COMMONWEALTH OF THE BAHAMAS
Ministry of Education
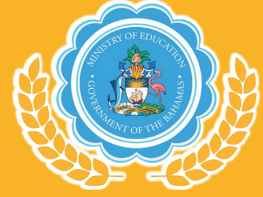
Strategic Plan For The Safe Reopening of Schools

2020

SAFETY FIRST...EDUCATION ALWAYS

FOREWORD

Education: Building A Responsive and Resilient Sector Through Teamwork and Technology

We have entered an era that calls for change. Change however is accompanied by new processes and procedures that sometimes result in push back, hesitancy, resistance and trepidation, all of which attempt to stifle modernization/growth, including educational innovation.

In 2019, change was ingrained in the Department of Education's goal to ensure equity through the use of Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) to provide for the education of students on our Family Islands who were without teachers in specific subject areas. This provision served as the springboard for the delivery of education to students in Abaco and Grand Bahama, who were educationally disenfranchised as a result of the devastating impact of Hurricane Dorian, a cataclysm that could have exasperated existing inequities in the Bahamian educational system. COVID-19, a global pandemic, was equally as devastating, for it impacted the delivery of education worldwide. At the peak of this global pandemic, according to data compiled by UNESCO, the education of nearly 1.6 billion students in more than 190 countries was affected as a result of the closure of learning institutions. This represents 94% of the world's student population. In The Bahamas, the closure of schools mandated the quick movement of over forty thousand Bahamian students from the Face to Face Model for learning to the virtual platform. Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) allowed for this transference from brick and mortar to the virtual platform.

Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) is defined as a variety of mechanisms used to provide access to information. This is not a new term in the educational arena, for ICTs have always been integrated into our system. The historical narrative of the Bahamian educational system records the emergence and advancement of technology. The Ten Year Plan for Education, updated 11th August, 2009, captures education's matriculation from slate to interactive board. It records that the available technologies, during this time, included access to computers and inter-active boards, and it forecast the need for and benefits of a comprehensive Management Information System. In ensuing years, the historical narrative of ICTs in education continued to unfold. At the 19th Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers held in The Bahamas 22nd – 26th June, 2015, further inroads in the area of ICTs were highlighted. It was reported that considerable efforts had been made to install computer labs and E-literacy capabilities in every junior and senior high school in The Bahamas. In 2017, The Ministry of Education continued to add details about the history of ICTs by naming Digital Evolution as one of its five priority areas for the Prime Minister's Delivery Unit. Digital Evolution, along with Universal Pre-Primary Education, Lower Primary Literacy, Improving High School Graduation Rate and School Modernization focus on improving the quality of education in The Bahamas.

Digital Evolution called for the creation of smart schools so as to improve the quality of education. To facilitate this, the Ministry of Education commenced infrastructural changes by equipping all public schools with fibre and Wi Fi. To date, more than sixty schools have been upgraded, and it is expected that considerably more will be added by the end of the calendar year. The Ministry is also making efforts along with strategic partners to support the integration of technology in the teaching and learning process.

Further, a Technology Task Force has been commissioned and charged with the responsibility of selecting and giving oversight to the implementation of both a comprehensive EMIS (Education Management Information System) and Learning Management System (LMS) system. The EMIS has the capacity to collect, process and analyze data and generate reports that can inform decision making at the policy and operational levels based on general trends. On the other hand, the LMS is a software application which provides for the administration, documentation, tracking, reporting, automation and delivery of educational courses and training programmes. This system serves as a platform for teachers to teach, students to access live

and on demand lessons, a repository for instructional resources, and it will facilitate a variety of professional development activities.

Continuing with scripting the story of technology integration through the employment of ICTs, the Ministry of Education launched Virtual School in 2019. Virtual School is lauded as providing the landscape for education to erect several pillars, especially in the areas of training and the development of digital resources. These pillars undergird the inborn changes in education's pursuit to ensure equity and build a system that is responsive to disrupters.

The Ministry of Education is keenly aware that changes are driven by those in the trenches. It also recognizes that if the vices of change are not attended to expeditiously they can rear their ugly heads at critical junctures to create a culture that derails a well–orchestrated plan. The Ministry therefore has embarked on a holistic approach to training: in the areas of technology, the development of digital resources, Pacing Guides and fluid timetables. Stakeholders representing the various tiers in education have been equipped with strategies in the use of technology, provided with digital resources, Pacing Guides, methods on subject integration and fluid timetables that, if necessary, will allow for the entire educational system to pivot quickly from one learning modality to another. Technology integration contributes greatly to a seamless transition but vehemently, it echoes an underlying tenet put forth by the narrative, "From Slate to Active Board." Technology integration resonates with the principle that, in addition to being adaptable,one must have a mindset to embrace change.

The Ministry/Department of Education is cognizant that in an ever changing world, the education sector is charged with forecasting the future so that graduates are prepared for jobs that do not yet exist. In this forecast, curricular reforms and ongoing professional development should lead the way, for they will become necessary to strengthen the work force. This dictates that the education sector must be poised and willing to reform, being aided by the available ICTS to better prepare graduates for the increasing and different demands of the new world of work. The History of ICT integration supports this mandate.

To this end, the Ministry/Department of Education has been engaged in building capacity in the use of ICTs, and since COVID-19 this sector has intensified its efforts around technology integration. **This aggressive approach** has contributed to this sector being able to confidently put forth three modes of instruction for the reopening of school. Conceptually, we can engage in the administration of three models concurrently.

Schools around The Bahamas will begin on October 5th, and, under normal circumstances schools would have commenced using the Face to Face Model. This model is the preferred model. However, given health and safety considerations, it has been projected that some schools will engage in Remote Instruction, while others will go Face to Face. Both models call for the employment of ICTs, for technology integration will play a key role in this new reality. Paradoxically, Hurricane Dorian and COVID-19 brought with it deaths, but simultaneously they ushered in the birth of this new normal. Indeed, 2020 is another turning point in the history of education and another chapter in the History of ICTs in Education.

Agreeably, in this COVID-19 Era, ICTs in Education have taken centre stage, but the overarching goal of the Ministry/Department of Education to produce the ideal graduate remains intact.

The ideal graduate will:

- *possess relevant knowledge in core disciplines/ learning areas to be functionally literate;*
- *think critically, be an innovative problem solver and show initiative;*
- *demonstrate creativity and innovation;*
- *communicate effectively and collaborate willingly;*
- *demonstrate flexibility and adaptability;*
- *use social skills effectively;*
- *appreciate Bahamian culture and utilize the appropriate cultural skills;*
- *guide and inspire others to do their best;*
- *have an appropriate awareness of the forces that shape and influence his/her life and surroundings;*
- *exhibit civic responsibility and display behavior that benefit the wider community;*
- *appreciate his/her role and responsibility to the local community, The Bahamas, the Caribbean Region, the Commonwealth of Nations and the world;*
- *demonstrate integrity and ethical behavior at all times;*
- *possess digital literacy, appreciate the role of technology and innovation in national development;*
- *display skills and competencies that reflect career and college readiness;*
- *possess ability to work effectively in teams; and*
- *embrace his/her role as an environmental steward.* *(Shared Vision for Education 2030)*

The Ministry of Education, recognizing the significance of the integration of technology, has blazed a trail that denotes it is intentional about being a responsive sector. Simultaneously, advancing Information and Communication Technologies in Education will also better prepare students to become digital citizens.

Clearly, COVID-19 and Hurricane Dorian showcased the significance of ICTs and the integration of technology. They also demonstrated that the Ministry/Department of Education is a responsive sector, always willing and ready to build the capacity to embrace fundamental changes that will benefit pedagogical and technological innovations.

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EDUCATION: THE RIGHT OF A CHILD

Every child has the right to an education.
It is the duty of parents to select one of the three options for schooling in The Bahamas to facilititate that right.

"It shall be the duty of the parent of every child of compulsory school age to cause him to receive full-time education suitable to his age, ability and aptitude by regular attendance or otherwise."
Education Act, Section 23 (1)

Public School   **Private School**   **Homeschool**
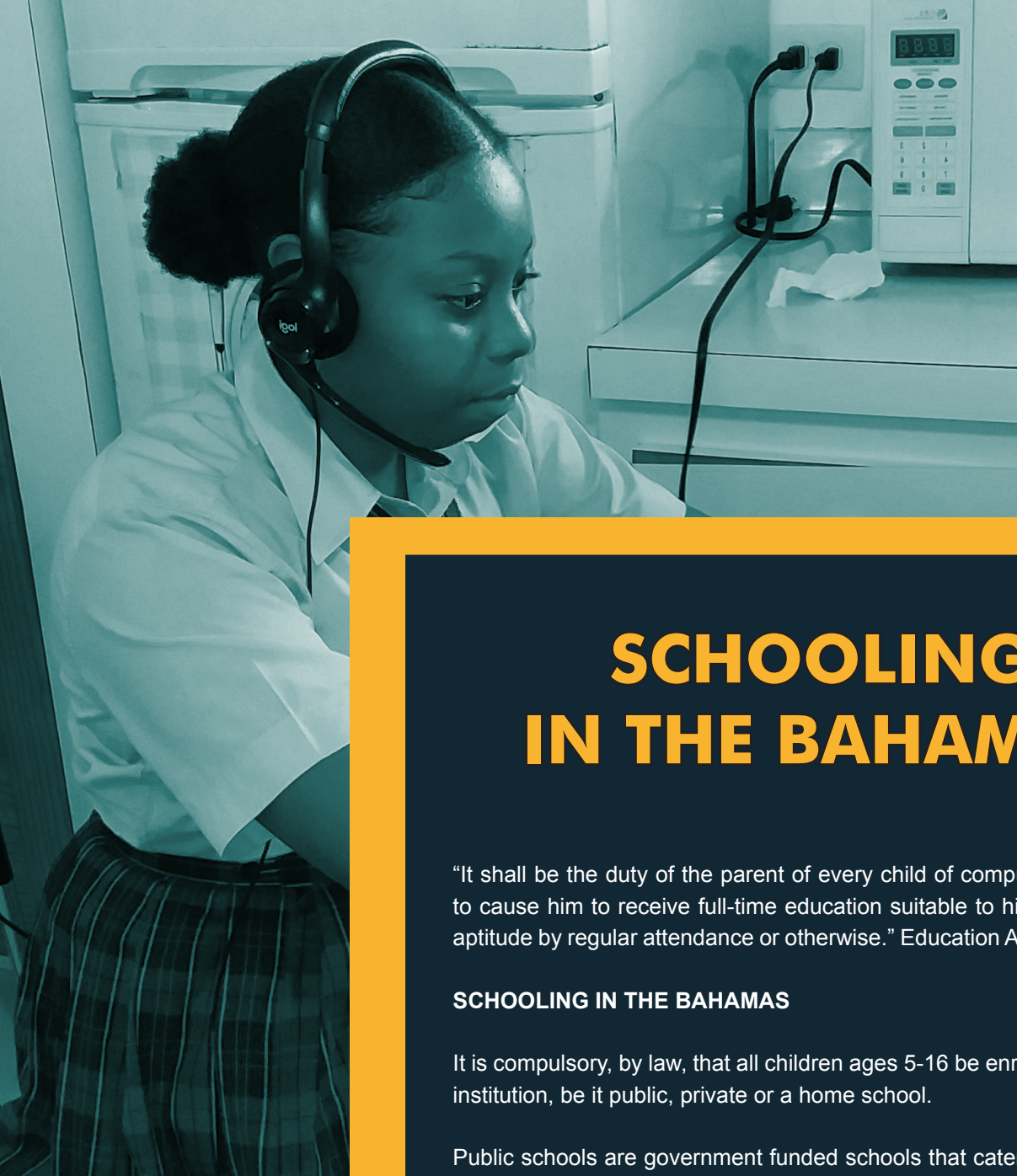
SCHOOLING IN THE BAHAMAS

"It shall be the duty of the parent of every child of compulsory school age to cause him to receive full-time education suitable to his age, ability and aptitude by regular attendance or otherwise." Education Act, Section 24 (1).

SCHOOLING IN THE BAHAMAS

It is compulsory, by law, that all children ages 5-16 be enrolled in a learning institution, be it public, private or a home school.

Public schools are government funded schools that cater to students from grades one through twelve.

Parents can opt to enroll their children in private institutions at a cost stipulated by that organization. Private schools which meet the standard of the Government of The Bahamas receive a subsidiary to support the teaching learning process.

Parents may choose to home school their children, but they are required to register with the Ministry of Education. A sample registration form is available from the MOE's website.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLAN

On 15th March, 2020, the government of The Bahamas announced the country's first COVID-19 case, and immediately following this announcement, schools were closed for Face to Face instruction. The delivery of instruction, via remote learning was instituted, and this helped us to manage generally during this pandemic. Many positive adaptive measures were explored nationally, and the Ministry of Education was not exempt from this new norm. In the education sector, the widescale use of virtual learning and information and communication technology **(ICT)** were employed, and resulting from this, our thesis, which did not emerge with COVID-19, was supported. COVID-19 substantiated our claim and thrust that ICT offers many possibilities for significant and positive changes.

On 13th June, 2020, schools closed, but one month later, this global pandemic distinguished itself as a stubborn entity. With the widespread of the corona virus, mandatory protocols such as social and physical distancing were instituted. Given these mandates, the Ministry of Education envisioned that the operations of school would differ significantly when schools reopened for the new academic year.

COVID-19 not only introduced new health and safety protocols, but accompanying it were additional layers of bureaucracy and logistics. It was clear that these needed to be addressed so that the Ministry of Education would be able to continue to fulfill its mandate of providing education, in a COVID-19 Era.

To address the safe reopening of schools, the Director of Education crafted a Concept Note which spoke to the employment of a system of committees, beginning with convening a Steering Committee. The Steering Committee served as the strategic and decision-making group in this exercise, and it consisted of senior officers of the DOE and MOE. Their mandate was to examine all factors that would have to be taken into consideration for the safe reopening of schools.

A Chairperson was named for each of the following sub-committees which represent ten key areas in the Department/ Ministry of Education:
Curriculum and Instruction
Special Education
Schools Management
Technology
Buildings, Equipment and Supplies
Health and Safety
Protection, Well-being and Social Assistance
Staff Preparedness and Training
Stakeholder Engagement
Public Relations
Chairpersons then nominated individuals best able to offer advice on matters related to the work of sub-committees.

Nominees were selected from the groups below:
MOE/DOE HQ staff (2)
District Superintendent or School Administrator (2)
Private Schools Representatives (2)
Teachers (2)
Relevant Government Agency (2)
School Board Representative (1)
PTA Representative (1)
Family Island Representative (1)

Following the specific format, as outlined by the Concept Note: Terms of Reference were developed for each sub-committee. Each committee then reported to the Steering Committee, via its Chair, and emanating from the reports was the creation of a draft proposal for the safe reopening of school.

Consultations were held with a cross section of stakeholders: Executive Management in the Ministry of Education, Ministry and Department of Education Technical Officers, District Superintendents, Principals, teachers, support staff, Bus and Ferry Operators, parents, School Boards, Island Administrators, Local Government Officials, civic organizations and other members of civil society. From these consultations, the content of the draft proposal was strengthened, producing a strategic plan that would position the education sector to respond, not only to COVID-19, but other crises that might confront us on a national level.

TIMELINE OF THE MOE'S

Virtual Learning
Portal was launched
with content for
Pre-Primary to
Grade 12

23

Distribution of
lunch vouchers

15

The Prime Minister
mandated the closure
of all schools

15

Distribution of
lunch vouchers

25

Live classes for
primary students

5

Report Card
Distribution

25

MARCH   **APRIL**   **MAY**   **JUNE**

16

Response to
COVID-19
(2 day
Conclave-
March 16-17)

18

Bahamas Learning Channel
296 Launched

10

Teachers reported to
work

30

Live classes
for secondary
students

COVID–19 RESPONSE

Timeline

National Examinations started — 13

Stakeholder Engagement Sessions Commenced — 9

Training for Support Staff, Bus and Ferry Operators — 17

Training for Lunch Vendors and Caterers — 7

Teachers' Training — 7

JULY

- 2 — CRS 20 Two Day Conclave (Presentation of Sub-Committees' recommendations for the Safe Reopening of Schools)
- 8 — Training for Principals (The Safe Administration of National Exams in a COVID-19 Era)

AUGUST

- 24 — Technology Training Commenced (EMIS)
- 31 — Administrators' Conclave

SEPTEMBER

- 14 — National Examinations Recommenced

OCTOBER

- 5 — Reopening of School

HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

COVID-19 has been credited as the impetus for the creation of this document. However, to rest education's response in the lap of this pandemic would refute that the Department of Education has been consistently immersed in exploring and implementing innovations to meet the demands that are synonymous with change and the demographics of our archipelago.

Our archipelago is divided into seven hundred islands and cays, and twenty-seven of these are populated. The Ministry of Education is charged with providing education for one hundred and sixty-one schools, over twenty-five islands and cays. This dictate places heavy demands on our system, for unlike some of our regional counterparts who have one land mass, we have to multiply our resources to meet the needs of our students, who by law are entitled to an education from age five to sixteen. Providing resources, human and instructional, has always been an area of concern, but undaunted by the task of ensuring equity, the Ministry of Education effectively employed the utilization of technology to bear on this issue. Responding to the need for instructional support on islands that were faced with teacher shortages, the Ministry of Education assigned students to Virtual School. Hence, when COVID-19 reared its head, we were positioned to make a transition.

We were not found scrambling and without innovation, but, admittedly, ingrained in transitioning our entire staff and student population to remote learning were inborn challenges. For three months we forged our way ahead, tackling each challenge with the view to build a system that could respond to possible threats beyond COVID-19.

COVID-19 has emphasized our strategic imperative, that is, Information Communication Technologies must be at the heart of what we do. We must continue to build a sector that is equipped to transition from one modality to another, and simultaneously train staff, students, parents and those attached to our sector with the skills needed to make unprecedented and unpredictable transitions. This plan offers additional ways in which this can be done, and it does so in the context of a COVID-19 Era.

This document therefore is multi-layered, and paramount are the endorsed health and safety protocols which all schools, service providers and those who visit and or use our facilities must follow. Districts and School Managers will be guided by the health and safety protocols outlined in this plan. They will build upon or create their Health and Safety Plans,which will be tailored to their context, but with the added focus of COVID-19. This added focus will highlight guidelines governing the wearing of masks, physical and social distancing, temperature checks, sanitization, set up of classrooms, staff rooms and movement on campus. Health and Safety Plans will be made available for public viewing on school websites.

In addition to health and safety protocols, determining the mode of delivery of instruction is also critical. Three models are proposed in this plan, but based on reports from health officials, the Remote Model will be our default model. To provide for a seamless transition, this plan details how the three models will unfold. School leaders have to be prepared to change over to any of the other models or operate within two models at the same time. To do this efficiently and effectively, school leaders will utilize the information in this document to dialogue with their teams at their respective schools about Curriculum and Instruction, utilizing the Pacing Guide, subject and technology integration, assessment of and for learning, developing resource kits, both digital and hard copy, roles, responsibilities and accountability. School leaders will examine their context and extract from the

broader implementation to plot out their approach to the three models.

All groups that are part of the school will be addressed in this document. Recommendations to accommodate our pre-primary students and vulnerable populations in school communities are also outlined in this plan, and school based teams will determine and seek to acquire what will be required to meet the needs of these communities.

Further, this plan outlines measures that will be put in place for the continuation of support services and programmes offered by Student Services, Special Services and Student Development. School leaders will review the means by which services will be delivered, and, for each modality, they will work in partnership with officers from several sections to develop a plan to facilitate the continued provision of these services for their school community.

A part of the support mechanism is the Health, Wellness and Protection component of this plan. Guidance and Counselling and the Employee Assistance Programme will collaborate with community partners to ensure that services are available, regardless of the delivery of instruction. This plan details the various services offered by these Sections, how to access them and new innovations that will be implemented to further advance the agenda of these areas.

In addition to all of the support services noted, this plan also cites training as an additional means by which the Ministry of Education will build capacity. Building capacity serves as one of the key goals of the Ministry of Education, therefore this plan maps out training modules in all of the areas spoken to by the various sub-committees. The training modules noted are not exhaustive; hence, updates will be provided on the Ministry of Education Website on a consistent basis. Currently, training is available on demand on the Ministry of Education's Website **www.ministryofeducationbahamas. com.** Schools will review the training modules in this guide, participate where applicable or mandated, and given their school context, create school based training components. School based training modules will be posted on the school's website.

