



Ministerial Statement

To The Senate

By

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Junior Minister for the Cabinet Office, Education, and Public Works

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Introduction of Signature Learning Programmes in Senior Schools

Wednesday, October 12th, 2022

Madam President,

This morning, I am pleased to provide you, members of the Senate, and the community at large with an update on the opening of Signature Schools and the introduction of signature learning programmes in our two senior schools, the Berkeley Institute and CedarBridge Academy. This is undoubtedly a significant milestone achieved in the ongoing work of Education Reform for our Public School System. Work that has covered some 30 months of belief and determination.

Madam President,

Much work has been and continues to happen to ensure that our children, Bermuda's children, have an educational experience that prepares them for their future and connects them with their community. It has been said on several occasions, that Bermuda's children are Bermuda's future. With this, **Madam President**, it is with great pleasure and gratitude to inform the Senate that on Monday, September 12th, 2022, a new chapter in Education Reform was celebrated. On this day, a total of 289 incoming S1 students entered The Berkeley Institute and CedarBridge Academy to undertake Signature Learning Programmes in Health and Social Care, Financial and Insurance Services, STEM, and Trades and Professions.

Madam President,

In celebration of this new chapter in learning for our children and Bermuda, the school hallways at both the Berkeley Institute and CedarBridge Academy were lined by students, educators, school leaders, Ministry and Department of Education staff, alumni and community partners as they clapped the procession of incoming S1 students who will be embarking on a transformative journey and a new way of learning.

Madam President,

It was deeply moving while welcoming our S1 students at both schools, knowing that the work and effort, some 30 months-worth had been put into implementing the Signature Schools and their signature learning programmes. Programmes that will serve our children well for years to come.

Madam President,

This is the change our community has been demanding for years. Learning for our children that is personalized, flexible, relevant, future-focused, inspiring, and authentically Bermudian. Areas of learning that students have chosen for themselves. Learning that will open up further study and career opportunities.

Madam President,

The Signature School at The Berkeley Institute will feature signature programmes in:

- **Financial and Insurance Services** which includes programmes in:
 - Accountancy
 - Banking and Financial Services
 - Business Administration and Management
 - Fintech
 - Insurance
- **Health and Social Care** which includes programmes in:
 - Holistic and Allied Health Care Services
 - Medical Sciences and Services
 - Social Sciences and Services

Madam President,

The Signature School at CedarBridge Academy will feature signature programmes in:

- **Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM)** which includes programmes in:
 - Animal and Veterinary Sciences
 - Computer Science
 - Creative Technologies
 - Engineering
 - Environmental Sciences
- **Trades and Profession** Programme which includes programmes in:
 - Automotive Technology
 - Carpentry
 - Cosmetology
 - Culinary Arts and Hospitality
 - Electrical
 - Horticulture
 - Textiles and Design

Madam President,

A press release was sent out on the first day of the school academic year, stating that this change has been built by Bermudians for Bermuda through engagement with teachers, students, parents, and business and community leaders. I take this opportunity to acknowledge and sincerely thank every educator, school leader, learning partner and team member who has contributed to the most significant and essential cause of doing what is best for our children's future.

Madam President,

The learning that our S1 students are currently engaged in will create a generation of young people who are engaged, adaptive, entrepreneurial, innovative, culturally connected, and empowered. These attributes will shape our young people to be creators of future jobs. To be active citizens and tackle increasingly complex challenges.

Madam President,

While I am very excited for what has been achieved to date, this is just the beginning. Whilst our educators at The Berkeley Institute and CedarBridge Academy are delivering our first year of Signature Learning Programmes, they are also beginning work on developing what is required for the S2 and S3 levels. And we are not stopping at just what happens in the Signature Learning Programmes. Teams of teachers at both Senior Schools are also focusing on redesigning the first two disciplines in the core curriculum: Mathematics and Science and on scaling a new model of advisory which caters to the more critical than ever area of social-emotional learning.

Madam President,

While so far, this statement has been focused on providing updates on the achievements and work underway in our Senior Schools, it would be remiss of me not to quickly refer to the remainder of the school transformation work underway right now. This includes the developmental work to prepare for a third Signature Senior School offering **Hospitality and Tourism and Education Services Signature Learning Programmes** and the phased introduction of Parish Primary Schools at the **Francis Patton** and **Purvis Primary School** sites.

Madam President,

In speaking with my colleague, the Minister of Education, he shared personal experiences that he encountered while visiting the many community socialization Pop-Ups held last week by our school transformation teams. He talked about:

- the 93-year-old Mr Furbert whom he spoke with at the Parish Primary School Pop-Up at Crawl Hill Gas Station last week,
- the parent that he spoke with at the Senior Signature School Pop-Up at the National Library last Friday who sent her children overseas for school,
- The young professional who spoke about her child at a public primary school when he stopped to visit the team at the Pop-Up at Lindo's in Devonshire on Monday evening, and lastly

- The mother that told him about her older children's struggles in the Public System and the hope she saw for her younger children at the Pop-Up on Nellie's Walk on Wednesday.

The thoughts expressed were all the same – that this is the change our community has been asking for.

Madam President,

Before coming into power, this Government made an earnest promise to Bermuda and her people. This was to “*Reform public education by phasing out middle schools and introducing signature schools at the secondary level . . .*”. Our public school system is moving in this direction. The legislation was passed last year to shift from a 3-tier to a 2-tier system. This year, the phased introduction of signature learning programmes for our S1 students was achieved. We will continue in a staged way to transform the quality of public education so that each and every young person in Bermuda can achieve great learning and life outcomes.

Madam President,

This Government is serious about transforming public school education because we value our young people. This is demonstrated not by our commitments but by our approach to delivering on those commitments. Of course, we are focused on quality and fidelity, but given that much of this work is unprecedented in Bermuda, we need to balance that with a new set of practices centred around collaboration, a learning mindset and large doses of determination and perseverance. This will ensure we can continue the work to reform our Public School System

Madam President,

Important work that is to create the necessary opportunities for our children to follow their passions and interests, build on their talents and capabilities, and achieve their careers and further aspirations. We will continue to be relentless in our focus and efforts because the work is to impact future generations, and it is not just our children that depend on the work, but it's also the success of Bermuda.

Thank you **Madam President,**