body count and prevailing uncertainty.

Yet, at this very time, the Commission demonstrated adaptive leadership, that is, the ability to thrive when survival was the priority, and to drive change during a crisis. In a matter of mere weeks, a Virtual Interview Platform (VIP) was developed by the in house IT staff. No consultant was hired. Not a ream of paper was required. Panels were expanded to include Principals, thus building capacity at this level of leadership. Interviewers received orientation online. The processes were completely virtual and months of work were reduced to a click. Lenin is reputed to have said, "There are decades where nothing happens and there are weeks when decades happen." This has been such a time. Online interviews have been taking place elsewhere for years.

The real story is the ability to pivot, the willingness to develop prototypes quickly, to embrace innovation, the openness of Commissioners to getting down into the heart of the process and, the start of something that has radically transformed an outdated process forever. The SCD was the only public sector organisation to produce and run such a program, but there are undoubtedly heroes among us in many of our schools and in our offices, heroes who pushed for and birthed creative solutions during this crisis. We want you to share your stories of innovation and inspiration. ***Tell us, during this pandemic, how did you or your team move the needle? Please send to: [scdcommunications@gov.tt](mailto:scdcommunications@gov.tt)***

## STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

### TSC TOBAGO CONSULTATIONS

By Chairman Mrs. Elizabeth Crouch



**Mrs. Denese Quashie Toby (Administrator for Education)**

The Teaching Service Commission hosted a two day period of consultations in Tobago on January 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>, 2022. This was an important occasion since the Commission had not visited Tobago since 2017.

During the period of consultations, the Commission met with several stakeholders including the Assistant Secretary for Education Mr. Orlando Kerr and the Administrator for Education in Tobago, Mrs. Denese Quashie Toby and her team. The following denominational board representatives were engaged:

Archdeacon Phil Isaac and Mr. Orville Carrington of the Anglican Board of Management; Father Wendell Bernard Chairman of the Bishop's High School Board of Governors and Ms. Cindy Ramnarine, Principal; Mr. Jasper Joefield, Secretary, Tobago Methodist School Board; Dr. Trevor Garcia, Chairman Catholic School Board of Management, Tobago; Reverend, Dr. Glenroy Frank, Chairman, Pentecostal Light and Life Foundation; Pastor Toney Mapp, Board of Management of Harmon's School of SDA and Mrs. Jamilla Nicholls, Education Director. Finally, the Commission met with representatives of TTUTA led by Mr. Bradon Roberts, Tobago Officer.

Stakeholders took the opportunity to share data and to gather information as well discuss issues and concerns with the Commission and on the final day of the consultation, a workshop was held with the staff of the Administrator's office with a view to enhancing an understanding of the work flow process between the Service Commission Department and the Division.



## CONT'D TSC TOBAGO CONSULTATIONS



**Inset:** Mr. Corey Harrison (Director of Personnel Administration), Mr. Martel Waldron (Deputy Director of Personnel Administration) along with the Commissioners.

During the consultations, the Commission identified the following:

- The digital transformation taking place in the Service Commission Department
- The implementation of virtual interviews for selection to promotional posts.
- The implementation of virtual tribunals for discipline

The feedback received from participants was extremely positive and the Commission aims to build on the commitments shared with regard to working collaboratively with all stakeholders, on the matters of appointment, transfer, promotion and discipline in Tobago. Joint meetings are now held more consistently via the Microsoft Teams platform. The Commission is pleased to indicate that the rationalization of secondary schools in Tobago is one of the fruits of this engagement. A special thank you to our Executive Director, Mrs. Farya Mohammed Basdaye for her astute implementation and to the Secretary to the Commission, Ms. Gail Pennie Douglas for her full support. The Consultations Report can be accessed at the following link: [Consultations Report](#)

## STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

### DENOMINATIONAL BOARDS

By: Commissioner Dr. Martha Des Vignes



The Teaching Service Commission (the Commission) appreciates the importance of stakeholder engagement in achieving its mandate. As such, one of the Commission's primary goals for 2022 is to develop strong relations with its stakeholders. In pursuance of this goal, the Commission hosted a virtual sensitisation meeting with Denominational Boards of Trinidad on February 23, 2022.

The purpose of this meeting was three fold – to introduce the members of the Commission to the representatives of the Board, to share the Commission's goals for 2020 and to achieve commonality with respect to major issues. The meeting was very well attended and included representatives from twenty (20) Boards with whom the Commission shared its new directions and goals.

During the meeting, the Commission was able to highlight the ongoing process of digital transformation that has been used to address some of the problems presented by the pandemic. This process involved the adoption of virtual tribunals to deal with the interview process.

This digital process has become pivotal to the Commission in achieving its mandate as it seeks to find solutions to the many challenges of its work.

The meeting also afforded the Commission the opportunity to share data with the representatives of the Board including data on officers before the virtual tribunals as well as data on appointments of officers. The Board's representatives were sensitised to major impediments regarding the timely appointment of officers such as delayed submissions of staff reports, delayed recommendations from the Board and weak communication between the Boards and the

During the meeting, each representative was able to share data with the Commission by presenting details of the numbers of schools and teachers being managed as well as staffing arrangements and appointments (acting, temporary and permanent). The representatives were invited to submit the data presented in writing to the Commission to assist with reconciliation of the Commission's records relating to the schools governed by the Boards.

Prior to the meeting, the Boards were also given the opportunity to identify concerns and issues they wanted addressed. Sixteen (16) concerns were identified, all of which the Commission highlighted during the meeting. Each concern was addressed by the Executive Director of Human Resource Management of the Commission to enable a common understanding on the issues surrounding these concerns. The Commission invited representatives who had further concerns to submit these concerns with recommendations for improvement so that the Commission can consider them. It was very encouraging to witness the data sharing and the opening of channels of communication between the representatives of the Board and the Commission.

The feedback received from the attendees was also heartening as a very large majority agreed that they were afforded the opportunity to present their concerns and a large majority felt that their concerns were addressed during the meeting. A large majority also indicated confidence that the Commission will fulfil its remit regarding the Teaching Service Regulations and the Concordat. While a majority signaled confidence in the Commission to uphold and protect Teacher's rights, the Commission noted that a large percentage was undecided. Therefore, the Commission is committed to working to build greater confidence in it and its processes in this area.

The Commission welcomed the enhanced shared understanding of the common issues that were facilitated by this stakeholder engagement with the Boards. It is committed to maintaining effective channels of communication so that it can work collaboratively with the Boards to find solutions that will allow it to fulfil its mandate in the best interest of our education system.

The Report of the Commission on the Stakeholder Meeting with the Denominational Boards can be accessed at the following link: [TSC Sensitization Report](#)

## NAVIGATING THE EDUCATION ACT (Part 1)

By Mr. Leon Nanan (Retired School Supervisor)



It is imperative that all stakeholders in the Education System, especially those directly involved in the teaching/learning process be cognizant of the Education Act, Chapter 39:01 of 1966. The Education Act lays out the legal parameters within which all stakeholders within the system are expected to operate. The Education Act is divided into four Parts and contains eighty-nine (89) sections with a Preliminary or General Section which discusses the power and responsibilities of the Minister of Education. Given the length and breadth of the Act and the restrictions of time, this paper will focus on those sections which educators tend to refer to on a daily basis as they carry out their duties and responsibilities in schools.

### **GENERAL**

This preliminary section of the Education Act confers power to the Minister of Education (Section 3) to establish and develop a system of education (Primary, Secondary, Further Education and Special Schools) according to the needs of the nation as well as the effective execution of the education policy of the Government. This General Section also speaks to the prohibition of discrimination (Section 7) whereby children of school age shall not be language.

## NAVIGATING THE EDUCATION ACT (Cont'd)

By Mr. Leon Nanan (Retired School Supervisor)

### **PART I: ESTABLISHMENT OF SCHOOLS**

Section 11 of the Education Act established Government schools, Government assisted denominational schools who are in receipt of funds from the Ministry of Education as well as private schools. General powers and duties of Boards of Management of assisted denominational schools can be cited in Section 17 of the Act. It is important to note that the above-mentioned powers bestowed upon the Boards of Management of denominational schools had been previously agreed upon between the Government and Denominational Boards via the Concordat of 1958.

Section 22 of the Education Act clearly states that no Principal of a Public school or Board of Management of an assisted denomination schools, except with the written permission of the Minister, may impose a charge/fee of any kind on pupils/parents in return for admission into the school or service/activity of any kind provided by the school or its agents. This section also prohibits schools from demanding that students procure books/uniforms/ school supplies from any particular person or supplier.

The duties and responsibilities of School Supervisors of all Primary and Secondary schools are delineated in Section 26 of the Act. Likewise, Section 27 of the Act clearly lays out all the duties and responsibilities of Principals (Primary and Secondary). Prominent among these duties is the physical safety (Duty of Care) for all students under their charge as well as the discipline (teachers and students) in the school, all teaching as well as its supervision, the proper use of school equipment and stock and cooperation with approved stakeholders, internal and external. It should also be noted that Principals delegate some of these duties to Heads of Department, Deans, Senior Teachers and Teachers in their respective schools. This is also reinforced in the duties and responsibilities of the above-mentioned posts.

Section 29 (1) of the Act speaks to the Conscience clause whereby no students shall be required, as a condition of admission into, or of continuing in any public or assisted school, to attend or abstain from attending any religious classes or place of religious worship/observance. Section 29 (2) also indicates that religious instruction shall form part of the curriculum of every public school and that adequate facilities and instructions be provided by school authorities for this purpose.

Section 30 to 37 of the Act refers specifically to Private schools. Critical to the operations of all Private schools ( pre- school, primary and secondary) is that they must be registered and approved by the Ministry of Education and must conform to all existing building, fire and electrical codes. No person shall be employed in any Private school as a Teacher unless his/her name is registered on the Teachers Register (Section 35).

Section 44 of the Education Act would be of special interest to Principals, Vice-Principals, Heads of Departments, Deans and Senior Teachers as it concerns the physical suspension and extended suspension of students from the school compound on account of gross misconduct where their continued presence in school is considered "injurious or dangerous to other students". Parents of the suspended student and the Minister must be notified, immediately upon said suspension.

