



GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

**Guidelines for the Revised Operations of
Selected Secondary Schools
September 2022-27**

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Effect of School Closure on Student Achievement

Schools were closed in March 2020, due to the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. Students were engaged in online schooling in their homes. Most students only returned to physical school in April 2022.

Though online schooling provided a critical level of educational continuity, it is globally recognised that it is not a substitute for face-to-face school, especially for children at the early childhood and primary levels.

One of the most deleterious effects of prolonged school closure is the learning loss experienced by students. The Curriculum Planning and Development Division (CPDD) of the Ministry of Education (MOE) provided a Diagnostic Test for administration by teachers in Mathematics and English Language Arts in October 2021. The results showed clear learning gaps.

For remediation purposes, teachers were provided with the key learning objectives for each subject at all levels, along with recommendations for closing the students' learning gaps.

An analysis of the results of the 2022 Secondary Entrance Assessment (SEA) showed a marked decrease in student achievement at the higher proficiency levels of over 90% and over 50%. However, there was a marked increase in students achieving less than 30%. This general decrease in performance is similar to global predictions of the learning loss and decreased performance of students associated with physical school closure.

1.2 The Vacation Revision Program 2022

Students scoring low grades in the SEA are likely to be under-prepared for the secondary school system. The results of SEA 2022 therefore precipitated the need to provide remedial instruction during the July-August 2022 vacation period in a physical setting. This allowed students the opportunity to devote more time to acquiring competencies essential for a solid foundational education in the fundamental areas of Mathematics, English Language Arts and English Language Arts Writing.

The Vacation Revision Programme 2022 was implemented during the period of July 18th to August 12th, 2022, at selected secondary schools. The continued implementation of this program during the years 2023-27 is envisaged to reduce the learning loss usually experienced by students who

need to maintain a level of academic engagement and psychosocial support during the July-August vacation periods.

1.3 The Correlation between and Implications of Performance at SEA and CSEC

Examinations

The results of the CXC examinations, CSEC and CAPE, follow the same general pattern as the SEA scores of the students entering Secondary Schools. The schools which receive SEA students with the highest scores have the greatest success at CXC examinations, and vice versa. While other factors such as school culture, resources, Boards, PTA and Alumni Associations play a role in producing a positive and productive educational experience, the influence of SEA scores is a major factor in secondary school output.

The low levels of success in CXC examinations at some secondary schools has serious national implications in the areas of Social Development, National Security and Youth Development- to name a few. An undeniable societal pattern exists between citizens' low educational achievement and the requirement for government support through its social programs, and/or involvement in criminal and gang activity. On average, 47% of students leave the Education System annually without achieving certification in at least five CSEC subjects, inclusive of Math and English. This greatly limits their ability to continue to tertiary education and find jobs above minimum wage.

1.4 Factors Influencing Achievement in CXC Examinations

An analysis of the factors which are found to be common among secondary schools with low levels of success in CXC examinations include:

- Greater than 60% SEA intake with scores under 50%
- Parents with low socioeconomic circumstances
- Many students from single parent homes
- Absent or inactive school support networks such as PTA and Alumni Associations
- High absenteeism of students
- Significant student attrition

- High levels of student indiscipline
- Dilapidated school infrastructure

The Ministry of Education recognizes this situation as critical, as a large proportion of young people reach the age of 16, when compulsory education ends according to the *Education Act*, without the preparation that they require to become productive citizens of Trinidad and Tobago. This has serious economic, social and security implications, and puts the upward trajectory of this nation, and the realization of *Vision 2030*, under threat.

To effect a positive change in these circumstances, an organized, sustained, and sustainable systemic approach to school operation is required.

1.5 Recommendations for Improving School and Student Achievement

The Principals of Government Secondary Schools, as well as wider education stakeholders such as the recognized majority union for teachers, TTUTA, the National Parent-Teachers' Association (NPTA), Principals' Associations (including public, private, and special schools) and Denominational Boards were consulted with by the executive team of the Ministry of Education. They shared their experiences in areas such as mitigating school indiscipline, parent and student engagement, increasing student achievement, generating a positive school culture, and differentiating curricular approaches to cater for cohorts comprising students at various levels of academic achievement. They made the following recommendations:

- Efficient provision of standard resources such as funding, teaching and non-teaching staff;
- Adjustment to curricular offerings and sequencing;
- Adjustments to examination schedules and available certification;
- Improvement of access to, and broadening of the services available through the Student Support Services Division;
- Increase in schools' support staff;
- Sustained programme of training for teaching staff and school administration;

- Increased level of monitoring of schools' operation and that of their School-Based Management Teams; and
- Focus on the upgrade and maintenance of the school environment, labs and infrastructure.