Information Communication Technologies in Education (ICTs) will also play a critical role in all of the modalities. It saturates this plan! Pre COVID-19 showcased the significant role ICTs played in complementing the traditional in-person classroom learning with new learning modalities - from live broadcasts to 'educational influencers' to virtual reality experiences. In this new norm therefore, the use of ICTs will be broadened to provide continued digital access to education in all of the proposed models. This plan will outline public, private partnerships and technological innovations being carried out by the Ministry of Education to address digital divide and inequalities amongst staff and students. Further, this plan will speak to the role of school managers and instructional leaders forging their way ahead with greater intentionality about matters related to their roles as school leaders, accountability, monitoring and evaluating, assessment of and for learning.

Underlying this aggressive approach to promote greater use of ICTs and the plan for technology integration is the view that today it is COVID-19, but tomorrow we might be confronted with another hurdle that forces us to make paradigm shifts. With a philosophy enshrined in the belief that whatever confronts the education sector, it must not only be resilient, but in a position to respond quickly to meet the challenges head on, the Ministry of Education considers technology integration as the vehicle to assist with this undertaking. Further, and aside from COVID-19, the Ministry/Department of Education is committed to preparing students for global citizenry. Standing with its

global counterparts, the Ministry/Department of Education refutes the notion/ myth that teaching and learning are limited to space and time. What better means to do this than through ICTs? Schools then will have to be engaged in a needs assessment to determine which additional technological resources they will have to procure and what training needs they will have to address to make effective use of the technology. Emanating from their needs based assessment, schools will develop a technology plan that, as far as possible, will be supported by the Ministry of Education.

The Ministry of Education is cognizant that some support mechanisms are more imminent than others, especially given that the decision has already been made for some of our islands to engage strictly in Remote Learning. Remote Learning and adherence to Health and Safety Protocols in a COVID-19 Era will call for Human Resources and Schools Management to address questions related to the roles and responsibilities of staff in a remote environment, as well as assist with repurposing staff and determining if there is a need to employ additional staff. Based on this assessment, decisions will have to be made at the executive level to address the aforementioned. This plan includes what will be required of administrators, as well as instructional and support staff to provide for the delivery of education, sustain or promote accountability and maintain an environment that is healthy and safe.

Remote Learning and adherence to Health and Safety Protocols in a COVID-19 Era will also hinge heavily on the work carried out by Physical Plant, whose remit includes the maintenance and upkeep of buildings, provision of supplies and equipment. Documented in this Strategic Plan is the work that has been completed by the sub-committee with responsibility for Building, Equipment and Supplies. This sub-committee has engaged in building assessments, infrastructural changes and the provision of school supplies and equipment. This plan will help School Managers and School Boards to review the allocation of supplies and rethink how school allocated and generated funds can be managed to supplement supplies

that will be provided.

The Ministry of Education is tasked with being in a position of readiness to provide for the continuation of education. This Strategic Plan seeks to fulfill this goal. It is envisioned that all sections of the Ministry of Education and stakeholders will move from their interaction with this document with a greater understanding of the work that they do and what measures/systems they can implement to be in a state of readiness, whatever the situation. Recognizing that change is inevitable and ongoing monitoring and evaluating will birth new innovations, the Ministry of Education avails itself to additional input. It is only through our collective efforts that we will build a responsive and efficient system that is adequately prepared to function in the midst of the challenges ahead.

VISION

Our vision is for a Bahamian education system that promotes the highest standards and produces students who are intellectually curious, compassionate, responsible and capable of making a meaningful contribution to the country's productivity, prosperity and peace.

MISSION STATEMENT

Guided by the universal principles of truth, justice, honesty, diligence and respect for the individual, the Ministry will provide all persons in The Bahamas with opportunities to receive quality education equipping them with the knowledge, skills, beliefs, values and attitudes required to work and live in an interdependent, changing world.

PHILOSOPHY AND BELIEF STATEMENTS

Education in the Commonwealth of The Bahamas is the principal vehicle for promoting the development of individuals and our nation. Therefore, our education policies and practices are grounded in the following principles:

a). Recognition of the intrinsic worth of every human being and the commitment to respect all human rights, including the right to an education;

b). Conviction that the government, educators, parents, students and the wider community must all share responsibility for the success of the educational enterprise;

c). Appreciation of the significance and value of the rich diversity of The Bahamas and its people, and the responsibility to respond to that diversity with tolerance and understanding;

d). Recognition of The Bahamas as part of a wider world community which it must value and with which it must interact responsibly;

e). Commitment to strengthening partnerships at the national, regional and international levels to promote the development of the education system.

THE PLAN

The Ministry of Education (MOE) will be guided by health officials to inform its decision related to which model of instruction will govern the safe reopening of school. Given the uncertainty of the health concerns that The Bahamas might be confronted with when school reopens, the Ministry of Education has selected the Remote Model as the default mode of instruction. Prior to 5th October, a definite decision will be made about the safest model to implement moving forward.

In the meantime, the Ministry of Education, in its effort to be proactive, has explored ten key areas that will position this sector for any eventuality. Recommendations emanating from these key areas were used to develop a framework for the safe reopening of schools, and this framework was presented to various stakeholders. A wide range of input was garnered from stakeholders, and used to build upon the work carried out by respective sub-committees. This Strategic Plan therefore reflects the input of a cross section of individuals and civic organizations.

This Strategic Plan outlines specific recommendations related to our changing dynamics as a result of COVID-19 Era, but embedded in the plan are core sectors such as Curriculum and Instruction, Special Services, Student Services, Student Development and Schools Management that will continue to provide for the delivery of education in the midst of crises beyond COVID-19.

The Strategic Plan is divided into ten areas, beginning with an overview of activities that sub-committees have been engaged in prior to the reopening of schools. Activities will be further delineated to illustrate how they interface with the three modalities.

Pre-Reopening

This section focuses on the proactive approach taken by the Ministry of Education to address the safe reopening of school. Ten areas have been taken into consideration, and listed under each area are general and preliminary activities that will commence prior to the reopening of school.

These activities have been expounded in the specific models.

The Ministry of Education

- Reviewed recommendations submitted by the ten key areas.
- Provided support in areas recommended, given its current budget.
- Submitted a Cabinet Paper to substantiate the need for additional funding that will support the safe reopening of school.

Physical Plant

- Inspected and collated a profile of the general condition of the school buildings as is customary. The customary aspects include structure, roofing, building exterior and interior, plumbing, electrical, grounds, furniture and equipment.
- Inspected classrooms, bathrooms, equipment etc. to determine what measures, in addition to summer repairs, needed to be addressed for the safe reopening of schools.
- Prepared school buildings based on assessments carried out.
- Addressed connectivity to speak to online learning.
- Retrofitted buildings, (e.g. classrooms, staff rooms etc.), to accommodate the minimum three to six feet of distance between students.
- Provided written and pictorial signs (e.g. entrance, physical distancing, wearing of mask, hygiene practices etc.) and markers (six feet distancing) to be placed throughout the school to speak to health and safety protocols.
- Installed protective and plastic shields in front office areas.

Supplies
Physical Plant

- Determined which supplies will be needed for the safe reopening of schools.
- Provided initial written and pictorial signage to indicate one way routes on porches and stairs, where possible, and to encourage safety protocols regarding social distancing and respiratory hygiene practices and frequent hand washing.
- Supplied personal protective equipment (PPEs), cleaning and disinfecting supplies with the understanding that School Boards and or tuck shops funds will be used to supplement supplies received from the Ministry of Education.
- Provided supplies for schools without School Boards.
- Responded to matters related to windows and/or doors and cooling systems that hinder proper ventilation.

Equipment
Physical Plant

- Provided mobile hand sanitizing stations.

Ventilation
Physical Plant

- Inspected ventilation systems to ensure that they are operating properly and to provide for increased circulation of outdoor air as much as possible.
- Replaced air-condition filters.
- Repaired windows and or doors that hinder proper ventilation.

Water Systems
Physical Plant

- Examined water systems and features (e.g. sink faucets, drinking fountains, and decorative fountains) to determine safety after a prolonged facility shutdown.

Cleaning and Disinfecting
Physical Plant

- Provided all schools with "start-up" supplies for cleaning and disinfecting. Schools with School Boards will supplement Ministry of Education's supplies, and those schools without will receive supplies consistently.
- Established contractual agreements with cleaning companies to address deep cleaning when an

employee with COVID-19 case has been on site.

- Liaised with the **Department of Environmental Health Services** to ascertain how to support deep cleaning on the Family Islands.
- Identified companies that will be able to provide deep cleaning services.
- Indicated funding needed for deep cleaning.

Curriculum and Instruction

- Took into consideration the health and safety protocols and spoke to guidelines that can be used in the proposed models of instruction for their specific areas, in particular, Technical and Vocational, Agricultural Science and Physical Education.
- Developed Pacing Guides and training modules.
- Engaged in a range of training to equip Curriculum Officers with the skills that they will need to carry out their functions and make for a seamless transition from one model to another.
- Created training modules and facilitated training to support Curriculum and Instruction.
- Worked in collaboration with Student Services and Student Development to develop plans that would support the continuation of their services in the three modalities.

Special Education

- Determined what will be required to continue with the provision of services for students with special needs.
- Created a plan illustrating how special needs students will be catered to in all modalities.
- Created training modules and facilitated training for support staff, students and parents.

Special Services

- Recommended strategies to ensure the continuation of services to students in all of the models.
- Engaged in technology training to ascertain how services can be offered in all of the models.
- Created training modules and facilitated training.

Schools Management

- Ascertained data from schools to create a plan of action for student and staff engagement in all models.
- Utilized data to inform the development of timetables for all models.
- Examined data to redeploy staff strategically.
- Crafted a document that speaks to the changing roles of administrators and teachers.
- Provided District Superintendents with guided questions (see Check List in the Appendix 1) that they can use to aid school administrators with designing a School Operational Plan that speak to the following: how they will prepare the facility, address health and safety issues/plans, engage instructional and support staff, address the curriculum, meet the needs of special needs students, utilize funding, enlist the support of community partners to secure material and human resource, support parents, fill the gap, engage in assessment for and of learning, develop a school level plan for skill building amongst staff.
- Procured technology to support teaching and learning.
- Made available information related to technology standards for staff and students.
- Negotiated with local companies to assist with technology packages for staff and students.
- Developed alternative academic calendars based on different public health scenarios and taking into consideration modalities to be used for teaching and learning.
- Created training modules that will support District Superintendents and School Administrators with their operational plans.
- Facilitated ongoing training for District Superintendents, School Administrators, staff, students and parents.
- Recommended policies that need to be crafted or updated for Schools Management in the areas of teacher student ratio, duty of care, job descriptions, safety school management, online assessment, teacher assessment, data collection and reporting mechanisms, administrators, staff and students with comorbidities.

Protection, Well-being and Social Assistance

- Redeployed a Guidance Counsellor to the Virtual School.
- Provided district level group guidance, to continue with the provision of services to staff, students and parents.
- Engaged the services of Liaison Officers, from three government agencies (Ministry of Health, Social Services and National Security), to coordinate their respective Ministry's response to protection, well-being and social assistance and resources that can be used to assist with the work carried out by the Ministry of Education.
- Partnered with the Employee Assistance Programme to build capacity.

Health and Safety

- Created Health and Safety protocols.
- Provided additional support and information related to the work of Janitresses, Food Handlers, Bus and Ferry Operators. **See supplementary document. www.ministryofeducation.bahamas.com**
- Recommended contractual changes to address health and safety protocols that service providers will have to implement.
- **Trained** administrators, teachers, support staff, security personnel, students, parents, stakeholders regarding the health and safety imperatives.
- **Focused on the following components:-**
1. **Infection** (Who, What, How?)
   What is COVID-19?
   How does it spread?
   Who is at risk?
   What are the risk factors?
2. **Control** - which includes social distancing, use of masks and limited gatherings.
3. **Prevention** - which includes hand washing, sanitation, cleaning and disinfecting.
- Informed school management, administrators and teachers of the mechanisms to actively monitor and report on students and staff health.
- Assisted schools with building capacity for the operation of schools by implementing **policies that address key issues:** Physical distancing regulations, organizing spaces and activities appropriately, creating a safe environment for students and staff through proper cleaning and disinfection, promoting appropriate hygienic practices.
- Provided support to assist schools with establishing health and safety committees, so that they can raise awareness of health and safety issues in the workplace, conduct work site inspections, investigations and identify workplace risks and develop recommendations for the employer to address these risks.
- Provided a guide for processes that should be undertaken throughout the school day.
- Worked in collaboration with Public Relations to build public recognition through media messaging and an organized set of communication tactics.

Technology

- Recommended and demonstrated how technology innovation can support the work of the Ministry and Department of Education.
- Presented available alternatives in the absence of being able to procure, in a timely fashion and or due to financial constraints, what has been recommended.
- Created and implemented a technology training module.

Staff Preparedness and Training

- Created a training plan for the Ministry of Education Staff.
- Facilitated training September 7th – 11th, 2020.
- Compiled a training calendar based on training modules received from sub-committees.
- Uploaded and updated training modules.

Public Relations

- Fostered an environment of consistent and accurate dissemination of information to ALL stakeholders, **from ONE primary source**, in partnership with the expertise of our internal communications / **PR team.**
- Identified general communication needs that exist nationally relative to our educational product- blended learning approach, safe school protocols/general information and management policies for mass communication.
- Engaged target marketing strategies to disseminate information in a manner relevant to islands/districts and local communities and tiered groupings within the education sector.
- Recommended PR/Communication policy for natural/ normal dissemination vs disaster/ crisis environments.
- Proposed a PR work plan/cycle to guide the implementation of recommended activities in preparation for school reopening.
- Monitored the implementation of the Public Relations work plan.

Stakeholder Engagement

- Engaged the following stakeholders by presenting the Proposed Plan for the Safe Reopening of Schools:
  1. Island Administrators
  2. District Superintendents
  3. Principals
  4. Administrators
  5. Teachers
  6. Parents
  7. Support Staff

8. Students
9. Civic Organizations
10. Churches
11. Unions (Bahamas Union of Teachers, The Bahamas Educators Managerial Union, Bahamas Public Service Union)
12. National Advisory Council for Education

<u>All of the sub-committees</u>

- Created training modules.
- Submitted training calendars to the Training Sub-Committee.
- Facilitated ongoing training to support the implementation of their recommendations.
- Created core messages for Stakeholder Engagement and submitted to Public Relations.

- Recommended stakeholder groups that should be engaged in the development of this document.
- Recommended a committee representative to serve as support for the hotline.
- Identified and provided answers to frequently asked questions.
- Spoke to policy considerations.
- Prepared and submitted a budget to the Director of Education, Chairperson for the Steering Committee for the Reopening of School 20 (CRS-20).

DAILY SCHOOL OPERATIONS AND MANAGEMENT
General Road Map

The Department of Education has considered a **GENERAL ROAD MAP** that will govern daily school operations. This roadmap will outline the daily routine of staff and students and the health and safety protocols that will be implemented. The priority is minimizing the risk of direct infection of COVID-19 as teaching and learning continue, regardless of the chosen modality of instruction.

Movement On Campus

Arrival on Campus

Transportation (Bus/Ferry)

Class Seating Arrangement

Pre-Arrival and Self Check

Exit

SCHOOL

Start

PRE-ARRIVAL

Health and Safety Statement

Schools are a critical component of communities and have tremendous impact on the health, well-being, growth, and development of students and families. School safety and a positive school climate are not achieved by singular actions but rather by effective comprehensive and collaborative efforts requiring the dedication and commitment of all school staff and relevant community members. As such, every effort should be made to ensure that there is a safe and secure environment for all students, staff and visitors and to ensure school districts are prepared to effectively respond to all emergencies that might affect the health, safety, and security of students and staff.

Framework for Developing a Safety Plan

The following is a guide to creating a safety plan
1. **Maps.** Include school floor plans and a map of the area surrounding the school with multiple exit paths and meeting points clearly marked.
2. **Equipment and materials**. Through every step of the plan, list materials and equipment needed to carry it out the safety plan. Examples include flashlights, first aid kits, walkie-talkies, whistles, safety vests or helmets and contact lists.
3. **Roles and responsibilities**. As you list actions in your safety plan, include the person or persons assigned to complete them. This ensures that everyone knows what to do during an incident and that no important steps are missed or duplicated.
4. **Safety policies and procedures.** Attach copies of safety-related policies and procedures to your plan. These should include information on:
     • Parent unifications (who may pick up each child and their contact information)
     • Safety training and drills
     • How and when to contact parents, the police and emergency responders
     • Building security
     • Natural disaster and fire response
     • Responding to threats or incidents of violence
     • How to answer questions from parents, the authorities and the community
     • Emergency response during non-traditional school hours (summer school, after school activities and programmes, performances and other evening events)
     • Intervention and prevention strategies. In addition to procedures for addressing safety concerns, your plan should include the ways in which will prevent incidents.

Procedure for COVID-19 Suspected Cases

School managers must designate a space as a holding area in the event of **a suspected COVID-19 case.** They must also dedicate a room to be used to address traditional health concerns.

The following steps must be taken if there is **a suspected COVID-19 case** on the school campus:

1. Isolate the individual.
2. Shut down the area immediately.
3. Consult the MOH (Surveillance Unit) at 376-4705/502-4705 or the COVID-19 Hotline at 376-9387/376-9350 or School Health Unit at 502-4895/828-5954 or the nearest Community Clinic. Likewise, consult the DEHS at telephone number 322-8037.
4. Contact the parent/guardian, and supervise the student until he/she is collected.
5. If the authorised health official determines that a **student requires the immediate services offered by a health facility** and a parent/guardian is not available, a plan of action should be put in place to facilitate transporting that student. For example, if a student has to travel in an ambulance, a member of staff should follow in a private vehicle.
6. Follow the internal line of communication to convey information related to the suspected case, at first orally, and then in writing.
7. Following the advice given by DEHS, wait at least 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting. If the allotted time (24 hours) is not feasible, wait as long as possible. This waiting period minimizes the risk of infecting staff as the virus may die in that period.
8. DEHS will identify the rooms or spaces requiring cleaning and disinfecting. They will also determine if this process should be conducted by internal staff or an outside agency **and the length of time the impacted area should be closed.**
9. If the impacted area can be isolated, the remainder of the facility can be used.
10. Where necessary, the DEHS' Director shall issue to the Ministry of Education a communication indicating the satisfactory implementation of recommended cleaning and disinfecting procedures. This information

will then be conveyed through the internal channels of communication, and will indicate if or when the area can be reoccupied.

The person identified as a suspected case will be tested, and if tested positive, that individual will be documented as a COVID-19 case. The following steps explain how the suspected case will be managed:

1. The relevant medical authority will inform the school if an individual associated with the school is confirmed to have contracted the COVID-19 virus.
2. The school's administration will provide the relevant medical authority with information for contact tracing and other investigation.
3. School administration shall inform the staff and parents of the school of a confirmed case without revealing the name of the individual. At that time, they will assure them that the appropriate health and safety protocols are being followed and the matter is under control.
4. A daily register of students, staff and visitors to the school facility should be kept to facilitate the contact tracing exercise. Note: Any individual who was within six (6) feet of the person for more than (15) minutes and not wearing a mask is likely to be included in the contact tracing exercise.
5. Contact tracing will then be conducted by the MOH (Surveillance Unit).
6. Persons who are required to be quarantined must do so for fourteen (14) days. The fourteen day period begins from the last time that individual was in contact with the infected person.
7. The COVID-19 case must present a letter of clearance from an authorized medical official in order to return to school.

CUSTODIAL STAFF GUIDE
(SEE APPENDIX II)
Cleaning and Disinfecting
Surfaces and Objects

- First, clean the surface or object with soap and water.
- Then, disinfect using an EPA-approved disinfectant.
- If an EPA-approved disinfectant is unavailable, you can use 1/3 cup of bleach added to 1 gallon of water, or 70% alcohol solutions to disinfect.
- Do not mix bleach or other cleaning and disinfection products together. Bleach solutions will be effective for disinfection up to 24 hours.

Cleaning and Disinfection Steps
Step 1
Pre-Cleaning
- If surfaces are dirty, clean them. Use detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.

Step 2
Clean and disinfect.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces. (This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, counter tops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.)

Step 3
Disinfection
- Most common Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) registered household disinfectants will work. Use disinfectants appropriate for the surfaces. Read the labels.

Non-frequently touched surfaces and objects
- Surfaces and objects that are not frequently touched should be cleaned with soap and water, for they do not require additional disinfection.

Frequency of Cleaning
- A checklist should be established outlining cleaning strategies and timelines (daily, weekly and monthly) Frequently touched surfaces and objects should be cleaned daily.
- Classrooms must be cleaned before the start and at the end of the school day.
- There must be a deep cleaning and disinfection exercise every term.

Clean floors
- Clean floors using clean water and the recommended EPA certified disinfectant.
- Disinfect mop heads and allow for drying.

Waste
- Dispose of accumulated garbage daily.
- Clean and disinfect trash bins.
- Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.

