



MEDIA RELEASE

September 7th, 2024

Dear Editor / Head of Department,

NO REDUCTION IN GOVERNMENT'S FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO 13 PRIVATE SPECIAL SCHOOLS

The Ministry of Education wishes to state categorically that there has been no reduction in the financial assistance provided annually to thirteen (13) registered Private Special Schools. The annual amount currently provided was approved at eleven million, five hundred and forty thousand dollars (\$TT\$11,540,000) for a period of five (5) years from academic year 2021/22. The Ministry of Education administers twelve (12) Public Special Schools, owned and completely funded by the Government; and also provides financial assistance, on the basis of a per student rate, to thirteen (13) Private Special Schools, as it is done for students placed at twelve (12) Private Secondary Schools. There is an approved rate, per student, in all cases.

The Ministry takes careful note of a media report, highlighting the case of a specific Private Special Needs School that has been having financial difficulties for some time. While this is regrettable, the Ministry of Education cannot extend funding to this private institution, outside of the approved framework, to shore up its financial position. This was reiterated at a recent meeting between Ministry officials and the School's proprietors. Therefore, to insinuate that the financial difficulties faced by the school are caused by a policy decision of the Ministry of Education is deliberately misleading.

The Government, through the Ministry of Education, continues to support our young citizens with special needs through the provision of twelve (12) Public Special Schools, annual financial assistance totalling eleven million, five hundred and forty thousand dollars (\$11,540,000) to thirteen (13) Private Special Schools, the provision of over four hundred (400) student aides to students with special needs in the mainstream education system, and a cadre of Special Education staff throughout the educational districts.

The Ministry of Education will continue to build and strengthen these systems in order to ensure equity in educational opportunity for all citizens.

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