Based on these recommendations, the Ministry of Education formulated a Revised Operational Plan for Selected Secondary Schools for Academic Years 2022-2027, to provide equity in educational opportunity along with increased student achievement.

2.0 REVISED OPERATIONS OF SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS

2.1 Schools selected for Revised School Operations 2022-2027 (Phase I)

The schools selected for the implementation of revised school operations from 2022-2027 (Phase 1) are outlined in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Schools selected for the implementation of Revised School Operations (Phase 1)

No.	Education District	Secondary School	Enrollment in 2022	No. Scoring <30%	Percentage of Enrollment Scoring <30%
1	Caroni	Chaguanas North Secondary	115	110	96%
2	Caroni	Chaguanas South Secondary	105	104	99%
3	Caroni	Carapichaima West Secondary	168	168	100%
4	North Eastern	Sangre Grande Secondary	230	208	90%
5	North Eastern	Manzanilla Secondary	175	173	99%
6	North Eastern	Brazil Secondary	184	175	95%
7	North Eastern	Valencia Secondary	185	175	95%
8	Port of Spain and Environs	Diego Martin North Secondary	214	149	70%
9	Port of Spain and Environs	East Mucurapo Secondary	220	114	52%
10	Port of Spain and Environs	Mucurapo West Secondary	175	175	100%
11	Port of Spain and Environs	Success Laventille Secondary	67	67	100%
12	Port of Spain and Environs	Morvant Laventille Secondary	90	87	97%

No.	Education District	Secondary School	Enrollment in 2022	No. Scoring <30%	Percentage of Enrollment Scoring <30%
13	Port of Spain and Environs	Tranquillity Secondary	89	89	100%
14	Port of Spain and Environs	South East Port of Spain Secondary	45	45	100%
15	South Eastern	Moruga Secondary	165	165	100%
16	South Eastern	Princes Town East Secondary	90	90	100%
17	St. George East	Barataria North Secondary	110	94	85%
18	St. George East	El Dorado East Secondary	189	182	96%
19	St. George East	Five Rivers Secondary	150	145	97%
20	St. George East	El Dorado West Secondary	149	149	100%
21	St. George East	Malick Secondary	168	167	99%
22	St. George East	San Juan North Secondary	140	122	87%
23	St. Patrick	Point Fortin West Secondary	150	149	99%
24	St. Patrick	Siparia East Secondary	183	182	99%
25	St. Patrick	Siparia West Secondary	44	44	100%
26	Victoria	Union Claxton Bay Secondary	150	150	100%
TOTAL			3750	3478	93% (average)

All 26 schools listed in Table 2 are classified as High-Risk Schools.

2.2 Details of Revised School Operations

The details of the revised school operational plan are outlined in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Revised Operational Plan for Selected Secondary Schools 2022-27 (Phase I)

Item	Division/Unit Responsible	Start Date	End Date	Remarks
1. Leadership				
The operations of School-Based Management Teams will be closely monitored	SSMD/CPDD	05.09.2022	07.07.23	Close monitoring by SSMD, members of the DLT and the Executive of the MOE to ensure that these critical teams are operating optimally, to the benefit of the schools.
Principals will be interviewed regarding the planned implementation of the School Development Plan at the start of the academic year	SSMD/CPDD	05.09.2022	30.09.22	All SDPs will be reviewed by members of the DLT, approved and implementation monitored to ensure KPIs are achieved.
The School Climate Survey will be administered during Term I of the academic year	SSMD/CPDD/EPD	05.09.22	16.12.22	Principals will be expected to return the data requested in a timely manner so that the data can be used to devise solutions for improvement where required
School Visits will be done weekly by members of the DLT to assure compliance and	SSMD/CPDD/SSSD	05.09.22	07.07.23	At least one member of the DLT familiar with the School Profile and Development Plan

