KEY GOAL 3: EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Equitable and high quality educational opportunities for all, which facilitate the acquisition of knowledge, life-long learning and the development of social and life skills and attitudes that support a just and prosperous society.

"Education and training must not only be better but different. It must seek to create a literate, skilled, democratic and patriotic society. It must also create a productive workforce and functional and caring communities."
Ministry Paper No. 6/2001. Education: The Way Upward – A Path for Jamaica's Education at the Start of the New Millennium

OVERVIEW

Education is an investment in the country's people and in its future. It is important for developing each person's full potential and creating a competitive workforce. It is also important for socialisation, or helping children learn how to function in society and be successful in life.

As part of the tracking process since the Annual Progress Report 2003, this goal statement has been revised to better highlight the dimensions of quality of education and equity within the system as well as to reflect the importance of building individuals' knowledge base and capacity for learning, following the National Shared Vision for Education (p. 80). Beyond equipping students with ` occupational and academic skills, the education system should mould citizens who can play an active and constructive role in society and develop educable individuals who have the creative and analytical skills, the attitudes to learning, and the emotional intelligence, that equip them for on-the-job training and lifelong learning.

Sub-goals:

Overall progress towards all Jamaicans having a solid educational foundation is being tracked through monitoring achievement in the following four areas:

1. **Early childhood cognitive and social development**
2. **Primary school attendance and learning outcomes.**
3. **Secondary school access, attendance and learning outcomes**
4. **Post secondary and tertiary access to opportunities for learning and skills development and for professional development, and outcomes**

Improving quality with equity
Access continues to be a major preoccupation in assessing progress towards this goal. But while the last report highlighted quality, this report emphasises **quality with equity**. Our education system and structures currently deny the

majority of Jamaican children the opportunity to reach their full potential. The country's stratified education system, inherited from Jamaica's colonial past, both reflects and perpetuates the inequalities that undermine social cohesion. The institutionalised elitism of the system, which begins at the early childhood and primary levels and becomes even more pronounced at the secondary level, works simultaneously against moulding citizens who can actively and constructively participate in all aspects of national life and against creating a workforce that can perform competitively in the global economy.

Interacting with this systemic elitism are other dimensions of inequality such as those related to gender, with biases within the education system supporting gender stereotypes and structures of employment that determine what happens to young women and young men. Other dimensions relate to vulnerable groups – children with learning difficulties, children with disabilities – who are too easily ignored or overlooked. These are our most vulnerable children and need to be given much more focus in the education system, as their difficulties can often be greatly ameliorated if they are given early attention (see Table 3.6 as well as note on budgetary allocation, above Table 3.6). The long term outcome of early assistance is both much better and much lest costly than later assistance.

Changing a system that is so fraught with inequalities requires deliberate and committed action. The Ministry of Education has plans to rationalise schools types so that there is one category of school at each level (primary and secondary), but this will mean very little if there are no systemic changes.[6] If the upgraded high schools continue to be inferior to their traditional counterparts in both perception and actuality, or if the gap between primary school and private preparatory school outcomes is not closed, the problem will persist. The Ministry is also planning to put more resources into special education but education is not an intact project, it is influenced by the wider society so this thrust needs to include broad education of parents and teachers. There is also far too little focus given to the gender dimensions of the education system.

The outcome of the lack of equity in Jamaica's education system is most evident in the levels of achievement in the matriculation CSEC (formerly CXC) examinations (see p. 40 on). **This outcome of our system calls for urgent and transformatory action of the kind identified by the Education Transformation Team. The entire country has to come together around this transformation of the education system. To do this it is imperative that citizens – teachers, parents, employers, civil servants – are given annual updates as to what is happening under Education Transformation so that all have a sense of where we are going, what the challenges are, and what each can do to make a contribution.** There is already a sense among teachers that having spent time making a considerable input, nothing is happening. This is not the case but persons must be informed of what is happening, where it is leading and what are the new challenges.

Positive developments

Since 2001, there have been a number of significant initiatives in the education sector:

- ***Early Childhood Education***. An Early Childhood Commission (ECC) was established in March 2003 by an Act of Parliament and the Early Childhood Act was passed in 2005. The Early Childhood Act prescribes the regulatory powers of the ECC and sets out standards for early childhood institutions and services. The Early Childhood Commission's commitment to ensuring that standards and facilities are improved within a set timeframe is commendable. This commitment is now being followed through with objectives, work plans and specific indicators.

- ***Reform of the Education System***. A Task Force on Educational Reform was convened in 2004 to make recommendations for improving education policy and practice. The Task Force has prepared two reports: the first deals with the overall transformation of the system to meet current needs and the second looks specifically at early childhood education (Task Force 2004. 2005). The consultative process used by the Task Force in preparing these reports, and their frank nature has helped shape a shared national vision for education (Box 3.1).

The government has also:

- introduced new measures to make it easier to name and register children at birth;

6 Jamaica currently has three types of state-run schools that offer primary level education: primary, all-age, and primary/junior high. At the secondary level, there are five types of institutions: all-age and primary/junior high schools offer 3 years of the secondary school curriculum, while high, technical and vocational/ agricultural schools offer 5 years. The Ministry of Education intends to have one category at each level by 20__

- introduced achieving universal secondary education by 2015 as a national target;
- expanded the capacity of the Human Employment and Resource Training Trust/National Training Academy (HEART/NTA) which has increased access to post-secondary training opportunities; HEART/NTA now has the capacity to take on over 87,000 trainees per year. The target is to take on 100,000 per year by 2008.
- reconfigured its lifelong learning offerings, upgrading JAMAL by modernising its facilities, re-training its employees and transforming its programmes, signified in its change of name in November 2006 to the Jamaican Foundation for Lifelong Learning (JFLL). Its aim is to provide continuing education including basic literacy and secondary certification (through the High School Equivalency Programme – HISEP) to 250,000 citizens over the next five years.

Box 3.1
Validated National Shared Vision for Education in Jamaica

The Validated National Shared Vision for Education in Jamaica was developed through roundtable consultation with more than 500 citizens in February and March 2004. A national validation roundtable of more than 400 people endorsed the Vision in April 2004. The 12 elements of the vision are as follows:

1. Enriching, learner-centred education environment
2. Each learner maximising his/her potential based on international standards
3. Committed, qualified, competent, effective and professional educators and staff
4. Full stakeholder participation in the education system
5. Equitable and accessible education for all
6. Maximum use of learning technologies
7. Excellent, self-sustaining, resourced education system
8. Accountability, transparency and performance of the education system
9. Full attendance
10. Full literacy and numeracy
11. Globally competitive, quality workforce
12. Disciplined, culturally-aware and ethical Jamaican citizen

Source: Task Force on Educational Reform 2004 Jamaica. 2005. p 14.

Moving forward

In assessing progress towards other key social policy goals, notably Governance and Social Integration, the role of the education system in shaping citizens is taking on added importance. In fact, the need for it to do this is considered an increasingly important strategy for progress towards these goals. With the elimination of civics from the curriculum there is no formal instruction for students on the role, rights and responsibilities of citizens. The Ministry of Education's initiative in preparing a Citizenship Education programme is very timely. Citizenship education needs to have a place at all levels of the national curriculum, from early childhood through to secondary programmes (also see p.__ in the Governance Goal chapter).

Overall Goal

Key Issues	Indicators
1. LITERACY	• Grade 4 Literacy Test by school type and gender • Literacy Rates among youth and adults
2. SCHOOL TO WORK TRANSITION	• % of young people (15-24 yrs) by educational qualification, vocational training and work experience obtained in school
3. PERFORMANCE OF SCHOOL BOARDS	• % of active and inactive school boards
4. FINANCING EDUCATION	• % of National Budget allocated to Education

Two selected markers of educational outcomes - Literacy and the School-to-Work Transition - and two selected markers

of inputs into the educational system – School Boards and Budgetary Allocations for Education - are used to gauge overall progress towards the education and skills goal. These indicators paint a mixed picture of progress. While some inroads have been made in improving literacy rates at primary level and the performance of school boards, there remain concerns about the extent to which the education system is preparing fully literate and numerate citizens equipped with the skills and abilities needed for the country's social and economic development and about the levels of funding needed to transform the education system.