It must be noted that this suspension must not exceed a period of five (5) working days. The Minister of Education, under part two (2) of this section may order the reinstatement, transfer the student to another educational institution, expel or extend the suspension of the students upon the request of the Principal and recommendation of the School Supervisor. Section 46 instructs School Principals to suspend students from school attendance who may be afflicted with a contagious disease which would most likely be transmitted to other students and stakeholders on the school compound.

## EMBRACING THE CHALLENGE OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AS HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

By Commissioner Inshan Mohamed



Congratulations to all our successful candidates who have been appointed to the positions of Head of Department. Unprecedented changes during the Covid 19 pandemic required many of the academic and managerial staff at our schools to rapidly embrace new developments in pedagogy and technology. Our school management teams at all levels had to quickly move from simply managing and working in a physical institution to creating an online environment and a virtual school community for learning to take place. This also redefined perceptions of leadership at the middle management levels at our schools, requiring Heads of Department to become more innovative and creative.

The prevailing conditions of the pandemic in our local educational environment is still dynamically shaping what is the "new normal" and staying motivated and productive in the uncertainty must bring together innovation in knowledge and expertise. As a Head of Department, you must inspire and aspire to create a transformational leadership style in which you do not isolate yourselves within your own departments with limited responsiveness and critical thinking. You now have the opportunity as a middle manager to become emotionally agile, confident and adaptable when you participate in the managerial decision making process of your school.

## EMBRACING THE CHALLENGE OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AS HEAD OF DEPARTMENT (Cont'd)

By Commissioner Inshan Mohamed

Developing good leadership qualities and values is crucial because no matter what the learning management systems or technology innovates in the future, the quality of learning or having successful learning outcomes will continue to depend on the caliber and passion of those who manage, deliver and facilitate the teaching and learning process. The post covid classroom will certainly change as part of this evolving process and possibly witness entirely new educational environments given all the emerging technologies. The resulting demands will require that you work within your department to develop different teaching methods and adjustments in the classroom to respond to emerging demands of students for new learning stimuli. This is where your leadership becomes very important to become a transformational leader, helping your direct reports to explore incorporating the new approaches and stimuli, in moving beyond they what they teach to how they teach and to maintain the learning interest among students in adapting to our new realities.

In navigating the "new normal" your leadership as a Head of Department must be defined by your commitment to seamlessly transition into your new career position at the school to which you have been appointed. It is a new challenge, but these career changes are not always difficult to embrace or predict how they would unfold. You would have to think differently as a middle manager at your school and managing your former colleagues or new staff will require that you separate your emotional attachments to manage with fairness and equity. It also demands that you overcome your fears of being assertive and taking decisive action to ensure the educational vision and goals of your department is met.

Adapting to your new role has to be realistic and requires a mindset to filter some of your previous notions when you were functioning as a Teacher and you must now engage in embracing new strategies to become creative, passionate, helpful, responsible and understanding so that you can gain the respect and support of your staff.



**QUARTERLY  
ACHIEVEMENTS OF  
THE TSC FOR THE  
PERIOD  
JANUARY 12th- MARCH 23rd,  
2022**

FAST FACTS QUARTERLY STATISTICS	
DISCIPLINARY MATTERS	25
TRANSFERS	72
TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS	489
APPOINTMENTS	77
ACTING APPOINTMENTS	254
CONFIRMATIONS	99
PROMOTIONS	16
RETIREMENTS	10
MEDICAL BOARD REPORTS	2
RELEASES	1
APPOINTMENT ON SECONDMENT	1

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**A PUBLICATION OF THE TEACHING SERVICE COMMISSION (TSC)**

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## Appendix II

Volume 2, Issue II  
JUNE  
2022



## TSC ONLINE

### TEACHING SERVICE COMMISSION NEWSLETTER



#### *Inside* THIS ISSUE

- TSC welcomes new CEO
- Promotions - Curriculum Officers (Secondary)
- Promotions - Head of Department (Secondary)
- TSC'S Appearance at the JSC
- Completion of reconciliation of secondary school establishments in Tobago
- National Schools Code of Conduct
- Virtual Promotion Ceremony
- Quarterly achievements of the TSC for the period APRIL – JUNE, 2022

Greetings from the Teaching Service Commission!

As we come to the end of the academic year 2021-2022, the Commission wishes to extend its continued support to you teachers and administrators as you face the many challenges of the transition back to school. We are aware of the excellent job many of you are doing in assisting your students back into the physical classroom. Thank you for this work!

#### "Fitting in the Pieces"

Important news from the Commission includes the appointment of Dr. Peter Smith as the new Chief Education Officer. We are also happy to present the names of the first round of Heads of Department, an important insertion of middle management leadership in our secondary schools. This exercise was completed with the full support of the Ministry of Education. We trust that these newly appointed academic leaders in their various subject areas will, in the new academic year, instill a love for teaching and learning among teachers and pupils in order to restore the highest standards of education in Trinidad and Tobago. Let's conquer the effects of the pandemic together!

Invitations will be sent via email to successful appointees for the Virtual Promotion Ceremony.

#### "Fitting in the Pieces"



#### *Editorial Team:*

Ms. Leah Lewis  
Mr. Inshan Mohamed  
Mrs. Elizabeth Crouch  
Dr. Martha Des Vignes

*Mrs. Elizabeth Crouch*  
CHAIRMAN  
TEACHING SERVICE COMMISSION

## TSC WELCOMES THE NEW CHIEF EDUCATION OFFICER

By Chairman Mrs. Elizabeth Crouch



From Left: Mr. Corey Harrison (Director of Personnel Administration), Mrs. Elizabeth Crouch (Chairman of the Teaching Service Commission), Dr. Peter Smith (Chief Education Officer), Mr. Kurt Meyer (Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education)

The Teaching Service Commission appointed Dr. Peter Smith as Chief Education Officer, Ministry of Education at a short ceremony at the Commission on Monday 11th April 2022. Dr. Smith was warmly congratulated by the Chairman of the Teaching Service Commission, Mrs. Elizabeth Crouch; Mr. Kurt Meyer, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education, Director of Personnel Administration Mr. Corey Harrison; Deputy Director, Mr. Martel Waldron; and the Executive Director of Human Resource Management, Mrs. Mohammed - Basdaye. Commissioners Dr. Olabisi Kuboni, Mr. Inshan Mohamed and Mrs. Claire Brathwaite Alexander who were present virtually also extended their congratulations to the new CEO. Dr. Smith indicated his complete commitment to his new position and to the contribution that he will make to the education sector in the coming years.

## PROMOTIONS - CURRICULUM OFFICERS (SECONDARY)

Graphics by Ms. Leah Lewis

It is with a sense of accomplishment that the Teaching Service Commission presents newly promoted Curriculum Officers and the first round of officers who have been promoted as Head of Department (Secondary). After screening more than 830 candidates and interviewing hundreds of officers, the Commission was able to produce an Order of Merit list from which officers were selected for promotion. Collaboration with the Ministry of Education proved to be very fruitful and productive. Congratulations to our newly promoted officers!



## PROMOTION - HEADS OF DEPARTMENT (SECONDARY)

Graphics by Ms. Leah Lewis

### Our New Academic Leaders

#### English/Language Arts

Ms. Shereeza Ali - Carapichaima West Secondary School  
 Ms. Michelle Ali - ASJA Boys' College, San Fernando  
 Mr. Tariq Ali Baksh - El Dorado West Secondary School  
 Mr. Hassan Basarally - Williamsville Secondary School  
 Ms. Catherine Boodhoo - Tabaquite Secondary School  
 Ms. Sharon Carlton - Carapichaima East Secondary School  
 Ms. Sunita Colai - Arima North Secondary School  
 Ms. Kiza Felix-Roberts - Fyzabad Anglican Secondary School  
 Ms. Lisa George-Wallace - Barataria North Secondary School  
 Ms. Camille Hong Ping - St. Augustine Secondary School  
 Ms. Carol Jaglal - Barrackpore West Secondary School  
 Ms. Michelle Joseph-Jarvis - Diego Martin Central Secondary School  
 Ms. Gail Koo - St. Joseph's Convent, Port of Spain  
 Ms. Esther Kowlessar - Girod - East Mucurapo Secondary School  
 Ms. Nina Lake - Holy Faith Convent, Penal  
 Ms. Rebekah Maharaj - Moruga Secondary School  
 Mrs. Raziah Mohammed-Pedro - Gasparillo Secondary School  
 Ms. Navita Nandlal - Saraswati Girls' Hindu College  
 Ms. Donna Niles-Marcelle - South East Port of Spain Secondary School  
 Ms. Asha Piggott - Mt. Hope Secondary School  
 Ms. Gail Ragoonanan - Five Rivers Secondary School  
 Ms. Shakuntala Ragoonanan - Malick Secondary School  
 Ms. Carol Ramkissoon - Fyzabad Secondary School  
 Ms. Vanda Ramkissoon - Shiva Boys' Hindu College  
 Ms. Candice Sinanan - Naparima College  
 Ms. Krystal Sookram - Barataria South Secondary School  
 Ms. Lisa Young-Delves - Cedros Secondary School

#### Home Economics

Ms. Faye D'Heureux -Calix- Arima Central Secondary School  
 Ms. Luann Taylor-Charles - St. Augustine Secondary School  
 Ms. Michelle Branche - Carapichaima East Secondary

### Mathematics & Computer Science

Ms. Jan Archie - Tableland Secondary School  
 Ms. Indira Bajnath - Gasparillo Secondary School  
 Ms. Marina Boodhoo-Matthews - Coryal Secondary School  
 Mr. Ashram Boodram - St. Joseph's Secondary School  
 Ms. Joanna Collins - Young- Palo Seco Secondary School  
 Ms. Melissa Gajadhar - Carapichaima West Secondary  
 Mr. Imran Hoosaney - El Dorado East Secondary School  
 Ms. Melissa Lutchmansingh - Couva West Secondary School  
 Ms. Kalindi Maharaj - Lakshmi Girls' Hindu College  
 Mr. Hameez Mohammed - Pleasantville Secondary School  
 Ms. Koreen Mohammed - Marabella North Secondary School  
 Ms. Salma Mohamed - ASJA Girls' College, Charlieville  
 Mr. Anderson Nanan - Princes Town West Secondary School  
 Ms. Vanessa Perez - Arima North Secondary School  
 Ms. Mela Persad-Lulkool - Holy Faith Convent, Couva  
 Ms. Gemma Ramdial - Carapichaima East Secondary School  
 Ms. Claudia Ramnath - Williamsville Secondary School  
 Ms. Sateesha Ramsawak - Marabella South Secondary School  
 Ms. Hilary Roberts - Toco Secondary School  
 Ms. Sandie Subero - Queen's Royal College