<p>fidelity to the School Development Plan and feedback provided.</p>				<p>will visit schools weekly to make observations, collect data and offer guidance where required to ensure the objectives of the plan are being achieved.</p>
<p>A mentorship and coaching initiative will be implemented for Principals, Vice Principals and Heads of Department</p>	SSMD/CPDD/TEPPDD	05.09.22	07.07.23	<p>TEPPDD will collaborate with SSMD, CPDD and Principals to develop Professional Learning Communities for the peer support of school management personnel.</p>

2. Teacher Training & Development

<p>The MOE will liaise with the TSC to facilitate the appointment of Heads of Departments, Deans, Principals; Vice Principals and Teachers</p>	HR/CPDD	Ongoing	Ongoing	<p>HR Unit will liaise directly with the TSC on recruitment priorities. CPDD will provide Human Resources as required for interview panels to facilitate maximum efficiency.</p>
<p>Schools will be assigned up to three (3) Learning Support Assistants</p>	SSMD/HR	05.09.22	30.09.25	<p>SSMD will support HR in the assignment of the LSAs, according to the needs of Principals, to provide support for classroom operations</p>

Ongoing training of Principals, Heads of Departments, Deans, Teachers, Students and Parents in areas relevant to professional and personal development.	TEPPDD	12.08.22	30.09.22	TEPPDD will coordinate with SSSD, SSMD, CPDD, IT, Ed. Tech, EDHSU and any other necessary Unit, Division or institution to develop a training schedule with a wide range of topics which will be made available at the start of the academic year so that participants can chart their personal and professional development.
3. Student Services				
Schools will be assigned at least one (1) dedicated School Social Worker and one (1) Guidance Counsellor	SSSD	05.09.22	Ongoing	Schools will not be required to share the services of fundamental SSSD staff, so students will benefit from increased attention and focus.
Special Education Instructors will be assigned to school clusters	SSSD	Ongoing	Ongoing	Caseloads of Special Education Officers will be kept as small as possible. Additional staffing will be pursued for further reductions towards the ideal of one Officer per school for maximum effectiveness in student intervention and teacher support.

The Parenting in Education Programme will be instituted in all schools	SSSD	05.09.22	Ongoing	PIE is an ongoing programme in some schools and will be strengthened/ introduced during the new academic year to support parental development.
The school timetable will be adjusted to facilitate fortnightly meetings of the School Based Intervention Teams. The operations of these Teams will be closely monitored and supported.	DSS/CPDD/SSSD	05.09.22	07.07.23	The meetings of School-based Intervention Teams, comprising Principals, Senior Teachers, class teachers and SSSD personnel will be monitored and supported by the DLT and MOE Executive. Where required, training will be done with schools to encourage efficient operations of these teams and early intervention for students and teachers who require it.
The School Needs Assessment will be conducted at each school	SSSD/EPD	05.09.22	07.07.23	The School Needs Assessment will identify major challenges to school operation, for which solutions can be designed and implemented.
Special Education Needs (SEN) Assessment will be conducted at each school	SSSD	05.09.22	16.12.22	The SEN Assessment, in collaboration with SBIT deliberations, will facilitate early student referrals to SSSD and the application of

				appropriate intervention strategies
Vision and hearing screening services for students will be provided by the MoH/authorised entities through the EDHU	SSSD/EDHU	05.09.22	07.07.23	Students with vision or hearing deficiencies will be identified. Where required, MSDFS will be engaged to find solutions for the provision of corrective devices.
Schools will implement diagnostic testing at the start of the school year or use available data from the VRP to determine levels of functional literacy and numeracy as well as competency in other subjects of the national curricula, using instruments created by or guidance from the CPDD, as is relevant.	SSMD/CPDD	05.09.22	07.07.23	SSMD to liaise with CPDD to monitor implementation and roll out. This will allow teachers to adjust curriculum delivery to meet the needs and levels of the students in their classes.
Screening and assessment will be conducted for students referred for to SSSD for targeted intervention	SSSD	05.09.22	Ongoing	Screening/assessment will be conducted by the relevant unit of SSSD to determine the needs of each referred student and ensure that they receive the required support.