1. LITERACY

Literacy rates are a critical long term outcome measure because literacy is a precondition for education and lifelong learning, and for high quality employment. Literacy rates are also considered a useful overall social development indicator because higher levels of literacy and educational attainment in a society generally correspond to more and better social and economic participation.

B~x 3.2
Grade Four Literacy Test

The Ministry of Education's Grade Four Literacy test is designed to identify any additional support that students might need to ensure they are performing at grade level by year six. The test measures ability in word recognition, reading comprehension, and writing. Students are ranked in three categories:

1. mastery – passed all 3 measures
2. near-mastery – passed 1-2 measures
3. non-mastery – passed no measures

Students in the non-mastery category are considered to be at risk of not being functionally literate at the end of grade six.

Grade Four Literacy Test

Grade four at the primary level, when children are nine years old, is the accepted stage internationally for first testing literacy. In Jamaica the overall trend for grade four literacy shows slow but positive movement towards the 2010 target. At 2006 65% of students were assessed at mastery level, 22 percentage points over the 2000/1 base line of 43% of students (the test is taken at the end of the school year) (Table 3.1).

Although overall performance is getting incrementally better, when the results are taken apart and looked at by school type, a clear picture of the unevenness of the quality of primary education emerges. Boys and girls in private preparatory schools outperform their counterparts in state schools. Their performance is already almost at the 2010 national target. The performance of students in all-age schools is the worst within the state sector, but this is at least partly accounted for by the fact that they have a higher percentage of male students (Table 3.13) and overall boys are not performing as well as girls (Table 3.1).

The disparity between the private and state sectors points to the lack of equity in the system: children of parents who can afford preparatory school fees perform better on the national curriculum. The differences in performance do not just reflect differences between schools, however, but also other benefits available to children of parents in the highest socio-economic categories relating to nutrition, availability of educational toys and books, ability to afford extra lessons and so on. The Ministry does not collect enrolment data for independent preparatory schools but these students account for a small minority in the overall picture although the declining enrolment in state primary schools (Table 3.13) suggests more parents are turning to independent schools to educate their children at the primary level.

But regardless of school type, girls consistently do better than boys, with a significant performance gap occurring in the non-mastery[7] group, which identifies students who do not pass any of the three tests, in all state schools. Whereas in preparatory schools there was a non-mastery rate of 1-2% for boys for the two years 2005 and 2006, with girls at 0.3% and 0.6%, in primary schools comparative figures were 19-20% for boys with girls much lower at 6%, for all-age schools there was a non-mastery rate of 27-28% for boys, with the girls at 9% and the primary and junior high schools were very close to this (Table 3.1). Some schools have experimented with changing their usual modus operandi and have had success in dealing with this gender problem (Boxes 3.10 and 3.11).

7 *Called 'at risk' before 2003/4*

Tracking Indicator *Literacy among Primary School Children*

Table 3.1 Grade 4 Literacy Test: % students assessed at mastery and non-mastery levels.

Mastery (all three subjects) by School Type and Gender	Target	2000/1	2001/2	2002/3	2003/4	2004/5	2005/6
National	*90% by 2010*	**43%** F: 56% M: 32%	**53%** F: 68% M: 40%	**58%** F: 70% M: 46%	**57%** F: 69% M: 45%	**64%** F: 76% M: 52%	**65%** F: 77% M: 53%
Preparatory					**88%** F: 92% M: 85%	**91%** F: 94% M: 88%	**91%** F: 95% M: 87%
Primary					**58%** F: 70% M: 46%	**65%** F: 77% **M: 53%**	**66%** F: 77% M: 54%
Primary & Junior High					51% F: 65% **M: 38%**	**59%** F: 72% M: 47%	**59%** F: 72% M: 47%
All Age					49% F: 63% **M: 35%**	56% F: 72% M: 41%	**56%** F: 73% M: 42%
Non-Mastery (no subjects)							
National		**27%** F: 17% M: 36%	**19%** F: 11% M: 27%	**18%** F: 10% M: 26%	**14%** F: 7% M: 20%	**14%** F: 7% M: 21%	**14%** F: 7% M: 21%
Preparatory					**0.3%** F: 0.1% M: 0.6%	**1%** F: 0.3% M: 1.2%	**2%** F: 0.8% M: 2.3%
Primary					**12%** F: 6% M: 18%	**13%** F: 6% **M: 19%**	**13%** F: 6% **M: 20%**
Primary & Junior High					**18%** F: 9% **M: 26%**	**17%** F: 9% M: 25%	**18%** F: 9% M: 28%
All Age					**19%** F: 9% M: 27%	**19%** F: 9% M: 28%	**19%** F: 9% M: 27%

Source: School Assessment Unit, Ministry of Education and Youth

Youth Literacy

Unless otherwise stated, the universal term literacy covers basic and functional literacy (Box 3.4). This Report is also extracting functional literacy levels where available because in the 21st century this is the minimum requirement for a functioning work force.

In tracking literacy rates among 15 to 24 yr olds, the Report is using one of the indicators of the UN Millennium Development Goal process. However literacy figures for Jamaica are outdated and therefore it has not been possible to assess recent progress. Regular literacy surveys should be undertaken every five years in tandem with the CARICOM Agreement by Heads of Government to address data management in a more systematic and coordinated way. No other single indicator is more telling of educational progress. Another survey is planned for 2008 using new UNESCO guidelines for measuring literacy.

The 1999 figures for literacy of 93% among 15 to 24-year olds (Table 3.2) compare reasonably with the average rate of

96.6% for Latin America and the Caribbean for the period 2000-04 (UN 2006). This should not lead to complacency, however, as the critical literacy measurement is now functional literacy (Box 3.4). Employers are very concerned at the low literacy levels of new young employees (feedback from PSOJ representatives at June 1, 2007 Stakeholder Review of Draft National Progress Report 2004-06) while universities are now putting in compulsory remedial English programmes. Pockets of illiteracy among male youth in the inner city as well as in deep rural areas is a risk factor that can lead to a criminal path, especially in the inner city (Gayle et al, 2007).

Adult Literacy

Although we have no recent data it is noteworthy that in 1999 less than 6 out of every 10 adult males (57%) were functionally literate (Table 3.2).

Table 3.2 Literacy Rates among Youth and Adults by Gender

Level/Age group		*Target*	1999
1. **Youth Literacy** (Functional + Basic)	15-19 yrs		**93%** F: 97% M: 89%
"	20-24 yrs		**90**% F:95% M: 85%
2. **Adult Literacy** Literacy (Functional + Basic)			**80%** F: 86% M: 74%
Functional Literacy			**65%** F: 72% M: 57%

Source: Jamaica Literacy Survey 1999

Box 3.4
Stages in Literacy

Functional literacy: these persons have a clear understanding of the alphabetic system in order to read a wide range of more complex ideas such as words that have vowel or consonant blends, to read and understand more complex prose or documents or write a short paragraph of connected sentences.

Basic literacy: these persons have a sufficiently clear understanding of the alphabetic system to recognize simple words, to read and understand simple narrative or documents, and to write a simple sentence.

Illiterate: these persons have a very limited knowledge of the alphabetic system. They may be able to read a few frequently used words but cannot understand a group of words in a phrase or sentence. Such persons may be able to write a few letters of the alphabet.

Source: Jamaica Adult Literacy Survey 1999

2. SCHOOL-TO-WORK TRANSITION

Progress in this critical area could not be tracked in the last Progress Report for lack of data. There is now a 2004 survey of 3,685 youth between the ages of 15-24 years, "The Transition of Jamaican Youth to the World of Work", undertaken under the auspices of the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ) in collaboration with the International Labour Organization (ILO). It found, as expected, that educational attainment is an important factor in an individual's ability to make the shift between school and similarly, youth with vocational training and work experience are more likely to be employed than those without. The extent to which schooling is preparing a competitive workforce that can meet the

challenges of the national context and global economy is questionable as the data showed that approximately 6 out of every 10 youth left school with no educational qualification while approximately 3 in 4 left school without vocational training or work experience (Table 3.3).

