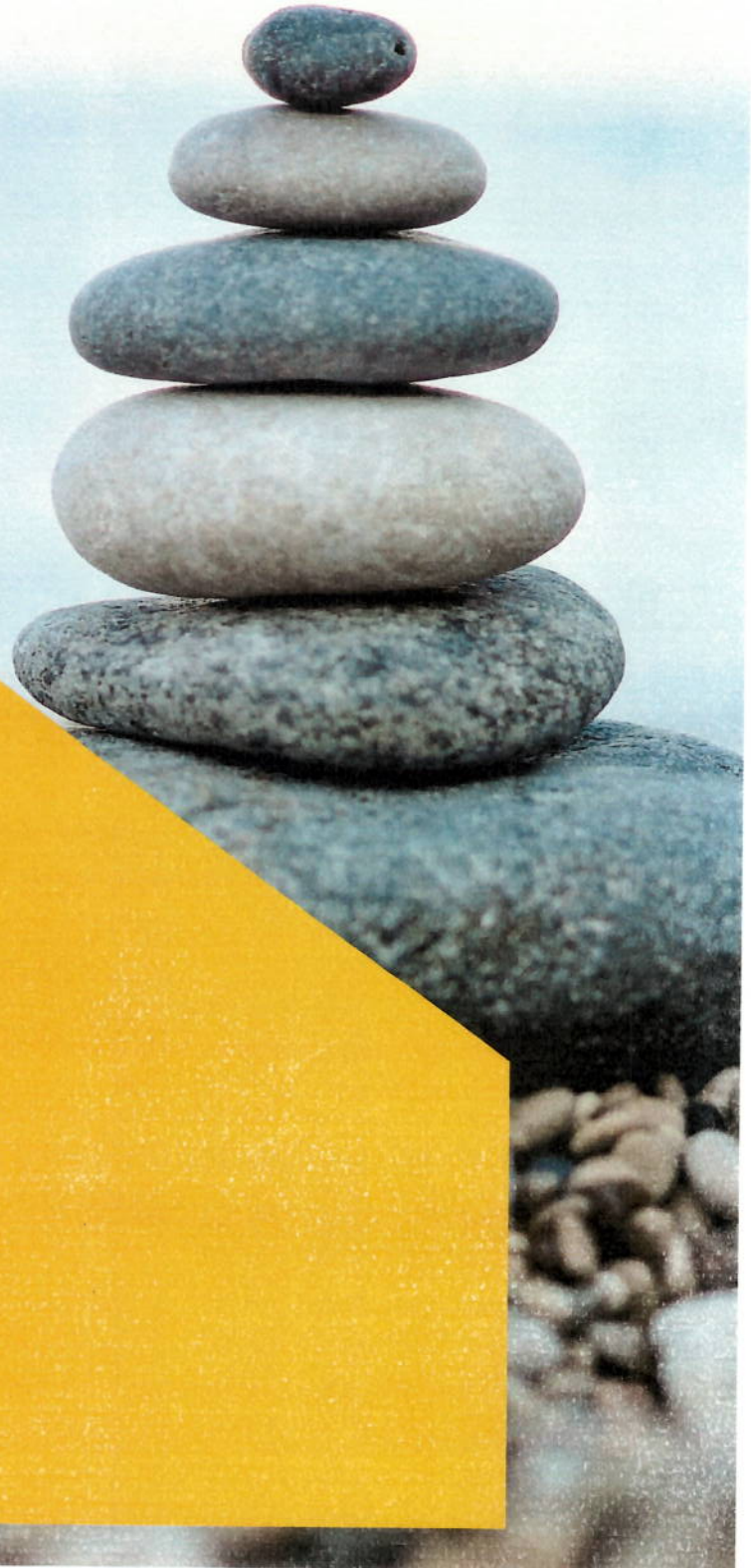


TEACHING SERVICE COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT 2021



**Service Commission
Department**

Table of Contents

➤ Chairman’s Remarks	3
➤ Executive Summary	5
➤ Introduction	7
➤ Membership	8
➤ Membership profile	9
➤ Overview	12
➤ Meetings	13
➤ Appointments	14
➤ Appointments/Promotions – De-linked Offices	17
➤ Other Activities Related to Appointments	20
➤ Discipline Matters	21
➤ Stakeholder Engagements	24
➤ E-Newsletter	25
➤ Issues and Challenges	26
➤ Plans and Programs	28
➤ Acknowledgement	29

Chairman's Remarks

The year 2021 was marked by severe dislocations caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, which were unprecedented in their impact on all institutions nationally and globally.