### Modern Languages

Ms. Jewel Alexander - Holy Faith Convent, Penal  
 Ms. Colette Browne - Weekes - St. Joseph's Convent, St. Joseph  
 Ms. Cathy-Ann Francis - Diego Martin Central Secondary School  
 Ms. Dawn Francis - Bishop Anstey High School  
 Ms. Phebe Granville - Woodbrook Secondary School  
 Ms. Keiba John - Holy Faith Convent, Couva  
 Ms. Shari Julien - North Eastern College  
 Ms. Faria Khan - ASJA Girls' College, San Fernando  
 Ms. Kizzy King-Chapman - Bon Air Secondary School  
 Ms. Donnella McConney - Andall- Valencia Secondary School  
 Ms. Khadine Nunes - Couva East Secondary School  
 Ms. Aneisha Aruna Ramjit - Lakshmi Girls' Hindu College  
 Ms. Jennifer Seemungal - Queen's Royal College  
 Ms. Secma Tewari - Aranguez Secondary School

**Technical and  
Technology  
Education**

Ms. Tracy Baptiste - Barrackpore West Secondary School  
 Ms. Gail Daniel - Arima North Secondary School  
 Mr. Alistar Gonzales - Sangre Grande Secondary School  
 Mr. Ashmead Mohammed - Gasparillo Secondary School  
 Mr. Brent Pedro - St. Augustine Secondary School  
 Mr. Charan Rampersad - Mayaro Secondary School  
 Mr. Leon Roopnarine - San Fernando East Secondary School  
 Mr. Ryan Anand Sookram - Couva West Secondary School  
 Mr. Collins Wason Jr - Carapichaima East Secondary School

**Visual and  
Performing Arts**

Ms. Akisha Audain - Chaguanas South Secondary  
 Ms. Cheryl Davis - Cunupia Secondary School  
 Ms. Johanna Fullerton - Auld - St. Joseph's Secondary School  
 Ms. Lavonne Isaac - Bhole - St. Francois Girls' College  
 Ms. Joy-Ann Marisha Moseley - El Dorado West Secondary School  
 Mr. Damion Phillip - Tranquillity Secondary School  
 Mr. Adiel Samuel Mahajan - Princes Town West Secondary  
 Ms. Tamara Martin - Bishop Anstey High School

**Business**

Ms. Karla Bryan - Queen's Royal College  
 Ms. Maxine Edwards-Senhouse - Malick Secondary School  
 Ms. Trudy Harripaul - Mayaro Secondary School  
 Mr. Janak Koonj-Beharry - North Eastern College  
 Ms. Nalini Maharaj - Tunapuna Secondary School  
 Mr. Joel Rampersad - Tableland Secondary School  
 Ms. Mala Ramsaran - Vessigny Secondary School  
 Mr. Joel Rattan - Siparia West Secondary School  
 Ms. Savitree Singh - Toco Secondary School

## Science

Mrs. Nicole Nadia Abdul - Cunupia Secondary School  
 Ms. Jennifer Avrielle Alleyne - Couva West Secondary School  
 Mr. Walt Aldhelm Bhawanie - Brazil Secondary School  
 Mr. Hugh Britto - Guaico Secondary School  
 Mr. Kester Kirk Ruthven Coker - Marabella North Secondary School  
 Ms. Joselle Cindy Cowie - Arima Central Secondary School  
 Ms. Jenelle Kerry Dickerson - Five Rivers Secondary School  
 Ms. Rhonda Denise Gellineau - Malabar Secondary School  
 Ms. Shelly-Ann Tricia Joanna Griffith - Holy Faith Convent, Couva  
 Ms. Opal Vanessa Hem-Lee - Carapichaima East Secondary School  
 Mr. Avinash Jackree - Valencia Secondary School  
 Ms. Josanne Trena, Jaymie James Leacock - Carapichaima West Secondary School  
 Mr. Ron Devindra Mahabalsingh - Baratara North Secondary School  
 Ms. Haseena Mohammed - Arima North Secondary School  
 Ms. Rhonda Wendy-Ann Alexander-Nancoo - St. Joseph's Convent, St. Joseph  
 Ms. Kristy Nathalie Phillip - Bishop Anstey High School  
 Ms. Stacy Ogeerally - ASJA Boys' College, San Fernando  
 Ms. Bella Rajkumar - Chaguanas South Secondary School  
 Mr. Ravindra Ramnanan - Siparia East Secondary School  
 Mr. Mitra Ramroopsingh - Aranguez North Secondary School  
 Mr. Yuva Roopchansingh - Vishnu Boys' Hindu College  
 Ms. Stacy-Ann Paula Seetahal - Tranquillity Secondary School  
 Mr. Bob Soogrim - Siparia West Secondary School

## Modern Studies

Ms. Kerry Achong - Cedros Secondary School  
 Ms. Lazina Ali - ASJA Girls' College, San Fernando  
 Ms. Drusilla Balkaran - Barrackpore East Secondary School  
 Mr. David Collymore - Valencia Secondary School  
 Ms. Roquel George - Malabar Secondary School  
 Ms. Kaisha Greene - St. Joseph's Secondary School  
 Ms. Lindy Ann Hainsley - Russell Latapy Secondary School  
 Ms. Anika Judette Harris - Bon Air Secondary School  
 Ms. Cyma Mahadeo-Seekumar - North Eastern College  
 Ms. Nalini Nagassar - Coryal Secondary School  
 Ms. Natakki Prosper - South East Port of Spain Secondary School  
 Ms. Patricia Scott-Moren - Mayaro Secondary School  
 Ms. Shelley Winter-Roach-Parris - Holy Name Convent, Port of Spain  
 Ms. Curlette Wyllie - Guaico Secondary School



## TEACHING SERVICE COMMISSION'S APPEARANCE AT THE JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE

By Commissioner Dr. Martha Des Vignes



On April 12, 2022, the Teaching Service Commission (TSC) appeared at the 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Joint Select Committee on Local Authorities, Service Commission & Statutory Authorities (including the THA). The TSC attended along with representatives from the Office of the Director of Personnel Administration, the Ministry of Education and Trinidad and the Tobago Unified Teachers Association. The meeting of the Joint Select Committee (the Committee) was chaired by Dr. Varma Deyalsingh.

The TSC was represented by Mrs. Elizabeth Crouch, the Chairman of the TSC and Commissioners Mr. Inshan Mohammed and Mrs. Claire Brathwaite-Alexander. The TSC shared that some of the major goals it achieved included the filling of the office of Chief Education Officer and the filling of the offices of Heads of Department (Secondary). These goals were achieved through the use of the Virtual Interview Platform with the appointment of the Chief Education Officer being accomplished through a very robust assessment centred exercise.

In relation to the appointment of Heads of Department (Secondary), Mrs. Crouch underscored the significance of appointing these academic heads who are responsible for ensuring that teams of teachers are able to effectively deliver curriculum both during and after the pandemic.

The Committee was further informed that the TSC was building on the foundation of the Virtual Interview Platform to conduct interviews for the posts of Principals, Vice Principals, School Supervisors, Curriculum Officers, Deans and Guidance Officers in 2022. This process is underway with officers currently going through a meticulous screening procedure.

Commissioner Brathwaite-Alexander shared about the stakeholder meetings held by the TSC on its two-day visit to Tobago on January 25 and 26, 2022 indicating that the critical issue during this stakeholder engagement was to improve communication with stakeholders. The TSC also wanted to obtain an appreciation of the particular issues and unique stipulations in Tobago requiring the attention of TSC and to address the backlog of appointments in leadership positions and general appointments. She indicated that the outcomes and deliverables which arose from those meetings included improved communication with meetings between stakeholders and the TSC now being conducted frequently on the Microsoft Teams Virtual Platform.

The Committee was also informed that there was now an improved level of collaboration and communication which have worked to facilitate a substantial clearing up of the backlog of appointments. It has also led to the reconciliation of the establishment of the secondary schools in Tobago and the rationalising of several of the issues.

During the meeting with the Committee, the following issues were also raised:

- The backlog of teacher applications and the TSC no longer accepting unsolicited applications. The Committee was informed that this practice aligns with that of the rest of the Public Service where applications are received only for advertised positions.
- The subject areas in which there is a glut of applications; Biology, Physics, Chemistry and Social Studies were some subjects identified.
- The case management of disciplinary matters.
- The number of tribunals including those dealing with the sexual abuse of students.
- Funding for interview panels.
- The importance of special reports for teachers and the role these reports play when conducting interviews for filling new positions.
- The role of succession planning in denominational schools. Commissioner Mohammed shared about the manner in which the ethos of these schools was maintained. A special appeal was made by the Chairman Crouch for the review of the portion of the Education Act governing the Local School Boards.

In concluding, the TSC indicated that it is in discussion with the Ministry of Education on matters related to the digitization of their shared operations. It is also dedicated to reaching the average teacher through its quarterly electronic newsletter. This electronic newsletter is formatted in such a way so that it is easily accessible and can be read on a smartphone. It was emphasised that the TSC remains goal-oriented and committed to achieving its remaining goals. Chairman Crouch assured the Committee that the TSC continues to work for the benefit of teachers and children post pandemic. Dr. Deyalsingh commended the TSC for its work.

Please see the link below for the live stream of the 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Joint Select Committee on Local Authorities, Service Commission & Statutory Authorities (including the THA).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q5A9CkMuqmU>



## COMPLETION OF RECONCILIATION OF SECONDARY ESTABLISHMENTS IN TOBAGO

By Commissioner Mrs. Claire Brathwaite - Alexander



The Teaching Service Commission has consistently affirmed its commitment to meaningful stakeholder engagement, and this commitment was one of the stated objectives of the Commissions' trip to Tobago in January of 2022. The consultation with key stakeholders in Tobago is already bearing fruit as is obvious in the completion of a significant element of the HR management of Tobago's teachers. The Commission is pleased to announce the completion of the reconciliation of the establishment for all secondary schools in Tobago.