PPE removal after cleaning
- Remove gloves.
- Place gloves in a plastic bag and discard immediately.
- Wash hands for 20 seconds with soap and water.
- Remove mask. If using a cloth mask, wash and reuse. Otherwise, discard immediately.

Outdoor Areas
- Outdoor area(s) generally require normal routine cleaning.

Disinfectants
Disinfection Type
- Soap and water mechanically removes the virus from your skin.
- Alcohol based sanitizers can be used on hands or surfaces.
- Bleach Solution - Diluting bleach, to make a bleach solution requires 1/3 cup bleach per gallon of water.
- Hydrogen Peroxide and Hospital Grade Disinfectants can be used.

- **DO NOT MIX CHEMICALS** - Do not mix disinfectants e.g. bleach and ammonia.
- Dispense disinfectants using spray bottles or commercial sprayers.

Type of Cleaning Cloths
- Cloths containing excessive dirt or worn should be discarded.
- Cloths should be color coded and each color for specific tasks.
- Cloths intended to be reused should be packaged in labeled bags, washed thoroughly with warm/hot water and a disinfectant (eg. Bleach).

School Boards

- School Boards are an integral part of the operation of schools, and it is important for collaboration to continue between school managers and board members. Decisions must be made as to the manner in which this relationship will continue so that the business of education is not stifled as a result of decisions made by the Competent Authority.
- In this era, School Boards will continue to ensure that provisions are made to address health and safety needs through the allocation and disbursement of funds.

Safety First... Education Always
Come Grow with Us!

Pre-Arrival (Mandatory)

This section focuses on the proactive measures to be undertaken by the Ministry of Education, District Superintendents, School Administrators, staff, parents, students, bus drivers, lunch vendors and caterers. These measures will be shared through training and other forms of communication to ensure that all stakeholders are aware of what will be required to transition smoothly on the school campus. To this end, this information will be made available to all stakeholders with the understanding that it is a framework for the governance of schools in a COVID-19 Era. This guide is dynamic, and it does not include all of the answers. Hence, updates will be distributed to speak to any change.

To promote health and safety, District Superintendents, School Administrators, staff, parents, students, bus drivers, lunch vendors and caterers will engage in the following activities, and School Administrators will be apprised of the subsequent protocols that will affect their interaction with schools:

Pre-Arrival

- School Administration will create or update Health and Safety protocols.
- Health and Safety protocols will be communicated to all stakeholders.
- Training will take place for all educational stakeholders.

Pre-Arrival Check List for Parents
(SEE APPENDIX IV AND V)

Parents should keep children at home
- who display symptoms consistent with COVID-19 as outlined by public health officials.
- if their children have a temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher.
- if they have been in contact with an individual diagnosed with COVID-19. This information should be conveyed to the school.
- if their children are suffering from a sore throat or other signs of illness, like a cough, diarrhea, severe headache, vomiting, or body aches.

Parents should
- ensure that their children are up-to-date with all recommended vaccines, including for flu.
- provide their children with and check personal protective packages (PPEs) – hand sanitizer, sanitizing wipes, tissue/hand towel.
- provide children with a set of guidelines that will govern their movement on the school/ public bus, ferry and while walking.
- instruct their children in health and safety protocols related to good hygiene, including using hand sanitizers and covering mouth and nose with a tissue to cough, or otherwise, into their elbow, as well as to physical and social distancing en route.
- where possible, procure a device for technology integration on campus.

Pre-Arrival Check List for Staff Members
- **Staff members should remain at home**
- if they have symptoms consistent with COVID-19, as outlined by public health officials.
- if they have a temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit/ above, and if they observe COVID-19 symptoms outlined by public health officials.
- if they have had close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19. This information must/should be conveyed to the school.

Pre-Arrival Check List for All Visitors

All visitors should
- should complete a self-check before seeking entrance to a school campus.
- be advised that they will NOT be allowed to enter campuses if they have symptoms of congestion, dry cough, breathing difficulties, sore throat and/or chills as outlined by health officials.

The Ministry of Education contracts Bus and Ferry Operators to transport students to and from school daily. Prior to the opening of school, Services Providers will be made aware of the following, and they will be responsible for complying with and ensuring that students adhere to health and safety protocols.

The Ministry of Education will conduct random checks, as is normally the case, to ensure adherence to the health and safety regulations.

Bus and Ferry Operators will be governed by the following guidelines:
Bus/Ferry Operators
- will be required to wear a face mask.
- will not allow anyone on the bus/ferry without a mask.
- will be advised to engage in sanitation protocols such as washing their hands often, including before and after completing trips.
- must have alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, and they must use it after assisting children to their seats or having direct contact with children, as needed throughout a trip.
- will add shields or enclosure systems to limit direct contact and exposure to viral particles between the driver and students.

- will, as far as possible, ensure that the **same** driver uses the same vehicle and keeps the same work schedule.
- will keep windows open for proper ventilation, weather permitting.
- will be advised that they should, twice daily, clean and disinfect the high touch areas of the bus such as seats, inside hand railing, floors, interior windows and wall sections below passenger windows, inside and outside door handles, pads and arm rests, or any other parts that are commonly used and that might have been touched.
- will ensure that students maintain 6 feet distancing as they board the bus/boat and 3 feet when they are seated on the bus/ferry.
- can seat families living in the same household together.
- will make sure that students remain in their designated seat, with physical distancing taken into consideration.
- will encourage students to practice good hygiene, including using hand sanitizer and covering mouth and nose with a tissue to cough, or otherwise, into their elbow.
- will load the bus by filling seats from back to front to limit students walking past one another. Operators are required to off load students from the front to the rear.
- If possible, Operators should not seat students in the first two row of the bus.
- should assign seats by cohort (same students sit together each day) or encourage students from the same family to sit together, or both.
- should not allow individuals, including parents, guardians and other caregivers, on the bus, unless necessary (i.e., to assist a student with a disability).
- should use markings to show students where to sit.
- will check the names of students as they enter the bus at the beginning and end of the day.
- should have contacts for the school and health authorities.

Students
- A minimum of 6 feet should be maintained between each student as they board the bus/boat and 3 feet when they are seated on the bus/ferry.
- All students are required to wear a face mask upon entry (bus/ferry).
- All bus/boat occupants (students and drivers) are to utilize hand sanitizer upon entry and exiting the vehicle.
- Students are encouraged to bring personal hand sanitizers, where possible, as some individuals may be allergic to certain products.
- Family members of the same household will sit together while en route.
- Students must remain in the designated seat, with physical distancing taken into consideration.
- All students are required to practice good hygiene, including using hand sanitizer and covering mouth and nose with a tissue to cough, or otherwise, cough into the crotch of their elbow.

Monitoring for Symptoms
If a student becomes ill in transit to school, the following steps should be taken:
- Isolate the student as much as possible
- Examine the student (signs, symptoms, and history)

Call:
- Health authorities
- School
- Parent
- It may be necessary for an operator to take a temperature reading of a student. If the student has an elevated temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit, a second reading will be required a few minutes after the first one. If this second reading is still elevated, this information will be shared with health officials. If the second temperature is not elevated, a third reading is to be completed. If this is elevated, the information will be relayed to health officials. If the third reading is not elevated, the individual will be allowed to proceed.
- Identify an isolation zone for the school bus when it arrives on campus.
- Isolation procedures for all students on the school bus/ ferry will take effect Such procedures should correspond to procedures developed for classrooms.
- A child who develops COVID-19 symptoms/who becomes ill while at school will not be permitted to return home on a school bus and should be picked up by a parent or guardian.

Sanitation Rules
- Keep windows open for proper ventilation, weather permitting.

Clean and disinfect the
- high touch areas of the bus at the start of the shift and after drop-offs:
- Seats;
- Inside hand railing;
- Floors;
- Interior windows and wall section below passenger windows;
- Inside and outside door handles (including manual control for service door);

- Pads and armrests;
- Other parts that are commonly used and that may have been touched.

Cleaning equipment and supplies include:-
- Personal protective equipment (mask, face shields, gloves)
- Paper towels
- Garbage bags
- Approved disinfectants
- Microfiber cloth for cleaning
- Commercial sprayers for dispensing EPA certified disinfectants
  (SEE APPENDIX I)

Other essentials for Operators include:-
- First Aid Kit
- Infra-Red Thermometer
- Emergency Information
(Telephone contacts for District Superintendent/Principal, Community Clinic, Police)

Seating Capacity
- School buses will operate at (50%) 50 percent seating capacity in compliance with precautionary measures against the spread of COVID-19.

- Each route within each district has provided the number of round-trips that each bus/ferry operator will need to make to accommodate 50% seating capacity. Due to the miles traveled per route, there may be the need for the Ministry of Education to hire additional Bus Operators.

Training
Operators will participate in training in the following areas:
- Cleaning and Disinfecting Processes
- Seating and Spacing Arrangements
- Evacuation Procedures
- Signs and Symptoms of an Unwell Student
- General Health and Safety Protocols

Physical Plant Assessment and Preparation

The upkeep and maintenance of the physical plant in a COVID-19 Era is critical; hence, all staff members will have to work collaboratively and on a daily basis to address concerns related to these two areas.

To accomplish this, District Superintendents and School Administrators will be expected to review the health and safety protocols, and create or update district a school based Health and Safety Plan. Included in this plan is the need for school administrators to identify a space to house the school nurse. This space, as far as possible, must be away from high traffic area to provide some level of privacy and minimize stigma associated with any form of illness in this COVID-19 Era.

Districts or schools in need of assistance with creating and implementing a Health and Safety Plan can contact the Health and Safety Unit of the Ministry of Education.

Below are some of the recommended protocols that will be carried out prior to students' arrival on the school campus.
A COVID-19 Era mandates the following pre-arrival measures, some of which will be executed on a daily basis:
- Pre-arrival checks will be made to ensure that areas such as, classrooms, restrooms, staffroom, offices, corridors, Security Booth, Nurse's Station, Tuck Shop area, equipment, appliances, walls, doors, railings, door knobs, window operators, railings, benches, chairs, swings, monkey bars and jungle gym **all other touchable surfaces and high traffic areas** have been cleaned and sanitized thoroughly.
- A cleaning and sanitization regiment will be established, and a timesheet to document cleaning times.
- Instructional staff, supported by janitorial staff, will ensure that classrooms and staff rooms are set up, on a daily basis, and are in compliance with the three to six feet physical distancing/twenty square feet per child.
- Notices will be placed on the door indicating room capacity based on the three to six feet distancing.
- Supplies will be checked daily and replenished where necessary.
- Support staff will be outfitted with masks, gloves and shields, (the latter will be provided on a one time basis by the Ministry of Education).
- Campuses will be kept free of debris and garbage.
- Grounds will be checked to ensure that signage is still visible and mounted.
- Signage will be mounted to indicate drop off and pick up areas for pre-primary and special needs students.
- A designated space will be identified for parents of pre-primary students to sign students in and engage in health protocols and screening process.
- In pre-primary, a sanitation station will be established for students and their personal belongings
- Staff members will be in place to attend to the management of students and implementation of

- health and safety protocols.
- Schools will comply with all policies and procedures outlined by The Emergency Orders/Department of Environmental Health/Public Health.
- Support staff will be outfitted with masks, gloves and shields, (the latter will be provided on a one time basis by the Ministry of Education).
- Campuses will be kept free of debris and garbage.
- Grounds will be checked to ensure that signage is still visible and mounted.
- Signage will be mounted to indicate drop off and pick up areas for pre-primary and special needs students.

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- Staff members will be in place to attend to the management of students and implementation of health and safety protocols.
- Schools will comply with all policies and procedures outlined by The Emergency Orders/Department of Environmental Health/Public Health.

ARRIVAL ON CAMPUS

ARRIVAL ON CAMPUS

To prevent the spread of COVID-19 on our school campus, the following protocols will govern access to the school campus.

Arrival on Campus

All individuals wishing to gain access to our campus must wear a mask. Parents will be responsible for providing solid coloured masks, (preferably the colour of the school uniform, **but definitely without writing/markings** of any kind), for their children.

As a part of the School Operational Plan, Administrators will determine and use various means, (E.g. School website or signage etc.) to inform those wishing to access our campus of the physical plant layout. This will include entry and exit points, movement on and around the campus.

Administrators, if they deem it necessary or possible, will also stagger the arrival of students to avoid overcrowding or creating bottlenecks at the entry point.

The Arrival and Screening Process for Staff Members
• The Principal/designated Administrator will facilitate the administration of health and safety protocols for staff members at the Main Office.
   All staff members will
   • sanitize their hands at the designated area.
   • have their temperatures checked.
   • sign in using an Electronic Sign in System.
   • be expected to assist with monitoring students to ensure physical and social distancing.
The Arrival Process for Students
All students, with the exception of Pre-Schoolers and special needs students will
   • be dropped off at the nearest and safest entry point to the school.
   • sanitize their hands at the gate/designated area.
   • have their temperatures checked.
   • report directly to their homerooms.
All Pre-Primary and Special Needs Students will
   • be dropped off on campus.
   • be expected, along with their parents, to follow the same health and safety protocols, (wearing of mask, sanitizing hands and having temperatures checked), in a place designated by administration.
   • be taken directly to their rooms.
The Arrival Process for Visitors
All visitors will
   • sanitize their hands at the gate/designated area.
   • have their temperatures checked.

   • be expected to provide, at the entry point of the school, their names and the purpose of their visit so that this information is registered.
   • be expected to comply with protocols related to their movement on campus.

The following established protocols will be carried out to address an individual with an elevated temperature:
   • Health and Safety Officers or another designated staff member will use non-contact infrared thermometer, to take the temperature of individuals at the school's entry point for students and visitors.
   • Any individual with a higher than average temperature (100.4 degrees Fahrenheit) should be directed to a cool area nearby and his/her temperature rechecked after 2 minutes.
   • The individual will be requested to have a second reading two minutes after the first one. If the second reading is still elevated, the individual will then be referred to the School Nurse/designated officer for further evaluation and action.
   • If the second temperature is not elevated, a third reading is to be completed. If this is elevated, the individual will be referred to the School Nurse/designated officer.
   • If the third reading is not elevated, the individual will be allowed to proceed.
   • If the third reading is elevated, the individual will be held in an isolated area.
   • Visitors with a high temperature reading will not be allowed entry and will be requested to make contact with school administration via telephone or email instead of face to face.
   • Readings will be logged in a screening notebook and kept confidential.
   • Information will be placed on a confidential file for staff and students.
   • The designated school administrator/staff/ Health and Safety Officer will report concerns immediately to the Principal.
   • School Administrators will make contact with the parent or guardian to advise on the need to come to the school for the student.
   • Parents will transport children to a local facility for further evaluation.
   • Schools will create a plan of action to address the best and safest way to transport students in the event of a medical emergency and its inability to contact parents/guardians.
   • The Principal will then alert the Safety and Disaster Risk Reduction Unit, Ministry of Education (242) 502-8320 and the District

Superintendent.

- Staff or student must bring a medical indicating that they are well enough to participate in the activity on the school campus.

Campus Access for Community

- The number of individuals entering the school compound/premises will be limited. Letters of request to use the campus facility should be written to the Department of Education. The Department of Education, in consultation with school administrators, will determine whether and to what extent external community organizations can safely utilize the school campus and resources. Community organizations that use the facilities will adhere to established health and safety protocols.

Movement – COVID-19 Delivery/Receipt of Supplies

- Safety procedures will be implemented to govern the receipt of goods, prior to packages being stored on the school campus **(For example, disinfecting packages, staggering delivery times, minimizing the interaction between staff and individuals delivering items etc.)**

Movement on Campus

- A clear plan of action will be in place to direct students' movement on campus (one way movement on stairwells, entrance, exit, physical distancing etc.). Mounted signage will indicate movement.
- Students will remain homeroom based.
- Personnel will be identified to escort students from their homerooms to option subjects.
- Restricted number of students will be allowed to use the bathroom.
- Staggered Breaks will be implemented designating a smaller population to be on the outside at any given time.
- Security Officers, Administrators, instructional and support staff will assist with the supervision of students during break and lunch time to ensure health and safety protocols.

Assembling of Staff, Students and Parents

- There is to be no gathering of more than five students or staff members at any given time. In instances where staff members have to be in blocks of more than five, physical distancing should be maintained.
- Microsoft TEAM can be used for virtual staff and Parent, Teacher Association Meetings. If PTA meetings are held, these can be conducted by grade levels to adhere to physical distancing.
- Schools that have the capacity to ensure health and safety protocols can engage in assemblies.
- Schools that do not have the capacity to address health and safety protocols can conduct virtual school assemblies or make use of the PA system.
- Events encouraged virtually.
- In class assemblies can be conducted, but they should not exceed fifteen minutes. The following can be factored in during this time: registration of students, bussing details, a motivational/ spiritual message, COVID-19 reminders, guidelines to assist with adapting to the school environment, how to care for masks, hygienic practices, class, teacher, announcement of upcoming events, standards to be maintained and preparation for learning.
- Schools can put plans in place to support socialization during break and lunch while practicing social distancing.

Lunch Protocols

- Where possible or necessary, one or more spaces will be designated to sell lunch and snacks to minimize student gatherings and bottlenecks.
- Administrators will ensure operators are in compliance with the established protocols.
- Students will be encouraged to bring their drinks, snacks/lunch with them from home.
- Lunch Vendors and Tuck Shop Operators will provide **"grab and go"** lunches.
- Lunch Vendors can provide **menus,** and preordering can be established.
- A permanent space on campus will be identified to house Lunch Vendors.

Exiting Campus

- Upon dismissal, students will leave their room in an orderly manner, practicing safety guidelines of physical distancing protocols, continued wearing of masks and sanitizing of hands before exiting the room.
- Staff will determine the most strategic way to dismiss students to adhere to physical distancing protocols.
- Students walking or catching public transportation will be instructed to leave the campus immediately through the predetermined exit gate/point, encouraged to practice physical

distancing and continue wearing masks while en route home, while walking or via the school bus or public transportation.

- Students will be assigned a designated area to safely await collection by parents/ the bus to transport them.
- Students walking or catching public transportation will be instructed to leave the campus immediately through the predetermined exit gate/point, encouraged to practice physical distancing and continue wearing masks while en route home, while walking or via the school bus or public transportation.

For the reopening of schools, in the new school year, consideration will be given to varied approaches that can be offered to engage staff and students in the teaching and learning process. Three models are presented: Face to Face, Hybrid Learning and Remote.
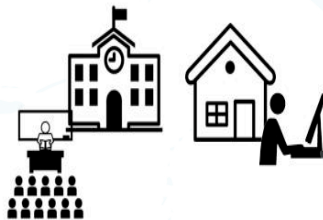
Face to Face
Entire student enrolment attending the school campus every day all day.

Hybrid Learning
Part of the student enrolment attending the school campus either on shifts within a day or for a reduced number of whole days per week.

Remote
Entire student enrolment not attending the school campus.

FACE TO FACE MODEL

FACE TO FACE MODEL

The Face to Face Model will follow what traditionally happens in schools where the entire school population attends a school facility daily. Greater emphasis will be placed on creating a safe and healthy environment that will prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Due to health and safety protocols, a room capacity of 20 square feet per student will be instituted.

Provisions will be made for the implementation of an Education Management Information System (EMIS) and Learning Management System (LMS) to support the management and delivery of education.

The main features of this model include the following:

• Implementation of a National Pacing Guide;
• Curriculum/subject integration;
• Technology integration;
• Staggered lunch timetable.

This model has numerous advantages. It is

• familiar to all stakeholders - quicker buy in.
• least disruptive to established routine of parents, community and other stakeholders.
• consistent with implementation of IEPs.
• easiest model to monitor the teaching and learning process.
• the model that allows schools to be more involved in the protection of students in relation to duty of care of children during the school week.
• a conduit for a greater sense of normalcy.
• the model that provides for continuous social interaction (necessary for psychosocial well-being), though limited by physical distancing.
• the mode by which diverse methods of assessment can be utilized.
• the modality that allows for staff members to be able to access technology based tools on their school campus.
• in this physical environment that teachers and students with the ability to see and hear can pick up on physical cues and body language.

The Face to Face Model also has many disadvantages, in particular the risk of individuals becoming infected with the coronavirus. Discussions surrounding the disadvantages resulted in recommendations being put forth by all of the sub-committees under each of the models. Curriculum and Instruction serve as the forerunner in each of the models.

Curriculum and Instruction

Curriculum development supports the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals that students should have access to a quality education by 2030, (United Nations, 2015), and it is also underpinned by the 4 C's, Critical Thinking, Collaboration, Communication and Creativity. Working in alignment with the aforementioned, the Curriculum and Instruction Sub-committee gave focused and intentional attention to the implementation of Curriculum in all modalities. Features of this implementation include the development of National Pacing Guides and Instructional Kits.