Sworn in October 2020, at the height of the pandemic, the Teaching Service Commission had to grapple with its constitutional remit in an environment which presented many unknowns. Almost immediately, there was the understanding that the Commission would be unable to meet physically and that all meetings would be conducted through the Teams virtual platform on the use of which, the Commissioners had to be trained. Nonetheless, the Commission made an early decision to adopt a strategic remit which aligned the strategy and tactics of the Commission to Vision 2030. Eight goals were selected for implementation, goals which were considered crucial to an education sector which had abruptly transitioned from 'physical school' to a virtual online space.

We agreed that this was a time, when more than ever, instructional leadership was needed in the nation's schools. The Commission therefore set about its number one goal of ensuring that the 347 positions of Head of Department (Secondary) were filled after a seven-year hiatus. These Heads of Department were urgently needed to marshal effective curriculum delivery, identify gaps in teaching and learning and to undertake the management of teachers for the task of remediation for the thousands of children who had not been in school since March 2020.

Further, to ensure the steady progress of the work, the Commission established a joint working group with the Ministry of Education to begin the screening process for the appointment of Deans. The Commission recognized that Deans too were urgently needed to mediate the emotional well-being of school children traumatized by the dislocations caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Commission developed its work in the area of discipline with particular emphasis on punctuality and regularity issues as well as those issues where there was physical or sexual abuse of students. In this regard, virtual tribunals were adopted for the disciplinary process.

At the same time, the Commission also committed to meeting quarterly with the Ministry of Education on all matters regarding staffing issues.

The Commission understood that it had to develop a robust communications policy at a time of isolation and dislocation and decided to produce quarterly e newsletters directed to teachers and administrators throughout Trinidad and Tobago. In this way, the Commission would remain engaged with its key stakeholders.

Its strategic remit therefore comprised a programme of action which was data driven and transparent, one which was aligned to a national vision and model for the education system.

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 (Ag.) Mr. Martel Waldron; the Executive Director, Human Resource Management (Ag.) Mrs. Farya Mohammed-Basdaye and the entire staff of the Service Commissions Department for their support in making this work possible.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'E. Crouch', written in a cursive style.

Mrs. Elizabeth Crouch
Chairman

Executive Summary

This 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. Included in the Report are the following:

➤ Major Achievements:

- ✓ Interviews for Head of Department (Secondary). A total of 507 virtual interviews were completed.
- ✓ Effective use of the Teams Platform during the Covid-19 pandemic for statutory meetings and the Virtual Interview Platform(VIP) for interviews.
- ✓ Policy Changes
 - ❖ Policies established during the period:
 - ✚ Effective 30th September 2021, the Teaching Service Commission, would no longer accept **unsolicited applications**.
 - ✚ Adoption of a **Communications Policy** for the Teaching Service Commission, inclusive of the use of an e newsletter.

➤ Virtual Tribunals

The TSC in its efforts to improve on the efficiency of disciplinary matters adopted the use of virtual tribunals during the year 2021.

➤ Stakeholder collaboration:

The TSC met regularly with stakeholders. Communicating directly with stakeholders unveiled varied perspectives that helped us to build a stronger Teaching Service.

➤ Issues and Challenges:

The TSC managed the challenges which arose in 2021 by maintaining focus on eight (8) achievable goals and collaborating with its stakeholders.

➤ **Plans and Programs for 2022:**

The TSC has established six (6) areas for growth and development of its work for 2022.

- The TSC will make every effort in 2022 and beyond to ensure, through a collaborative approach, the implementation, establishment and sustainability of a modern and efficient Teaching Service.

Introduction



Teaching Service Commission Report:

This is the report of the Teaching Service Commission (TSC) for the period 1st January 2021 to 31st December 2021. 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.

The functions of the TSC:

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.

The 2021 Commission:

Has continued to strive to ensure equity 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.