Table 3.3 Percentage of Young People (15-24 yrs) in 2004 by Educational Qualification, Vocational Training, and Work Experience obtained while at School

Highest Exam Passed*								
No response or Other	None	CXC Basic/ JSC/SSC	CXC: 1-2 subjects	CXC 3-4 subjects	CXC 5+ subjects or A-levels 2+ subjects	Degree	**Vocational Training**	**Work Experience**
3% M: 3% F: 3%	**59%** M: 65% F: 55%	**13%** M: 12% F: 15%	**10%** M: 9% F: 11%	**9%** M: 8% F: 10%	**5%** M: 4% F: 7%	**0.4%** M: 0.3% F: 0.6%	**26%** M: 26% F: 26%	**26%**
Total no = 2,054							**Total no = 3,685** M: 44%, F: 56%	

Source: PIOJ/ILO 2006 *N.B Percentages rounded* **This statistic applies to out-of-school youth only*

3. PERFORMANCE OF SCHOOL BOARDS

Although by 2005/6 54% of school boards were meeting regularly, indicating a 20% increase over 2000/1 levels, the situation is far from ideal and seems to have improved little in the last four years (Table 3.4). School boards are an important link between schools and the communities they serve. Stakeholder and community participation in education is an accountability mechanism in schools' governance structures.

Box 3.5
Duties of School Boards

- Policy
- Financial management (the Principal is the Accountable Officer)
- Appointment, promotion and development of Staff
- Discipline of students and staff
- Maintenance of property
- Ensuring maintenance of records
- Dispute resolution

Source: National Council on Education

Since 2003 a continuous programme of training for school boards has been carried out by the National Council on Education (NCE), the body responsible for nominating persons for appointments to school boards, and the impact on improving financial management, for example, has been demonstrable. All board chairpersons and members provide their services on a voluntary basis and serve for three years. The NCE appoints the Chair after taking nominations from three persons: the Principal, the Education Officer and the Member of Parliament. Boards are required to meet three times a year – at least once per term - although many operational boards meet more often. A 90% attendance record is expected of Board Members. It may be that there are not enough persons available to serve each school and the Ministry is considering clustering schools under one board.

The Education Transformation Team and the NCE are working with school boards to launch the National School Boards Association in mid-2007.This is expected to provide opportunities for the strengthening and repositioning of school boards, providing opportunities for advocacy, sharing best practices, garnering the resources for projects and so on.

Tracking Indicator ***Performance of School Boards***

Table 3.4 Percentage of School Boards meeting at least 3 times per year (once per term) or less and percentage of school boards that are non-operational (no meetings for the year)

All Schools	2000/1	2001/2	2002/3	2003/4	2004/5	2005/6
Active Boards: 3 or more mtgs per yr			**54%**	**55%**	**57%**	**54%**
Partially active Boards: 1-2 mtgs " "	**34%**	**50%**	26%	28%	27%	28%
Non-operational Boards			**20%**	**17%**	**16%**	**18%**
			(100%)	(100%)	(100%)	(100%)
Total No. of Schools (reporting these figures to MOEY in Annual Census)				**978**	**936**	**985**

Source: Education Statistics Dept., Ministry of Education and Youth

4. FINANCING EDUCATION

In 2003, the House of Representatives agreed to commit 15% of the total national budget over the next five years to the Ministry of Education, Youth and (then) Culture. In 2002/3, education received 10.4% of the national budget and allocations in the subsequent financial years have continued to fall not only short of the 15% mark but for the succeeding two years were below this 2002/3 figure (Table 3.5). A special fund of J$5 billion over five years has been earmarked from National Housing Trust Funds to be spent in the implementation of the recommendations of Task Force on Education.

Tracking Indicator ***Percentage of national budget allocated to education***

Table 3.5 Percentage of national budget allocated to education

Year	*Target*	Percentage of national budget allocated to education
2000/1		10.0% (actual)
2001/2		9.7% (actual)
2002/3		10.4% (actual)
2003/4		9.0% (actual)
2004/5		9.4% (revised estimates)
2005/6	*15%*	10.9% (revised estimates)
2006/7		11.4% (estimates)

Source: Ministry of Education and Youth

A review of the distribution of the budget by the expenditure on each student at the different areas in the system from 2000/1 to 2005/6 is shown in Table 3.6. It indicates that every area but one, special education, has shown an increase. The allocation to early childhood per student has doubled, although it is still very low ($11,392 per year per student). However it is of concern that the allocation to students in need of special education (at all levels) has decreased by almost 20%. To enable these students to successfully overcome their handicaps a higher per student allocation is needed and to have reduced this over the past six years is cause for concern.

Tracking Indicator ***Expenditure at different levels of the education system***

Table 3.6 Per Capita Expenditure at all levels of the educational system (J$ current costs)

Educational Level	Targets	2000/1 actual	2001/2 actual	2002/3 actual	2003/4 actual	2004/5 revised	2005/6 revised	2005/6 as % of 2000/1
Per capita expenditure on Early Childhood educn.		**5,316**	7,503	8,279	9,701	11,105	11,392	214%
Per capita expenditure at Primary level		**18,668**	20,765	22,094	30,796	28,860	34,024	182%
Per capita expenditure at Secondary level		**27,342**	32,370	34,229	45,614	40,941	45,005	165%
Per capita expenditure on Special Education		**96,552**	93.689	84,718	98,306	87,431	**78,252**	**81%**
Per capita expenditure at Tertiary level		**119,861**	134,863	130,641	134,613	200,296	200,265	167%

Source: Ministry of Education and Youth

Dedicated Pool of Funds

Like the National Housing Trust, the HEART/NTA, and the National Health Fund, Education Transformation needs its own dedicated pool of funds. While insufficient, the six billion dollars collected annually through the 'Education' Tax would be a solid start.

Selected Cross Cutting Issues in Early Childhood, Primary and Secondary Education

Key Issue	Indicator	Case Study/Note
1. GENDER: - Subject choice - Employment for school leavers - Male and female representation and mobility among teachers - Gender sensitive teaching and biases of teachers - Biases in attitudes towards teenage parents - Policy for girls re-entering school post pregnancy	• 2004 CXC subject areas chosen by candidates in 2004 by gender • % young people (15-24 yrs) employed in 2004 by age and gender • Ratio of female to male teachers and principals at infant, primary and secondary levels	Note on Dakar Framework of Action
2. PREPARING SCHOOLS TO SUPPORT PARENT EDUCATION AND INVOLVEMENT	• No. of active PTAs	Transforming Education: Involving parents and the wider community
3. VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS		
4. SOCIAL SUPPORT/GUIDANCE COUNSELLORS	• No. & % of Guidance Counsellors in schools	
5. YOUTH AT RISK		Good Practice: Children First – Saving Youth at Risk
6. BETTER AND EXPANDED PHYSICAL FACILITIES	• No. of schools with a shift system • Categories of primary schools • Space audit of primary schools • Space audit of secondary schools • Completed School expansion Aug 2005-Feb 2007	
7. QUALITY ASSURANCE IN MANAGEMENT - Student Registration System - Planning and assessment - Role of Education Officers - Grading of schools - Performance Management System and incentives for teachers and principals		

1. GENDER

Traditional perceptions of masculinity and femininity exist in the education system and tend to reinforce gender inequality.

Box 3.5
The Experiences of one Region, Brown's Town: Gender, Socialisation & Education

"Gender disparity was a common theme in almost all of the discussion topics. This was particularly so for the students' learning process, how students were treated, the approach and outcome of adult education, adolescent pregnancy and alternative teaching methods."

Report on Citizens' Feedback, Brown's Town Local Forum on Education & Skills, JASPEV, 2004, p. 19.