National Pacing Guides

Instruction will be driven by National Pacing Guides, which is very similar to the Schemes of Work previously prepared by the classroom teacher. These National Pacing Guides, prepared by Curriculum Officers, ensure that there is an alignment of the curriculum and the syllabus, and indicate what is to be taught weekly. While some of the guides may follow a different structure, the common feature include the weekly topic,(s).

The Guides were implemented to ensure standardization across the country. This is particularly important as we move between the three school models in this COVID-19 Era. There will be room for flexibility however because we know that based on cognitive capacity, some students will move at a faster or a slower pace.

The Pacing Guides will help teachers prepare their weekly forecasts. While teachers will not have to determine the topics and objectives, they will be called upon to create engaging activities and assignments to reinforce concepts and content.

The National Pacing Guides will also help teachers produce the lesson plans, which in this instance will be developed virtually. Following the traditional format, teachers will create lesson plans to be uploaded to the One on One Platform.

Instructional Kits

Access to digital resources is a key component in the delivery of online instruction. Lesson Kits, which contain various digital resources to complement specific curriculum topics and objectives should be available to all teachers. Hence, the creation of these lesson kits, also known as Open Educational Resources, should be a collaborative effort.

Collaborative teams, comprised of department members or grade level teachers, will be guided by Curriculum Officers who will facilitate the requisite training for the creation of the learning kits and assign topics for their development. During the first few weeks of teachers returning to work, teacher teams will receive training and will begin the creation of the lesson kits. To ensure quality, completed kits will be submitted to vetting teams supervised by Curriculum Officers. Once approved, these kits will be uploaded to a shared repository for all teachers to access and share with their students. The creation of these Open Educational Resources (OER's) will be an ongoing process as teachers proceed through the respective pacing guide, curriculum/syllabus. Team Leaders, Subject Coordinators, Subject Supervisors and Vice Principals (Curriculum) will supervise teachers working on the creation of the Open Educational Resources (OER's) and in the instruction of students.

When implemented, it is envisioned that curricular will merge with other critical components to produce a 21st century graduate.

Hence, in the Face to Face Model, **Curriculum and Instruction will**
- Develop an integrated instructional plan and Pacing Guide to cater to all learners, inclusive of students in **alternate** schools.
- Improve access to digital resources to support the Curriculum through a resource library or repository. Digital Resources will include Indigenous Resources developed by teachers, Open Educational Resources (OERs) and Publisher Resources (subscriptions). The work of Curriculum and Instruction will be supported by the **strategic plan developed by the Committee for the Development of Digital Resources.**
- Develop Guides for the integrated approach. Use differentiation, and train for its use. Training will focus on the methodology behind the new instructional approaches monitoring strategies for administrators and best practices to support it in the face to face environment.
- Provide technology integration training for teachers to focus on leveraging technology to increase student engagement and achievement.

Pre-Primary Education
The early years are a period of rapid growth and development. During this time, children begin to build the foundation for life-long learning and well-being. A holistic programme which facilitates the development of social, language, physical, cognitive and creative skills is necessary for a strong foundation. Supportive adults provide students with positive experiences within a safe and healthy environment, setting the framework for success in school and later life.

Within this COVID-19 period, it is important to strive to provide children with experiences and opportunities which will enable them to acquire the skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary to meet the developmental milestones, preparing them for later learning. With safety as the first priority, developmentally appropriate activities and best practices will be employed to facilitate this holistic development. Young children require the assistance of an adult as they perform functional and education tasks. Therefore, collaboration between home and school plays a central role in this process of positive development.

In the Face to Face Model, Pre-schoolers will attend school five days a week in person from 9 a.m. to 2.30 p.m. The number of students per class will be determined by the national standards requirement of 21 square feet per child and the teacher-student ratio of 1:20. All health and safety protocols will be implemented for the management of Pre-Schools in a Covid-19 pandemic. This includes procedures for signing in and out and daily screening of staff and students. An adapted face to face schedule will be executed. This includes additional aspects of the instructional programme delivered outdoors, if necessary staggered recess/breaks so smaller groups of children can engage in outdoor play, reduced number of learning centres and an early dismissal to facilitate physical distancing. Students will be assigned to cohorts of no more than 5 students who will engage in small group indoor and outdoor activities. Students will use individual learning kits with school supplies and materials. Parents are encouraged to send a packed lunch to school for students. Children will be reminded not to share snacks, lunch or learning materials and supplies.

Special Services

Embodied in its vision and guided by the SDG 4 goal, the Special Services Section seeks to make available equitable and effective support and intervention services that elevate the educational, social, emotional, behavioural, psychological and even spiritual needs of all persons, especially those with disabilities/challenges requiring our services.

The Special Services Section exists to advocate for the needs of all students within the educational system, under the premise of providing support in speech/language services; special education; psycho-educational services; mental health intervention; school counselling; and school attendance. Its aim is to collaborate with other stakeholders such as parents/guardians, teachers, administrators, and other related agencies to ensure students are performing at their maximum potential; or when necessary to provide the appropriate support/intervention. The section works to facilitate student learning and development so that they may become productive and contributing citizens of The Bahamas. The teaching, learning and supporting would in turn increase equity and accessibility to the workforce for individuals with special needs.

This is done by implementing holistic programmes/plans whereby students can benefit from the educational system through adaptation and modification of curricula in an inclusive environment.

Aspects of Special Services Section were first introduced in 1967 when the first Education Officer for Special Services was appointed and charged with the responsibility of establishing programmes for students with learning disabilities in all Ministry of Education schools. In 1968 both a Speech Therapy Service and Guidance Counselling Unit were introduced, followed by the School Psychological Services in 1993. In that same year the Student Attendance Services of the Department of Social Services, was transferred from the Ministry of Social Development and National Insurance to the Special Services Division of the Ministry of Education. (Hanna, C., 1994, The Special Service Division Handbook, pg.2).

The mandate for the development of Special Services is embodied in the Education Act of 1962, subsections 24 and 25 and subsections 26 to 30.

The intent of Government's policy to provide equal educational opportunities for all students; is among other things to extend greatly the range of special services for children with special needs either in special schools or in regular schools.

Today the emphasis of special educational provision, is widely evident in regular schools, stand-alone special schools, attached units and programmes to regular schools, resource rooms etc. Critical specialist services are offered in these same programmes and venues as well as in clinics – speech therapy and school psychology,

established in alignment with our philosophy of 'prevention' so that we cater to the very young from Pre-School through young adulthood and those students attending private schools/institutions, our Family Island students or even those who are home schooled.

In this COVID-19 era, as in all mitigating situations that may disrupt the regular /normal operating procedures, the section has had to adjust its implementation strategies while maintaining its mandates as much as possible. With safety first being the hallmark, the section too has adopted the three models (face to face, hybrid and virtual) for service delivery as appropriate. School and clinic services will continue mainly individually or via small group sessions using the various virtual platforms. Once the education system returns to Face to Face instruction, only then will services be offered in this manner, with modifications as necessary.

Best practices and input from local regulatory bodies which govern each of these professions will be followed in implementing and continuing services for students and by extension parents.

Special Education

As access to education is a human right, The National Development Plan 2040 of The Bahamas Strategy 6.7 for Special Education is to "Enhance the provision of special education to ensure equity in education and enhance the employability of students with special needs" (The National Development Plan 2040 of The Bahamas - NDP 2040, p. 168). According to CARICOM, in its Draft Framework for Reopening of Schools in the Caribbean, including Schools for Learners with Special Educational Needs, 2020, MOEs were caught off-guard in the provision of remote/distance education for students at all levels and so now have to prepare for the new school year 2020/2021 and beyond. In so doing, of paramount importance is the safety and health of all students.

The Ministry of Education encourages learning institutions to take into account the special needs of persons with disabilities with respect to the entry requirements, curriculum, examinations, augmentative aids, and services, including accessible formatting, use of school facilities, class schedules, physical education requirements and other relevant matters. The Ministry of Education adopts appropriate measures to facilitate the implementation of the Special Education Programmes in the Commonwealth of The Bahamas. The programmes will not only ensure

that learning takes place at the student's functioning level while embracing his/her specific needs, but will also promote lifelong learning and readiness for employment. Due to the impact of COVID-19 and the disruption of Face-to-Face instruction, students with Special Educational Needs (SENs) have experienced greater challenges than their peers in general education. The Special Education Unit of the Department of Education facilitates appropriate and inclusive education programmes for students with diverse learning needs and abilities to be accomplished through collaboration with general education in the least restrictive environment.

We believe that:
- All students can learn;
- Education will provide appropriate instruction; resources and support to meet diverse learning needs;
- Students should have equal opportunities to participate in educational programmes and school activities which are appropriate for their education;
- Respect and dignity are essential in the learning process; and
- Collaboration and communication are vital to the educational partnership among students, parents and educators.

The Special Education Sub-Committee, of the core Committee for the Safe Reopening of Schools, established a procedural plan for the delivery of instruction to accommodate students with special educational needs (SENs) during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The provision of Special Education instruction will continue for all special education students within the educational system. The instructional programme will be guided by the Ministry of Education Curriculum and Functional Academic Curriculum for Exceptional Students (FACES) and the Individualized Education Plans (IEPs). The core subjects, Language, Mathematics and daily living/functional skills, will be offered at all levels of readiness. Specialist subjects will also be offered with adherence to social distancing protocols.

The Ministry of Education will continue to provide support for students at The Bahamas Association for the Physically Disabled.

Special Education students will transition to the Remote Model based on the recommendations of health officials. In this model, technology integration will be used to support curriculum and instruction and a seamless transition to the Remote Model.

School Attendance Unit

In order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals 2030, education has been identified as a vital, indeed integral component to the success of this venture. It is a given that for students to learn and benefit from the curriculum/the education system, they must attend school.

Learning includes not only the academics, but also the social-emotional interactions, as well as appropriate behavioural responses that are shaped and nurtured in the classroom, on the playing field etc.

Crises, pandemics, natural disasters etc. all have the ability to impact students' school attendance. As a result of the recent global pandemic, some 500 million students have not attended school during the past six (6) months and have been told to stay at home in order to mitigate the spread of the corona virus. Out of this number some 463 million had no access to remote learning (UNICEF, August 2020). Research has also shown that students in higher income households fared much better, in reference to accessing educational material and continuing their schooling virtually during the pandemic than those from lower income households. As a result, it is believed that the world would feel the ramifications of this deficiency in education for decades to come.

As far back as the late 1880's school attendance in The Bahamas has been a cause of concern. The challenge of habitual absences was addressed as far back as 1872 when school teachers were asked to enquire about students who presented absentee problems. When this proved to be unsuccessful, School Attendance Officers were appointed to meet this challenge.

Today, absenteeism and truancy (severe absenteeism) remain a challenge, although some of the reasons for absenteeism have changed. More emphasis is placed on educating the populace on the importance of education and motivating parents and students to see that education is vital to their future success and development.

Data from The Bahamas Institution of Corrections has shown that some 65% of those incarcerated presented abnormal/poor attendance when enrolled at school.

School Attendance Officers as they are now called,

review registers for those students who fail to meet the criteria for regular attendance, and investigate cases where necessary. Street Patrol exercises (community walkabouts) and home visits are also conducted in various areas throughout the Islands of New Providence and Grand Bahama in particular, to look for children who may be out of school.

School Attendance Unit Criteria for Absenteeism in the COVID-19 Era

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, which resulted in the closure of all educational institutions in mid-March 2020, the role of the School Attendance Unit is evolving to meet the needs of students identified as having 'attendance issues or at-risk' for the upcoming school year 2020-2021.

Tracking of student attendance in the "new normal" will be based upon the three models implemented by the education system for delivery of teaching and learning, i.e. the traditional (face to face), the hybrid and the virtual (remote).

In the traditional model, (Face to Face) would be utilized. The criterion for the traditional or Face to Face model is as follows:
• Absent three (3) or more days without a note/contact from parent/guardian over a two week period
• Absent once a week on a regular basis over a four week period, or where a pattern of absences begin to develop whether the student presents a note or not.

Speech Therapy

Communication is a vital component of life and effective communication plays an important role in a child's academic achievement. Access to speech therapy services allows students to improve speech and language skills both academically and socially. Due to COVID-19, the proposed manner in which Speech Therapy will be delivered is noted below:

Speech Therapy will
• Deliver speech and language services face to face to children in the school setting.
• Service students individually or group by maximum of two pending work space and in keeping with protocol guidelines. Clients will be required to sanitize hands upon entry and wear required protective equipment. Where possible, plexi glass will divide the therapist

and client.
• Engaged clients will participate in a 30–45 minute weekly session to address the goals set.

School Psychology
In keeping with UNESCO's SDG # 4 - to "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all", the School Psychological Services Unit evolved out of a need to support the regular education system. This support included academic intervention and instructional support, mental and behavioural health services and intervention, family, school and community collaboration through ethical and professional practices to promote safe, healthy, and supportive learning environments.

With strict adherence to the Practice Model as developed and implemented by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP), school psychologists will build upon their success by advancing consistent implementation of services helping to maximize their effectiveness, efficiency and quality of services. Being uniquely qualified members of school teams supports students' abilities to learn and teachers' abilities to teach.

Notably, the School Psychological Services Unit offers academic intervention and instructional support, mental and behavioural health services and intervention, family, school and community collaboration through ethical and professional practices to promote safe, healthy, and supportive learning environments.

Prior to March 2020, School Psychologists allocated seventy percent (70%) of their time conducting psycho-educational assessment, with the remaining thirty percent (30%) appropriated to programme designs and implementations, students' interventions and facilitation of professional development amongst educators within the public and private sector(s).

The academic school year 2019-2020 experienced a shift in the manner in which educational services were delivered as a result of the natural disaster – Hurricane Dorian and the global pandemic COVID-19. The Unit like every facet of the educational system, had to alter the way in which services were delivered to schools, families and communities. Service delivery was mainly via telepractice with modifications.

Today, COVID-19 changed the world's perspective of daily operations by introducing a 'new norm'. To address

the needs of students in this norm, whether hybrid, virtual or face to face, the Unit will continue to be their advocate. Emphasis will be placed on the delivery of psycho-education services guided by three levels (Red, Yellow and Green).

- Green level refers to delivery of services via the traditional Face to Face model with all safety and physical distancing protocols in place and adhered to. While individual and small group assessment and counselling sessions will continue, large group and classroom-based interventions will be limited and tailored with adherence to health and safety standards.
- Depending upon the circumstance and in the best interest of all concerned, the Hybrid/Blended model may be utilized with students throughout the country.

The Unit aims to continue supporting students and their families in New Providence and the Family Islands by providing relevant information to better understand and cope with the myriad academic challenges, behaviour, mental health and social-emotional issues. Recognizing the importance of resiliency, the Unit will assist students and parents in addressing these by providing coping strategies as well as sensitivity training so that they may recognize 'triggers' as they relate to these mitigating issues.

This is realized with better equipped and on-going staff and stakeholders training and development. Increased and improved human capacity equates to more equity and better access for students in both private and public education sectors.

Student Services Section

The mission of this arm of the Ministry of Education is to enhance the Bahamian curriculum through after school programmes and initiatives that develop, heighten and reinforce skills in leadership, academics, creativity, spirituality and athleticism.

It seeks to develop well-rounded, self-actualized citizens who are able to perform in a changing global community.

The Student Services Section of the Ministry of Education is tasked therefore with managing and implementing initiatives to enhance and reinforce skills taught in the public schools throughout The Bahamas. It hosts a number of programmes and competitions as follows:

- National Debate Competition
- National Spelling Bee Competition
- National Art and Craft Enrichment Programme
- After School Sports Programme
- Essay, Poetry and Poster Competitions
- Bahamas Government High School Student Councils
- National After School Literacy and Numeracy Remediation Programme
- Minister's Beautification and Clean Campus Competition
- Student Christian Movement

Nevertheless, the threat of COVID-19 has forced the Section to re-strategize how each programme would be managed in a new climate that demands that physical distancing and other protocols are implemented to ensure that students, facilitators and officers are protected from contamination. Therefore, for the upcoming school year 2020-2021, the Section proposes to implement a Blended Approach to effectively and safely deliver its programmes. Following are outlines of how the Section proposes to execute the various programmes.

National After School Literacy Numeracy Enrichment Programme

- This programme is designed to provide assistance to students in Grades 3 and 6 who are performing three or more grades below grade level in Reading and Mathematics.
- In this model, students will meet at **3:15 p.m. – 4:15 p.m. two (2) days** per week for each discipline (Literacy and/or Numeracy).

Training

- A Facilitators' Workshop will be held to provide instructors with non-traditional strategies to assist their students and Creative Remedial Instruction training will also take place.

Bahamas Government High School Student Council

- This programme is designed to give students in Grades 10-12 an opportunity to serve on a board that would act as a liaison between Administration, the Teaching and the student body. It will also enable students to develop leadership skills through their meeting procedures and other activities and the creation and implementation of goals and objectives.

Training will be held in

- Social Distancing, Sanitization Measures, Parliamentary Debate, Electoral Process in The Bahamas and Leadership Skills.
- The general objectives of **The Bahamas Government High Schools Student Council.**

Minister's Cup School Beautification Competition/

Clean Campus Competition
- This programme inculcates students' self-pride, responsibility and creativity. Schools are judged on the aesthetic appearance of their school garden. *At this juncture, we are contemplating whether to proceed with this programme (Minister's Cup, School Beautification/Clean Campus Competitions) during the 2020/2021 school year.*

Training
- A video will be created and provided to demonstrate how to **start** planting the seeds given and **maintain** the plants.

National Debate Competition
- The National Debate Series is open to students in Grades 10-12 at public and private schools nationwide. This programme has a series of five (5) competitions which begins with the District and culminates with the National Champion Competition. A Debate Coaches Workshop and an Officials' Training Workshop are held prior to Zone Competitions. Debate Clubs should be formed at the beginning of the school year. Club meetings are inclusive of: auditions, teaching research and speech writing strategies, public speaking skills and preparation of speeches for competitions.
- Debate Clubs are launched in September, but in light of the delayed opening of school, this has to be rescheduled. Coaches will teach public speaking, research and writing skills and facilitate auditions for the School's Debate Team.
- A workshop for the officials will be conducted.
- A Mock Debate will be held.
- A meeting will be held for coaches to discuss Rules, Rebuttal Pointers and Claim Form Submission. The event will be recorded for Coaches on the Family Islands who are unable to attend.
- The following competitions will be held and winning teams advance to the next round: District, Zone, Quarter Finals, Semi-Finals and Finals.
- Family Island Debaters and Coaches remaining in the competition will be collected from the airport, transported to the hotel and collected the next morning for their competition.
- The final competition will be held at a hotel in New Providence.

National Spelling Bee Competition
- The Spelling Bee is open to students in grades 4-8 in public and private schools. Competition is inclusive of Classroom, School Based, Associate Schools and District Competitions. The Series culminate with the Final Bee Competition.
- In October, a Coaches' forum will be hosted by the Section to familiarize them with the competition and provide strategies to assist the spellers.
- A National Spelling Bee Committee will also be formed to plan the Orientation, activities for Spellers, secure sponsorship for prizes, Final Bee and trip to Washington.
- To prepare students for competition, schools will host Spelling Bee Clubs which meet at least once per week.
- District Superintendents will host District Competitions simultaneously, in venues in their districts.
- Districts will be required to support the Spelling Bee by providing an advertisement for the final Bee Booklet.
- An Orientation and series of activities, including a courtesy call on the Governor-General, will be held for Contestants and Coaches for the Final Spelling Bee.
- The final competition will be held at a hotel in New Providence, and it will be recorded to be aired at a later date.
- Winners of the Bee will travel to Washington with members of the National Spelling Bee Committee.

Officials Training
- All Officials (Coordinators, Moderators, Judges, Pronouncer, Dictionary Consultant and Sound Technician will attend workshops to increase the level of excellence at all competitions. Pronouncers' Club will be promoted to ensure a greater level of accuracy with word pronunciation. Coaches will be provided with tips that should assist with producing more well-rounded global spellers.

Student Christian Movement (S.C.M.)
The aim and primary mission of this programme is intended to foster awareness and promote strong Christian values in all students in the Commonwealth of The Bahamas. This club also seeks to empower students to be positive role models in their schools and communities.
- Club leaders will advertise and form SCM Clubs.
- Clubs will participate in a number of national events planned and hosted by the National Student Christian Movement.
- A Spiritual Awareness Assembly will be held at the beginning of the school year.

Student Development
Alternative Schools

Education around the world has been faced with many challenges. One such challenge has been responding to students who have difficulties adapting to learning in conventional school environments. This has promoted the development of Alternative School programmes with the focus of providing opportunities for students while addressing their unique needs.

