



The Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION**

**MOE ACCESS: DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION LAUNCH**

*(REMARKS)*

**Message By**

**Mr Kurt Meyer**

**Permanent Secretary**

**Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2023**

**9:30am**

## **SALUTATIONS:**

- **Dr the Honourable Keith Rowley**, Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.
- **Dr the Honourable Nyan Gadsby-Dolly**, Minister of Education
- **The Honourable Penelope Beckles**, Minister of Planning and Development
- **Senator the Honourable Allyson West**, Minister of Public Administration
- **Senator the Honourable Hassel Bacchus**, Minister of Digital Transformation
- **The Honourable Lisa Morris-Julian**, Minister in the Ministry of Education.
- **The Honourable Symon de Noreiga**, Minister of Communications in the Office of the Prime Minister
- **Assemblyman Zorisha Hackett**, Secretary of Education Research and Technology - Tobago House of Assembly
- **Mr Kurt Meyer**, Permanent Secretary - Ministry of Education.
- **Other Permanent Secretaries and Deputy Permanent Secretaries.**
- **Dr Peter Smith**, Chief Education Officer, Directors, Heads of Departments and other staff of the Ministry of Education.

- **Representatives of International Agencies**
- **Representative Heads of Denominational Boards and other Education Stakeholders**
- **Specially invited guests**
- **Ladies and gentlemen**
- **Members of the Media.**

Good Morning.

Today holds great significance as it represents a major milestone in the Ministry of Education's Digital Transformation journey. I ask that you please take out your phones... **(pause)**... Within the palms of your hands, lies the power of a digitally empowered Ministry which gives access to services, systems, and solutions at the click of a button. I welcome you to the launch of "MOE: Access" under the theme: "Unlocking the future of Education."

The project document articulates twelve goals of the Ministry's Digital Transformation Programme but for the purpose of these remarks, I will draw your attention to four:

1. To promote a learner centred education system
2. To improve teacher efficiency and effectiveness
3. To allow for digital fluency at all levels in the education system
4. To promote resilience in school system

Even before the pandemic, a path forward toward digitization was underway; COVID-19 merely expedited the need for increased

accessibility to minimise loss of learning and increase access. However, what we have learned from this experience is that the ecosystem for transforming the education system calls for all hands on deck. I am therefore very happy that the representatives of many education stakeholders groups, who have been part of this learning process are here with us today. They have worked with us to test, pilot and scrutinize many of projects being officially launched today. They have been an integral part of the journey and will continue to be so. As such, today's launch is in no way the conclusion of this process. The Ministry's digital transformation agenda continues not only with projects already in the pipeline but as our country's digital transformation evolves so will the Ministry of Education's to ensure our students are prepared.

With this initiative, we aim to harness the power of technology to transform education in our country, Trinidad and Tobago. The Ministry of Education envisions a future where every student has access to high-quality digital resources, personalized learning

experiences, and the skills they need to succeed in the digital age. Furthermore, the Ministry understand the critical role that teachers play in shaping the future of education, as such, the new toolkits and training modules provide teachers with the support they need to deliver high-quality digital resources and personalized learning experiences to their students.

Currently there are eighteen projects in the Digital Transformation Programme. Most have been in use for a while, some are in test mode and some in development mode. New projects are being conceptualized based on client, student, teacher and staff needs, others based on keeping abreast with developments nationally and internationally. The point is we have come very far but know we have more work to do, from further improvements in our human resource systems through a complete build out of IHRIS to making all our student's text books available online. But to do this we need the right people.

We must take note of that Trinidad and Tobago's education system has produced the minds that made these projects a reality. No doubt, our education system is one of the best in its class. This initiative will undoubtedly benefit hundreds of thousands of our clients and we often overlook the people who made it possible. The staff who made it possible for over 640 schools, 250 000 students, 13 000 plus teachers and 9000 members of staff to have access to improved system, services and benefits from digital solutions.

It would be remiss of me not to pay due respect to the stellar teams who contributed toward this success: those who dreamed of a better way of doing things; those who mapped out new solutions; those who spent nights writing the code; the end users who sat and tested the system; the teams that stayed up trouble shooting and finding solutions, those who found ways to counter attacks on our systems; the teachers and principals who were the first users and gave feedback; the copy writers, the final end users, the parents and children who give

us their feedback daily. I say thank you. Your contribution to the Ministry's success deserves our applause.

There were many teams across the MOE who contributed but I wish to make special mention of and ask these teams to stand. The ICT Dev Ops and their former director, Cory Belfon, now the DPS at the Ministry of Digital Transformation, the IHRIS team, the Educational Technology Unit, Teacher Education, the Curriculum Department and Corporate Communication Division teams. We say thank you and applaud you for your work in bringing us to this juncture. (**applause**)

I urge you all present here today to take the message back to your various organizations- join us on this exciting journey of unlocking the future of education, the MOE cannot do this alone.

Ladies and gentlemen, with these remarks, I thank you for your attention and I formally introduce to you *MOE: ACCESS, Systems, Services, Solutions*. (**await playback on screen**)