Membership

The Teaching Service Commission (TSC) comprises a Chairman and not more than four 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 O.R.T.T., 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 part of the outgoing Commission and would continue serving with the other four members. The members of the Commission are:

Mrs. Elizabeth Crouch - Chairman
Dr. Martha C. Des Vignes - Member
Dr. Olabisi Kuboni - Member
Mrs. Claire Brathwaite-Alexander - Member
Mr. Inshan Mohamed - Member

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.

The Teaching Service Commission 2021

Profile of Mrs. Elizabeth Crouch



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.

Profile of Dr. Martha Des Vignes



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 is 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.

Profile of Dr. Olabisi Kuboni



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.

Profile of Mrs. Claire Brathwaite-Alexander



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 fledging 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.

Profile of Mr. Inshan Mohamed



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.

Overview

The filling of key administrative positions

The selection process of Heads of Department for secondary schools, though outstanding for a number of years, began in May 2021. By the end of the year, the Commission had achieved its #1 goal of completing the selection process for the office of Head of Department in secondary schools having conducted 507 interviews for this position.

Policy Changes

Effective September 2021, the Teaching Service Commission, like the Public Service Commission, will no longer be accepting unsolicited applications. Applicants for teaching positions will submit an application in response to offices advertised in the Teaching Service. The life of an Order-of-Merit list will be for a period of three (3) years with effect from the on which it was established. In this way, the Secretariat of the Teaching Service Commission, with its small staff will no longer be burdened with the task of processing hundreds of applications for which there are no vacancies.

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

The Efficiency Initiative

During 2021, the Commission embraced a strategic remit that included Operational Efficiency as an important pillar of its work. It is against that background that the Virtual Interview Platform (VIP) was established. The VIP allows for seamless interpersonal interaction, without the need for physical contact among participants. It also facilitates a paperless operation. The VIP, which is the only one of its kind in the Trinidad and Tobago public sector, was developed without any additional budgetary allocation.

Meeting Teacher- Leaders

One of the most important highlights was the many opportunities Commissioners had to meet with hundreds of future teacher-leaders. Commissioners took part extensively in the interview process for Heads of Department (Secondary) over a period of many months which allowed for this important area of contact and communication.

Working Virtually During the Covid-19 Pandemic

A transformational acknowledgement and the embracing of virtual technologies have definitely reshaped the innovativeness and responsiveness of the Teaching Service Commission in successfully executing its constitutional mandate and adapting to a changing work environment triggered by COVID-19.

Meetings

During the year 2021, the Commission held twenty- four (24) statutory meetings and no (0) 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.

Table 1
Statutory and Special Meetings during the Period 2021

Year	No. of Statutory Meetings	No. of Special Meetings
2021	24	0

Informal Meetings

However, the Commissioners participated in many informal meetings throughout the year including the following:

- Meetings to prepare for virtual interviews through in -house training in the use of Teams Platform.
- Meetings to plan for the use of the interview instruments and to prepare guidelines for questions and responses.

Appointments

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. Up to September 2021, the process involved the following:

The Ministry of Education and the Division of Education, Innovation and Energy, (now Division of Education, Research and Technology) Tobago House of Assembly accept unsolicited applications from persons wishing to enter the primary school system*. An individual who is registered as a Teacher may apply to the Ministry of Education and/or the Division of Education, Innovation and Energy, (now Division of Education, Research and Technology) Tobago House of Assembly for the position of Teacher in a primary school.

The Ministry of Education and the Division of Education, Innovation and Energy, Tobago House of Assembly assess the application to determine whether the individual meets the stated criteria, that is, five (5) GCE 'O' Level/CXC subjects (General Proficiency level I or II) including English Language, Mathematics and Science for an Assistant Teacher (Primary) and the additional certification in teaching as evidenced by the possession of a Teacher's Diploma or equivalent for Teacher I (Primary).

The Ministry of Education and the Division of Education, Innovation and Energy, Tobago House of Assembly conduct interviews using a structured instrument which was designed by the Commission, to identify candidates who meet the requirements to determine their suitability to teach in a primary school.

Successful candidates are placed on a Priority List established by the Commission for future placements when vacant offices arise. The Priority List is valid for a period of two years.