Vikki Kelchner (2015) asserts that frequently, students who are most susceptible to dropping out (of school) are those who are in or have attended alternative schools (The Professional Counselor Volume 7, Issue 2, Pages 169-184, 2017.

The article provides a context for the creation of Alternative Schools. These schools were initially designed to provide a positive alternative to conventional learning environments. Unfortunately, the trend today is for alternative schools to function as separate retributory schools for students who exhibit unacceptable behaviours.

In the United States, there are three models that currently exist. The first is Schools of Choice that mimic magnet schools. The second model is that of 'last chance programmes'. The third model is disciplinary programmes designed to return students to their home schools after successful 'treatment'.

The wider view is that these schools exist to separate troublemakers in one place to better protect the students in transitional schools.

In The Bahamas, alternative schools tend to follow the third model although there is an underlying desire to provide a second chance for these students. Upon completion of these programmes, students return to their home schools with the hope that they will perform successfully.

The ideal format for the functioning of Alternative Schools is within the 'Face to Face" model because behaviour modification is its primary goal. It is very difficult to affect the type of change that is needed from 'a distance'. At present, each facility is able to support this type of instruction while adhering to Ministry of Health protocols.

Alternative Schools provide for the continuation of instruction for some members of our vulnerable population. The Face to Face Model is highly recommended for this group of students; hence, they will only revert the Remote Model if mandated by the Competent Authority.

Five alternative programmes are maintained by the Department of Education. In the Face to Face Model, the five programmes noted below will continue to receive services.

Programme SURE
- Located at Gladstone Road, New Providence, this facility is exclusively designed for adolescent males. The basic academic courses are provided for students in addition to some technical offerings where possible. At present there are sixteen students enrolled with a teaching compliment of six teachers along with two Guidance Counsellors.

PACE
- Female students, once they are confirmed as being pregnant, become members of this school. Students are enrolled until they deliver their babies. Teachers assigned to PACE provide instruction in basic subjects. There is also a strong emphasis on and provisions made to address the psycho-social needs of these young women.

TAPS
- This school caters to the needs of adolescent females who are unable to successfully adjust to life in a conventional learning environment. Basic subject offerings are also available to students in addition to some vocational offerings.

Williemae Pratt/Simpson Penn Schools
- These schools are jointly maintained by the Ministry of National Security, Department of Social Services and the Ministry of Education. Juveniles who are directed to these facilities by the legal system complete their sentences as Wards of the State. There are living accommodations for students. Once a sentence is completed, students are released to continue their education or in some cases they are transferred to the adult section(s) at Department of Correctional Services at the age of eighteen.

Schools Management

The success of students and society at large is dependent on the ability of Ministries of Education to provide schools with support in terms of human, financial and material resources to fulfill their charge. With this kind of support from Central Offices, Schools Managers are then tasked with the responsibility of organizing, managing and

monitoring human, physical and financial resources and the implementation of curriculum to accomplish the projected goals and objectives. How well School Managers accomplish this is brought to bear on the success of students and society at large. School operations relate to the management of resources to ensure a safe, caring and effective teaching and learning environment.

In a broader sense, District Superintendents and institutional leaders must review the overarching goals and objectives of their Departments of Education to establish district goals which are then translated into specific institutional goals. At the district and school levels, managers must develop and implement plans, examine available resources and determine how best to organize or distribute them to bring about the desired results. School Managers must also monitor the day to day operations of all facets of the campus and provide support for the implementation of programmes and execution of portfolios. Established mechanisms of assessment must be utilized to determine productivity and allow for capacity building.

In the Bahamian context, these guiding principles and responsibilities govern the operations of our public schools. However, to provide for a more efficient school administration, delegation of responsibility is fostered through defined roles as outlined in the Administrators Guide to Effective Leadership Manual. This manual outlines the portfolios of Administrators, Teachers at the various levels, Subject Coordinators and Support Staff.

In the midst of COVID-19, Schools Management is being called to work assiduously to foster a greater team spirit through building consensus. This team spirit will allow for a greater understanding of what will be required to manage schools in this new dispensation. It is envisioned that Schools Management will also foster a willingness, amongst team members, to support and further equip themselves to adapt to the changes. Changes will come. School Managers and their teams must always be in a position of readiness, be it to function in the Face to Face, Hybrid/Blended or Remote Model.

Recognizably, there are some islands where the team is a "two man band", and delegation is limited due to capacity. School Managers are required to function in a manner that ensures accountability for what is entrusted to them by the Department of Education. To substantiate how and why they function contextually and not according to established norms, School Managers must always

document. Data is embedded in documentation, and armed with this data, School Managers can always put forth a case for additional support or the position taken.

In the midst of COVID-19, Schools Management will continue to provide effective leadership. Grave consideration will be given to the roll out of the health and safety protocols so as to assure stakeholders that education is priority, but health and safety lead the way.

To provide parents and other stakeholders with these assurances and other information related to school operations, school teams will make effective and optimum use of Information Communication Technologies. In addition to using ICTs to communicate with stakeholders, School Managers and their teams will also utilize The Education Management System (EMIS) and Learning Management System (LMS) to develop forecasts, lesson plans, mark books and deliver content, and live lessons that will be available on demand. ICTs will also be employed to monitor, assess and report on the instructional programme. Technology integration is deliberate, for it is the intent to equip, as far as possible, all of our stakeholders, with the skills to transition to remote learning.

In the Face to Face Model, school leaders will engage in the following:

- Utilize guiding questions from Schools Management and make use of the Administrators Guide to Effective Leadership Manual to develop an onsite Management Plan that is workable within the context of the school environment. **(SEE APPENDIX III)**
- Determine, in collaboration with their team, how they will organize themselves to produce optimum results in the areas of health and safety protocols, the upkeep and maintenance of the physical plant, Curriculum and Instruction, Record Keeping, Special Services, Student Services and Technology.
- Assist Schools Management, Department of Education, with addressing how to utilize staff with comorbidities and where to assign students with comorbidities.
- Facilitate the implementation and monitoring of the Curriculum and Instruction, face to face timetable, Student Development, Special and Student Services.
- Provide data so that technology can be used to support the instructional programme in schools where physical distancing poses a challenge.

- Repurpose rooms to accommodate additional students whose homerooms cannot house them because of physical distancing.
- Communicate to all those affected by these changes, that is, students, parents, caterers and lunch vendors.
- Facilitate the staggered break and lunch times, according to the timetable.
- Identify, where possible and necessary, various locations for lunches to be sold, or identify personnel to collect pre-ordered lunches for students.
- Monitor the execution of the Plan of Action during break and lunch time to ensure compliance with health and safety protocols.
- Coordinate and or supervise the movement of students as they transition to option subjects.
- Encourage, where possible, teaching on the outside.
- Strategize to determine the safest way for students to be dismissed.
- Develop a policy that speaks to: <u>staff members with pre-existing comorbidities</u>. Key questions will be addressed: What is the protocol for staff members with pre-existing conditions? How will they be utilized? Will they be placed on the virtual platform to provide support for their existing school? In the absence of their schools needing support, will they be reassigned to schools that need additional instructional support?
- Develop a policy document that speaks to student ratio.
- Revisit the Safe School Manual and make recommendations to make adjustments to reflect a COVID-19 Era.

Staff Preparedness and Training

The importance of professional development as a means of advancing education in an altered landscape cannot be overstated. The Ministry of Education, like others concerned with education in countries around the world, knows about this firsthand. In March 2020, due to the spread of the COVID-19 virus, officers and teachers had to simultaneously engage in professional development training while launching lessons on the virtual platform. During this period over 17,000 badges were issued to those individuals who engaged in aggressively preparing themselves for this new reality.

After passing this initial hurdle, the Ministry of Education sought to prepare a plan that would focus on the systematic training of all educational stakeholders. The Staff Preparedness and Training Sub-Committee was formed to address this need. In addition to including MOE officers, administrators, teachers and parents, this sub-committee drew on the expertise of those charged with the responsibility for national training: namely the National Training Agency and the Public Service Centre for Human Resource Development.

In subsequent meetings it was decided that this training would focus on five (5) key areas: health and safety, psychosocial emotional needs, strategies for working remotely, innovative pedagogical methods and information and communication technology in education. It was also determined that the actual training would take place in a variety of forms: face to face while maintaining the appropriate health protocols, virtual meetings, webinars, sessions on demand, public service announcements, brochures and flyers.

While the biggest constituents of the Ministry of Education are its administrators and teachers, the training will include other important stakeholders such as:
- Central Office Staff
- Curriculum and Special Services Officers
- Examinations Officers
- Clerical Personnel in the Schools
- Janitorial Staff
- Security Guards
- Food Vendors
- Bus Operators
- Parents
- Students

Given the fluid nature of this pandemic, the Sub-Committee had to determine what training should look like for each of the three models: Face to Face, Blended and Remote learning for all of the educational stakeholders.

Additionally, the training had to be sufficiently comprehensive that it would empower teachers to transition seamlessly across the three models as necessary. Below is a brief description of the type of training that would take place for teachers under each of the models.

The training for the Face to Face model would follow what traditionally happens at the beginning of the school year, but greater emphasis would be placed on creating a safe and healthy environment, providing emotional support for

stakeholders in need, putting a structure in place for the digitalizing of records and having teachers receive training in order to create resources for the virtual platform. These resources would be available for teachers to access on a daily basis, for parents in the case of a national crisis, for the home schooling population and also for students who may be too ill to attend school.

A National Virtual Training for parents will acquaint them with what education will look like for the new school year.
- Devices they will need
- Psychosocial support
- Parents' and students' responsibilities
- Creating a work space

Protection, Well-being and Social Assistance
As the global community is adapting its practices and policies to accommodate recovery and progression during the pandemic, UNESCO advances that promotive, preventive, and responsive functions be built-in to the operations of an organization. Promotive functions include advocating, coordinating, educating and training aspects, while the identification of vulnerable households, working with community leaders and providing psychosocial support are central tenets of the preventive function. The responsive tasks embrace counselling, case management, and options for alternative care management; all of which have been an integral part of the organization's evolving service, via the Guidance and Counselling Unit, Special Services Section, Department of Social Services, National Security and other government and non-government agencies.

Worldwide and nationally, our service functions remain the same; it is now the resolve to provide services using innocuous and effective avenues. Considering in-person risk, a number of the social assistance, well-being and protection assessments and provisions must be addressed virtually. In The Bahamas, school counselling, referrals and networking have predominantly moved to a virtual platform since May 2020. However, food voucher receipts, welfare check-ins and some aspects of case management remain in-person.

This is an integral component of the education sector, for while many focus on the three proposed learning modalities, this area gives attention to the needs of our students, in particular the vulnerable community. In partnership with other agencies and through the Department of Education's human and material resources, the following framework will be implemented for the continued provision of service.

Networking will take place on behalf of students via emails, phone calls and in-person meetings with the following agencies:
a. **School Psychological Services**
   - Testing
   - Therapy
   - Assessment
   - Consultation
   - Student Follow-up
b. **Alternative Schools (Programme SURE, TAPS, PACE)**
   - Case Monitoring
c. **National School Feeding Unit**
   - The National School Feeding Unit is charged with the task of providing nutritious meals for students enrolled in the public school system. These lunches are provided by both Lunch Vendors and Caterers.
   - In the Face to Face Model,
   Food Handlers will supply hard copies of Health Certificate, Medical Report, Environmental Certificate and Food License to their respective schools.
   - Food Handlers will be allowed one helper.
   - Food Handlers will deliver food items to the designated officer/area to reduce risk of contamination.
   - Food Handlers will deliver lunches at least thirty (30) minutes prior to the lunch period.
   - Primary Lunches will be pre-packaged for ease of grab and go.
   - High school vendors will display food items in chaffing dishes and package items upon request.
   - Proper markings indicating six feet apart will be visible at the serving stations.
   - Food handlers will wear clean uniforms, head coverings, gloves and masks while serving/ delivering food.
   - Menu cards will be displayed at serving stations.
   - Minimal food choices will be prepared.
   - Stations will be deep cleaned and sanitized prior to and after providing services.
   - Food Handlers should clean and sanitize the vehicles used for the delivery of food.
d. **Social Services**
   - Abuse/ Neglect Cases
   - Welfare Checks
e. **Health**
   - Immunizations
   - Chronic and non-communicable disease management

- Drug Prevention/Intervention
    f.   **National Security**
- Court/ Abuse/Drug Cases
    g.   **EAP Referrals/ Assessments**
- Trauma victims needing more intense services outside the scope of the CRT will be outsourced to the appropriate specialist. Based upon the need, number of sessions may range from three to twelve.
    g.   **EAP Referrals/ Assessments**

2. Officers will work in collaboration with three major government agencies to identify a Liaison Officer to coordinate the responses and resources of their Ministries will:
- Continue to utilize Guidance Counsellors to make referrals and follow-ups.
- Engage in monthly virtual case conferencing with stakeholders.

3. Training will be provided in the following areas:
- Staff awareness of student issues and coping skills/ Guidance Counsellor Training Sessions.
- Data collection to identify and provide accurate social assistance.
- Making Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) Referrals.
- EAP Training.

4. Group and District Group Counselling will continue. Large and small Group Guidance will be facilitated in classroom settings, and individual sessions will be held in-person.

5. A plan of action will be created to speak specifically to educating students about precautionary and hygienic measures that they should take in this COVID-19 Era.

6. Guidance and Counselling will work in collaboration with Public Relations to create and share Public service announcements via television, radio, social media and print concerning:
- Enrollment
- Learning/Study Strategies
- Accessing Social Assistance
- In-school and In-route Sanitation Measures for Students
- Living with COVID-19
- Updates about school meetings, assignments and check-in

Health and Safety

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to this work. An immense challenge is determining what public health accommodations and adaptations ought to entail, what schools will require to make them practicable, how community organizations can provide support, and what the path to reopening will look like in practice. Implementation should be guided by what is feasible, practical, and acceptable.

Several strategies will be used to encourage behaviours that reduce the spread of Covid-19.These include:-
1. Promoting behaviors that reduce spread which include:
   - Staying home when appropriate
   - Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette
   - Face coverings
   - Adequate supplies
   - Signs and messages
2. Maintaining healthy environments:
   - Cleaning and disinfecting
   - Ventilation
   - Shared Spaces
   - Food Service
3. Preparing for when someone becomes ill:
   - Identify an area that can be used as Sick Bay
   - Isolate the sick
   - Clean and disinfect
   - Notify health officials and close contacts

These considerations are meant to supplement **not replace** any health and safety laws, rules, and regulations with which schools must comply. Personal prevention practices and environmental **cleaning and disinfecting** are important principles that will be promoted by the Health and Safety Team.

In this model, there is an increased risk to exposure and the spread of COVID-19; hence, training will be at the heart of Health and Safety.

Health and Safety permeates the three models, and extends beyond COVID-19, therefore, schools will have to look at the broader picture of health and safety, and will continue to provide for First Aid Training.

Technology

Twenty-first century learners must be equipped to function in an ever evolving digital world, and they must be prepared to adapt to changes that will occur be they in the form of another pandemic or some other anomaly/crises/ disaster. To equip learners, teachers must engage them, and technology has proven to be an avenue to promote student engagement not only during these time, but also

as we explore differentiated instruction for all learners. Therefore, in the Face to Face Model

- There will be an intentional move towards improving teaching with technology.
- Through training, teachers will be exposed to creation of open education resources, how to integrate the ICTs in the teaching learning process;
- The best use of the Office 365 apps for organization and management of the teaching process and for student enrichment activities (Word, Excel, Sway, etc.)
- Technology will be used to improve internal communication through virtual staff rooms, student assemblies, and Push Notifications.
- The improvement of external communication will also be a goal. This will be accomplished through Office 365 Suite. Teams, One Note, Share Point, and video conferencing are all apps in this suite that can be employed for sharing virtually.
- Technology will aid in accomplishing one of the goals of health and safety, that of minimizing paper handling.

The following will be implemented for School Management and Operations:

1. A digital sign-in system
This system will:
- Improve monitoring of personnel on the campus.
- Decrease handling of physical sign in books/ sheets for staff and visitors.
- Improve data collection and reporting.

A Full Digital Sign-in System will be utilized. Preparation for this system will involve
- The creation of identification cards.
- A dedicated tablet for the sign in and capturing of the data.
- Online/Offline Mode

2. An Education Management Information System
An EMIS will provide a centralized system for school management and data collection using the information that will be keyed in the following documents:
- Attendance Register
- Grade book
- Forecast/lesson plan
- Physical plant
- Data collection

The incorporation of this system will call for Administrators and teachers to be provided with devices, and schools with internet connectivity. Training will be designed around the benefits and multiple usage of this system. Each school will have a trained System Administrator who will be responsible for handling the data at that level.

3. A Learning Management System, (LMS), will be incorporated in the Face to Face Model as a means of supporting the delivery of education. This will be used as a teaching and learning resource, and will also require devices and connectivity for teachers and schools.

4. Educational Repository – Learning Content Management
- The Educational Repository – Learning Content Management is a storage system that can archive and manage learning content. This system contains Reusable Learning Objects (RLO) which is comprised of metadata authoring and editing features. Each RLO supports a single learning objective, which is streamlined into a digital library of RLOs.
- OERs, LCM Hub, Digital Resources – Multiple Media all having creative commons or published in such a way that they can be freely utilized and shared.

   Microsoft SharePoint, One Drive, Stream, Sway, and other Office 365 apps can facilitate coordination and collaboration of resources.

Simulation Software
- This will provide opportunity for students to receive instructions in subjects such as Physical Education in the Face to Face Model. The use of this kind of software gives the advantage of maintaining physical distance while still observing skills being utilized in a virtual environment. The student is engaged and learning can still take place.

Specs for Devices
- Parents will be provided with the following information to purchase devices:
- For students at the Pre-Primary and Lower Primary levels:
  - ◇ Tablets 10" or larger can be used. These tablets should possess at minimum,
  - ◇ a quad core processor,
  - ◇ Front Camera (2 MP), Rear Camera (5 MP),
  - ◇ built in Wi Fi and

- ◇ an Android operating system 9.0.
- For Upper Primary and Secondary students:
    - ◇ either a netbook with an Intel Atom X5/ Intel Celeron N400/ AMD A4 processor,
    - ◇ 4GB DDR3 memory,
    - ◇ 64GB eMMC storage,
    - ◇ web camera,
    - ◇ built in Wi Fi,
    - ◇ Windows 10 Operating System; or
    - ◇ a laptop or notebook with Intel Celeron/ Intel Pentium / AMD A Series processor,
    - ◇ 4GB DDR3 RAM memory,
    - ◇ 500GB HD or 128 GB SSD storage,
    - ◇ Web Camera,
    - ◇ Built in Wi Fi and
    - ◇ Windows 10 operating system.

Public/Private Partnerships

- **The Ministry of Education has partnered with local businesses to negotiate affordable rates.**
- Hard copy learning packages will still be included as a means of disseminating information, but with careful attention paid to health and safety protocols**.**

THE HYBRID/ BLENDED MODEL

THE HYBRID/BLENDED MODEL

The Hybrid/Blended Learning Model combines Face to Face instruction with online learning. A Hybrid Learning Model will decrease the number of students on the campus each day by moving some of the instruction online in an alternate day schedule. The risk of exposure to COVID-19 is reduced.

Sometimes referred to as the Blended Model, hybrid learning lends itself to individualized learning, collaboration via online discussions and modes of interacting with course content for different learning styles.

The main features will include:
• Flexibility for teaching and learning;
• Standardized timetable, pacing guide/scope and sequence to facilitate students' ability to transition seamlessly from Face to Face instruction to the virtual platform;
• Opportunities for learning on demand;
• Partnership between home and school.

Teachers will be trained to plan for and facilitate online instruction and to create digital resources. Administrators will be trained to monitor and support the teaching and learning process within a hybrid learning environment.

Ongoing support will be provided for parents to assist their children in a hybrid learning environment.

The model has numerous advantages. It:
• Maintains student engagement on and off the school.
• Limits physical contact on campus.
• Improves home school partnership.
• Provides greater flexibility in use of instructional approaches.

Curriculum and Instruction will:
• Work in collaboration with Schools Management to determine subject/period allocation of face to face instruction - consider a variety of scheduling models to fit the school context.
• Provide training to promote collaboration, accountability and professionalism for teachers and administrators.
• Develop an Integrated Instructional Plan and Pacing Guide which will both include skills that students will acquire. Integrate social subjects into the core areas.
• Ensure that special needs and students in alternate schools are also considered.
• Ensure the alignment of the curriculum and the syllabus.

• Improve access to digital resources to support the curriculum through a resource library or repository.
• Develop and publish an instructional guide for parents and create a parent support plan, particularly for parents of special needs students and those in our alternate schools.
• Provide training for remote teaching strategies and online tools used in specific subject areas.
• Create activities to reinforce concepts/skills that students will engage in on the days they are not in school.