Subject Choice

Gender stereotypes still influence subject selection at secondary level, with girls continuing to gravitate, or be steered, towards the arts and boys towards sciences (Fig. 3.1)). Table 3.7 shows that only in Agriculture, Information Technology and Chemistry does the percentage of male and female candidates taking these subjects nearly match the overall male/female candidate distribution. Many schools' have timetables which in fact reinforce gender stereotyping making certain options e.g. Clothing & Textiles, unavailable to boys, and other options e.g. Building Technology, unavailable to girls. These restrictions influence a student's opportunities for work or study after leaving school. This is something the Technical/Vocational Rationalisation project should help to eliminate (see Box 3.16).

Perceptions of what subjects are appropriate for which sex, seem to hamper boys more than girls who more easily break out of gender stereotypes. Boys' overall performance is also affected by societal perceptions of masculinity that do not encourage boys to further their education.

Figure 3.1 CXC Subject Areas in 2004 by gender of candidates

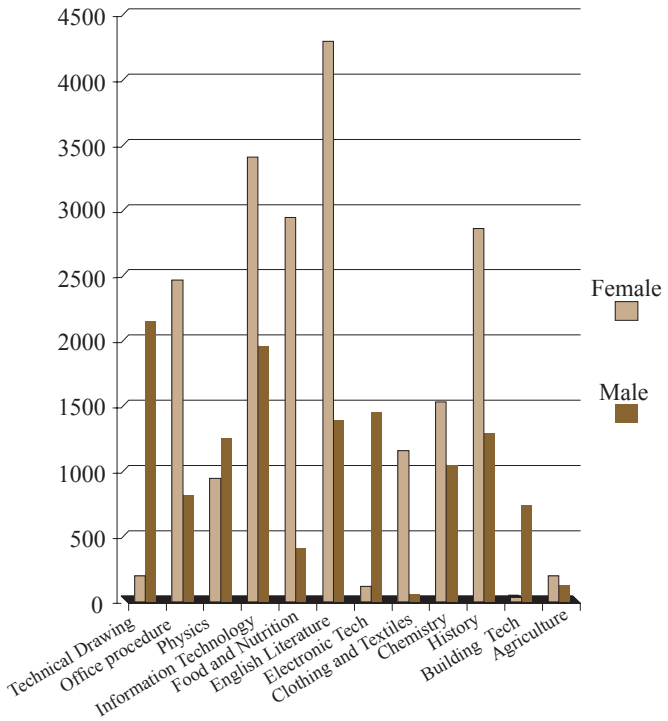


Table 3.7 CXC Subject Areas chosen by candidates in 2004 by gender

Subject	No. Candidates	Male	Female
M/F Candidate distribution		39%	61%
Agriculture	324	38%	62%
Information Technology	5360	37%	63%
Chemistry	2575	41%	59%
Physics	2196	57%	43%
History	4149	31%	69%
Office Procedures	3280	25%	75%
English Literature	5678	24%	76%
Food and Nutrition	3350	12%	88%
Clothing and Textiles	1212	5%	95%
Technical Drawing	2344	91%	9%
Electronic Tech	1565	93%	7%
Building Technology	775	96%	4%

Source: National Council on Education

Employment for School Leavers

The gendered structure of the employment system impacts on young people leaving school: it is easier for young men to find jobs (Table 3.8) although these are often low quality areas of employment. In the 2004 PIOJ/ILO survey referred to above, regression analysis on the gender differences suggested that males were over three times more likely to be employed than females, despite the fact that a larger percentage of females (39%) than males (29%) had passed an academic exam. **One of the factors accounting for this is the higher percentage of females who go on to tertiary education, a phenomenon that in itself requires further explanation.** A conclusion of the study was that "*Further investigation is, therefore, necessary to identify the operant factors in the apparent gender bias in youth employment.*" (Kerr, S. et al. 2006).

Table 3.8 Percentage of Young People (15-24 yrs) Employed in 2004 by Age and Gender

Age				Gender	
15-17	18-20	21-23	24+	M	F
18%	**30%**	**42%**	**53%**	**48%**	**26%**

Source: PIOJ/ILO 2006 *N.B Percentages rounded*

Male and female representation and mobility among teachers

Women continue to outnumber men at a ratio of over eight to one among teachers at the primary level. There are so few male teachers in infant schools that they are now outnumbered by about over 170 to one, an even worse situation that in earlier years when it was over 60 to one (Table 3.9). The prevalence of women among primary and infant level teachers may be due in part to a cultural perception that teaching in the lower grades is a female occupation rather than a male one because of the nurturing needs associated with younger children. The ratio is not as extreme at the secondary level where female teachers still however outnumber males by two to one (Table 3.9).

Smaller numbers of male teachers means there are fewer male role models among teaching staff at the infant and primary level. For children growing up in female-headed households, as is the case in 46% of households (Survey of Living Conditions 2005), having male role models in school and the community is particularly important. An experiment at the Polly Ground Primary School in St. Catherine suggests there are benefits to children being taught by teachers of their own sex at primary level (Box 3.13, p. 36). It is important for children to have positive male and female role models at all stages of development, including early childhood.

But while there are more women than men within the teaching ranks, the situation changes dramatically at the leadership level. There is one male principal for every two female primary school principals, and one male principal for every one female secondary school principal (Table 3.9). This suggests greater mobility for men than women in the higher administrative ranks of the profession, and is consistent with trends in the general labour market. Addressing the imbalance in male and female representation and mobility among teachers requires bringing more men into teaching, particularly at the primary level, as well as ensuring that women have equal opportunities for upward mobility.

Tracking Indicator *Gender Representation among Teachers and Principals*

Table 3.9 Ratio of Female to Male Teachers and Principals at Infant, Primary & Secondary Levels

Infant Schools only	2000/1	2001/2	2002/3	2003/4	2004/5	2005/6	2006/7
Ratio of female to male teachers	60f :1m	55f : 1m	66f : 1m	87f : 1m	324:1m	336f : 1m	172f:1m
Ratio of female to male principals				All female	All female	All female	All female
Primary Level							
Ratio of female to male teachers	8.5f : 1m	8.4f : 1m	8f : 1m	8.1f : 1m	8.1f : 1m	8.1f : 1m	8.4f : 1m
Ratio of female to male principals	1.8f : 1m	1.8f : 1m	1.8f : 1m	2f : 1m	2.1f : 1m	2.2f : 1m	2.3f : 1m
Secondary Level							
Ratio of female to male teachers	2f : 1m	2f : 1m	2f : 1m	2f : 1m	2.1f : 1m	2.2f : 1m	2.2f : 1m
Ratio of female to male principals					1f : 1m	1.2f : 1m	1.2f : 1m

Source: Education Statistics, Ministry of Education and Youth

Gender-sensitive teaching and biases of teachers

Where teachers reinforce stereotypes, the result is often differential treatment for boys and girls in the classroom, with the former being treated more harshly than the latter. Girls are generally expected to "apply themselves more than boys …receive more positive encouragement and help with homework." (Management Systems International, 2005). Such attitudes contribute to and perpetuate poor male performance in school.

The CARICOM/Centre for Gender and Development Studies manual and training course on Gender in Education should become part of the core curriculum at teacher training colleges. Although developed since 2001 take-up has been minimal regionally and suggests a continued lack of awareness of the deep impact of gender biases and their impact on learning.

Among the main recommendations of the PIOJ/ILO study is *"Gender-based pedagogy introduced to reflect the different learning styles of males and females"*. It should be noted that parents also need to be better sensitised about the gender-specific needs of children in the educational setting.

Box 3.8
The Experiences of One Region: Continuing the Education of Adolescent Mothers

"The overall concern was for adolescent mothers to have a smooth re-entry into the educational system. Most people agreed that encouragement should be given to teen mothers to go back to school. It is problematic when they do not go back to school: their minds are not nurtured, education is halted and this doesn't put them in a good position to raise their children properly. Sending them back to school can halt the cycle of poverty.

Report on Citizens' Feedback: Brown's Town Local Forum on Education & Skills, JASPEV, 2004. p. 15

Box 3.6
The Experiences of one Region, Brown's Town: Gender Biases in Teaching

"Everyone agreed that boys and girls are treated differently by their teachers…The perspectives were quite varied and there was no obvious direction towards consensus. The clearest indication was that there were biases operating in the teaching of boys and girls and that this affected the learning process."

