



Ministerial Statement
To The House of Assembly

By

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Minister of Education

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Series of Break-ins at Bermuda Public Schools

Friday February 17th, 2017

Mr. Speaker,

Today I would like to take the opportunity to share with Honourable Members, the disturbing news of a series of break-ins and vandalism in Bermuda Public Schools.

Mr. Speaker,

During this month, five (5) of our public schools were broken into and vandalized. These include: our school for students with special needs, the Dame Marjorie Bean Hope Academy on February 5th and 6th, Elliott Primary School on February 8th, West Pembroke Primary School on February 11th, Prospect Primary School on February 12th, and Victor Scott Primary School on February 13th. In all cases the break-ins occurred between the hours of 12:00 am and 6:00 am.

Mr. Speaker,

The recent series of break-ins have disrupted school fund raising efforts and destroyed school property including file cabinets, classroom doors, classroom windows and security cameras. These break-ins are inflicting damages to our Schools worth thousands of dollars.

Mr. Speaker,

It is disheartening and demoralizing for our teachers to return to work after these break-ins to find the sanity of their classrooms violated. Our students have endured

the distressing experience of arriving at school to find their classwork, and school projects ruined and/or destroyed.

Mr. Speaker,

The vandal who struck at Dame Marjorie Bean Hope Academy broke the security cameras attached to the building. It is disconcerting that anyone would be so insensitive as to put this vulnerable school population at risk.

Mr. Speaker,

I extend appreciation to the Facility Management team at the Department of Education, the Bermuda Police Service and GET Security who are collaboratively working together reviewing security footage and closed circuit camera footage in an effort to determine the identity of the culprits responsible for these break-ins. I also wish to thank the teams from the Department of Works who fixed the broken doors and windows in time for schools to reopen for our students.

At this time we are asking the general public and particularly the school neighborhoods to be vigilant of any suspicious activity or individual loitering around school buildings during unusual hours; and report such activity to the Bermuda Police Service.

Mr. Speaker,

As a community and a Government we must ensure that our schools are safe, secure and healthy environments that support and facilitate the development of our future leaders, our students.

Thank you

Mr. Speaker