Pre-Primary Education
This model is not preferred for Pre-Schoolers as it does not provide the level of consistency that young children require.

Pre-schoolers in each class will be divided into two groups. Group 1 will attend the school campus on Monday and Wednesday and Group 2 will attend the school campus on Tuesday and Thursday. Friday will be used for independent activities for reinforcement enrichment and individual student assessment interviews. Teachers will also engage in professional development and planning. During attendance on campus all health and safety protocols and procedures along with the adapted schedule identified in Model A will be followed. Students away from the campus will engage in virtual and hardcopy activities assigned by the teacher to meet their specific needs.

Special Services
Special Education
Students will remain in the Face to Face modality, health conditions allowing for this mode of delivery.

School Attendance Unit Criteria for Absenteeism in the COVID-19 ERA

The Hybrid model will address those students who report to school some days and stay at home utilizing the virtual platform on other days. The criterion is the same as the virtual, once a student is at home.
However, once in school, the traditional model (Face to Face) would be utilized. The criteria are for the traditional or Face to Face model is as follows:
• Absent three or more days without a note/contact from parent/guardian over a two week period.
• Absent once a week on a regular basis over a four week period, or where a pattern of absences begin to develop whether the student presents a note or not.

School Psychology
Emphasis will be placed on the delivery of psycho-education services guided by three levels (Red, Yellow and Green).
- Yellow level will allow the School Psychologist to administer psycho-educational assessment to students at the Ministry of Education. Students and parents must adhere to the health and safety protocols before, during and after services are rendered. During the Yellow Level only one student per school psychologist within a three to four day interval will be allowed for testing.
- Depending upon the circumstance and in the best interest of all concerned, the hybrid model may be utilized with students throughout the country.

Speech Therapy will
- Deliver speech language services Face to Face to children in the school setting.
- Service students individually or group by maximum of two pending work space and keeping with protocol guidelines.
- Require clients to sanitize hands upon entry and wear required protective equipment.
- Utilize plexi glass, where possible, divide the therapist and client.
- Engaged clients will participate in a 30–45 minutes weekly session to address the goals set.
- Deliver speech and language services virtually to children in the school setting.
- Address clients' targeted goals by delivery of biweekly speech and language therapy to more mature clients via a virtual platform in clinic at MOE for a period of 30 to 45 minutes
- Provide training for students on how to use the virtual platform.
- Provide training for speech therapists related to the delivery of therapy virtually.
- Provide training in the areas of Microsoft Teams, Google Classroom, Zoom and other platforms/ How to decipher how to use therapy material, assessments and apps on the virtual platform.
- Provide technology training for parents of students who are enrolled in speech therapy in both school and clinic programmes.
- Provide support for parents by hosting virtual meetings to explain the new therapy process, what is expected from them and to address any concerns.
- Provide training for parents of students who are unable to focus/attend, work independently due

to the severity and type of speech and language diagnosis (e.g. ADHD, Autism, Down Syndrome).

Student Services
The following programmes will continue with some modifications:

National After School Literacy Numeracy Enrichment Programme
Classes will be conducted face to face and virtually. (one face to face and one virtually)
- One-hour Face to Face (teaching of various skills)
- One hour Virtual (Practice/Drills/Homework stemming from the concepts taught in the face to face classes)

Training
- A Facilitator's webinar will be held to provide instructors with non-traditional strategies to assist their students.

Bahamas Government High School Student Council
Virtual Meetings will be held for the following:
- Meeting with Advisors in New Providence
- Selection of Leaders
- Regular Meetings
Activities and ballot elections will be conducted face to face.

Minister's Cup School Beautification Competition and Clean Campus Competition
At this juncture, we are still contemplating whether to proceed with this programme (Minister's Cup, School Beautification/ Clean Campus Competitions) during the 2020/2021 school year.

National Debate Competition
- Debates will be held via a virtual platform
- All Zone Competitions will be hosted at the various centres throughout New Providence, but will only be opened to the contestants, coaches, judges and other officials. Live Streaming of the competition will be aired so that representing schools can view the competitions virtually.
- The workshop for the officials will be conducted face to face at a spacious venue that will allow for physical distancing. The event will be recorded so that information can be used in the future.
- A webinar will be arranged for the coaches' meeting. This format will allow coaches on the Family Islands to participate and receive virtually, information and strategies to prepare their teams.

National Spelling Bee Competition
- Spelling Bee Clubs will be held via virtual platforms.
- A webinar will be arranged for the Spelling Bee coaches' forum. This format will allow coaches on the Family Islands to participate and receive virtual information and strategies to prepare their teams.
- District Superintendents will host District Competitions at venues in their Districts.
- All District Competitions will be hosted by District Superintendents at various centres throughout The Bahamas. All competitions are scheduled for the same day to maintain the integrity of the competition. Competitions will be open only to contestants, coaches, judges and other officials. Where possible, there will be Live Streaming of the competitions so that representing schools can view the competitions virtually.
- The Orientation for the Final Spelling Bee will be held at a spacious venue.
- The Final Bee will be open to the contestants, coaches, parents and officials only. It will be recorded to be aired at a later date.

The Ministry of Education Student Christian Movement (S.C.M.)
- Club leaders (Moderators) advertise and form S.C.M. clubs. This is done at school as well as virtually (BLAST for Parents and Students/ placed on the school's Facebook page etc.)
- Clubs participate in a number of national events planned and hosted by the National Student Christian Movement. Some events will be face to face, while others will be virtual.
- A Spiritual Awareness Assembly can be held virtually as it will include a number of schools. Events on the programme can be pre-recorded and then aired electronically.

National Art and Craft Enrichment Programme
- This programme will be held face to face only.

Student Development
Alternative Schools
Each centre has reviewed its spacing capacity to comply with Health and Safety guidelines as have been outlined by the Ministry of Health. The space that is being occupied by the centres is separate from the main facility so the integrity of the programme can be maintained. Students in the alternative programmes will be engaged in the Face to Face Model, but throught technology integration they will

be exposed to strategies employed in the Hybird/Blended model. Hence, greater emphasis will be placed on technology integration and strengthening mechanism that would make for a seamless transition to remote learning.

Schools Management will, in addition to the roles and responsibilities in the Face to Face Model,
- Execute the approved management plan.
- Assess the management plan developed to facilitate the Hybrid Model.
- Continue to collaborate with teams as to how they will re/organize themselves to produce optimum results in the areas of health and safety protocols, the upkeep and maintenance of the physical plant, Curriculum and Instruction, special services, student services and technology.
- Assist Schools Management, Department of Education, with addressing how to utilize staff with comorbidities and where to place students with comorbidities.
- Provide data so that technology can be used to support the instructional programme where physical distancing poses a challenge.
- Repurpose rooms to accommodate additional students whose homerooms cannot house them because of physical distancing.
- Utilize technology effectively to assist with supporting the instructional programme.
- Communicate to all those affected by these changes, that is, students, parents, caterers and lunch vendors.
- Facilitate the staggered break and lunch times, according to the timetable.
- Identify, where possible and necessary, various locations for lunches to be sold, or identify personnel to collect pre-ordered lunches for students.
- Monitor the execution of the plan of action during break and lunch time to ensure compliance with health and safety protocols.
- Coordinate and or supervise the movement of students as they transition to option subjects.
- Strategize to determine the safest way for students to be dismissed.
- Address the issue of students with comorbidities.
- Develop a policy that speaks to: <u>staff members with pre-existing comorbidities</u>. Key questions will be addressed: What is the protocol for staff members with pre-existing conditions? How will they be utilized? Will they be placed on the virtual platform to provide support for their existing

schools? In the absence of their schools needing support, will they be reassigned to schools that need additional instructional support?

- Develop a policy document that speaks to student ratio.
- Revisit Safe School Manual to make adjustments to reflect a COVID-19 Era.

Staff Preparedness and Training

In the Blended Model there will still be a focus on maintaining a healthy and safe environment as the students will be spending days at school. There will be a heavier emphasis placed on technology training than in the Face to Face Model as teachers would need to be trained to use the Learning Management System and the Education Management Information System. Additionally, there would be a focus on strategies needed for operating between the face to face classes and online classes.

Protection, Well-being and Social Assistance

The approaches in all models presented are similar as welfare assessments can be effective using either model. It is imperative to note that Model B relies heavily on the virtual collaboration and ability of a number of representatives from various government agencies. Consistency and accurate accounting are paramount in ensuring that no student is excluded while executing the activities; hence the following activities will be carried out in the Blended Model:

Guidance and Counselling will create public service announcements via television, radio, social media and print concerning:

a) Enrollment
b) Learning/Study Strategies
c) Accessing Social Assistance
d) In-school & En-route Sanitation Measures for Students
e) Living with COVID-19
f) Updates about school meetings, assignments and check-in
g) Virtual Clubs Enrollment

A School Counsellor will be posted at the Virtual School to:

a. Monitor students during live sessions and assist with academic, social and career issues that arise.
b. Arrange and manage all virtual sessions for the guidance counsellors across The Bahamas.

Networking on behalf of students will become predominantly virtual as we engage the following agencies:

a. School Psychological Services
   i. Teletherapy will be used to provide a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS), positive behavioural interventions, and supports (PBIS), psychoeducational and mental health support.
   ii. Telehealth Consultation
   iii. Tele-assessment
   iv. Testing
   v. Therapy
   vi. Assessment
   vii. Consultation
   viii. Student Follow-up (IEP)

b. Alternative Schools (Programme SURE, TAPS, PACE)
   i. Case Monitoring

c. National School Feeding Unit
   - Food Handlers should be in possession of the following documents in order to provide food services:
     - health certificate
     - medical report
     - environmental certificate
     - food license
   - Food Handlers will carry out the same protocols as in the Face to Face Model.
   - Food Handlers/Lunch Vendors and Caterers will be engaged to provide meals for students. Students on the NSLP will also be provided with food vouchers to adequately meet the need for sustenance while home based. They will collect vouchers, which will be available from the schools, on a monthly basis. Prior arrangements must be made with school administration to collect vouchers.
     i. Food Vouchers
     ii. Lunch Tickets

d. Social Services
   i. Abuse/Neglect Cases
   ii. Welfare Checks

e. Health
   i. Immunizations
   ii. Chronic and non-communicable disease management
   iii. Drug Prevention/ Intervention

f. National Security
   i. Court/Abuse/Drug Cases
g. EAP Referrals/ Assessments
Trauma victims needing more intense services outside the scope of the CRT will be outsourced to the appropriate specialist. Based upon the need, number of sessions may range from three to twelve.
h. Guidance and Counselling Assessments

A Stakeholder School Liaison Officer will be a new feature.
   a) Each of the three major government agencies will identify the person who will coordinate the Ministry's response and resources.
   b) School counsellors will continue to make referrals and follow-ups.
   c) Monthly virtual case conferencing with stakeholders will be carried out.

Training will include the following modules:
   a) Additional prevention and intervention virtual training for individual, and large group counselling.
   b) Staff awareness (student issues).
   c) Data collection strategies to identify and provide accurate social assistance
   d) Skills in the creation or maintenance of digital IEP for each student
   e) Making EAP Referrals
   f) EAP Training

District Grade Level Group Counselling
   a) Counsellors will hold large Group Guidance in grade clusters on days when students remain at home. Emails of students will be channelled to school counsellors via a general counsellor email address.
   b) Individual sessions, if necessary, will be held virtually, whats app, teleconference or in-person. Counsellors will hold large Group Guidance in grade clusters on days when students remain at home. Emails of students will be channelled to school counsellors via a general counsellor email address. Individual sessions, if necessary, will be held virtually, whats app, teleconference or in-person.
   c) Leads the national campaign strategy

Health and Safety
Health and Safety will continue as per the Face to Face Model.

In this model, risk is minimized as few individuals will be on campus, but **all** health and safety protocols must be followed as outlined.

Technology
Twenty-first century learners must be equipped to function in an ever-evolving digital world, and they must be prepared to adapt to changes that will occur be they in the form of another pandemic or some other anomaly/crises/disaster. To equip learners, teachers must engage them, and technology has proven to be an avenue to promote student engagement not only during these times, but also as we explore differentiated instruction for all learners.

Therefore, in the Hybrid Model,
   • Technology will be used to combine in-class of and out class learning.
   • Teachers are linked to their students whether in the traditional face to face or in the virtual environment on a continuous basis.
   • Technology is used to improve internal communication through virtual staff rooms, student assemblies, and Push Notifications.
   • The improvement of external communication through the use of technology is a goal. This is accomplished through use of the Office 365 Suite. Teams, One Note, Share Point, and video conferencing are apps and tools that will be used.
   • Technology will aid in accomplishing one of the goals of health and safety, that of minimizing paper handling.

Since teachers will for the most part be teaching on the school's campus for the Hybrid Model, the following will be implemented:

5. A Digital Sign-in System
This system will:
   • Improve monitoring of personnel on the campus.
   • Decrease handling of physical sign in books/sheets for staff and visitors.
   • Improve data collection and reporting.
It is recommend that a Full Digital Sign-in System be utilized, for this system will also provide
   • For the creation of identification cards.
   • Use of a dedicated tablet for the sign in
   • Online/Offline Mode.

6. An Education Management Information System
An EMIS will provide a centralized system for school management and data collection using the information that will be keyed in the following documents:

- Attendance Register
- Grade book
- Forecast/Lesson Plan
- Physical Plant
- Data Collection

The incorporation of this system will call for Administrators and teachers to be provided with devices, and schools with internet connectivity. Training will be designed around the benefits and multiple usage of this system. The System Administrators are again responsibe for all the handling of the data for the EMIS. Staff data, Student data, Administrative Data and School profile data will be incorporated in the EMIS.

7. A Learning Management System, (LMS), will be relied on more heavily than in the Face to Face Model. This will be used as a teaching and learning resource, and will also require devices and connectivity for teachers and schools.

8. Educational Repository – Learning Content Management
- The Education Repository – Learning Content Management will be used. It is a storage system that can archive and manage learning content. This system contains Reusable Learning Objects (RLOs) which comprise of metadata authoring and editing features. Each RLO supports a single learning objective, which is streamlined into a digital library of RLOs.
- OERs, LCM Hub, Digital Resources – Multiple Media will be placed in the repository for giving support to the teaching process.

Microsoft SharePoint, One Drive, Stream and Sway, Office 365 apps that facilitate sharing, can facilitate coordination and collaboration of resources.

Simulation Software
- This will provide opportunity for students to engage in subjects such as Physical Education even when they are in the virtual environment for their lessons.

Specs for Devices
- Parents will be provided with the following information to purchase devices:
- **For students at the Pre-Primary and Lower Primary levels:**
    - ◇ **Tablets 10 inch or larger can be used. These tablets should possess at minimum,**

- ◇ **a quad core processor,**
- ◇ **Front Camera (2 MP), Rear Camera (5 MP),**
- ◇ **built in Wi Fi and**
- ◇ **an Android operating system 9.0.**

- **For Upper Primary and Secondary students:**
    - ◇ **either a netbook with an Intel Atom X5/ Intel Celeron N400/ AMD A4 processor,**
    - ◇ **4GB DDR3 memory,**
    - ◇ **64GB eMMC storage,**
    - ◇ **web camera,**
    - ◇ **built in Wi Fi,**
    - ◇ **Windows 10 Operating System; or**
    - ◇ **a laptop or notebook with Intel Celeron/Intel Pentium / AMD A Series processor,**
    - ◇ **4GB DDR3 RAM memory,**
    - ◇ **500GB HD or 128 GB SSD storage**
    - ◇ **Web Camera**
    - ◇ **Built in Wi Fi**
    - ◇ **Windows 10 operating system**

Tablet
Processor: Quad-core Processor
Memory: 2GB
Storage: 32GB
Display: 10"
Front Cam (2 MP) & Rear Cam (5 MP)
Built in WiFi
OS: Android 9.0

Notebook/Laptop
Processor: Intel Celeron/ Intel Pentium/ AMD A Series
Memory: 4GB DDR3 RAM
Storage: 500GB HD or 128 GB SSD
Display: 14" or larger
Webcam
Built in WiFi
OS: Windows 10

Netbook
Processor: Intel Atom X5/Intel Celeron N400/ AMD A4
Memory: 4GB DDR3
Storage: 64GB eMMC
Display: 11"
Webcam
Built in WiFi
OS: Windows 10

Public/Private Partnerships
- The Ministry of Education has provided guideline specification for parents and students. Further, MOE has partnered with local businesses to negotiate affordable rates, and engaged media such as the radio and television broadcast.
- Hard copy learning packages will still be considered as a means of disseminating information, but careful attention will be paid to HOW to make these learning packages available so that health and safety protocols are still maintained and the quality of the instructional material is of an acceptable standard.

THE REMOTE MODEL

In this model the entire delivery of instruction takes place in the virtual environment. All learners receive daily instruction off campus. The risk of exposure to COVID-19 on campus is minimal.

The main features include:
- Student-directed learning;
- High level of flexibility to accommodate more students in a virtual classroom;
- Teaching and learning is not limited to the physical space;
- Parent/Guardian becomes a facilitator of learning along with the teacher.

Teachers will be trained to plan for and facilitate online instruction and to create digital resources. Administrators will be trained to monitor and support the teaching and learning process within a remote environment.

Ongoing support will be provided for parents to assist their children in a remote- Not ideal for the Pre-Primary, Lower Primary, and some Special Education Needs populations;

The model has numerous advantages:
- Provides opportunities for learning on demand
- Teaching and learning not limited to specific schools or geographical location
- Online learning is flexible; students can review the lesson at their pace
- Greater opportunities for School/Home partnership
- Requires minimal adjustment for expansion of Virtual School to the entire school population

Curriculum and Instruction will:
- Determine subject/period allocation of face to face instruction.
- Develop an Integrated Instructional Plan and Pacing Guide that will outline specific activities to be completed on each day. Pacing Guide will include the subject, topic and suggested activities and resources.
- Improve access to digital resources, (Open Educational Resources (OERs) and Publisher Resources (subscriptions) to support the curriculum through a resource library or repository.
- Develop and publish an instructional guide for parents.
- Integrate social subjects into the core areas.
- Redefine the role of the Grade Level and Subject Coordinator.

- Engage in Curriculum Reform to focus new teaching strategies with emphasis on critical thinking and skills based instruction in a virtual environment. Focus on assessment in a virtual environment.
- Identify key benchmarks to ensure standardization.
- Utilize the Grade Level and Subject Coordinators help guide the tasks to be accomplished in the week and monitor the progress of teachers in the virtual environment.
- Provide training in use of devices, programmes, delivery of instruction and strategies for effective use of the Virtual Learning Platform Indigenous Resources developed by teachers.
- Create a parent support plan to include training via PSAs, school-based training and training during PTAs.

Instruction
- It is a fact that students who are learning online must remain motivated. Thus, the effective online teacher, not only has to make good effort to motivate students, but more importantly, has to provide opportunity for excellent instruction. Teachers, who have always been creative, will find that virtual teaching allows them to be even more so. Through online teaching, teachers can offer students alternative options when it comes to assignments and projects, leading to even greater student motivation because they are now tasked with assignments which they are more interested in, using technological tools which excite them. It is a well-known fact that the engaged online learner is a successful online student.
- Just as in traditional instruction, the teacher in the virtual classroom must cater to the needs of all learners, differentiating instruction, activities and assignments. This includes our special needs students as well as students in alternate schools.
- In addition to ensuring that there is differentiation, the virtual model allows for even greater opportunities for integration of content across disciplines and the integration of technology.
- **Supervision of the Remote Model**
- The teacher in the traditional setting is supervised by a Grade Level Head, Subject Coordinator and the Subject Supervisor who checks the hard copy lesson plan, forecast book and who observes a lesson.
- The virtual classroom also demands supervision but in this instance, the supervisor, instead of

being given a hard copy, or instead of walking into a brick and mortar classroom will receive a lesson plan or weekly forecast which has been uploaded to the One on One platform   Using the same review tool, the supervisor checks the plan for evidence of differentiation, integration, and alignment to the pacing guide. To ensure teacher accountability, the LMS and EMIS allows the Supervisor access to the Virtual Classroom where, upon lessons or parts thereof can be observed.

Pre-Primary Education

Pre-schoolers will engage in remote learning through the virtual platform, hard copy worksheets and hands on, interactive activities. An adapted virtual learning schedule will be implemented. Students will engage in live lessons of 20 minutes each between 9:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. on Monday through Thursday. A snack and free play period is included in this morning session. In the afternoon, students will engage in independent activities, away from the screen, assigned by their teacher. These activities will be in the areas of Physical and Creative Development (Art, Music and Drama). Teachers will utilize the afternoon sessions for professional development, resource creation, team planning and parent teacher conferencing. Fridays are assigned to assessment, enrichment and intervention activities. Each child has a 10-minute assessment interview with their teacher. At this time the child is assessed on the week's skills and concepts along with a verbal report and display by the child of their afternoon activities. Learning packets will be available bi-weekly to be used for reinforcements and in the absence of access to the virtual learning platform.