*The policy decision of the Teaching Service Commission is that, as of October 2021 the Commission no longer accepts unsolicited applications. Vacant offices in the Teaching Service will be advertised and persons can submit an application in response to the advertisement.

Table 2 illustrates the number of candidates who were successful at interviews for offices of Teachers (Primary).

Table 2
Number of Persons Interviewed and Successful for Offices of
Assistant Teacher (Primary) and Teacher I (Primary)

Year	No. of Persons Interviewed	Successful candidates placed on OML
2021	178	144

Recruitment of Secondary School Teachers

The existing recruitment and selection process for entry level secondary school teachers include the following:

- ✦ An individual who is registered as a Teacher applies to the Ministry of Education and Division of Education, Innovation and Energy, Tobago House of Assembly for the position of Teacher in a secondary school.*
- ✦ The Ministry of Education and the Division of Education, Innovation and Energy, Tobago House of Assembly through their Curriculum Division assess the applicant and certify him/her as being qualified to teach at a particular level. This certification may be at either the level of a Teacher I, II or III or Technical Vocational Teacher I to IV.
- ✦ The applicant's file/assessment is then forwarded to the Commission where an interview is conducted to ascertain their suitability and fitness for an appointment.
- ✦ If the applicant is successful at the interview, his/her name is placed on a Priority List and sent to the Ministry of Education or the Division of Education, Innovation and Energy, (now Division of Education, Research and Technology), Tobago House of Assembly, for subsequent placement in a secondary school when such a vacancy may arise.

*As of October 2021, unsolicited applications will no longer be accepted. Applications will be accepted only in response to advertised vacancies.

For the office of Teacher in Secondary Schools, during the period 1st January 2021 to 31st December 2021 a total of one hundred and forty-five (145) persons were interviewed in the various subject areas with one hundred (100) persons being placed on the Priority Lists as follows:

Table 3
Number of persons Interviewed and successful for the office of
Secondary School teachers

Year	No. of Persons Interviewed	Successful candidates placed on OML
2021	145	100

Table 4
Persons interviewed in various subject areas for the year 2021

No.	SUBJECT	Number of persons interviewed
1	AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE	3
2	BUILDING & FURNITURE TECHNOLOGY	4
3	DANCE, DRAMA THEATRE ARTS	13
4	ELECTRICAL & ELECTRONIC TECHNOLOGY	7
5	ENGLISH	6
6	HISTORY	6
7	HOME ECONOMICS	9
8	MECHANICAL ENGINEERING	3
9	MUSIC	2
10	CHEMISTRY	11
11	PHYSICS	18
12	NATURAL SCIENCE	6
13	PRINCIPLES OF BUSINESS	21
14	PHYSICAL EDUCATION	4
15	SOCIAL STUDIES	5
16	SPANISH/FRENCH	6
17	TECHNICAL DRAWING	3
18	VISUAL ARTS	4
	TOTAL	131

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.

The following Table show the total number of Teachers interviewed for appointments/promotions to administrative offices in secondary and primary schools during the period 2021.

Table 5
Summary of Promotional Interviews for Administrative Offices in Secondary and Primary Schools during the year 2021

Office	No. of candidates interviewed	No. of offices filled
Office	No. of candidates interviewed	No. of offices filled
Principal (Primary) (Grade 7), Division of Education, Research & Technology, Tobago House of Assembly	25	Nil
Curriculum Officer (Range 59D), Division of Education, Research & Technology, Tobago House of Assembly	31	8
Head of Department (Secondary) in Secondary Schools (Grade 5)	507	Interviews were completed in December 2021
Head of Department (Secondary) (Grade 5), Division of Education, Research & Technology, Tobago House of Assembly	1	1
Principal (Secondary) (Grade 8), Division of Education, Research & Technology, Tobago House of Assembly	2	1

The Administrative offices in the Teaching Service are as follows: -

Secondary Schools:

- ✚ Principal (Secondary); Vice Principal (Secondary); Head of Department (Secondary) and Dean (Secondary).

Primary Schools

- ✚ Principal (Primary); Vice Principal (Primary); Head of Department (Primary); Senior Teacher (Primary).