The Division of Education, Research and Technology (DERT) of the Tobago House of Assembly had previously identified the need for clarification of the establishment for schools as an important step in overcoming its HR challenges. As a result, a Task Force was created to update the establishment for each school in Tobago with a view to facilitating the filling of vacancies in a more timely manner. During the January consultations, the Division cited reconciliation of the establishments provided by the Task Force as critical to the completion of the process. The Service Commission's Department (SCD) and the Division collaborated over the next succeeding to carry out this task.

The importance of the reconciliation cannot be overemphasized. A clearly defined establishment for each school is closely aligned to all HR functions. Timely processing of these functions (such as identification of vacancies, transfers, and appointments) is hampered if records at the SCD and the Division are not the same. This problem and the attendant time-consuming to-ing and fro-ing to correct the differences, have now been eliminated and with regular updates, there should be no recurrence of this situation.

Of even greater significance than the actual completion of this task, is the associated benefits of improved communication between the two units. Staff members have affirmed the excellent working relationship established through meetings using the Teams platform. The initial meeting in January was a major catalyst for dialogue and has facilitated a deeper understanding of the challenges which each unit faces.

The Commission believes that despite the many challenges of the last two years, the digital option has transformed the processes of the administration of education and provided positive change amidst what seemed like unsurmountable burdens. Team development, mutual support, and effective collaboration have been the outcome and our teachers will certainly be the beneficiaries of these developments.

## MAXIMISING THE EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE THROUGH ETHICAL GROWTH: THE NATIONAL SCHOOLS CODE OF CONDUCT

By Commissioner Mr. Inshan Mohamed



In reflecting on the ideals of the educational process and the teaching-learning experience, it is not an overstatement to say that educators at all levels in the teaching and learning process, play a crucial role in guiding students to develop attitudes that would put them on the path to becoming patriotic, ethical and productive citizens. There is no doubt that schools are integrally connected to the society and are themselves a microcosm of the communities they operate in, through the interface between the education process and the wider community. How many times as educators have we heard remarks by students who want to emulate Miss or Sir, wanting to dress like their teachers, admiring the thoughtfulness and dedication of their teachers. How many times have they noted the little gestures of respect and caring that provide them with a feeling of safety, trust and feeling valued as young adolescents.

Students in the classroom will always form perceptions and evaluate the educational and social interactions, conduct and attitudes displayed towards them. In a classroom, educators have the opportunity to mould young minds and their learning experiences can bring about attitudinal changes required for realising our national developmental goals. Educators must therefore have a deep awareness of this influential interface and how their behaviours, attitudes and interactions with students and colleagues play a key role in the educational experience at their schools. This cherished relationship between educators and students allows for innovative pedagogical transformations and allows schools the opportunity to produce young persons who can achieve academic success, meaningfully manage their learning and become entrepreneurial and disciplined citizens.

Developing the ethos of a disciplined, and intellectually stimulating school environment where teachers and students look forward, to coming daily, requires more than pedagogy and intellectual stimuli. It also requires an awareness, adherence and enforcement of the operational guidelines and professional codes of conduct required for fostering educational integrity in the system. As educators, we are all aware that there is an existing National School Code of Conduct, developed by the Ministry of Education which outlines in detail, the standards of behaviour expected, to effectively build and strengthen core competencies and behaviours for creating the ethos we desire at our schools.

“

“A teacher affects all eternity, you never know where his influence stops” – Henry Adams.

”

You are invited to click on the link below to acquaint yourselves with the contents of the National School Code of Conduct. <https://www.moe.gov.tz/national-schools-code-of-conduct/>

This Code establishes the expected standards of behaviour for meaningful learning to occur in the creation of a holistic school environment. Evaluation of our attitudes and work ethic in our confidential staff reports is linked closely to the Code. As educators we must become familiar and have an awareness of these professional guidelines. Deliberate non-adherence or non-familiarity with the National School Code of Conduct, should never be used as an excuse for not developing successful emotional intelligence and ethical fitness in carrying out routine duties.

In achieving our educational ideals, we must make a genuine effort to familiarize ourselves with the contents of the Code to allow for critical self-reflection to help us improve on unreflective ways of doing things and unimaginative school practices, so that we can improve the educational experience in our classroom and school.

Non-familiarity or non-adherence to the codes certainly has consequences when infractions occur and these breaches trigger a rigid disciplinary process. Based on the nature and seriousness of the acts of misconduct or indiscipline, implications at various stages of the discipline process can range from the imposition of available penalties (reduction in rank, reduction in remuneration, deferment of increment, stoppage of increment, imposition of a fine and reprimand) to full dismissal. A subsequent article will go into more detail on the establishment of disciplinary tribunals, the right of appeal and the related processes involved in the imposition of these available penalties.

"Most of us end up with no more than five or six people who remember us. Teachers have thousands of people who remember them for the rest of their lives". Andy Rooney

As educators, we are sometimes faced with ethical decision making situations inside our schools, for example, do we keep disruptive students inside our classroom given the difficulties this poses for the learning experience of other disciplined students simply because everyone has a right to learn and receive an education? Do we simply initiate the discipline process at our school through our Deans of discipline for such disruptions, or do we first try to implement effective classroom management and control? What would we do if we are faced with the non-submission of School Based Assessments (SBAs) by students who outrightly refuse to submit their assignments, notwithstanding all our efforts to have them completed to meet our statutory deadlines for submission of marks to CXC? Do we register students to sit regional exams if those students have not been attending classes regularly throughout the academic year?

If as a Head of Department, we have a teacher centred pedagogy which is primarily exam-oriented and where the passion for learning is suppressed and replaced by the need for higher grades. do we create a genuine love for some subjects or a distaste for those subjects because of our heavy focus on passing an exam rather than promoting an attitude of lifelong learning in the academic life of students? As an Administrator, would we condone habitual irregularity and unpunctuality among our teaching staff which can leave students with lessons untaught or an incomplete syllabus; and still give them a *satisfactory with reservations* comment on their staff reports? How responsive should we be to allegations of serious misconduct as it relates to- sexual grooming, abuse of students or colleagues and

any other such acts of misconduct which clearly violates the National Schools Code of Conduct? If these questions generate deep, logical thought or an assessment on what decisions should be made when faced with these situations, then we cannot avoid dealing with ethical issues and the standards of behaviour and attitudes expected of us.

In the process of making schools educationally inviting places to be, we cannot avoid focusing on ethical ways to work if we are to fulfil our potential and passion as educators and administrators. Seeing the National School Code of Conduct as an ethical terms of reference in the educational process is crucial so that students and colleagues are able to find fulfilment in the educational experience as well as develop patterns of good behaviour which perpetuate sound judgement in life situations outside of the school environment, thereby creating a holistic learning experience.

Effective teaching and learning may become more meaningful and fulfilling when we infuse thoughtful ethical practices from the Code of Conduct into our pedagogy and we find imaginative and ethical ways to maximise our potential. Educational leadership at all levels must allow students to meaningfully understand the curriculum and better their individual and social experiences in the classroom. Undoubtedly the National School Code of Conduct is a guiding document which forms part of a comprehensive framework for realising that objective.

Educators must therefore have a deep awareness of the Code and how they influence their professional conduct during their interactions with students and colleagues. There would certainly be times when faced with systemic challenges, that we may become frustrated and blame our school administrators, students, colleagues or the system for why things are not working harmoniously. This can have an impact on how we engage with students, colleagues, parents and other stakeholders. When faced with this we have to do some critical self-reflection to rediscover ways to invite educational fulfilment for ourselves. We have to reflect on our role in creating an inviting and balanced learning environment and not think of our school as a place that only offers a curriculum.

Educational ideals do matter and as educators we must have a willingness to pursue ethical growth, to allow a greater appreciation for all of the interactions which go into developing the educational character and maximising the educational experience. The educational philosopher Professor Howard Gardner, suggested many ways to think more deeply about bettering educational virtues, valuing knowledge and knowing values when he said,

*"Education must continue to confront truth (falsity), beauty (ugliness), and goodness (evil), in full awareness of the problematic facets of these categories and the disagreements across cultures and subcultures. These concerns may be ancient, but they must be perennially revisited and refashioned. And the academic disciplines remain the best way to pursue this mission. (Gardner, 1999:35)*

#### References

- Gardner, H. (1999) *The Disciplined Mind: What All Students Should Understand*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Ministry of Education, National School Code of Conduct (2018, May) <https://www.moe.gov.tz/national-schools-code-of-conduct/>

## FAST FACTS QUARTERLY STATISTICS

**QUARTERLY ACHIEVEMENTS  
OF THE TSC FOR THE PERIOD  
APRIL 1st - JUNE 30th,  
2022**

<b>DISCIPLINARY MATTERS</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>REPRESENTATIONS</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>TRANSFERS</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS</b>	<b>913</b>
<b>APPOINTMENTS</b>	<b>113</b>
<b>ACTING APPOINTMENTS</b>	<b>463</b>
<b>CONFIRMATIONS</b>	<b>188</b>
<b>PROMOTIONS</b>	<b>162</b>
<b>RETIREMENTS</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>MEDICAL BOARD REPORTS</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>RELEASES</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>CANCELLATION OF TEMPORARY APPOINTMENT</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>CANCELLATION OF APPOINTMENT</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>CANCELLATION OF TRANSFER</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>CANCELLATION ACTING OF APPOINTMENT</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>APPOINTMENT ON SECONDMENT</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>AMENDMENT OF APPOINTMENT ON SECONDMENT</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>AMENDMENT OF TRANSFER</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>AMENDMENT OF PROMOTION</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>AMENDMENT OF ACTING APPOINTMENT</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>AMENDMENT OF APPOINTMENT</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>AMENDMENT OF CONFIRMATION</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>AMENDMENT OF TEMPORARY APPOINTMENT</b>	<b>4</b>

**A PUBLICATION OF THE TEACHING SERVICE COMMISSION (TSC)**

52-58 WOODFORD STREET, NEWTOWN, PORT OF SPAIN, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO.  
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Volume 2, Issue III  
 SEPTEMBER  
 2022



# TSC ONLINE

## TEACHING SERVICE COMMISSION NEWSLETTER



### Inside

### THIS ISSUE

- Chairman's Remarks
- Promoted Heads of Department
- Additional Promotions
- Feature – Exhortation to New Heads of Department
- Every School needs its Academic Leaders - A Special Appeal
- Guest Essay - Challenges of Returning to the Post-Pandemic Primary Classroom.
- Quarterly achievements of the TSC for the period JULY – SEPTEMBER, 2022

Greetings from the Teaching Service Commission!