4. Security				
Schools will have their full complement of Security as well as Safety Officers	HSSU	05.09.2022	07.07.23	There will be two safety officers attached to each Government Secondary schools. NMTS to consistently supply the contracted strength at each school. Monthly meetings with the MOE and MTS to discuss school security have been instituted.
Safety Officers to confer with Principals to develop plans and strategies to prevent or minimize dangerous situations in or near the school or involving students at school related activities.	HSSE/SSMD	05.09.2022	07.07.23	The MOE Emergency Procedures Manual has been prepared for Schools. Upon approval by the MOE Executive, the Manual will be disseminated to all Principals for sensitization of all staff, students and parents.
Safety Officers to develop guidelines for the establishment of a school Safety/Security team within the school in consultation with the principal	HSSU/SSMD	05.09.22	07.07.23	SSMD to monitor and facilitate collaboration. Specific officers to be trained, and roles and functions to established in consultation with the principal, according to the approved MOE Emergency Procedures Manual.

Increased school patrols by Middle Management, School Safety Officers as well as Security Officers should be instituted	HSSU/SSMD	05.09.22	07.07.23	School patrols will assist in reducing the unsupervised spaces within school plants, which will discourage student indiscipline.
Community Police will be assigned to each school	SSMD/CEO	05.09.22	07.07.23	The MOE will liaise with the TTPS Community Police to expand the number of schools serviced. The patrols and engagement are intended to reduce school indiscipline on the plant and environs.
Establishment of Cadet Force Units, Girl Guides Companies, Boy Scout Troops at schools	HSSU/DSS	05.09.22	07.07.23	The MOE will liaise with the relevant officials, and Principals to establish these paramilitary associations within the schools, to promote students' personal development and discipline.
5. Curriculum *Further details of the adjustment to the Curriculum are contained in Appendix I				
Introduction of online literacy and numeracy solutions at all schools	CPDD/ ICTD/ Educational Technology	09.22	07.23	This initiative will facilitate self-directed, differentiated learning inside and outside of the classroom.

Establishment of e-classrooms for teachers	Educational Technology	09.22	Ongoing	E-classrooms will provide modern, educational resources for students and promote engaging, self-directed learning opportunities, as well as opportunities for teachers to closely monitor student engagement.
Preparation of all Form 1 students achieving under 50% in SEA to sit the Lower Secondary Proficiency Examination (LSPE) in Form 2.	CPDD/DERE	09.22	06.24	Students to be given additional opportunities at Secondary School to develop fundamental education and achieve certification which can be used for employment, especially where student attrition is a risk.
Schools to sensitize students and parents of the educational pathway for each student to acquire, at minimum, the LPSE, CXC Mathematics and English Language, and at least three (3) skills based CXC/CVQ subjects at Secondary School.	CPDD/SSMD	09.22	12.22	Schools should seek through joint School/PTA and class sessions to explain students' expected educational pathway, and the possibility of extended school enrolment (6 years) to facilitate completion of examinations.

Formal introduction of skills training at the Form 1 level and a modular approach to the completion of CVQ examinations.	CPDD	09.22	Ongoing	MOE to collaborate with post-secondary institutions to augment the skills training agenda to enhance student engagement and reduce apathy and attrition.
6. Discipline				
Schools will engage with students, parents/guardians, community-based organizations, and others in explaining and supporting the implementation of the tenets of the Revised School Discipline Matrix	SSMD/SSSD/TEPPDD/COMMS	05.09.22	07.07.2023	SSMD to liaise and collaborate with SSSD and TEPPDD to monitor and facilitate the implementation of the Revised School Discipline Matrix, which is to be implemented in collaboration with the Positive Behaviour Matrix, Preventative and Reinforcement Strategies. COMMS to engage external agencies/ persons to provide support for the reinforcement of positive behaviours.
7. Resources and Infrastructure				
Devices will be provided to students and teachers for online and digital engagement	ICTD	09.22	Ongoing	Ongoing procurement in fiscal 2022; another device provision cycle will also be done in 2023

Internet access will be provided throughout the school compound	EFPPD/ICTD	05.22	Ongoing	Internet access currently available in administrative and common areas, as well as libraries in all 134 secondary schools and 85% of Primary Schools. Expansion projects to increase coverage and broadband are ongoing.
Focus will be placed on the upgrade and maintenance of labs and equipment for skills-based subjects, as well as sporting and visual/theatre arts facilities	EFPPD/IT	2022/23	Ongoing	A phased approach to infrastructural upgrade, including electrical upgrade, will be taken to improve the conditions at schools and facilitate student engagement in skill development and certification. In addition, the procurement of IT equipment will be pursued to facilitate the Digital Transformation agenda.