Report on Citizens' Feedback: Brown's Town Forum on Education & Skills, JASPEV, 2004. p. 11-12

Policy for girls re-entering school post pregnancy

Although the Ministry of Education says that the majority of girls who become pregnant continue their secondary schooling (Office of the Cabinet, 2006), a policy that supports this is desirable, as it would have more teeth than the education code. Some girls are reluctant to return to school because of the stigma they face and some schools are reluctant to accept girls once they have given birth. Having a policy in place would help ensure that all teenage girls who fall pregnant have *"a smooth re-entry into the educational system"* (Box 3.8) and complete their secondary schooling. Following a review of this recommendation from the last Progress Report the Ministry has set up a Committee to look at developing a policy.

Note **The Dakar Framework for Action – Gender Goals**

The Dakar Framework for Action represents the most important international political commitment towards Promoting Education for All. In its gender goals it distinguishes between:

- Gender equality through parity, i.e. achieving equal participation of girls and boys in all forms of education, based on their proportion in the relevant age groups in the population. Jamaica is close to this but it has not achieved it because there is a problem with male participation at secondary and tertiary levels. This problem is likely to be influenced by many factors as suggested above.
- Substantive gender equality, which is measured in what happens beyond school. Here the problem is with equality for women, as evidenced in the continuing lack of representation of women in corporate boardrooms, in political representation, in leadership in schools as noted above, in the church and so on.

2. PREPARING SCHOOLS TO SUPPORT PARENT EDUCATION AND INVOLVEMENT

Studies have shown that when parents are actively involved in their children's education, the children do better in school and have fewer behavioural problems. Parental involvement is not just good for individual students, it is good for the school as a whole and as such needs to be placed at the heart of the governance structure of schools. Parental involvement can increase the accountability of schools and helps share responsibility for education between the school system, parents, and the community. The power and autonomy of principals can be intimidating to parents, particularly when there are no structures that involve them in decision-making and cultivate them as advocates for the school. Getting more parents involved with schools requires new attitudes, roles, and relationships. Among other things this means preparing teachers for effective and meaningful parent involvement, not waiting until children are having disciplinary or academic problems to engage their parents (Box 3.10). Parents need to be educated about the importance of their interest and presence to a successful educational experience and to long term achievement for their children. For parents and the community, it means taking responsibility for children's education and building stronger links between the home, the community, and the school.

Box 3.9
National Parent Teachers Association Launched
Involved Parents = Better Students

In July 2006 the National Parent Teachers Association (NPTA) was launched. Mobilised over many months by members of the Education Transformation Team through meetings in towns and districts, hundreds of PTA members from every parish converged on the Jamaica Conference Centre to elect their first executive in inclusive democratic elections supervised by the Electoral Office.

The NPTA intends to encourage parental involvement and strengthen strategic partnerships among parents, community and the school environment. It will also structure parental support and involvement in school life at the national level. It will facilitate linkages among PTAs islandwide and coordinate parenting workshops as well as advocate for quality education.

The quantitative indicator in Table 3.10 below gives no indication of what constitutes an 'active' PTA and its value is therefore limited. A PTA meeting may take place with a tiny percentage of parents and, although such a meeting may accomplish tasks and is better than no meeting, it hardly constitutes an 'active' PTA. (c.f. Box 3.10 below). The new National Parent Teachers Association (Box 3.9) aims to involve more parents in PTAs and raise the quality of their involvement.

Tracking Indicator

Involvement of Parents in the Education System

Table 3.10 **N° of Active Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs)**

All Schools	Target	2000/1	2001/2	2002/3	2003/4	2004/5	2005/6
Active Parent Teachers Associations					90%	92%	89%
Total No. of Schools (who report these figures to MOEY in Annual Census)					978	936	985

Source: Education Statistics Dept., Ministry of Education and Youth

Parents also need assistance in parenting skills. Many parents find raising children in today's world to be very stressful, while many young people feel misunderstood by their parents. The issue of parenting was the third most important issue for young people, after employment and education, in research undertaken by JASPEV among youth in six urban (inner city and middle income) and rural and deep rural communities. Organisations such as Parenting Partners, the Coalition for Better Parenting and Hope for Children, among others, have found parents very enthusiastic once they have become involved in parenting classes and seen the personal benefits of understanding the stages of child development and getting hands-on help with parenting problems. Many schools are now organizing parenting classes as part of their outreach to parents.

It remains a fact that far more mothers than fathers attend these classes. However there are many signs, from the formation of organizations for men, like Fathers Inc. and Fathers in Action, to anecdotal evidence that many fathers are now playing nurturing roles and are seeing economic provision as only one of their roles, to greater focus on fathering in the media, that more fathers are playing their full role in parenting.

Box 3.10

Good Practice

Transforming Education: Involving Parents and the Wider Community

Every one of the schools in the Change From Within (CFW) Project (see p. 38) had to come to grips with the low level of parental involvement in the life of the school. Parental involvement is critical to the sustainability of the change process. All the schools therefore, had to find innovative ways to involve the parents and the focus was on the strengthening of the traditional school-home network, the PTA. Here again, the schools had to find innovative ways of engaging parents using the traditional structure of the PTAs.

Most accepted the fact that they had to begin by working with the few interested and involved parents. In the case of Charlie Smith High, the traditional Sunday afternoon PTA meetings would compete with football matches in the community. Recognising that many of the parents, being unemployed, were available during the school hours, a competition for parental involvement was designed. Parents would sign in and sign out each time they visited the school, for whatever reason, and at the end of each school term, the parent adjudged the most frequent visitor would be awarded '*Parent of the Term*' and a prize, at a public function held in the school.

Twice per year, parents would visit the school to collect their children's reports. After they consulted with the individual class teachers, there would be a celebration in the courtyard, at which students would entertain their parents with cultural performances. Prizes would be awarded to students and their parents for good performance in the internal examinations.

Having been drawn into the schools activities, parents began to become aware of their children's progress, to visit the school more often, and to see themselves as partners in the process – as having a responsibility in determining the educational and social development of the children who attend *their* school. They became co-owners.

St. Peter Claver Primary School has had outstanding success in drawing in parents. From the 25 Parents in 1988 PTA attendance has soared to between 500 and 600 parents. Through a system of rotation, parents monitor children on the streets. The PTA ensures that each vendor at the school gate is a parent. They have also been actively integrated into the school community. Now an organised group, they wear uniforms, participate in morning devotions, and have a representative on the school's planning committee. Recently, the first set of parents was trained in a Project called *'Parents in Partnership'*. Through this Project, teachers train parents in helping to solve disciplinary problems, an acquired skill these parents give back to the school once or twice weekly.

CFW takes a holistic approach to the definition of a school and recognises that just as the school has to motivate the children, so too the teachers and the parents - who are the messengers - are in need of motivation. That is why part of the method of change involves workshops and seminars for teachers and parents in personal development as well as professional issues.

Source: Chevannes 2005

3. VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS

During the period under review there have been increasing reports of violence in schools. Violence in schools and the community affects children's psycho-social development and their ability to learn, and it disrupts exams and school attendance. The extent of violence in schools is largely unknown as data are not being collected systematically, or where they are being collected, schools do not always pass them on to the Ministry of Education's Guidance Unit because of the stigma associated with being a 'violent school'. While some reports reach the media, anecdotal evidence suggests news of several incidents does not, particularly when they occur in the larger, more influential schools that are able to suppress negative publicity.