Welcome back to the new academic year 2022 -2023 which we trust will be a fulfilling and productive one. We know that teachers and administrators are happy to be back fully to physical school and that the children and their parents are equally happy that the worst of the pandemic is behind us. We are pleased to continue to present officers appointed to the office of Head of Department (Secondary). Congratulations to these officers!

An "Exhortation" by Commissioner Claire Brathwaite Alexander to all our newly appointed Heads of Department is included in this issue.

At the same time, the Commission wishes to place on record, its deep concern that there are still vacant offices of Head of Department to be filled. It seems apparent that there is a lack of interest in certain schools across Trinidad.

#### Pushing Forward

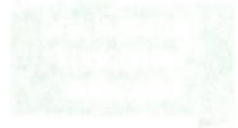
Nonetheless in the coming months, the Commission will be continuing its work of selecting administrators for the offices of Principal and Vice Principal (Primary and Secondary) as well as the office of Dean (Secondary). Further, now that the disruptions of the past two years have abated, the work of appointments, confirmations and transfers will continue. We will also be placing a strong emphasis on primary schools in light of the challenges being experienced in this sector. We continue to encourage all teachers to give of their best as together we restore what was lost over the past two years.

### Pushing Forward!



#### Editorial Team:

Ms. Leah Lewis  
 Mr. Inshan Mahamed  
 Mrs. Elizabeth Crouch  
 Dr. Martha Des Vignes



Mrs. Elizabeth Crouch  
 Chairman

## PROMOTED HEADS OF DEPARTMENT

Graphics by Ms. Leah Lewis

In the June issue of TSC ONLINE, the Commission presented the first listing of the newly appointed Heads of Department (Secondary). The following is another list of officers who are also promoted as Heads of Department (Secondary). We wish to thank the Ministry of Education and officers of the Ministry of Education including School Supervisors, Curriculum Officers and Principals for making this possible. Collaboration with the Ministry of Education proved to be very fruitful and productive. Congratulations to these academic leaders who will undoubtedly make a difference to the quality of curriculum delivery in the nation's schools.

### English/Language Arts

Ms. Leekeesha Duncan - Russell Latapy Secondary School  
 Mrs. Jillian George-Douglas - Holy Name Convent, Port of Spain  
 Ms. Alicia Natasha James - St. Mary's College  
 Ms. Anna La Roche-Samaroo - Success Laventille Secondary School  
 Mrs. Raziah Mohammed-Pedro- ASJA Girls' College, San Fernando  
 Ms. Vanda Ramkissoon- Shiva Boys' Hindu College

### Home Economics

Ms. Clara De La Rosa-Blackman- Belmont Secondary School  
 Ms. Nichole Chase - Mucurapo West Secondary School  
 Ms. Karen Imamshah- Marabella North Secondary School  
 Ms. Sharon Persad- Siparia East Secondary School

### Technical and Technology Education

Ms. Marsha Antoine-Fraser - Fyzabad Secondary School  
 Mr. Davindra Ramai - Point Fortin East Secondary School  
 Mr. Jagdish Roopnarine - Barrackpore West Secondary School

## PROMOTED HEADS OF DEPARTMENT

### Mathematics & Computer Science

Mr. Ravi Bachoo- Moruga Secondary School  
 Ms. Julie Dookie-Ragoo- Vessigny Secondary School  
 Ms. Meshal Maharaj-Nanan- Princes Town East Secondary School  
 Ms. Koreen Mohammed- Naparima Boys' College  
 Mr. Dale Ramlochan - Barrackpore West Secondary School  
 Ms. Nadia Ramlal-Kumarsingh - San Juan North Secondary School  
 Ms. Michelle Scott-Johnson- Malabar Secondary School  
 Ms. Reva Singh-Maraj - Vishnu Boys' Hindu College  
 Ms. Alice Thomas-Martin- Fyzabad Secondary School

### Visual and Performing Arts

Mr. Prior Eversley Joseph- Union/Claxton Bay Secondary School  
 Ms. Radheka Kissonlal- Siparia West Secondary School  
 Ms. Michelle Tappin-Baboolal - Five Rivers Secondary School

### Modern Languages

Mrs. Karen Anderson-Rouse - St. Mary's College  
 Ms. Keisha Mc Eachnie - Fatima College  
 Ms. Reah Warner-Mayers - Marabella North Secondary School

### Science

Ms. Avis Clairenee Sharon Benjamin - Pleasantville Secondary School  
 Mrs. Lystra Nisa Bellarsario - Fyzabad Secondary School  
 Mr. Denny Budhooram - Mucurapo West Secondary School  
 Mr. Kevin Antonio Campbell - North Eastern College  
 Mr. Kester Kirk Ruthven Coker - Siparia East Secondary School  
 Mr. Martin Edmund - Ste. Madeline Secondary School  
 Ms. Raquel Jeannette Kalloo - St. Augustine Secondary School  
 Mrs. Pamela Lisa Lloyd - Cowen Hamilton Secondary School  
 Mr. Raj Mahabir - Gasparillo Secondary School  
 Mr. Selvon Miguel - San Juan South Secondary School  
 Mrs. Nadira Nandlal - San Fernando Central Secondary School  
 Mrs. Stacey Sankar-Sampson-Morales - St. Mary's College  
 Mr. Siva Singh - Point Fortin East Secondary School  
 Mrs. Linda Sudama-Sookoo - Rio Claro West Secondary School

## PROMOTED HEADS OF DEPARTMENT

### Business

Ms. Colleen Barbaste-Jackson- Success Laventille Secondary School  
 Ms. Dyann Barras- Point Fortin East Secondary School  
 Mr. Anslem Charles - Couva West Secondary School  
 Ms. Diane Dassrath - San Fernando Central Secondary School  
 Mr. Kirk Ferguson - Arima North Secondary School  
 Mrs. Lisa Garcia Reid - Polytechnic Sixth Form Government  
 Ms. Patricia Granderson - Marabella North Secondary School  
 Ms. Neesha Hosein - Preysal Secondary School  
 Ms. Gemmi Jahoor - Waterloo Secondary School  
 Ms. Jo-Anne James-Wellington - St. Joseph's Convent, Port of Spain  
 Mr. Wendell Long - Holy Faith Convent, Couva  
 Mr. Richie Maharaj - Brazil Secondary School  
 Ms. Shaneela Mahelal - San Juan South Secondary School  
 Ms. Georgette Medford - Union Claxton Bay Secondary School  
 Ms. Zairah Mohammed- Khan - East Mucurapo Secondary School  
 Mr. Kirk Philip- Holy Faith Convent, Penal  
 Ms. Rachael Raghoo-Bitu - Bishop Anstey High School  
 Ms. Avita Ramlochan - Barrackpore West Secondary School  
 Ms. Maxine Ribeiro - El Dorado East Secondary School  
 Ms. Ingrid Woon Sam - Providence Girls' Secondary School  
 Ms. Vidya Lochan - Tabaquite Secondary School

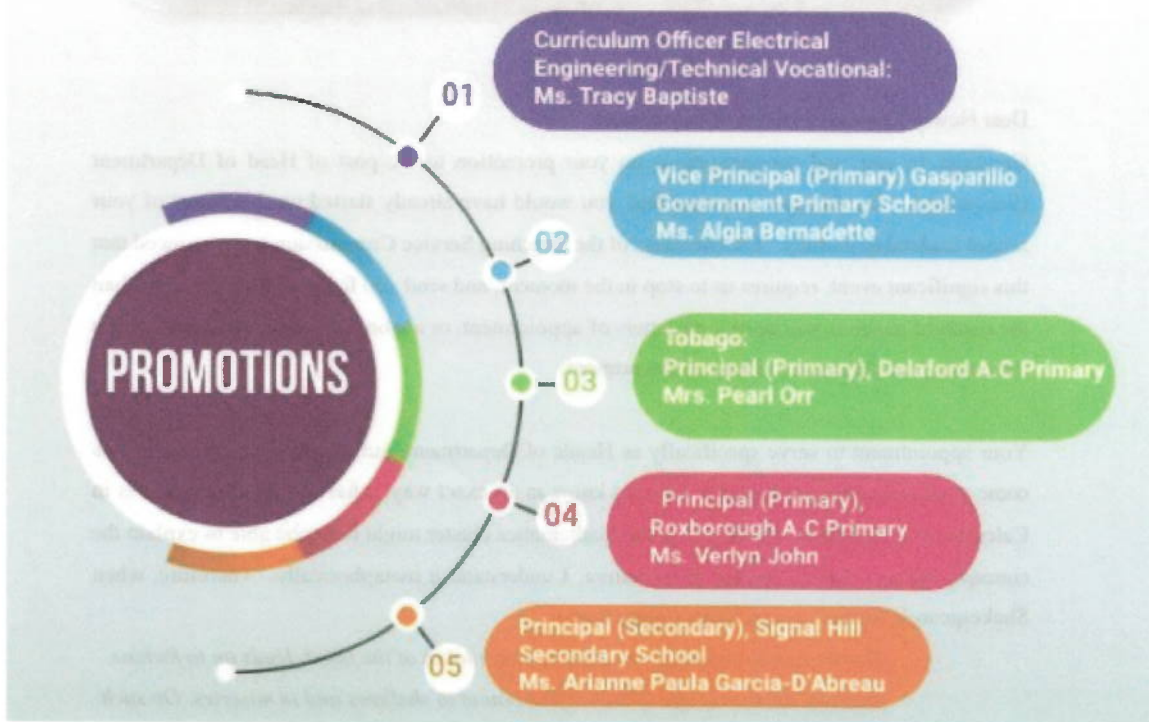
### Modern Studies

Ms. Chantel Bain - Couva East Secondary School  
 Ms. Jamie Birbal - Barrackpore West Secondary School  
 Mr. Benignus Bitu - Aranguez North Secondary School  
 Ms. Michele Cole - Princess Town East Secondary School  
 Ms. Fayola Clarke - El Dorado East Secondary School  
 Ms. Patricia Claxton - Cunupia Secondary School  
 Mrs. Dameia Dyett - Providence Girls' Catholic School  
 Ms. Soter Giddings - Chaguanas South Secondary School  
 Mrs. Tamika Griffith-Alexander - Fyzabad Anglican Secondary School  
 Ms. Nicole Laptiste-George - St. Stephen's College  
 Ms. Tara Maharaj - Rio Claro East Secondary School  
 Mr. Jason Manswell - Tableland Secondary School  
 Mrs. Meera Moniquette - Fatima College  
 Mrs. Leslie-Anne Samuel - Cowen Hamilton Secondary School  
 Ms. Roxann Smith - Palo Seco Secondary School