3.0 Monitoring of the Implementation of the Revised School Operational Plan

- Each School's Development Plan (SDP) will be discussed with Principals by the DLT during the first month of the Academic Year.
- Schools will develop realistic KPIs, and action plans for implementation and achievement.
- Approved SDPs will be submitted to the MOE Executive via SSMD.
- DLT visits will be done weekly at schools to ensure that the action plans are being implemented effectively.
- Monitoring at the level of the Ministry Executive will be done at least fortnightly to monitor the progress of schools' action plans and determine solutions for challenges they may be experiencing
- An annual report for Cabinet will be compiled to track the impact of the Revised School Operational Plan. The data collected throughout the academic year will inform the compilation of this report.

FIVE-YEAR CURRICULUM PLAN FOR SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS

The following will obtain in the 26 selected secondary schools:

- Form groupings can be based on students' SEA + Diagnostic Scores in Mathematics and English Language Arts. Based on the level of variation within the Form 1 cohort. Either **homogenous or heterogenous grouping can be applied.**
- Forms 1 and 2 subjects will be taught at an appropriate level to prepare students for the Lower Secondary Proficiency Examination (LSPE) (formerly called the Primary School Certificate Leaving Examination) which will focus on **Mathematics, English Language Arts and General Paper.**
- Other compulsory subjects: Life Skills, Physical Education, Visual and Performing Arts, Information Technology, Spanish, CVQ and TVET related areas will be included in the curriculum.
- The students should be frequently exposed to practical aspects of the subject areas by their respective teachers.
- Regular assessments of students should be done by teachers – daily, weekly and termly. **Emphasis should be placed on formative assessment as part of the teaching and learning process.**
- If Form groupings are streamed, students who are progressing significantly and have achieved the stipulated curricular benchmarks can be moved to more advanced streams.
- At the end of Form 2, students will sit the LSPE. At least one class at Form 3 is to be reserved for students who need to repeat the LSPE. These students will also be recommended to do an extra year at secondary school to facilitate the completion of CSEC level subjects.

LOWER SECONDARY CURRICULUM

The curriculum will be divided into two (2) major levels with different but related offerings for students as they progress through secondary school. The first level, Forms 1 and 2, ends with the sitting of the LSPE, while the second level, Forms 3-5, ends with the sitting of the CSEC examinations.

Schools are expected to make the necessary timetable changes to accommodate the subjects to be offered at each level.

(i) Level I- Forms 1 and 2

Figure 1 displays the subject offerings at the lower secondary level. Students are expected to pursue the subjects indicated, which are prepare them to sit the LSPE at the end of Form 2. Based on the achievement levels, students can proceed to one of three (3) streams at Forms 3 – 5.