There have been a number of responses to this situation. PALS has for years been working with schools and teachers and has now changed the meaning of its acronym from Peace And Love in Schools to Peace And Love in Society, as the links between what the children are experiencing from adult behaviour at home and in their community and their own

behaviour in schools have become clearer. Change from Within is another programme that deals in a comprehensive way with behaviour and now the Dispute Resolution Foundation and the Police Mediation Unit work in schools while the Safe Schools Programme for secondary schools, a collaboration between the Ministry of Education and Youth and the Ministry of National Security is a specific response to this problem.
Under the Safe Schools Programme there has been clear evidence of a reduction of violent incidents in schools (see Human Security Goal chapter). A proxy indicator for the level of violence in schools at the secondary level could be suspension and expulsion records, but once again these data are also not passed on systematically to the Ministry's Guidance Unit by the guidance counsellors. The Jamaica Constabulary Force's Safe Schools Programme, meanwhile, only records major incidents and does not document the smaller incidents that plague many schools. While the problem of violence in schools is largely underreported, even more hidden may be the subtle and not so subtle violence against girls, because it is often dismissed with an acceptance that "boys are being boys".

Without systematic data collection and reporting in order to build a complete picture of the extent and nature of violent incidents, it is not possible to design the most effective interventions. In the absence of a functioning voluntary reporting system, a policy that requires schools to record and report incidents is needed. It will be important for the data to be disaggregated by sex.

Behaviour Modification Interventions
A number of interventions geared towards behaviour modification have been introduced. These include special summer camps through the Change from Within programme and the National Youth Service's Success Programme. With regard to the latter there are reservations in some circles about the use of JDF soldiers to run these programmes and the impact this has on young people, although others feel that the military provide a form of discipline that is required. This approach could be inappropriate for boys, especially in the current context when so many children live in disturbed and aggressive environments and need exposure to the 'soft' skills. The Task Force in their 2004 Report spoke of holding "summer camps for boys in particular that are geared towards esteem building, values, attitudes, and sports." (p. 85). In order to ensure that the outcomes of these summer camps are effective and provide young people with the guidance and role modelling they need, the Ministry of Education and Youth should consider an external review.

Trauma response units
A well-structured trauma response system is needed in the face of growing problems associated with student trauma. The measures that currently exist need to be strengthened and interventions need to be made earlier on in the education system. One suggested route is to establish trauma units that serve a cluster of schools, to which students could be referred. The units should involve a range of professionals and agencies, including clinical psychologists, the police and the Ministry of Justice.

4. SOCIAL SUPPORT

Given the increasing need for social support to students and parents it is of serious concern that the progress made from 2000/1 – 2003/4, has now been reversed at both primary and secondary levels (Table 3.11). Only 287 or approximately one in three (36%) primary level schools now benefits from having a guidance counsellor, down from 340 or approximately two in every five (43%) schools in 2003/4. Although the Ministry of Education has said it plans to increase the number of guidance counsellors in primary schools to 25% of the total number it employs (Office of the Cabinet. 2006), it has not set any specific targets. The Ministry is also considering using teams of specialists to work with clusters of schools. In today's world no school should be operating without some specialist assistance in this area.

Every secondary school has at least one guidance counsellor. The new target at this level is to have a ratio of one guidance counsellor to every 600 students (for comparison, the standard is one to every 250 students in the USA). Although the ratio has improved considerably since 2000/1, from one guidance counsellor to over 1,000 students to one to every 800 students, the situation was better in 2004/5 when the ratio one to every 690 students. There is also the ongoing problem of insufficient male guidance counsellors.

School guidance counsellors are the school-based specialists that teachers can turn to when their students are experiencing social or psycho-emotional problems that are affecting their ability to learn. They help improve students' welfare as they deal with day-to-day issues related to such things as parenting problems, peer pressure and nutrition. As children experience more trauma and pressure (see above two paragraphs and also p. 39), the guidance counsellor is becoming increasingly important. Even when the psycho-social needs of the children are beyond the guidance counsellors' capacity, the role they play in identifying the need for more support and referring them onwards is very important. School psychologists are now needed to deal with these children and school social workers are needed to extend the work the guidance counsellors are doing because children's families are often under stress and this stress impacts on the children.

Box 3.11
Specific Recommendations from Brown's Town Forum to Improve the Quality of Guidance Counselling

- Guidance Counsellors should be screened properly before being accepted for training
- Persons who are trained as Guidance Counsellors should have genuine love for people
- Train teachers in counseling where necessary
- Resource persons should be brought into classes
- More emphasis on real life experiences rather than the curriculum
- Classes should not be held only when there are issues to discuss
- Each school should have at least two counsellors
- Guidance counsellors should also be in all primary schools
- A place should be set aside for one-to-one discussions between Guidance Counsellor and student
- Initiatives to reduce conflict between students should be introduced
- Peer counseling – or a 'buddy' system where two persons share and confide in each other (at secondary level)

Report on Citizens' Feedback: Brown's Town Local Forum on Education & Skills, JASPEV, 2004. p. 14

The present approach to guidance counselling in schools needs a complete review, moving away from pastoral type counselling to current professional practices. Because of their critical role, guidance counsellors must be carefully selected, using the latest methods including psychosometric testing. Not every personality is suited for this demanding job, which requires high professional standards and genuine dedication.

Tracking Indicator ***Guidance Counsellors in Schools***

Table 3.11 Number and % of Primary and Secondary Level Schools with Guidance Counsellors

Primary Level	Targets	2000/1	2001/2	2002/3	2003/4	2004/5	2005/6
No. and % of schools with Guidance Counsellors		**238** 30%	**n/a**	**316** 40%	**340** 43%	**325** 41%	**287** 36%
Ratio of female to male Guidance Counsellors		**10f:1m**	**n/a**	**7f:1m**	**6f:1m**	**10f:1m**	**8f:1m**
Secondary Level							
Ratio of Guidance Counsellors to Students	*Ratio of 1 GC to every 600 students*	**1:1,083**	**n/a**	**1:848**	**1:786**	**1:690**	**1: 803**
Ratio of female to male Guidance Counsellors		**3f:1m**	**n/a**	**4f:1m**	**3f:1m**	**3f:1m**	**3f:1m**

Source: Ministry of Education and Youth

5. YOUTH AT RISK

Increasing attention is being paid to youth at risk and disruption or premature termination of education can be a significant factor leading to vulnerability. Although at present there is no system to accurately assess the school drop-out rate (see below p. __), the declining ratio of boys to gilrs at secondary level suggests a higher drop out rate among them. Students who are functionally illiterate fall further and further behind and it is difficult for schools to cope without specialized remedial programmes. However many students need specialized remedial education as well as other types of support of a psychological and emotional kind. It is a serious challenge for the education system. It is therefore very important to support those NGOs and special schools that assist such children. Two examples, one from Kingston and one from Spanish Town, are given on Boxes 3.__ and 3.__ below).

Box 3.11

Good Practice

Children First-Saving youth at risk:a developmental approach based on participation and the pardner principle

Children First started in Spanish Town in 1997 with a former senior project officer, 50 children in a remedial education programme, formerly run by Save the Children UK, and their families, who had been provided with food and school supplies by the same agency.

Claudette Richardson-Pious, the senior project officer, recognized that those who Save the Children had served were genuinely marginalized and would suffer too much if the project closed when they left Jamaica. She brought the children and families together to dialogue about how to keep the project going. She knew it would not have a ready source of funds so it had to move from a welfare approach to a more developmental approach. They talked, they drew pictures of what the project should be, they ran a competition among the children to find a name for the project. At the end they agreed that it must run on the same principle as a pardner: everyone must put in something to run the project. Their 'draw' was quality education for their children. The children voted on the names and a street boy won the prize with his name of 'Children First'!

Mrs. Pious recognized that many of the parents, especially the mothers, did very little during the days and thus the cycle of poverty continued. She raised money for skills training from the World Food Programme and from the Netherlands Embassy for income generation. There was not enough to serve all the parents. There was another round of long discussions with the parents on how to empower them in this situation. In the end they agreed on a small grant scheme in which parents were given equipment – a fridge or a sewing machine – or materials like chickens, feed and medicine. Each beneficiary paired with another parent whose role was to monitor and observe the project and who would become the next beneficiary. They were also taught entrepreneurial skills to ensure that the investment was not consumed but turned over to make profit. Some parents found they could network their businesses so a parent jerk vendor would be supplied by a parent chicken farmer, while another would supply seasoning. The model was very successful, with parents supporting each other.