## ADDITIONAL PROMOTIONS

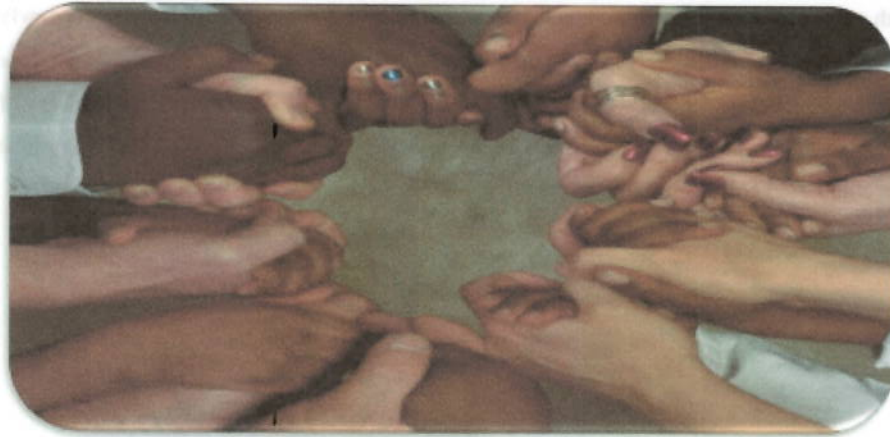
Graphics by Ms. Leah Lewis

It is with a sense of accomplishment that the Teaching Service Commission presents other newly promoted officers. After screening and interviewing many candidates, the Commission was able to produce an Order-of-Merit list from which officers were selected for promotion. Collaboration with the Ministry of Education and the Division of Education Research and Technology proved to be very effective. Congratulations to our newly promoted school leaders!



## EXHORTATION TO NEW HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS

By Commissioner Claire Brathwaite-Alexander



Dear Newly Appointed Heads of Department,

Greetings to you, and congratulations on your promotion to the post of Head of Department (Secondary). By the time you read this, you would have already started on this phase of your school leadership journey. The members of the Teaching Service Commission are convinced that this significant event, requires us to stop in the moment, and send you forth with a little more than the rustle of paper as you open your letters of appointment, or a word of “congratulations” as we announce your elevation to Head of Department.

Your appointment to serve specifically as Heads of Department, but effectively as Leaders, has come at an inflection point. Now I do not know in an exact way, what an inflection point is in Calculus or in Geometry, the Heads in the Mathematics cluster might better be able to explain the concept, but as a former teacher of Literature, I understand it metaphorically. Therefore, when Shakespeare’s Brutus says in Julius Caesar that:

*There is a tide in the affairs of men, which taken at the flood, leads on to fortune.  
Omitted, all the voyage of their life is bound in shallows and in miseries. On such  
a full sea are we now afloat. And we must take the current when it serves or lose  
our ventures*

he (Brutus) was speaking about the need to recognize and seize moments which determine our destiny—success or failure. I consider this time in history to be such a point in our delivery of education. This is a time of flood, a time of rapid change and rampant uncertainty, a time when we either reset or become ineffective. If we do not embrace the current offerings of technology and mixed modalities, if as school leaders we do not intentionally evaluate what we do, and how we “educate” in this “full sea” of undeniable opportunity, if we do not view innovation as a primary element of our current reality, our education system may be set back immeasurably. Success, as Barack Obama states “depends on us, on the choices we make, particularly at certain *inflection points* in history; particularly when big changes are happening, and everything seems up for grabs.” (My emphases)

I wish to highlight that this perspective is precisely how the Teaching Service Commission, and the Service Commissions Department chose to operate despite the restrictions of the COVID 19 pandemic. We revolutionized the established processes of interviews using digital protocols and ensured that over 500 applicants were assessed, ranked, and placed in schools for the beginning of the first year of return to full school in over two years. We recommend this determined openness to change to you, even in what is undoubtedly a difficult season. It is in this context that I want to take the opportunity to focus you on one issue as growing school leaders. I would like to distil the complex facets of what will confront you in your new role into one key question. It is my hope that as you confront this question you will unearth helpful insights as you embark on this journey.



**What is your purpose?** On a purely operational level, this question might be misconstrued to apply to your “job spec”, your role, what you *do* as leaders in your school. It could refer to your focus on curriculum implementation, your insistence on authentic assessment *of learning* and *for learning*, the initiatives you will take to fill learning “gaps” by intentionally redefining *learning*, identifying what facilitates learning and what may be hindering learning among your students and among the staff members of your team. All of these are significant to your success and that of your students and must be emphasized. But what will elevate your success more than anything else is a clear sense of purpose. Conceptually, purpose resides in the realm of the “why.” Why were you selected at such a time as this? What special talents and skills do you bring to the school? How can you transform the world by your contribution in this small corner? All aspects of leadership have to do with influence and impact, and you can have a tremendous impact on your school community. Embrace this potential. As teachers, especially those who influence or lead other teachers, we are not called to serve self. We fulfil our purpose in community. We are called to serve others, to make a difference in the lives of others. Our most important “others” as teachers are our students. Our primary purpose is to unlock the potential within every child.

We are not purveyors of facts or information, but persons who minister to others, who prepare others to live full and meaningful lives through the learning in which we engage them. I believe that your specific purpose will be located somewhere within this sphere, but I urge you as you reflect on your purpose at this time, to consider the dislocation and isolation of the last two years. Most persons are struggling, especially our young people. Leaders must work to develop among teachers, students and even parents a keen sense of belonging.

Some years ago, I encountered one student who lived with foster parents far from his home which was in a remote community. He felt seriously alienated in the environment of his new home. He came to school early every day because he felt happy at school. This student excelled and eventually became a teacher because he was motivated to give to others what school gave to him: a sense of belonging. It is no surprise that that school eventually chose as the theme of its development plan, “*Making School A Place Where People Want to Be.*”

*“Our primary purpose is to unlock the potential within every child.”*



My dear Heads, it is critical that you stay on purpose in the midst of the demands and distractions, the complaints and crises. When you wonder why you took this job, purpose will direct you. If resistance or failure dishearten you at the end of the day, purpose will awaken you ready to persevere the following morning. A word about failure. You will fail, but as a friend of mine frequently says, fail fast. What we did for decades before may not work now. Innovate. Take risks and learn from them. If it does not work, do not be afraid to try something else. You must risk to succeed. Always keep the larger picture of what you want to achieve before you. Work consistently to enable the growth of teachers and students. Work hard to develop departments which are purposeful. Purposeful departments have an unclouded vision of what is desired. They are led by teachers who support administrators and each other but insist on meeting the mark, not missing the mark, so these teachers and their leaders “sharpen the saw” constantly through personal and professional learning.

Children feel valued when teachers show up in the classroom but also show up for them, insisting on meeting their learning needs and holding them to high but achievable standards. You may want to “hit the ground running” but you cannot do everything on your first day, or week, or month. The best leaders recognize that learning and transformation take time and will not sacrifice quality for speed. Planning is critical but your plan must allow for observation if you are in a new school and for data collection and review of the data. Obviously, your plan must be suited to the times in which you lead and the outcomes that you wish to achieve.

I can almost hear naysayers pointing to the weaknesses and inequities in the system. Yes, there are issues that bedevil our education system, and we must confront these, but the strongest element of our education system is our teachers and, equally, the weakest element of our system is our teachers. Teachers make the difference. One writer states that when the “centre cannot hold, anarchy is unloosed.” In the context of our schools currently, you school leaders are that centre. The problems that beset our society cannot be separated from our education system. Most often these problems start in the home but can be mitigated or even healed when teachers serve with integrity and with love. Quite simply, that is your mandate and your superpower.

*“Work hard to develop departments which are purposeful. Purposeful departments have an unclouded vision of what is required.”*



Commissioner Mrs. Claire Brathwaite-Alexander

## EVERY SCHOOL NEEDS ITS ACADEMIC LEADERS

### A SPECIAL APPEAL!

By Chairman Mrs. Elizabeth Crouch



As of the end of September 2022, fifty eight (58) offices of Head of Department (Secondary) which had been advertised and for which the Commission has established an Order-of-Merit List, have not yet been filled. This means that thirty six (36) Secondary schools are impacted since the candidates who are remaining on the Order-of-Merit List have not expressed any interest in being promoted in these schools, notwithstanding being asked by the Commission. This is a cause of grave concern to the Commission. The Commission therefore urges those teachers who are on the Order-of-Merit lists in the various subject clusters to indicate to us their willingness to be promoted to these offices. The Commission looks forward to ensuring that all of the children in the nation's schools are well served by having academic leaders in these key subject areas especially Science, Mathematics, Technology Education and Visual and Performing Arts. We also urge key stakeholders in education to build support for these promotional posts to be filled.

## GUEST ESSAY – CHALLENGES OF RETURNING TO THE POST- PANDEMIC PRIMARY CLASSROOM

By Coreen Kirton B.A.