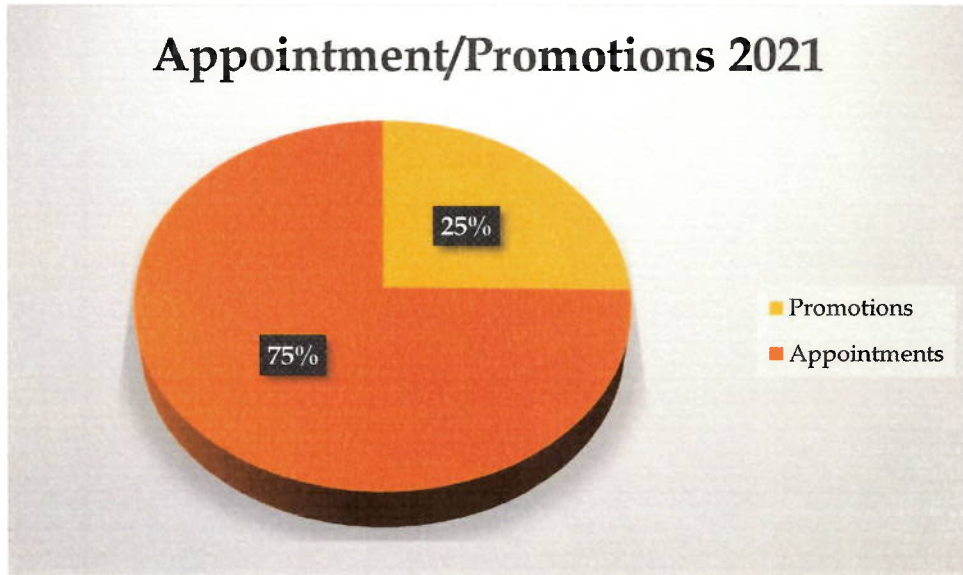
De-linked offices in the Teaching/Education Sector

The delinked offices in the Teaching/Education sector are as follows

- | | |
|---|---|
| ✚ 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
Promotions/ Appointments in the Teaching Service and De-Linked Offices

Nature of Appointment	No. of Offices filled in 2021
Promotions	114
First Permanent Appointments	339



Other Activities Related to Appointments

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

Table 7
Other Activities Related to Appointments

Other Activities Related to Appointments	2021
Acting	907
Temporary	1878
Confirmation	482
Transfers	266

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 **“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 53 matters referred to the Commission for its attention.

Table 8 provides a breakdown of disciplinary matters for the period 2021. Table 9 provides a breakdown of matters under the category of Allegations of Misconduct and Table 10 provides a breakdown of matters under the category of Court Charges.

Table 8
Breakdown of Disciplinary Matters

CATEGORY	NO. OF MATTERS BEFORE THE COMMISSION 2021
Court Charges	2
Disciplinary Tribunals	14
Abandonments	7
Allegations of Misconduct	25
High Court Matters	5
Total	53

Table 09
Breakdown of Allegations of Misconduct

CATEGORY	NO. OF MATTERS BEFORE THE COMMISSION 2021
Late Minutes	2
Disobeyed/Disregarded Lawful Order	5
Failure To Report	3
Physical Assault On Teacher/Student	5
Sexual Offence	4
Unauthorized/Unaccounted Absence from duty	2

Table 10
Breakdown of Court Charges

CATEGORY	NO. OF MATTERS BEFORE THE COMMISSION 2021
Sexual offence	1
Failure to provide breath specimen	1
Total	2

The Commission notes numerous issues in effectively disposing of disciplinary matters, especially those regarding High Court matters. The need for advice from Senior Counsel is one of the most challenging factors involved. The Commission and the Discipline Unit will continue to work on improving the effectiveness of managing suspected and proven misconduct.

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 other Members, who are also appointed by the President after consultation with the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition. 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.

See Table 11 for Appeal Matters in 2021.

Table 11
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 2021.	2
No. of appeals filed before the Public Service Appeal Board with respect to court charges in 2021.	4
No. of Matters filed before the Public Service Appeal Board as at December 31, 2021.	1
No. of Public Service Appeal Board matters concluded in 2021.	5

Of the 5 matters which were completed in 2021: -

All 5 were dismissed and the penalties imposed by the Commission were affirmed by the Appeal Board. However, one of the penalties of fine was varied.