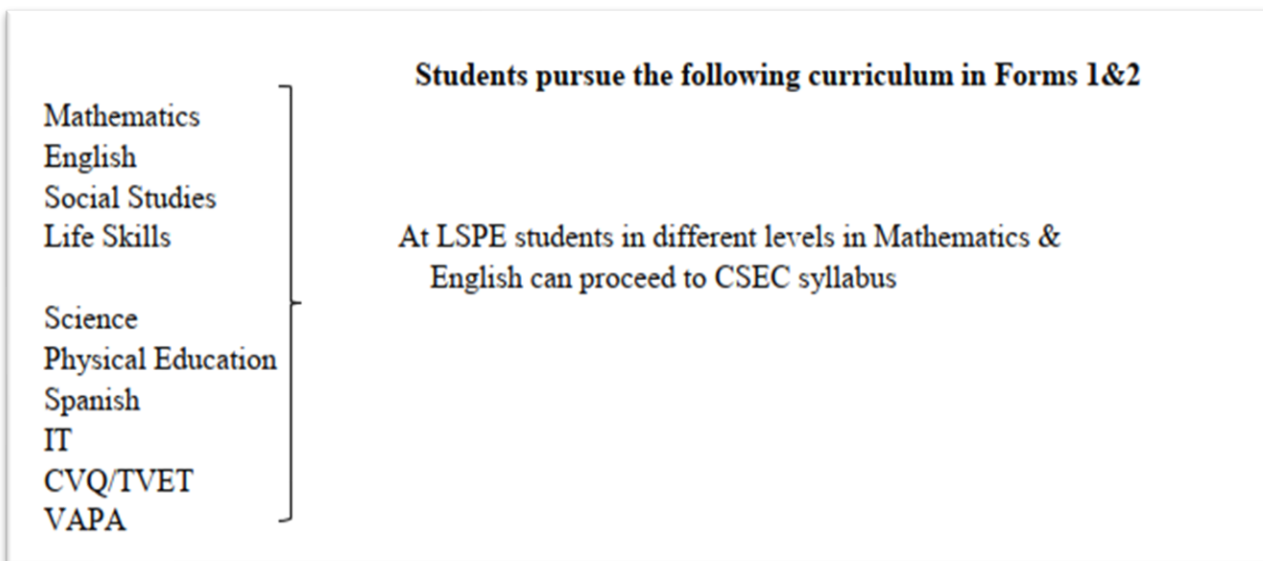


Figure 1 Curriculum Offering at Forms 1 and 2

A sample timetable for Forms 1 and 2 is presented below. The subject offerings and the percentage time allotments per subject should be maintained, even in cases where the structure of the school timetable differs from the sample one below.

- Length of Cycle: Five (5) days
- Number of periods per day: 5
- Duration of one (1) period: ~ 60 minutes
- Proposed assignment of periods: 25
- Dedicated Life Skills period for Guidance Officers/School Social Workers must be included

Table 1 Timetable at Forms 1 and 2

	Subject	No. of periods
LSPE English	Reading skills, Comprehension	3
	Writing	3
LSPE Mathematics	Mathematics	5
LSPE General Paper	Social Studies	2
	Science & Agricultural Science	2
Life Skills & Practical Subjects	HFLE / Life Skills	2
	CVQ Foundation Areas	2
Co-curricular activities	PE	2
	VAPA	2
	Spanish / IT	2

(ii) Level II- Forms 3-5

Based on the results from the LSPE at the end of Form 2, students will have the option to join one of the three streams from Forms 3-5 as shown in Figure 2. The timetable for Forms 3-5 is also displayed at Table 3,