*Coreen Kirton is a retired teacher with over thirty years experience at both primary and secondary level. From 2013 she served as a monitor for schools from Diego Martin to Blanchisseuse as part of the 'Leading for Literacy Project'. She is an experienced trainer/monitor with both virtual and in person sessions.*

The confusion, frustration and havoc created by the pandemic especially among the less fortunate is indeed cause for concern. Many children returned to school, still dealing with issues of financial strain, violence in the homes, unemployed or underemployed parents and most significantly, death of parent(s) and relatives.

It is against this backdrop that teachers are expected to return to the classroom and continue to deliver. Of particular concern are the widespread gaps in learning achievement that will appear as children are promoted. The recurring idea that extra lessons, all nighters and.... more extra lessons in SEA class will ensure success is largely a myth. It is in the Infant Department that skills needed to prepare for long term academic success must begin. It must be seen and treated as the cornerstone of educational achievement.

The development of early literacy skills is crucial to the transition from learning to read to reading to learn. It is foundational to children's academic success in the future. Children who fall behind in developing reading skills can quickly find themselves struggling to keep up. The role of reading, therefore, cannot be overstated. Infant Departments will now need to focus on language development and should make reading and writing a priority.

Mere recounting of challenges is not enough. Here are a few suggestions for principals and teachers:

- Facilitate clear open lines of communication, free of judgement, between educators and parents
- Create a clean, pleasant and welcoming physical environment
- Promote social and emotional learning
- Encourage parents to engage verbally as much as possible with their children through reading, story-telling, poetry and conversation
- Institute a systematic synthetic phonics programme in the Infant Department.

Many studies show that the most effective way to teach **all** children, including those with dyslexia, to read and write is through systematic synthetic phonics. These studies have demonstrated how an early grounding in synthetic phonics can make it possible for all children to leave primary school better able to access the secondary school curriculum.

For many schools this will require an enormous rethink of language instruction as many teachers, through no fault of their own, are unable to teach struggling children how to read. It is also difficult to convince teachers who have done things a certain way for a long time that a shift is needed. Training will prepare teachers to effectively and confidently deliver systematic, synthetic phonics.

Teacher training in systematic synthetic phonics is important for excellence, as teachers must know the correct methods to teach it. Merely approaching phonics as one of the tools rather than the tool for unlocking the English Alphabetic Code, will only perpetuate the dismal results that were revealed in this year's S.E.A. Principals and Ministry officials, your teachers will need your support to implement and sustain this programme. Here are a few websites where you can peruse information about systematic synthetic phonics: <http://rrf.org.uk/>

<https://www.jollylearning.co.uk/>

<https://thriveedservices.com/>

**QUARTERLY ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE TSC FOR THE PERIOD  
JULY 1st – SEPTEMBER 29th, 2022**

FAST FACTS QUARTERLY STATISTICS	
	TOTAL
DISCIPLINARY MATTERS	12
REPRESENTATIONS	0
TRANSFERS	132
TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS	709
APPOINTMENTS	219
ACTING APPOINTMENTS	289
CONFIRMATIONS	177
PROMOTIONS	116
RETIREMENTS	3

**A PUBLICATION OF THE TEACHING SERVICE COMMISSION (TSC)**  
**52-58 WOODFORD STREET, NEWTOWN, PORT OF SPAIN, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO.**  
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## Appendix IV

Volume 2, Issue IV  
DECEMBER  
2022



## TSC ONLINE TEACHING SERVICE COMMISSION NEWSLETTER 2022 YEAR IN REVIEW



Greetings from the Teaching Service Commission!

### *Inside* THIS ISSUE

- Chairman's Remarks
- Transitions
- Feature Article – Important Career Tips
- 2022 Highlights
- Interviews for Principal Primary (Advertised in 2019)
- TSC statistics for the period January – December, 2022
- Challenges
- Appreciation

As we come to the end of the year 2022, we take this opportunity to wish you a Happy New Year 2023! We look back at the year that has gone past with a sense of gratitude for all that has been accomplished in spite of the many difficulties faced by the Commission and the Department. Further, over the course of the year, the Commission has been both transparent and accountable with its stakeholders as far as was possible, with approaches which included not only engagements both physical and virtual but also through the medium of this newsletter.

Our fourth issue of the TSC ONLINE 2022 captures some of the highlights of the work of the Commission. These 2022 highlights demonstrate the benefits of strong collaboration and a strong work ethic among all of those who have made these achievements possible.

#### *Our best efforts*

For 2023, the Commission will face continuing financial challenges since our budgetary allocation is less than **One Hundred and Twenty Thousand dollars**. Nonetheless, the work will be carried out utilizing the best efforts of the Commission and the Department. Once again, we extend our very best wishes to all teachers and administrators in the education system and we look forward to a bright and productive 2023.



#### *Editorial Team:*

**Commissioners.** Mr. Inshan Mohamed, Mrs. Elizabeth Crouch, Dr. Martha Des Vignes.

**Corporate Communications Department:** Ms. Leah Lewis.

**ICT Department:** Mrs. Tavita Ramsaran.

*Mrs. Elizabeth Crouch*  
CHAIRMAN

## TRANSITIONS



Dr. Olabisi Kuboni - outgoing Commissioner.

At the end of September 2022, the Commission bade a fond farewell to Dr. Olabisi Kuboni. Greatly admired by her colleagues for her fearless and passionate spirit, Dr. Kuboni positively impacted the work of the Commission with her meticulous and insightful approach to issues in education. Her wide ranging contribution is deeply appreciated. We wish her well in her new endeavours.

### WELCOME



Mrs. Vidyawatee Lalla-Ramsammy receiving her instrument of appointment from Her Excellency Paula-Mae Weekes (ORTT), President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

The Commission welcomes Mrs. Vidyawatee Lalla-Ramsammy, a former Principal of the Couva South Government Primary School, in which she served for over fifteen (15) years. She was sworn in on November 17<sup>th</sup> 2022 as a member of the Teaching Service Commission by Her Excellency Paula-Mae Weekes, President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

Mrs. Lalla-Ramsammy is the holder of a Bachelor of Education Degree, (First Class Honours) in Educational Administration and a Certificate in Education from the University of the West Indies.

She has over four (4) decades of working experience in Education and also served as a Local School Board member and educational administrator. She possesses competencies in data driven decision-making in development, implementation and execution of performance-enhancing programmes. Mrs. Lalla-Ramsammy will serve for three (3) years.

## FEATURE ARTICLE

### *Important Career Tips*

By Commissioner Inshan Mohamed



A total of 1715 officers received letters of appointment, 328 officers received letters of promotion and 618 received letters of confirmation for the year 2022.

While this is a very satisfactory achievement for officers, the question arises: what happens to these letters of appointment and confirmation after they are received?

Very often, officers in the teaching service do not secure these very important documents for their future use.

How do we know this? It is a common occurrence that the Service Commissions Department is bombarded with requests for copies of letters of first appointment and letters of confirmation generally when the officer is approaching retirement. Many officers are unaware that these documents are necessary in order to complete retirement protocols. The Commission urges officers to create a **personalized teaching service career file** where documents of this nature are well secured for their future use.

Similarly, many officers may view the exercise of the Annual Staff/Performance Appraisal Report as routine and irrelevant. This impression exists due to the fact that teachers often express surprise that the Commission is awaiting an up-to-date staff/performance appraisal report in order to complete their appointments. However, appointments cannot be completed unless the officer is in possession of an up-to-date staff/performance appraisal report.

This is therefore a document that every member of the Teaching Service should hold as essential to the career progression of a member of the teaching service. This report should be prepared on time and be an accurate reflection of the officer's performance of his or her duties and responsibilities.

**Education Act Part VIII 62- 77 or Code of Conduct** is an important document to which many teachers may fail to pay attention. Consequently, officers are often unaware of the impact that breaches of the Code of Conduct will have on their professional lives.



## PROFESSIONAL LIFE

Teachers against whom allegations of misconduct are made (these allegations may be with respect to irregularity and unpunctuality, a transgression of a physical or sexual nature or a criminal matter) may be uninformed about the disciplinary process which follows from breaches of the Code. Members of the Teaching Service are advised to read and be familiar with all aspects of the Code of Conduct which should also be a part of teacher resource material at every school.

Additionally, the Commission offers the following career advancement tips for all officers:

- √ Cultivate a passion for teaching and learning - this impacts your work ethic.
- √ Develop a checklist and maintain a personal career file with copies of important documents.
  - Teacher Registration Number
  - Letter of first appointment
  - Letter of confirmation
  - Letter of Assessment from the Curriculum Division
  - Follow up with your Supervisor to ensure your annual staff report is completed on time
  - Secure recommendation letters from your Denominational Board where applicable
  - Update your personal file and your IHRIS record with any new bio data including additional educational/professional development certification you have completed
  - Assumption of duty letter where applicable
  - Resumption of duty letter in cases of secondment
  - NIS number
  - BIR number
  - Recent salary slips
  - Annual Tax Returns
  - Other related documents
- √ Explore the value of continual learning.
- √ Acquaint yourself with emerging themes in education.
- √ Develop a pyramid of creative achievements.
- √ Take corrective action to improve your irregularity and unpunctuality record where applicable.
- √ Familiarize yourself with the Education Act and the Code of Conduct.
- √ Be prepared for the opportunity when it comes!

## 2022 HIGHLIGHTS



In its effort to be transparent and accountable, the Commission published a number of Reports for the year 2022. These included:

- The Teaching Service Commission Report on Tobago Consultations January 25th- 26th, 2022.
- Report of the Sensitization Meeting between the Teaching Service Commission and the Association of Denominational Boards, February 23rd, 2022.
- The Teaching Service Annual Report of 2021.
- Report of the Sensitization Meeting between the Teaching Service Commission and the Association of Denominational Boards, October 5th, 2022.

Links to the various reports are available below and on the SCD website.

[Teaching Service Commission Report on Tobago Consultations](#)

[TSC Sensitization Report](#)

[Sensitization meeting between the TSC and the Association of Denominational Boards](#)

## STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

During the course of the year 2022, the Commission succeeded in its goal of having productive engagements with a number of key stakeholders. Each engagement proved to be an opportunity for frank and free dialogue, follow up action, further meetings, and positive outcomes for teachers.