Special Services
This area provides support for staff, students and parents through the following services:

School Attendance Unit Criteria for Absenteeism in the COVID-19 ERA
Within the virtual environment, teachers would be the first to intervene if a student is absent from anywhere between 5 and 20 classes over a one month period. Absences exceeding 20 sessions at any point within a one month period should be referred to the School Attendance Officer for further investigation.

School Psychology
Emphasis will be placed on the delivery of psycho-education services guided by three levels (Red, Yellow and Green).
- Red level refers to virtual only whereby the School Psychologists will continue to provide individual and small group sessions adhering to safety protocols utilizing telepractise, consultation and collaborations with counsellors/school administrators and other allied agencies.
- Depending upon the circumstance and in the best interest of all concerned, the hybrid model may be utilized with students throughout the country.

Special Education
Remote is not the ideal teacher student engagement for special needs students, but should health concerns dictate that students transition to a virtual platform to receive instruction, SPED will:
- Provide for continued support for students with special needs to learn at their own pace based on IEPs developed by the child's teacher. Use virtual platforms such as Google Classroom, Zoom, WhatsApp, Edmodo, Facebook, iReady to support the LMS.
- Provide Alternative Education Support in the form of low-tech packages to students who are unable to access the virtual platform programme.
- Provide training for Teachers and Teacher's Aides in the areas of Differentiating Instruction for Students with Special Educational Needs Via Remote/Virtual, Learning How to Use Tools for Virtual/Remote Learning Effectively (Google Classroom, YouTube, Zoom, WhatsApp, etc.) Training for assessment in remote learning in the post-COVID classroom.
- Provide training for parents and caregivers.
- Work collaboratively with parents and caregivers to Enhance At-Home Instruction.

Speech Therapy will:
- Deliver speech and language services virtually to children in the school setting.
- Address clients'' targeted goals by delivery bi-weekly speech and language therapy to more mature clients via a virtual platform in clinic at MOE for a period of 30 to 45 minutes .
- Provide training for students on how to use the virtual platform.
- Provide training for speech therapists about how to deliver therapy virtually.
- Provide training in the areas of Microsoft Teams,

Google Classroom, Zoom and other platforms/ How to decipher how to use therapy material, assessments and apps on the virtual platform.

- Provide training, about device and platform, for parents of students who are enrolled in speech therapy in both school and clinic programmes.
- Provide support for parents by hosting virtual meetings to explain the new therapy process, what is expected from them and to address any concerns.
- Provide training for parents of students who are unable to focus/attend, work independently due to the severity and type of speech and language diagnosis (e.g. ADHD, Autism, Down Syndrome).

Student Services
National After School Literacy and Numeracy Enrichment Programme
This programme will be offered virtually, and it will require the following from Teachers/Facilitators. They will

- be responsible for contacting students.
- verify if students have the necessary tools after collaboration with their Administrative personnel and guidance from the Ministry of Education.
- prepare a virtual programme for their students based on the results of the tests.

Coordinators will
- Assist teachers with the testing of students
- Provide the virtual tests.
- Assist teachers with preparing virtual lessons and programmes.
- Galvanize the personnel for the programme (District Personnel).
- Share the revised guidelines which reflect the new policies of the Ministry of Education with teachers.
- Collaborate with teachers pertaining to the way forward.
- Assist teachers with any concerns they may have.

Bahamas Government High School Student Council
Virtual Meetings will be held for the following:
- Advisors in New Providence
- Selection of Leaders
- Regular Meetings

Activities and ballot elections will be conducted via email.

Minister's Cup School-Based Beautification Competition/Clean Campus Competition
If this model goes beyond 5th October, the Programme will be delayed so academic routines are firmly established by students and school staff.

- Students will be given supplies to use at home, and they will receive instruction and converse with their instructor virtually.
- There is the possibility of giving each participating student seeds to grow in a home garden to be transplanted in the school's garden once on-site instructions commence.

National Debate Competition
- Debate Clubs will be held via virtual platforms.
- All Zone Competitions will be hosted at various centres throughout New Providence, but will only be open to the contestants, coaches, judges and other officials. Live Streaming of the competition will be aired so that representing schools can view the competitions virtually.
- The workshop for the officials will be conducted virtually using a zoom platform where officials can be placed in groups.
- A webinar will be arranged for the coaches' meeting. This format will allow coaches on the Family Islands to participate and receive virtually, information and strategies to prepare their teams.

National Spelling Bee Competition
- Spelling Bee Clubs will be held via virtual platforms.
- A webinar will be arranged for the Spelling Bee coaches. This format will allow coaches on the Family Islands to participate and receive information and strategies virtually to prepare their teams.
- District Superintendents will host District Competitions at venues in their Districts.
- All District Competitions will be hosted by District Superintendents at various centres throughout The Bahamas. All competitions are scheduled for the same day to maintain the integrity of the competition. Competitions will be open only to contestants, coaches, judges and other officials. Where possible, competitions will be live Streaming of the competition so that representing schools can view the competitions virtually.
- The Orientation for the Final Spelling Bee will be held at a spacious venue.
- The Final Bee will be open to contestants, coaches, parents and officials only. It will be recorded to be aired at a later date.

Student Christian Movement (S.C.M.)
- Club leaders (Moderators) will advertise and form S.C.M. clubs. This will be carried out virtually (BLAST for parents and students/placed on the

school's Facebook page and website).
- Clubs will participate in a number of virtual national events planned and hosted by the National Student Christian Movement.
- A virtual Spiritual Awareness Assembly will be recommended. This will include a number of schools. Events on the programme can be pre-recorded and then aired.

National Art and Craft Enrichment Programme

Essay, Poetry and Poster Competition
All competitions will continue to be posted on the Ministry of Education's website, as well as disseminated via email to District Superintendents. Principals will have full responsibility of circulating the information electronically to the staff and student body.

Student Development
Alternative Schools
Suspension Centres can work remotely, but mechanisms will have to be implemented to monitor students' behaviour, movement and provide for their academic engagement. Further, in the Remote Model, Suspension Centres must be more intentional about providing additional training for staff, students and parents.

Should remote instruction be mandated, teachers are preparing to offer instruction through several virtual means. These include utilizing the Ministry of Education's Virtual School Platform, Facebook, Google Classroom and Whatsapp. Students will receive instruction in the core areas of Math, English Language and possibly Science, and they will be provided with skills coaching opportunities.

Periodic check-ins will also be facilitated through the use of cell phones and virtual platforms such as zoom, WhatsApp and Facebook. A 'live' component will be added to guarantee that students are engaged and not being distracted by other things.
Character development sessions will continue in this model. Sessions are sometimes personal in nature, so one on one interaction will be utilized. In addition to one on one sessions, where necessary, group and individual counselling sessions will be scheduled and conducted virtually.

The main component to better guarantee success for these students is the collection of a daily/weekly progress report from parents and teachers. In this model, there will be more direct communication with parents to grasp a better understanding of how students are performing in all environments. Centre Managers will utilize social media platforms to connect.

These ideas cannot exist in the absence of continuous training whether it is in the use of technology or as part of the dissemination of instruction through this platform. Training will also be sought after in recognizing psychosocial issues and determining strategies that can be used to address these issues. Parents will also be offered continued support through parent coaching initiatives.

Schools Management
In the Remote Model, Schools Management will
- Implement approved recommendations for the use of Itinerant Teachers and teachers with multi grades.
- Facilitate the implementation and monitoring of the Curriculum and Instruction, Remote Timetable, Special Needs Instruction, Special Services and Student Services.
- Utilize technology effectively to support the instructional Program.
- Communicate to all those affected by these changes, that is, students, parents, caterers and Lunch Vendors.
- Revisit Safe School Manual to make adjustments to reflect a COVID-19 Era.
- Monitor the instructional programme through the EMIS and LMS.
- Ensure that the teaching and learning take place in the EMIS and LMS
- Provide further support through the use of other resources to continue learning. Each school will determine the most appropriate way to communicate and provide instruction for each student which could include some/all of the following: Paper packets or worksheets.

Staff Preparedness and Training
The training for the remote model incorporates most of what would take place in the previous two models. However, this model does not focus in a major way on the health and safety protocols of the Face to Face and Blended Models as students will be working from home. Teachers, however, will be supplied with information that they can share with students on how they can be safe at home. Again, more of the focus for this model will be on training for delivering lessons using the virtual platform, the creation of digital resources as well as the LMS and EMIS.

One of the main methods for training teachers will be through self-paced courses on the Dive into PD website, the Teachers Virtual Conference scheduled for the 7th – 11th September, 2020 and training sessions that will be held bi-monthly with the teachers. The bi-monthly sessions will be based on needs observed as well as from requests that are made by administrators and teachers.

The inserted training plan lays out the training that will be provided for each of the constituents.

Protection, Well-being and Social Assistance

Model C requires a more focused intervention as all contact is virtual, excluding, if only momentarily, some members of the learning community. Training may extend beyond the MOE as stakeholders play a vital part in resolving safety and well-being issues that can affect student performance.

Create public service announcements via television, radio, social media and print concerning:
   a) Enrollment
   b) Learning / Study Strategies
   c) Accessing Social Assistance
   d) In-school and In-route Sanitation Measures for Students
   e) Living with COVID-19
   f) Updates about school meetings, assignments and check in
   g) Virtual Clubs Enrollment

School Counsellor Posted at the Virtual School to:
   a) Monitor students during live sessions and assist with academic, social and career issues that arise
   b) Arrange and manage all virtual sessions for the guidance counsellors across The Bahamas

Networking on behalf of students will become predominantly virtual and in collaboration of the following agencies:
   a. School Psychological Services
      i. Teletherapy will be used to provide a multitiered system of support (MTSS), positive behavioural interventions, and supports (PBIS), psychoeducational and mental health support.
      ii. Telehealth Consultation
      iii. Tele-assessment
      iv. Testing
      v. Therapy
      vi. Assessment
      vii. Consultation

viii. Student Follow-up (IEP)
   b. Alternative Schools (Programme SURE, TAPS,PACE)
   i. Case Monitoring

   c. National School Feeding Unit
      • Food Handlers should be in possession of the following documents in order to provide food services:
         • Health Certificate
         • Medical Report
         • Environmental Certificate
         • Food License
      • Food Handlers/Lunch Vendors and Caterers will be engaged to provide meals for students. Students on the NSLP will also be provided with food vouchers to adequately meet the need for sustenance while home based. They will collect vouchers, which will be available from the schools, on a monthly basis. Prior arrangements must be made with school administration to collect vouchers.
      i. Food Vouchers
      ii. Lunch Tickets

   d. Social Services
      i. Abuse/ Neglect Cases
      ii. Welfare Checks
   e. Health
      i. Immunizations
      ii. Chronic and non-communicable disease management
      iii. Drug Prevention/ Intervention
   f. National Security
      i. Court/Abuse/Drug Cases
   g. EAP Referrals/ Assessments

Trauma victims needing more intense services outside the scope of the CRT will be outsourced to the appropriate specialist. Based upon the need, number of sessions may range from three to twelve.
   h. Guidance and Counselling Assessments

Stakeholder School Liaison Officer Implementation
   a) Each of the three major government agencies will identify the person who will coordinate the Ministry's response and resources.
   b) School Counsellors will continue to make referrals and follow-ups
   c) Monthly virtual case conferencing with stakeholders

Training Modules
   a) Additional prevention and intervention virtual training for individual, and large group counselling.
   b) School counsellors will assist in staff awareness (student issues)
   c) Data collection to identify and provide accurate social assistance
   d) Creation or maintenance of digital IEP for each student
   e) Making EAP Referrals
   f) EAP Training

District Grade Level Group Counselling
   a. Counsellors will hold large Group Guidance in grade clusters on days when students remain at home. Emails of students are channelled to school counsellors via a general counsellor email address.
   b. Individual sessions, if necessary may be held virtually, Whatsapp, teleconference. Counsellors hold large Group Guidance in grade clusters on days when students remain at home. Emails of students are channelled to school counsellors via a general counsellor email address. Individual sessions, if necessary may be held virtually, what's app, teleconference or in-person
   c. EAP Referrals/Assessment - Trauma victims needing more intense services outside the scope of the CRT will be outsourced to the appropriate specialist. Based upon the need, number of sessions may range from three to twelve.
   d. Guidance & Counselling Assessments (Online).

Health and Safety
   • The Remote Model minimizes the spread of COVID-19 as fewer individuals are on campus. However, health and safety measures should still be enforced. Further, measures will be taken in the Face to Face and Hybrid Model to provide health and safety literature for parents given that they will have sole duty of care for their children in this model.

Technology
In the Remote Model,
   • **There will an intentional move towards improving teaching with technology.**
   • **Through training, teachers will be exposed to alternate assessment methods as well as to learning tools that are based mainly in the virtual space.**

   • **Technology will be used to improve internal communication through virtual staff rooms, student assemblies, and Push Notifications.**
   • **The improvement of external communication will also be a goal. This will be accomplished through** Office 365 Suite. Teams, One Note, Share Point, and video conferencing.

The following will be implemented in the remote model:

A digital sign in system
This system will:
   • Improve monitoring of personnel on the campus.
   • Decrease handling of physical sign in books/ sheets for staff and visitors.
   • Improve data collection and reporting.
It is recommended that a Full Digital Sign in System be utilized. This system will also provide
   • For the creation of identification cards.
   • Maintenance Support.
   • Online/Off-line Mode

Teachers teaching in the Remote model on campus can utilize the digital sign in as well as their attendance can be recorded in the EMIS and LMS.

An Education Management Information System
An EMIS will provide a centralized system for school management and data collection using the information that will be keyed in the following documents:
   • Attendance Register
   • Grade book
   • Forecast/lesson plan
   • Physical plant
   • Data collection

The incorporation of this system will call for Administrators and teachers to be provided with devices, and schools with internet connectivity. Training will be designed around the benefits and multiple usage of this system.

The alternative for the EMIS will be the 365 Office Suite.

A Learning Management System, (LMS), will be incorporated in the Face to Face Model. This will be used as a teaching and learning resource, and will also require devices and connectivity for teachers and schools. **Microsoft Office Teams will be used as an alternative. Educational Repository – Learning Content**

Management

- The Education Repository – Learning Content Management will be used. It is a storage system that can archive and manage learning content. This system contains Reusable Learning Objects (RLO) which comprise of metadata authoring and editing features. Each RLO supports a single learning objective, which is streamlined into a digital library of RLOs.
- OERs, LCM Hub, Digital Resources – Multiple Media resources will be developed.

Microsoft SharePoint, One Drive, Stream and Sway, Office 365 apps that facilitate sharing, can facilitate coordination and collaboration of resources.

Simulation Software

- This will provide opportunity for students to engage in subjects such as Physical Education in the Face to Face Model.

Public/Private Partnerships

- The Ministry of Education has provided guideline specification for parents and students, has partnered with local businesses to negotiate affordable rates, and engaged media such as the radio and television broadcasts,
- Hard copy learning packages will still be considered as a means of disseminating information for those students without access to devices and connectivity, but careful attention will be paid to HOW this is done in order to maintain health and safety protocols. The continued delivery of quality education is still the goal.

SUPPORT PILLARS FOR GOVERNANCE IN THE CONTINUATION OF LEARNING

Giving support to all that we are about to implement are four pillars, each playing a role so that we are able to properly execute to bring about the desired outcomes. These four pillars are Assessment, Accountability, Capacity Building and Resources. Several Sub-committees have worked to provide frameworks that speak extensively about the value each pillar brings to the teaching learning process.
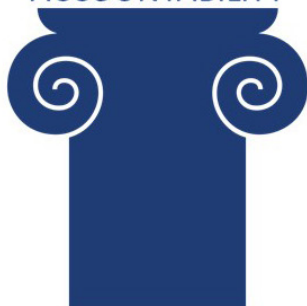
SUPPORT PILLARS FOR GOVERNANCE IN THE CONTINUATION OF LEARNING

TRAINING
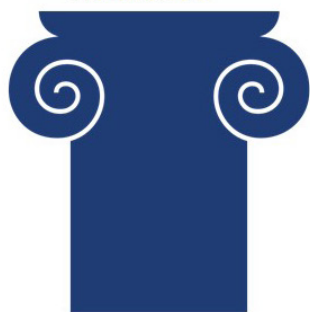
Training focuses on equipping staff with the knowledge and skills necessary to build a responsive and resilient system.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability focuses on the roles and responsibilities of each educational stakeholder.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment for learning and assessment of learning are the two approaches to determining student performance and improving teaching and learning.

RESOURCES

Access to Resources supports the production and collection of high-quality online resources to advance the delivery of the National Curriculum at all grade levels.

Assessment

According to the Glossary of Education Reform, "In *education*, the term *assessment* refers to the wide variety of methods or tools that educators use to evaluate, measure and document the academic readiness, learning progress, skill acquisition, or *educational* needs of students." Assessment therefore is the primary measurement tool in education.

This aim of assessment is to "promote academic integrity, improve academic programs and maximize student achievement. The data collected must be analysed to diagnose, remediate and assess the teaching and learning process."

Assessment of students is paramount, for, given the discontinuation of face to face instruction, assessments must be utilized to determine whether or what level of intervention will be required for students. The data will support the development and implementation of the instructional plans for students.

In addition to an assessment of the teaching learning process, good governance requires an assessment of any proposed plan. This requires asking key questions and making observations related to how well the plan is being implemented. It calls for an examination of behaviours, intended and unintended, delving into outputs and outcomes. Resulting from the responses and observations, decisions should be made as to whether one needs to adjust or adapt.

Accountability

Entrenched in the process of assessment is the act of holding all stakeholders involved in a plan accountable. To hold individuals accountable requires that all parties are made aware of their roles and responsibilities. Armed with this awareness, individuals can execute their duties and managers can engage in continuous monitoring and evaluation.

Capacity Building

Assessment and Accountability however cannot be carried out in a vacuum. There is a level of responsibility that comes with outlining roles and responsibilities, especially those that individuals are expected to play in this new norm. Creating these expectations require, on the part of employers and employees, all stakeholders the need to engage in capacity building. Capacity Building therefore entails more than training. It encompasses the passing on of information to all stakeholders, working towards changing mindsets, the way services are provided and assisting with the delivery and improvement of services. Capacity building therefore is co-captain with assessment and accountability.

Training Plan for Administrators and Teachers

Pre-Virtual Conference → Virtual Conference → Post-Virtual Conference

Resources

Resources, as a pillar, is an important part of governance. It is diverse, for it speaks to human, material and fiscal resources, all of which are required to build a rigorous, resilient and responsive system.

Building a system upon these four pillars will guide and support all stakeholders as they seek to advance the agenda of education in The Bahamas.

Two key resources that will be introduced in the new school year are the National Pacing Guide and the creation of Digital Resources Kits.

National Pacing Guides will aid in standardization of instruction across the board. The National Pacing Guides will help teachers with the preparation of their differentiated lesson plans to be uploaded to the One-On-One Platform. National Pacing Guides will also assist with the creation of course outlines. Course Outlines will provide an overview of the course and a listing of topics to be covered for the term/school year.

Using the National Pacing Guide, Team leaders, Subject Coordinators, Subject Supervisors and Vice Principals (Curriculum) and teachers will follow the guidelines below to work together on the creation of Open Educational Resources (OER's.)

Resource	Format
A. Detailed Lesson Plan	Document (doc.)
B. Power Point	Power Point Presentation (ppt)
C. Lesson/Content Notes/ Handout/ Anchor Chart	Document (.doc) and/or Portable Document Format (pdf)
D. Content Video	Media Player 4 Format (MP4/MOV) and/or Internet Links (http://)
E. Differentiated Worksheets – Beginner, On Level/ Intermediate, Advanced	Portable Document Format (pdf)
F. Additional Online Resources (Games, Activities, etc.)	Internet Links (http://)

Hard copies of content notes, handouts and activities will be made available at the school campus, on a weekly basis, for students who do not possess devices and/or Internet connectivity.

It is anticipated that the National Pacing Guides and the Digital Instructional Kits will result in increased collaboration among teachers, greater standardization of instruction and, ultimately, an improvement in student performance.

In short, together we will produce high quality instructional materials, while simultaneously reducing the individual teacher's workload.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

In addition to the four pillars, Stakeholder and Public Relations Engagement Sub-committees advanced the work of the Committee for the Safe Re-opening of Schools 2020. Inserted below is the work that was carried out by both committees.