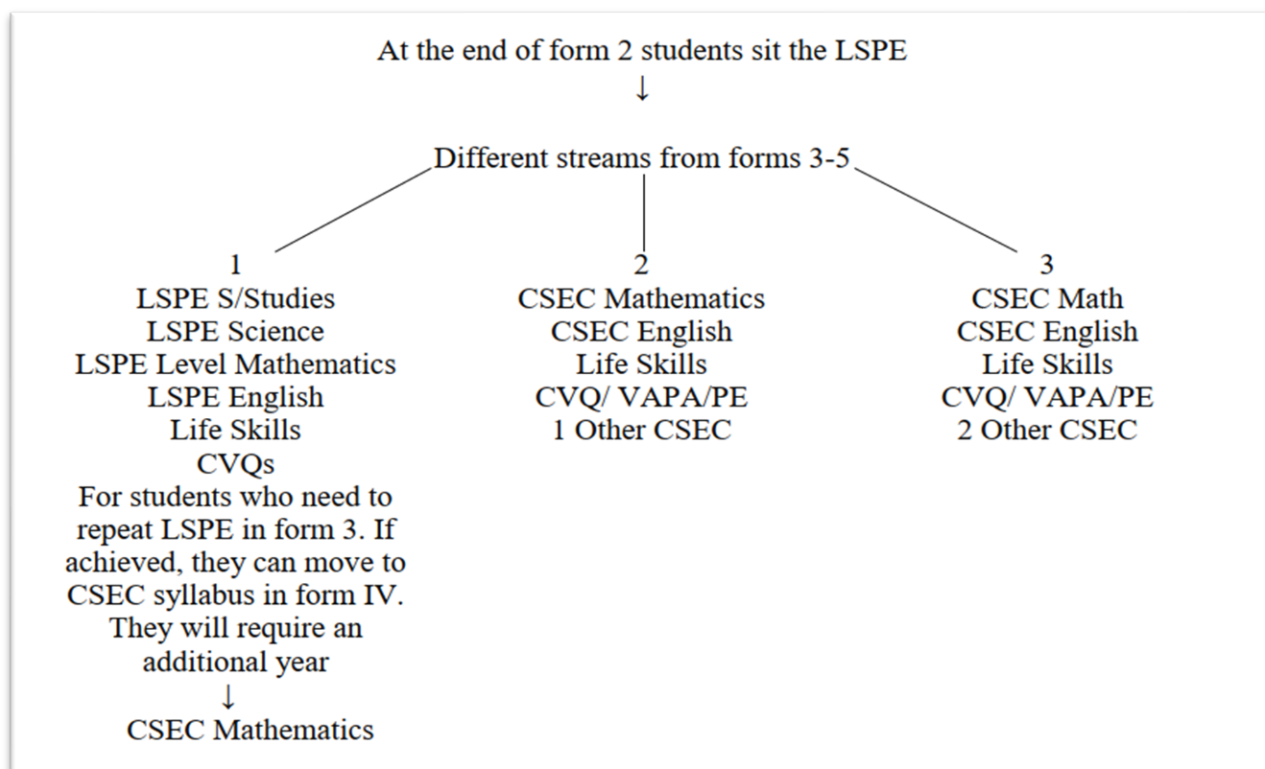


Figure 2 Curriculum Offering at Forms 3-5

The timetable at Forms 3-5 is as follows for stream 2 and 3:

Length of Cycle: Five (5) days

Number of periods per day: 5

Duration of one (1) period: ~ 60 minutes

Proposed assignment of periods: 25

Dedicated period for Guidance Officers/School Social Workers

Table 3 Timetable at Forms 3-5

Subject		No of periods
CSEC English	English Language Arts	5
CSEC Mathematics	Mathematics	5
CSEC / CVQ/PE		5
CSEC / CVQ / Life Skills	HFLE / Life Skills	2
	PE / VAPA	3
CSEC/CVQ/PE		5

SUPPORTING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CURRICULUM IN SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Schools across the various education districts require research-based support for student recovery from learning loss because of the COVID-19 pandemic-related extended school closures. Early planning is indispensable to direct scarce resources to effectively manage the strategies designed to mitigate against the effects of learning loss with cost-efficient strategies. Research has clearly identified the need to go beyond remediation and accelerated programmes, hence the system-wide approach of the Revised School Operational Plan. Consideration of the following key findings contributed to the development of the plan:

- Focused district and school collaboration with key Ministry personnel inclusive of School Supervision and Management, Curriculum Planning and Development Division and Student Support Services to ensure School Development Plans are well designed and implemented with a high level of fidelity.
- Additional in-school strategies inclusive of time to focus on fundamental skills in numeracy and literacy. These key skills will be complemented by the introduction of practical skill subjects, which would give students the vital grasp about being able to live self-sufficiently.
- Integration of school-day classroom instruction with after-school curricula to help tailor programmes to better assist in learning loss recovery. Such programs will include Cadets, Girl Guides and Scouts.

- Creation and expansion of community partnerships to help schools and districts create and implement cost efficient programs such as after-school and vacation programs. Community partnerships create external sources of funding, shared resources (e.g., facilities), and utilizes trained volunteers from service programs.

The following activities should accompany the implementation of the revised curriculum:

1. Sensitization of Teachers, Parents and Students on the 5 Year Plan for their Students

- Teachers, Heads of Departments and Deans to meet with Special team from Curriculum Planning and Development Division (CPDD), Student Support Services Division (SSSD) and School Supervision and Management Division (SSMD) to be sensitized about the 5-year revised operational plan for the schools.
- Form Teachers, Deans, Heads and subject teachers together with CPDD, SSSD and SSMD to sensitize parents and students about the revised operational plan for the schools.

2. Training of Teachers on Strategies for Dealing with Learners Facing Challenges

- The MOE to offer relevant training courses for teachers and administrators through the collaboration of TEPPD with SSSD
- Heads of Department may organize training sessions during Department meeting times.

3. Provision of Diagnostic Testing and Testing for Learning Disabilities

- Hearing and vision testing coordinated by the EDHU
- Testing for learning disabilities led by the SSSD

4. Adjustment of the School Curriculum

- Curriculum committee at the school meets and adjusts, where necessary, the school curriculum based on the guidelines provided for the different levels.
- The timetable is adjusted for alignment with the guidelines provided for the different levels.