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 2021, the Commission met with the undermentioned stakeholders to discuss various issues: -

- Ministry of Education.
 - Creation of a joint team for screening and shortlisting of applications.
 - Advertisement for the Office of School Supervisor II
 - The provision of proper documentation when a recommendation is made for transfers.
 - Waiver of Medicals for retirees in order for them to be confirmed in their appointments. This function remains under the purview of the Ministry.
 - Improving the process with respect to the online application system.
 - Difficulties with the creation of seniority lists for some schools. As such, the Ministry was asked to identify the schools with this problem and submit same to the Secretariat.
 - Challenges with recommending senior officers to act in higher offices who are not suitable to perform duties in these higher offices in accordance with Regulation 26 of the Public Service Regulations as adopted by the Teaching Service Commission.
- Staff of the Division of Education, Innovation and Energy, Tobago House of Assembly.
 - Training
- Trinidad and Tobago Unified Teachers Association (TTUTA)
 - Seniority Lists
 - Advertisement of the office of School Supervisor II

- Waiver of Medical for retirees in order for these former officers to be confirmed in their appointments
- Acting for both permanent and temporary vacancies
- Regularity and Punctuality - Requested that TTUTA hold sensitization sessions with respect with their members on this matter
- Meeting with the Archbishop of Port of Spain and the Catholic Education Board of management (CEBM) /Legal Advice.
 - Issues of eligibility to act in Denominational Schools keeping in mind the tenets of the Concordat vis a vis that of Regulation 26.

E-Newsletter

The Commission utilized the communication tool of an e-newsletter during 2021 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 Mohammed and Dr. Martha Des Vignes as well as Corporate Communications Officer Ms. Leah Lewis. Each newsletter was structured around a theme. Feature articles were written by Commissioners as well as retired educators. Video and audio materials were embedded in the texts and links attached to other sources of information. 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 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 2022 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.

Issues and Challenges

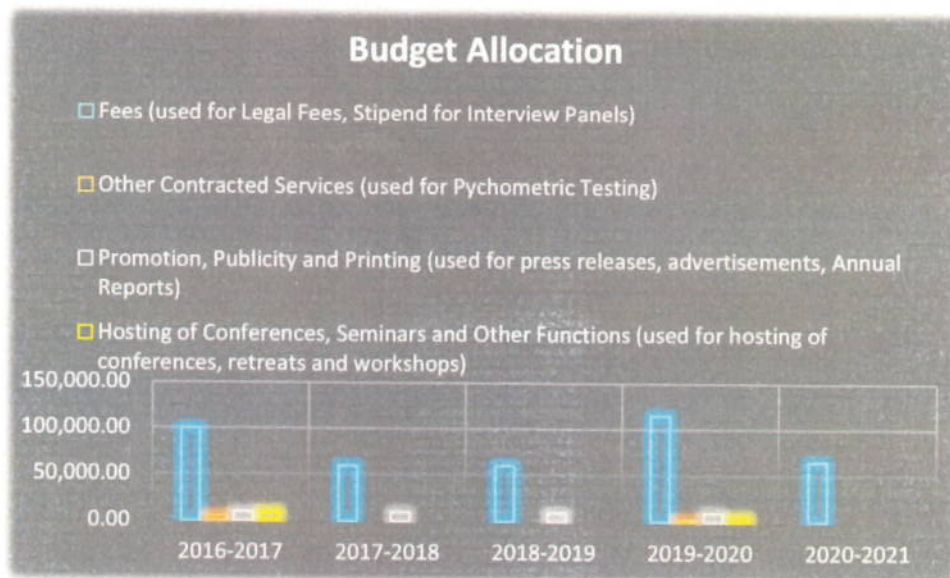
The Commission experienced a number of challenges during the year 2021. These challenges can be summarized as follows:

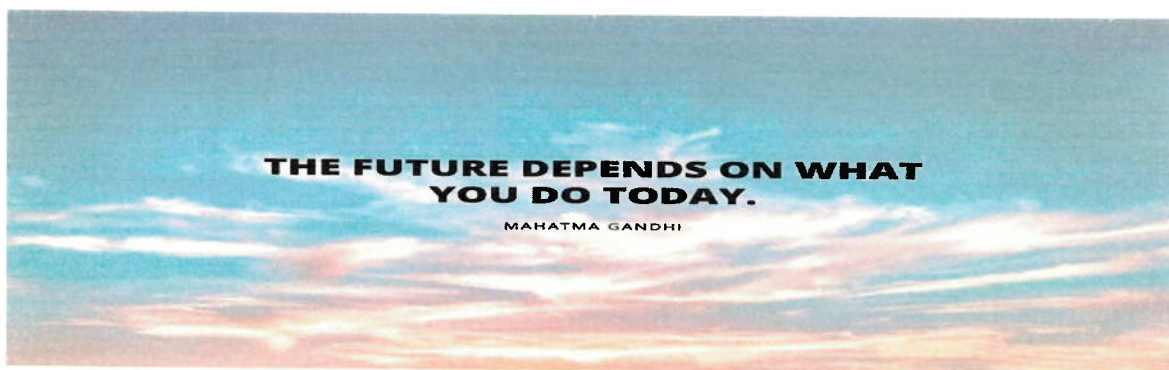
- **Disruptions** There was a high level of staff absences in the Service Commission Department brought about by the rotation of officers from April 19th 2021 onwards and during the period of lock down in the Public Service (May-June 2021). Sick leave, self-quarantine and rostering therefore caused interruptions in the workflow of the Department.
- **Building a team** The COVID-19 pandemic affected the Commission's ability to meet physically subsequent to being sworn in October 2020. All communication was conducted via the Teams platform. As a result, the Commission met on-line very frequently in order to better work as a team as well as to resolve the various issues which arose in the course of its duties and responsibilities. Long hours were required in order to better understand the communications process. Training was required to operate efficiently on a virtual platform and to get a good understanding of the functions of the Commission.
- **The budget** (See Table 12) The Commission's work was affected by a very small budget. This was particularly true with respect to the establishment of panels for interviews so that many interviews were conducted by the Commissioners themselves over many long months. The issue of panelists was however mitigated by support from the Ministry of Education. Schools Supervisors, Curriculum Officers and secondary school Principals served on panels. Two stakeholder bodies- the Association of Principals of Public Secondary Schools and the Association of Principals of Assisted Secondary schools supported the participation of the Principals in the interview process. This initiative while unprecedented, proved to be very productive.
- **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 12
Budgetary Allocation**

Year	<u>Fees:</u> (used for Legal fees, Stipend for Interview Panels)	<u>Other Contracted Services:</u> (used for assessments or psychometric testing and other services)	<u>Promotion Publicity and Printing</u> (used for press releases, advertisements, Annual Reports)	<u>Hosting of Conferences, Seminars and other Functions:</u> (used for hosting conferences, retreats and workshops)
2020-2021	65,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2019-2020	115,000.00	3,000.00	10,000.00	5,000.00
2018-2019	60,000.00	0.00	10,000.00	0.00
2017-2018	60,000.00	0.00	10,000.00	0.00
2016-2017	100,000.00	5,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00

As stated earlier, the Commission's work was affected by a small budget. It is the smallest budget given to the Commission over the last five (5) years.





Plans and Programs for 2022

1. The Commission will fill the long standing vacancies (seven years) for Head of Department in over 100 schools with 347 officers taking up these new promotional posts. The selection process was completed at the close of 2021. The Commission is aware of the need for academic leadership in schools in order to address the learning loss experienced by the student population.
2. 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 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 years.
3. The Commission is already planning two major stakeholder engagements – one a consultation series in Tobago and a sensitization Meeting with all denominational Boards in Trinidad. (These two activities have already been executed, as of July 2022).
4. The Commission is reviewing the draft Teaching Service Regulations and will undertake to write a policy framework for the new Regulations. A two/three-day retreat is planned to begin this exercise.
5. 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.
6. The Commission will focus on the needs of Primary schools. Emphasis will be placed on filling the offices of Principal (Primary) and Vice Principal (Primary). The Commission views this process as urgent, given the poor SEA results of 2021.

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 entire staff of the Teaching Service Commission Secretariat and
- The stakeholders who continue to contribute to the development of education in Trinidad and Tobago.