After four to five years a transformation was noticeable at Children First. The attendance of the children was much improved. Their general demeanour was happier, more upbeat. Some children now had their 'owna bed', a big privilege after sharing since birth. One girl commented that she didn't have so many 'uncles' again (less men coming to her mother…). Others now had dinner every night, curtains at the windows, a clean house all the time.

Children First in Spanish Town and its branch in Old Harbour Bay, now serves 3,000 children between the ages of 10-22, half of whom are full-time.[1] They run:

- a full-time remedial programme for 400 children aged 10 – 18 years;
- a skills training programme for those in the remedial programme who do not get transferred into the school system, and who have not mastered the Grade 9 level for HEART entry when they graduate. The skills areas, chosen after the children themselves were sent to undertake market research in their communities to ascertain what skills were needed, are: cosmetology, barbering, photography, videography and computer training.
- a homework and general guidance programme for youngsters who leave the remedial programme and are placed in schools. The agency finds that without monitoring and guidance these children often drop out after a term;
- a youth wellness programme, with youth friendly health services and HIV counseling

1 *Children First applied four years ago for independent school status and is unaware of why they have not yet received it.*

Box 3.11 *(cont'd)*

Good Practice

Children First – Saving Youth at Risk: a developmental approach based on participation and the pardner principle

• career counseling and job placement in companies with whom Children First have formed agreements and to whom they also send students for work experience.

The parents – there are now 150 of them - formed a group 'Parents in Action' and are very involved with the project, some serving on staff (30 in number, two thirds full-time). Many have also moved on from basic skills to take the computer training.

All children and parents participate in running the school. Elected students and elected parents sit on the Board. At the end of each school year the children do an evaluation of the staff, including the Director, Mrs. Pious. These evaluations are done in different sections and are facilitated by suitable older children (from other sections). In one year the children insisted on one teacher, known as 'bulldog', leaving. The children said they couldn't take being 'barked at' any more.

Funds for salaries and nutritional support remain a challenge. The parents run the kitchen but there are not enough funds to provide school meals for all students. However parents are "militant" about children being provided with the proper support for school. They know the few delinquent parents – pressure will be applied and special case children will be looked after. The staff generally work at below market salaries, while the Director is not paid out of the project and has to undertake consultancy work to pay herself. Her acting jobs got her through the first few years. All financial decisions are taken openly through the Board.

From their experience Children First suggest some important lessons for the education system:

1. **Give children a space to deal with their issues, a chance to talk** – Children First hold sessions called 'Come mek we reason'. Children today have so many issues to cope with. Groups in the Brown's Town Forum made the same recommendation repeatedly (JASPEV/Cabinet Office. 2006: 12, 14, 15).
2. **Children should have a chance to evaluate school**.
3. **Orient teachers and staff (including the gateman) on how to identify a troubled child.** For example, in the early days of Children First, a girl, after several months of coming to school, suddenly picked a serious fight with another girl. It was only then that staff learned that she had seen her mother stabbed 17 times. No-one knew – her aunt who brought her never mentioned it and the school had not provided the space for her to share her issues.
4. **Academic testing is only one type of testing that children should have.** Testing that can diagnose other aspects – learning problems and emotional problems – should be used. Schools should connect with diagnostic centres like MICO and Sam Sharpe Teachers College.
5. **Place children at their grade level regardless of their age.** This is only possible within a creative learning environment so that older students feel respected and challenged. However some version of this is necessary for effective child-centred learning.
6. **Plan for what happens after Grade 11 and the 'Graduation'.** Experience suggests that after the 'high' of the graduation ceremony, for those who can afford to attend,[1] many return to their communities with no preparation to go forward. What is school phasing them into? Many schools do not seem to see that part of their task with Grade 10 and 11 students has to include career guidance, information on entry requirements and dates for tertiary education, and for the world of work skills in resume writing, job application letters, interview techniques etc.. Their role does not stop at providing them with three weeks of work experience (where this applies).

1 At a 2007 graduation of one Spanish Town school the Principal noted that of the 386 in the graduating class, only 120 (less than one third) attended the ceremony (which at $4,000 was cheaper than many).

6. TRANSFORMING EDUCATION THROUGH BETTER AND EXPANDED FACILITIES

Elimination of the shift system for students

In the seven years between 2000/1 and 2006/7 the number of schools on shift actually increased by 12. In keeping with the Task Force on Educational Reform's recommendation to eliminate it, the government's policy to phase out the shift system was to have been accelerated from 2015 to 2008. However the sheer logistics involved in building the necessary plant-not to speak of the resources-have meant this date has been pushed back to 2009 and this still looks impossible. Seventy eight - or one in ten - primary level schools island-wide still operate on the shift system (Table 3.12) as do 46 - or more than one in four - high schools. In the school year 2007-8 the MOEY plans to take nine primary level schools and four secondary level schools off shift.

The shift system was introduced in the 1970s as a short term measure to overcome a capacity problem, but its long-term use has placed some students at a disadvantage. Students in shift-system schools have an average of 4.5 teaching contact hours per day in contrast with students in whole-day schools who on average enjoy 5.5 teaching contact hours daily. The former also have less time for extra-curricular activities which are extremely important for socialisation and resilience-building.

Tracking Indicator ***Schools on a Shift System***

Table 3.12 N° and % of primary and secondary level schools operating a shift system

Location	*Target*	2000/1	2001/2	2002/3	2003/4	2004/5	2005/6	2006/7
National Primary Level		**73**	**73**	**73**	**77**	**79**	**78**	**78**
		9%	**9%**	**9%**	**10%**	**10%**	**10%**	**11%**
Primary	*Elimination by 2009*	27	29	29	31	31	31	31
Primary & Junior High		36	35	35	35	37	37	37
All-Age		10	9	9	11	11	10	10
National Secondary Level		**39**	**41**	**44**	**45**	**46**	**45**	**46**
		26%	**26%**	**28%**	**29%**	**29%**	**28%**	**28%**
Secondary High		37	39	42	43	44	43	44
Technical High		2	2	2	2	2	2	2

Source: Ministry of Education and Youth N.B No of secondary high schools has expanded from 152 in 2000 to 162 in 2006

Streamlining types of schools

The government intends to have a single category of primary school by 20__ instead of the existing three primary levels (primary, and grades 1-6 in all-age and primary/junior high). Outcomes are better in separate primary schools (see Grade Four and Grade Six Test results p. 6 & p. 32). As grades 7 – 9 are eliminated from all-age and junior high schools, additional primary level spaces will be created. As the new spaces become available, it will be important to ensure that the facilities are age and level appropriate.

Tracking Indicator *Categories of Primary Level Schools*

Table 3.13 No. of Primary, All-age and Junior High Schools, Student Enrolment, Gender distribution

School type	*Target*	2000/1	2001/2	2002/3	2003/4	2004/5	2005/6	2006/7
Primary:								
Number of schools		350	356	356	355	-		
Enrolment		**187,005**	**191,497**	**189,568**	**187,840**	**188,057**	363	382
% male students		51%	51%	51%	51%	50%		
All Age:								
Number of schools		353	348	348	349	-		
Enrolment		**71,226**	**70,589**	**69,554**	**67,164**	**64,886**	343	233
% male students		53%	53%	53%	53%	53%		
Primary & Junior High:								
Number of schools		90	88	89	89	-		
Enrolment		**54,140**	**51,594**	**50,650**	**49,767**	**47,343**	87	80
% male students		52%	52%	52%	52%	52%		
Total No. of Schools		793	792	793	792	-		
Total Enrolment		**312,371**	**314,060**	**309,772**	**304,771**	**300,286**	793	695
% male students		51%	51%	51%	51%	51%		

Source: Ministry of Education

Eliminating the shift system, streamlining school types, and reducing class size have major implications for the physical infrastructure and other facilities across the educational system. The results of the recently concluded space audit indicate that, at the recommended class sizes for primary and secondary level, with five year olds added at the primary level (Table 3.14) and Grade 12 added for all students at secondary level (Table 3.15), the total estimated cost for the optimal choice (highlighted in the tables) could be as high as $112.1 billion.

