



**The Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago**  
**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION**

**UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES, ST. AUGUSTINE CAMPUS**

**OPEN DISTINGUISHED LECTURE BY PROFESSOR EMERITA**

**ALMA HARRIS, SWANSEA UNIVERSITY, WALES**

**(VIRTUAL EVENT)**

**Message By**

**Dr. the Honourable Nyan Gadsby-Dolly**

**Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> March, 2022**

## **SALUTATIONS:**

- Professor Neela Badrie- Chair of the Open Lectures Committee (OLC), The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago
- Professor Brian Copeland- Pro Vice-Chancellor and Campus Principal of The University of the West Indies, UWI St. Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago
- Professor Emerita Alma Harris PhD- Professor of Educational Leadership and Policy, Swansea University School of Education, Wales.
- Dr. Freddy James- Member of the Open Lectures Committee and Deputy Dean, Graduate Studies and Research, Faculty of Humanities and Education, The UWI.
- Members of management of UWI throughout the various campuses in the Caribbean
- Staff and Students of The UWI and the various universities represented throughout the Caribbean

- Colleagues, friends and family of Prof. Harris
- Specially invited guests
- Members of the Media
- Speakers and Stakeholders
- Ladies and Gentlemen

Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen,

I am especially honoured to address you at this distinguished lecture by Professor Emerita Alma Harris of the Swansea University, Wales on the topic, “**Future Proofing Education: What’s Next?**” Allow me to begin by commending the Open Lectures Committee of the University of the West Indies (UWI), St. Augustine campus for initiating this important discourse on the future of education. Events like this go a long way towards informing education-based policies, strategies and activities.

Vision 2030 highlights the need for “a modern, relevant and accessible education and training system” which requires the support of all stakeholders. The objective is to provide access to quality education for all citizens, while ensuring that the curriculum is always compatible with technological advancements and adequately trains the nation’s workforce to satisfy the needs of the changing world of work.

At the Ministry of Education, we greatly value the contributions of our stakeholders in the planning, regulation and implementation of the overall delivery of quality education throughout the public education system. The recently concluded national consultation on the Education Policy 2022-2027 examined eight (8) strategic areas of focus, among them was Digital Transformation.

With the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have become even more reliant on technology and digitization to serve the interests of the Ministry of Education's clients and by extension, our country. Though the pandemic has reignited our thrust towards digital transformation, it was set in motion before the pandemic and is a continuous process that encompasses various processes working together to facilitate continued innovation. The Ministry of Education is seeking to future-proof the delivery of education in this country by achieving complete digitalization of the education sector.

## **The MoE's Commitment to Digital Transformation**

The Digital Transformation Strategy of the Ministry of Education looked at the current situation in relation to the Ministry's goals and crafted the way forward within the context of a realistic, logical and systematic plan. The strategy proposes ways to bridge the gaps between where we are and where we need to be. The Digital Transformation Programme is the map that outlines a suite of projects, products and services designed to achieve digital fluency at all levels within the education system and among all stakeholders. These products and services are at various levels of implementation, with the first four identified as priority.

The suite of products/services solutions are as follows:

- **School Learning Management System (SLMS)**
- **E-books**
- **Literacy and Numeracy Adaptive Learning system**
- **Education Management Information System**

- Open Educational Resources (OERs)
- National Online Open School
- Student Digital Literacy
- Human Resource Support
- School Infrastructure Upgrades (School Issue Management System - SIMS)
- Teacher Training
- Curriculum Enactment, and
- E-testing

The School Learning Management System is an online portal that allows for the remote livestreaming of classes by teachers as well as student access to revision material and subject material. Teachers and educators provide a full online repository of accessible content for all students at the Early Childhood Care and Education, Primary, and Secondary school levels. The eBooks project provides electronic text support for teachers and students that follow the main flow of

content and skills to be taught, with a focus on enabling learning to continue in an electronic medium.

The Literacy and Numeracy Adaptive Learning System is a web-based platform that will provide administrators, teachers and parents with enriching, developmentally appropriate literacy and numeracy experiences. The Education Management Information System was launched to facilitate the efficient management of the education sector by automating all back-office operations. The features include management of the teachers, students, employees, classes, forms, syllabus, class schedule, attendance, exam schedule, exam results, student promotions, library operations, announcements, mail and SMS texts to parents and accounting for schools.

These four initiatives were identified as priority and as such, the Ministry has allocated the necessary resources to ensure its success.



## **Conclusion**

As the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago (GORTT) leads our nation into a digital revolution, the Ministry of Education recognizes the pivotal role that continuous digital transformation plays in the optimal performance of our clients in the education system. Allow me to reiterate that to successfully future-proof education tomorrow, we must successfully navigate the current digital landscape and ensure its continued development.

Thanks to the University of the West Indies for partnering with the Ministry of Education to serve the people of Trinidad and Tobago and achieve the standard of operations that we have set for education in our nation. Your continued efforts are highly valued. It is through activities such as this lecture, that fresh ideas are generated on ways to achieve excellence in education.

The Ministry of Education remains committed to providing equitable access to quality education. As the world changes and adapts to various challenges, I am proud to lead a Ministry and be part of a

Government that ensures that we provide access to a world class education for every member of our population. I look forward to participating in many more sessions that prepare our students for tomorrow's world. Thank you.