Stakeholder Engagement is an ongoing process throughout the development and implementation of a policy or product. It is critical that the varying views and concerns of all stakeholders are heard, acknowledged and addressed.
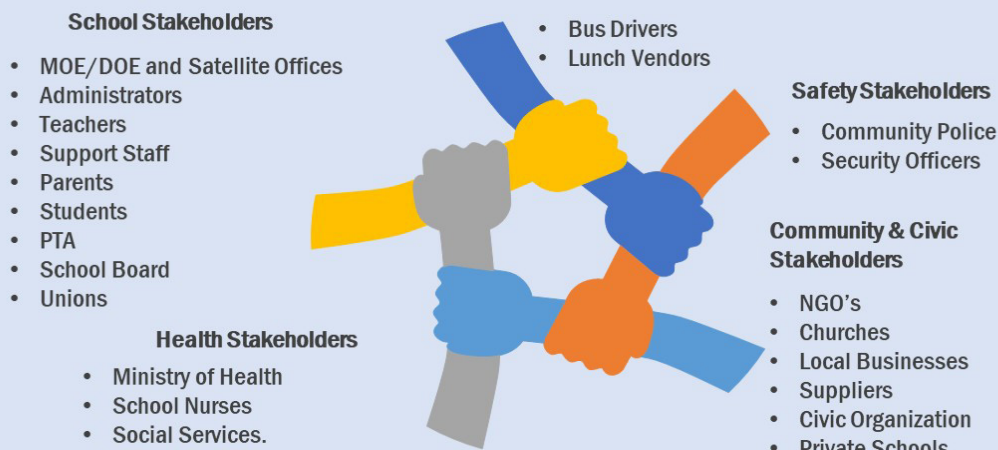
Recognizing the importance of collaboration and consultation to the success of the Strategic Framework for the Safe Reopening of Schools, the Ministry/Department of Education included Stakeholder Engagement as one of ten Sub-committees for the Safe Reopening of Schools 2020.
The Stakeholder Engagement Sub-committee aimed to:-

• promote stakeholder buy-in;
• build transparency, confidence and Public Trust;
• encourage diverse views;
• increase empathy;
• give clear direction/instruction;
• allow stakeholders to be proactive/adaptive;
• diminish possibilities of misinformation (Fake News!);
• bring autonomy and flexibility in decision-making and implementation; and
• empower stakeholders to become advocates.

On 14th July, 2020, the Stakeholder Engagement Sub-committee launched virtual stakeholder meetings, one of a number of engagement strategies. As at 26th August, 2020, the Stakeholder Engagement Sub-committee facilitated twenty separate virtual meetings with groups of internal and external stakeholders which included: School Stakeholders, School Support Stakeholders, Health and Safety Stakeholders, and Community and Civic Stakeholders. More than three thousand five hundred (3,500) stakeholders from throughout the Commonwealth of The Bahamas were engaged in information sharing, building awareness and receiving vital feedback. The framework embodies input from a diverse and vast cross section of individuals, hence, this document is the collective voices of all stakeholders.

Who Are Our Stakeholders?

School Stakeholders
• MOE/DOE and Satellite Offices
• Administrators
• Teachers
• Support Staff
• Parents
• Students
• PTA
• School Board
• Unions

Health Stakeholders
• Ministry of Health
• School Nurses
• Social Services.

School Support Stakeholders
• Bus Drivers
• Lunch Vendors

Safety Stakeholders
• Community Police
• Security Officers

Community & Civic Stakeholders
• NGO's
• Churches
• Local Businesses
• Suppliers
• Civic Organization
• Private Schools

Critical to the acceptance and support of organizational initiatives is the manner in which it communicates and disseminates information to internal and external stakeholders. Public Relations campaigns must therefore be deliberate, direct and strategically implemented, as it is Public Relations which is credited with shaping the public persona of an organization, engaging the most effective and efficient tools available.

Guided by this mandate, the Public Relations Sub-committee for the Safe Reopening of Schools charted its course with several objectives in mind:

This committee aimed to
- Foster an environment of consistent and accurate dissemination of information to ALL stakeholders, from ONE primary source, in partnership with the expertise of the Ministry of Education internal communications machinery;
- Identify general communication needs that exist nationally relative to our educational product- blended learning approach, safe school protocols / general information and management policies for mass communication;
- Engage targeted marketing strategies to disseminate information in a manner relevant to islands/districts and local communities;
- Recommend PR/Communication policy for natural/normal dissemination of information vs disaster/ crisis environments;
- Propose a PR work plan/ cycle to guide the implementation of recommended activities in preparation for school reopening;
- Monitor the implementation of the Public Relations work plan.

To date, The Public Relations Committee has launched an impressive Safe School Reopening Campaign under the banner, "Safety First…Education Always". This has been communicated in reliable and authentic ways, including the traditional methods of communicating. However, the Public Relations Committee has extended those platforms to increase the Ministry of Education's electronic presence. The Ministry's website, surveys, Facebook Page, Youtube Channel, Instagram , MOE branded Whatsapp posts, an email account, **(schoolreopening@moe.edu.bs)**, to address school reopening questions, suggestions and concerns have all been employed by this committee to disseminate information about the safe reopening of school.

Public Relations has been intent on using these varied presentation styles so as to target multiple audiences and maximize reach in the shortest possible time. This committee, with its aggressive approach has made its contribution to allay the fears of education stakeholders as the Ministry of Education prepares to reopen school in a COVID-19 Era.

Public Relations...A Tiered Approach
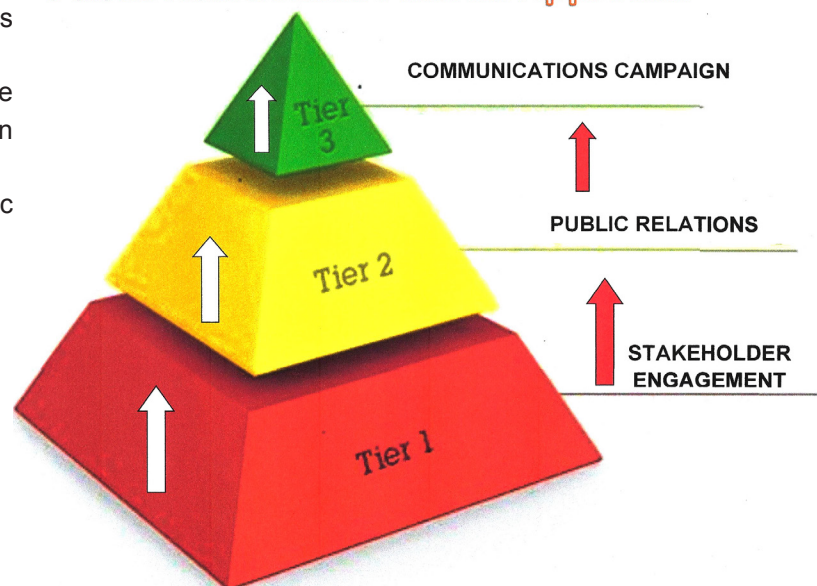
COMMUNICATIONS CAMPAIGN

PUBLIC RELATIONS

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

CONCLUSION

COVID-19 has changed the landscape of education sectors around the world, and it has dictated that all countries, including The Bahamas, explore innumerable ways to ensure the continuation of education in a safe and healthy environment.

CARICOM, in its effort to support this goal, collaborated with the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) and the International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) to create the Framework for the Reopening of Schools in the Caribbean including Schools for Learners with Special Education Needs (SEN). The Bahamas Ministry of Education utilized CARICOM'S framework, along with other resources, to create its draft framework for the safe reopening of school. After consulting with over three thousand stakeholders, this technical document, representing the voice of the people from around The Bahamas was prepared.

The true beauty or value of the document is not solely its design, but its true beauty and value will be viewed in the execution of its content. As a people, we know how to execute! From March 15th 2020, we have been forging our way ahead into new territories; territories that would have threatened the life of our system had we not laid a secure foundation through ICTs and the Virtual Learning Network. Agreeably, ICTs were critical to the continued delivery of education, but paramount to any other factor was teamwork. Teamwork, fostered through the supervision of Curriculum Officers, District Superintendents and School Administrations, led to the collaboration of teachers from around The Commonwealth of The Bahamas. As a result of teamwork, teachers received extensive training, and students were provided with continued access to quality education in a COVID-19 Era. It is this same level of teamwork that will be required to translate this document from paper to practice, for the best made plans will only be actualized when teamwork is at the heart of nation building.

There is no denying that the delivery of education, in normal circumstances, is a mammoth undertaking. With COVID-19 considerations, the task becomes far greater, but not insurmountable. The task will require something more and different from all stakeholders, as noted in this document. Embedded in these requirements are tenets of adaptability and change that internal and external stakeholders have expressed through their recommendations. Hence, the appeal for all team members to execute their roles as outlined in the document to ensure that education continues to play its role in safeguarding our country's future, especially in a COVID-19 Era.

APPENDICES

WEEK OF: _____

OPERATOR NAME: _____

	M	T	W	TH	F
1. Hand railings					
2. Seats					
3. Seat handles					
4. Interior windows					
5. Interior and exterior door handles					
6. Pads / Armrests					
7. Seatbelts					
8. Driver's seat					
9. Dashboard					
10. Steering wheel					
11. Bus door					
12. Other:					
13. Other:					
14. Other:					
15. Other:					

WEEK OF: _____

CLASSROOMS/AREA NUMBER: 1,2,3,4,5 – Male and Female Bathrooms A - Block

	M	T	W	TH	F
1. Floors swept and mopped	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎
2. Desks emptied and wiped	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎
3. Counters cleaned	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎
4. Door knobs / Handles cleaned	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎
5. Light switches cleaned	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎
6. Chairs cleaned	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎
7. Walls spot cleaned	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎
8. Window Sills cleaned	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎
9. Chalkboard and ledge cleaned	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎
10. Bins emptied and liner placed	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎
11. Pleasant odor present in room	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎
12. Lights and fans turned off	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎
13. Windows closed and doors locked	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎
14. Grounds in immediate area clean	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎
15. Corridor cleaned morning, break, after lunch	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎
16. Stairways cleaned: morning, break, after lunch	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎
17. Foyer and reception area frequently swept/mopped	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎
18. Outside main entrance cleaned: morning and afternoon	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎
19. Toilets and urinals cleaned/disinfected	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎
20. Cubicle doors/partitions cleaned	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎
21. Sinks cleaned/disinfected	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎
22. Mirrors cleaned	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎
23. Bathroom walls cleaned	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎
24. Bathroom floors cleaned/disinfected	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎
25. Hand sanitizer replenished	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎
26. Tissue/Hand towels replenished	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎
27. Pleasant odor present in bathrooms	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎
28. Janitor's equipment cleaned and properly stored (mops, buckets, etc.)	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎
29. Janitor's closet cleaned	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎
30. Vandalism documented and reported (missing louvers, broken furniture, graffiti, etc.)	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎
31. Items/Articles found are reported to administration	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎
32. Leakages, faulty toilets, urinals, etc., are documented/ reported to administration	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎	🍎

You can protect yourself and your students by practising and promoting healthy habits during the school year. Use this check list to plan and take action to prevent a COVID-19 outbreak in your school. The safety and welfare of students and staff are paramount.

PLAN AND PREPARE

1. At the entrance, there should be signage indicating the following: ***All persons must wear masks. No mask, no entry.*** All visitors must wear masks at all times whilst on the compound.

2. Sanitation measures for entering the campus must be enforced to ensure success in the fight against COVID-19. Hand washing stations should be strategically placed close to the entrance of the school, where the Security Guard/ Safety Officers can ensure that all students and visitors sanitize their hands upon entry.

3. All persons on the campus must observe the visible floor markers for physical distancing placed at the school entrance and must comply with instructions to form orderly lines and to maintain appropriate physical distancing upon entry.

4. We must ensure social distancing at the start and end of each school day.

5. Physical distancing must be observed on the campus, especially at the sanitization stations, lunch areas, washrooms, main office, etc.

6. Encourage students to stay home if sick. If a student gets sick at school, keep the sick student away from well students until picked up.

7. Create a Sick Bay to isolate students that are not feeling well.

8. Visitors with flu-like symptoms will not be allowed entry on to the campus.

9. Staff and students with flu-like symptoms must remain at home and provide written medical clearance before attending school.

10. If it is planned to take students' temperature, how will this be managed safely in terms of social distancing?

11. Persons with a high temperature reading after following the protocols for taking temperature should not be allowed entry.

12. A screening notebook should be put in place to be used if the staff or student has 2 consecutive high readings.

13. Students who report to school with flu-like symptoms should be placed in a quarantine room and the parent and health facilities (depending on severity) must be called. Parents will be asked to take the student home and return with written medical clearance.

14. We must consider the specific needs of vulnerable/challenged students.

15. We must reduce/limit movement around the school to reduce contact.

16. We must have constant communication with students, staff, and parents.

17. Security –access controls must be put in place to discourage a person from randomly walking on campus.

18. Availability of soap, water, hand sanitizer stations must be known to all.

19. A policy should be implemented for queuing up.

20. Will the air conditioning system not be used unless it can be confirmed that there is no additional risk?

21. Will a one-way system be introduced for movement?

22. Designate an administrator(s) to monitor the COVID Plan.

23. What arrangements are proposed for access to bathrooms to ensure social distancing?

24. How will break and lunchtime be supervised/monitored to ensure social distancing?

25. Assemblies and the coming together of large groups both staff and students are discouraged. How will this be addressed?

26. What training will be put in place to ensure that these measures will be carried out?

27. What about the marking of books and taking books to and from school and home?

28. Students should be discouraged from sharing food and drink, books, stationery and other personal items.

29. All students should be encouraged to walk with a personal supply of sanitizer and/or hand soap.

30. What practices and measures will be put in place for lunch vendors?

31. What counselling services will be available for staff and students who may need it?

32. What arrangements will be in place for students/staff with underlying health conditions who cannot attend school?

33. Develop a COVID Plan, produce a manual and have training and information sharing about the plan.

34. Create an emergency communication plan.

35. Encourage students and staff to practice healthy behaviour.

36. Post signage encouraging proper/correct hygiene practices.

37. Ensure that the trash is removed frequently during the day.

38. How will classes be split to accommodate social distancing and will additional resources be needed?

39. How will students be taught?

40. Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects in the classroom. Follow the CDC's guidelines for cleaning and disinfecting facilities

41. Monitor absenteeism.

42. Formulate and be familiar with your school's plans for virtual teaching and learning.

43. If school is dismissed early or closed, what is the plan for dismissal and closure? Implement a plan to continue educating students through virtual means.

APPENDIX IV – PARENTS' AND STUDENTS' CHECK LIST

A
Always stay home if you are sick.

B
Bring your packed lunches and snacks.

C
Come to school with your mask on.
Clean your desk throughout the day.

D
Devices should have the following specs:
Primary levels
- ◈ 10" tablets or larger can be used. These tablets should possess at minimum,
- ◈ a quad core processor,
- ◈ Front Camera (2 MP), Rear Camera (5 MP),
- ◈ built in Wi Fi and
- ◈ an Android operating system 9.0.

Upper Primary and Secondary students:
- ◈ either a netbook with an Intel Atom X5/ Intel Celeron N400/ AMD A4 processor,
- ◈ 4GB DDR3 memory,
- ◈ 64GB eMMC storage,
- ◈ web camera,
- ◈ built in Wi Fi,
- ◈ Windows 10 Operating System; or
- ◈ a laptop or notebook with Intel Celeron/Intel Pentium / AMD A Series processor,
- ◈ 4GB DDR3 RAM memory,
- ◈ 500GB HD or 128 GB SSD storage,
- ◈ Web Camera,
- ◈ Built in Wi Fi and
- ◈ Windows 10 operating system.

E
Expect to have your temperature checked at the gate.
Elbow bump your friends or anyone whom you want to greet.

F
Follow the seating arrangements made by the bus driver by sitting three feet apart and with anyone who lives in the same house as you.

G
Go directly to your class when your temperature has been checked.

H
Head directly to school, and do not linger on the road or outside of the gate.

I
Inform your teacher or a member of administration if you are not feeling well, and bring a note from the doctor clearing you to enter the campus.

J
Join your classes on a daily basis, or you will be recorded as absent. You can join during the live sessions or access lessons on demand. However, there must be some evidence that you have attended for the day.

K
Keep your environment (remote and face to face) clean and organized.

L
Label all of your supplies.

M
Maintain physical distancing of three to six feet in the classroom and six feet on the outside.

N
Note that if you have a comorbidity, you will begin with Virtual School.
Note that when you begin with the Public School in the Remote Model, you either transition with the Public School or to home schooling

O
Optimize your time by creating and sticking to your timetable.

P
Pack your Personal Protection Package with hand sanitizer, an extra mask and tissue.

Q
Quash all misconduct on line or face to face, for there will be consequences meted out in both modalities.

R
Read all safety signs on the campus, and follow the instructions.

S
Sneeze in the crook of your elbow or your shoulder for cover, instead of hands.

T
Throw away used tissues right away. If you use tissues to cover your cough or blow your nose, dispose of them in the nearest waste bin immediately after use, then wash hands.
Take time to review your timetable for the day.

U
Use your personal equipment, and do not borrow anyone else's equipment.

V
Visit your virtual classroom or school website to receive updates.

W
Wash your hands often (after using the bathroom, before and after you eat).

X
XOXO love them from a distance.

Y
Yearn to do all that you can to succeed and stay safe.

Z
Zip through a safety protocol when you return home from school by sanitizing your hands, taking your shoes off in a designated space, placing your clothes in a laundry basket and taking a bath immediately.

PART to PLAY in EDUCATION – PPE

P

Prepare your children to engage in Public Schooling for back to school.

Provide, where possible, your children with hand sanitizers, tissue, and an extra mask.

Place your children in a safe environment/ Place them in the care of someone responsible if you are not able to monitor them during the remote learning.

Pick your children up from school before 3:15 p.m.

Present your children to school at an acceptable time, and ensure that an Administrator, who arrives at 8, is on campus.

A

Always engage your children in a health check before they leave for the day.

Access information about your child's school on the school's website.

Ask all the questions that will help clear things up for you.

R

Review your children's schedule and help to organize them consistently.

Reach out to your children's homeroom teacher.

Request information about Special Services and Student Services so that you are aware of the services in place to support your children's development.

Request support for social assistance through Guidance and Counselling.

Report your children's reason for being absent, and provide a medical record.

E

Educate your children about health and safety protocols such as physical and social distancing, washing hands and coughing in the crook of the elbow.

Ensure that an Administrator is on campus to receive your children when they are dropped off to school. Administrators report to school at 8:00 a.m.

N

Note that when your children begin with the Public School in the Remote Model, you either transition with the Public school or to Home Schooling.

Note the names and email addresses of your children's teachers, and notify the school if your children are sick.

T

Talk to your children's teacher about virtual learning protocols, and tell your children to obey the following guidelines: select, as far as possible, a space that is quiet, arrive early, wear appropriate clothing, be respectful, mute microphones during the presentation and use the raise hand button to ask a question.

S

Select an option for your child's schooling that you will be able to sustain, be it Public, Private or Home Schooling. Public means that all services are provided by the government, and all benefits of the virtual platform will be available to students.

Private means that you pay for tuition to a private institution, and you have limited access to the Ministry of Education virtual package. For example, you can view and access lessons on demand, but your children's school will be responsible for assessment and generating report cards.

Home schooling requires parents to register with the Ministry of Education to indicate their intent to provide for the instructional programme for their children. They will be able to access lessons on demand from the Ministry of Education's platform, but they will be responsible for assessing their children's work and generating report cards.

Speak to your children about Safe School and Technology protocols.

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The Ministry wishes to thank the Steering Committee which was consisted of Chairpersons of the respective sub-committees:

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CRS-20

01 CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

02 SPECIAL SERVICES

03 STUDENT SERVICES

04 STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

05 SCHOOLS MANAGEMENT

06 STAFF PREPAREDNESS AND TRAINING

07 TECHNOLOGY

08 PROTECTION, WELLBEING AND SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

09 HEALTH AND SAFETY

10 BUILDING, EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

11 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

12 PUBLIC RELATIONS

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Force

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Stephen Dillet Primary
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Department of Education

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Principal
Eva Hilton Primary School
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Chester Cooper
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Exuma
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Cleveland Eneas Primary
School

Ryan McPhee
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Willard Patton Pre-School

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Christopher Smith
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Freeport, Grand Bahama
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Family and Consumer Science
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Terry McPhee
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Stakeholder Engagement Cont'd
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Lifeway Academy
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United Estates
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Advisory Group
National Advisory Council on Education (NACE)

Knowledge Management
Terrice L. Carey-Curry
Principal
Assigned as Site Manager
Marjorie Davis Institute for Special Education
Department of Education