### **TOBAGO CONSULTATIONS WITH THE THA, THE DIVISION OF EDUCATION AND DENOMINATIONAL BOARDS, TOBAGO - JANUARY 25 & 26, 2022.**



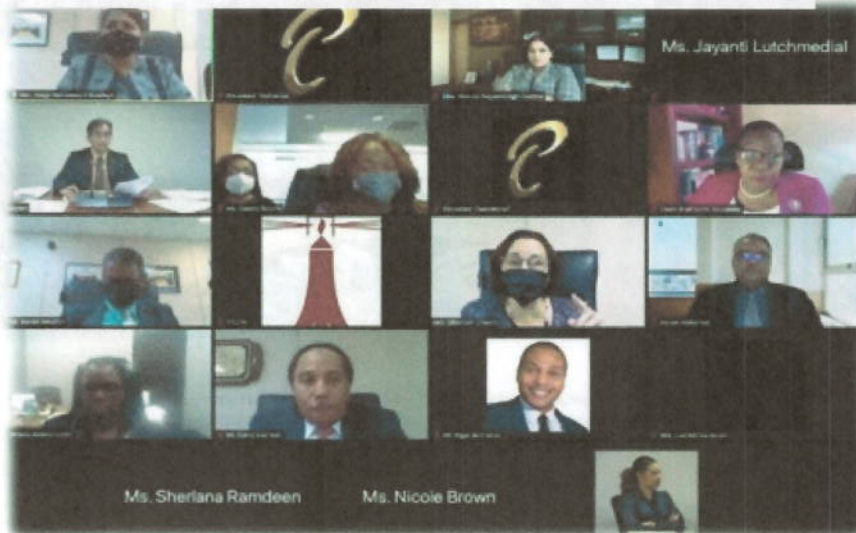
**Inset left to right: Dr. Olabisi Kuboni (Commissioner), Mr. Inshan Mohammed (Commissioner), Mrs. Claire Brathwaite (Commissioner), Mrs. Elizabeth Crouch (TSC Chairman), Dr. Martha Des Vignes (Commissioner), Mr. Corey Harrison (Director of Personnel Administration) and Mr. Martel Waldron (Deputy Director of Personnel Administration).**

**MEETINGS WITH DENOMINATIONAL BOARDS OF TRINIDAD  
FEBRUARY 23 AND OCTOBER 5, 2022**

The Teaching Service Commission hosted two (2) virtual sensitization meetings with Denominational Boards of Trinidad on February 23, 2022 and October 5, 2022.

The Association of Denominational Boards of Education indicates the following membership: Anglican; Anjuman Sunnat-ul-Jamaat Association; Arya Pratinidhi Sabha; Catholic Diocesan; Dominican Sisters; Dominican Fathers; Fundamental Baptist Mission of T&T; Kabir Panth Association; Holy Faith Sisters; Holy Ghost Fathers; London Baptist; Methodist; Miracle Ministries; Moravian; Presbyterian; Sanatan Dharma Maha Sabha; Seventh Day Adventist; Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny; St Barbara's Spiritual Shouter Baptist; Society Working for the Advancement of Human Aspiration; Trinidad Muslim League.

**APPEARANCE BEFORE THE JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE  
OF PARLIAMENT ON APRIL 12, 2022.**



**MEETING WITH THE MEMBERS OF THE NEWLY APPOINTED TTUTA EXECUTIVE- NOVEMBER 16, 2022**



The Teaching Service Commission exchanged greetings and ideas with the newly appointed TTUTA executive on November 16<sup>th</sup> 2022. Inset: Mrs. Claire Brathwaite-Alexander (TSC Commissioner), Mrs. Elizabeth Crouch (TSC Chairman), Mr. Martin Lum Kin (President of TTUTA), Dr. Martha Des Vignes (TSC Commissioner), and other members of the TTUTA Executive team.

**MEETINGS WITH THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION**



The Commission had several engagements with its foremost stakeholder, the Ministry of Education during the year 2022. These included meetings with the Minister of Education, the Honorable Dr. Nyan Gadsby Dolly; the Permanent Secretary, Mrs. Lenor Baptiste Simmons and the Chief Education Officer, Dr. Peter Smith and various teams from the Ministry during which critical issues affecting the education system were discussed. These included digitalization of operations, staffing issues, matters of discipline and the recruitment process at the primary school level.

## THE FILLING OF SENIOR ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

The Commission met its 2022 goal of filling the offices of Chief Education Officer and that of Director of Schools Supervision.

### NEWLY APPOINTED CHIEF EDUCATION OFFICER, DR. PETER SMITH - APRIL 11, 2022.



From left to right: Mr. Corey Harrison (Director of Personnel Administration), Mrs. Elizabeth Crouch (Chairman of the Teaching Service Commission), Dr. Peter Smith (Chief Education Officer), Mr. Kurt Meyer (Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education).

**NEWLY APPOINTED DIRECTOR OF SCHOOLS SUPERVISION, MR. AARON  
RAMRATTAN – OCTOBER 25, 2022**

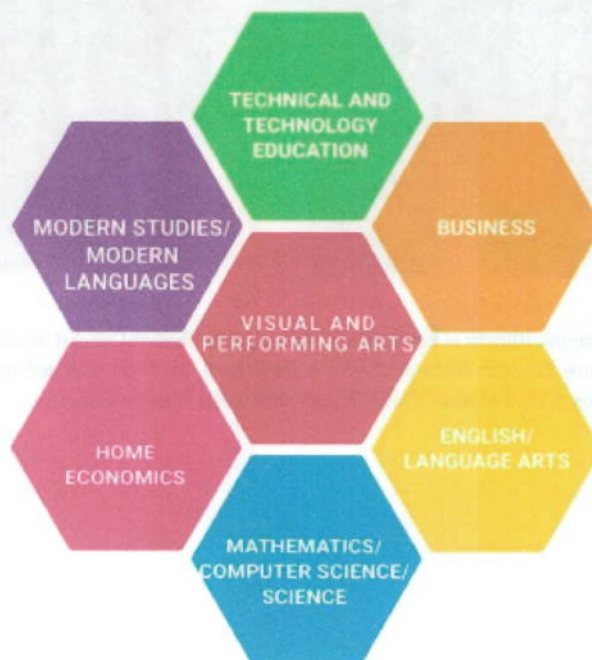


From left to right: Mr. Corey Harrison (Director of Personnel Administration), Mrs. Elizabeth Crouch (Chairman of the Teaching Service Commission), Mr. Aaron Ramrattan (Director of Schools Supervision), Mrs. Lenor Baptiste-Simmons (Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, (Chief Education Officer), Dr. Peter Smith (Chief Education Officer).

## 207 OFFICES OF HEAD OF DEPARTMENT (SECONDARY) FILLED

In time for the start of the new school year 2022-2023, the Commission started the process of filling the office of Head of Department (Secondary) in a wide variety of subject clusters represented in the diagram below. As of December 2022, two hundred and seven (207) academic leaders were promoted into vacancies in Mathematics, Computer Science, Modern Studies, Technical and Technology Education, Modern Languages, Home Economics, English/Language Arts, Business, Science and Visual and Performing Arts. Four (4) Curriculum Officers were also promoted into vacancies in key subject areas. The filling of these offices continues.

The full range of curriculum planning and delivery was therefore assured at secondary schools nationwide particularly with regard to safeguarding student performance in the SBA and IA modules of the CSEC and CAPE examinations.





## INTERVIEWS FOR PRINCIPALS (PRIMARY)

During the month of November 2022, the Commission began the process of interviewing candidates for the office of Principal (Primary). As of December 2022, these interview are almost complete. The Commission expects to begin filling these offices in the first quarter of 2023 for all schools that were advertised.

### CHALLENGES FOR 2022



The work of the Commission throughout the year 2022 has been consistent and thorough. However, the following challenges were evident:

- Financial resources are very small because of a limited budgetary allocation. Indeed, the sum of less than **One Hundred and Twenty Thousand dollars** has made it very challenging for the Commission to effectively fulfill its mandate. As a result the Commission has had to develop strict priorities and creative strategies in order to do its work.
- Each aspect of the work carried out by the small resource base in the Service Commissions Department must be meticulously checked so that every officer in the Teaching Service is fairly and equitably treated. Administrative and legal demands abound.
- Disruptions by COVID-19 continued to affect staff.

## 2022 TSC STATISTICS

	Total
<b>DISCIPLINARY MATTERS</b>	<b>74</b>
<b>TRANSFERS</b>	<b>345</b>
<b>TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS</b>	<b>1978</b>
<b>APPOINTMENTS</b>	<b>1715</b>
<b>ACTING APPOINTMENTS</b>	<b>1378</b>
<b>CONFIRMATIONS</b>	<b>618</b>
<b>PROMOTIONS</b>	<b>328</b>
<b>RETIREMENTS</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>MEDICAL BOARD REPORTS</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>REPRESENTATION</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>INTERVIEWS FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS</b>	<b>416</b>

## APPRECIATION

The Commission extends a sincere thank you to Director of Personnel Administration, Mr. Corey Harrison; the Deputy Director of Personnel Administration Mr. Martel Waldron; Executive Directors (Ag) Mrs. Farya Mohammed-Basdaye and Ms. Milli Daylal; Senior Human Resource Advisor, Ms. Gail Pennie-Douglas and the staff of the Service Commissions Department whose hard work has made 2022 a productive one. We also thank Schools Supervisors, Curriculum Officers, Principals and our retired officers who serve on our panels, without whom the interview process would not have been possible.

### THE HARD WORKING STAFF OF THE SERVICE COMMISSIONS DEPARTMENT WITH THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (Ag) MRS. FARYA MOHAMMED-BASDAYE



## YOUR COMMISSIONERS



**Mrs. Elizabeth Crouch**  
Chairman



**Mr. Inshan Mohamed**  
Commission Member



**Mrs. Vidyawatee Ramsammy**  
Commission Member



**Mrs. Claire Brathwaite-Alexander**  
Commission Member



**Dr. Martha Des Vignes**  
Commission Member

**A PUBLICATION OF THE TEACHING SERVICE COMMISSION (TSC)**

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