Table 3.14 Total Demand and Cost for Primary School Places by Class Size & Option for Five-year olds

Class Size	Space Needs without 5 year olds	Cost in J$ Billion	Space Needs with 5 year olds	Cost in J$ Billion
35 per class	91,685	17.9	136,927	26.7
20/30 per class	172,340	33.6	**229,955**	**44.8**

Source: Ministry of Education

Table 3.15 Total Demand and Cost for Secondary School Places by Class Size & Option for Sixth Year

Class size	Space Needs without 6th yr	Cost in J$ Billion	With % in 6th yr	Cost in J$ Billion	With all In 6th yr	Cost in J$ Billion
40 per class	126,020	34.9	169,520	46.9	179,360	49.7
35 per class	154,415	40.3	190,330	52.7	200,060	55.4
30 per class	168,050	46.5	214,750	59.5	220,170	61
25 per class	187,275	51.8	231,550	64.1	**242,925**	**67.3**

Source: Ministry of Education

Options and choices therefore have to be carefully considered in the light of available resources and the educational and social implications of each. In terms of construction time alone, it is likely to take another ten years to meet demand. Table 3.16 indicates those spaces that have been added in the 19 months from Aug 2005 – Feb 2007.

Table 3.16 Completed expansion from August 2005 as at February 2007

School Type	School Name	Parish	Spaces added	Cost
Primary & Junior High	Beulah	St. Catherine	175	$8m
	Braeton	St. Catherine	160	$8m
	Green Park	St. Catherine	120	$4m
	Rosemount	St. Catherine	140	$5m
All Age	Pollyground	St. Catherine	200	$6m
	Tredegar Park	St. Catherine	120	$4m
	Osbourne Store	Clarendon	120	$9m
	Spring Garden	Portland	180	$4m
High	May Day	Manchester	120	$4m
	Port Antonio	Portland	200	$14m
	Iona	St. Ann	200	$21m
	Charlemont	St. Catherine	400	$19m
	Cumberland	St. Catherine	80	$6m
	Eltham	St. Catherine	80	$6m
	St. Jago	St. Catherine	360	$24m
	Lacovia	St. Elizabeth	200	$15m
	Newell	St. Elizabeth	120	$4m
	Paul Bogle	St. Thomas	80	$3m
	Little London	Westmoreland	160	$6m
	Carron Hall	St. Mary	120	$5m
	St. Mary	St. Mary	160	$5m
Technical High	Denbigh	Clarendon	160	$5m
	Jose Marti	St. Catherine	320	$23m
Total:	**23 Schools**	**9 parishes**	**3,975**	**$208m**

Source: Compiled from data supplied by Education Transformation Team

7. QUALITY ASSURANCE IN MANAGEMENT

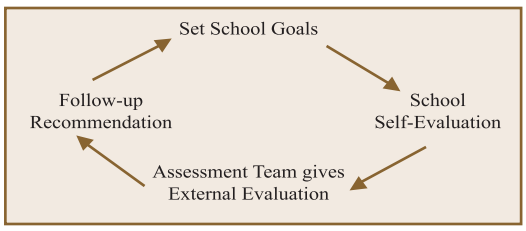
Student Registration System

There is currently no administrative mechanism in place that makes it possible to keep track of a child throughout her/his academic career. The Early Childhood Commission has recommended the introduction of a child identification system which would make it possible for each child to have a comprehensive record of her/his academic performance from early childhood through secondary school. The system would also keep track of health checks and other assessments made throughout the child's academic career. As a child moves from one educational stage to another or from one school to another, a cumulative profile and record of her schooling would accompany her. It is recommended that information on socioeconomic status, geographic location and family size be added as critical data. Such a system would provide valuable data for policy making. This system would also accurately assess the drop-out rate. Currently it is not possible to tell whether a student has dropped out of the education system or has moved to another school, migrated etc.

Planning and assessment

Planning and assessment are important for quality assurance. Present efforts being made to raise the level of quality assurance include putting in place performance-based standards to relate to salaries and professional registration for teachers, which will include ongoing professional upgrading requirements.

Figure 3.2



Each school should have a clear set of goals, objectives, targets and standards against which the Panel Inspection Review should be conducted. Late feedback and lack of follow-up continue to undermine this valuable review system, however. One way to overcome this might be to change the review cycle to between three and five years, with a requirement for reports to be submitted within three months of the review.

Over the past five years all schools have been encouraged to prepare development plans and administrators have been trained to help put them in place. Schools with good leadership have forged ahead, while others are lagging behind. For this planning tool to be used to best effect, extra support is needed prior to assessment, so that schools can analyse themselves and set their targets. The regional monitors should function as a quality assurance team trained to help take schools through the circular process shown in Figure 3.2.

Role of Education Officers in quality assurance

Because their assignments are not well conceived Education Officers are not as effective as they could be in assuring quality in the education system. There is little accountability in the system and besides being overloaded - officers are expected to oversee up to 30 schools in a geographic area - their performance targets are low and vague. Education Officers are also often called on to provide services in areas where they have no expertise, such as assessments of physical plants or governance and management.

Specialists who can provide short-term targeted interventions to schools should be used to support Education Officers. Curriculum Support Officers (CSOs), for example, could provide some of the clinical support to schools that Education Officers are expected to provide. CSOs would be responsible for assessing and grading schools' support needs as well as for designing the appropriate intervention needed. This might be group seminars and review sessions for staff and administration, or more targeted school-based interventions to help schools to strengthen their weak areas.

Grading of schools

Pegging principals' salaries to the number of students on their rolls may have contributed to overcrowding in some schools. Overcrowding undermines the quality of the learning experience and places undue pressure on teachers. Tying how much a principal is paid to the size of their school's student population is no longer appropriate and a ceiling should be placed on the percentage of students allowed above capacity. Another grading mechanism is now needed, based on a more complex set of criteria.

A connected but different issue is packing in more students at the primary level in order to get an extra specialist teacher for P.E. or Music or Art because otherwise it is expected that classroom teachers will carry these subjects. The Ministry should consider employing teams of specialist teachers to work in clusters of schools to enable the specialist teaching required for a quality educational experience at primary level.

Performance management system and incentives for teachers and principals

The accountability of the system needs to be improved with the establishment of clearer performance targets and systems for measuring performance on a regular basis. Education Officers need smaller caseloads so they can have more meaningful and frequent interaction with their schools. All Education Officers should be trained in performance management.

The quality of teaching can be enhanced by a culture of research and innovation, where continued professional development and practical innovation (see examples of St. Peter Claver and Polly Ground Primaries, p. 36 and p. 38) is valued and encouraged. Too often teachers from training college do not employ the new techniques they have learned because the school environment in which they find themselves does not value or encourage innovation (the resource constraint is also an inhibiting factor). The performance management system at both teacher and principal level should include these critical features for a healthy education system. In addition incentives, which do not always have to be monetary, for innovative and resourceful teachers should be developed by individual schools and by the Ministry of Education.

SUB-GOAL 1
Early childhood cognitive and social development

Key Issue	Indicator	Notes
1. REGISTERING AND NAMING OF CHILDREN AT BIRTH		Note on incentive to register and name child at birth
2. READINESS FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL	• % of children who enter Grade 1 assessed as 'ready to learn'	Note on new Early Childhood standards
3. TEACHER QUALITY	• No. of Early Childhood Practitioners at Levels 1,2 & 3 graduating from HEART • No. of trained teachers in Early Childhood Institutions (ECIs) • Teacher:Student ratio in ECIs	
4. CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS	• No. of children aged 0 – 6 with learning difficulties receiving special assistance	

Positive developments

Box 3.12

Why is early childhood education so important?

Getting education right at the early childhood level leads to better social and educational outcomes in school and adulthood. Access to high quality pre-school learning is also important for reducing the inequality in education and educational outcomes that are so much a part of the Jamaican system. A solid pre-school formation can help children from disadvantaged backgrounds overcome some of the cognitive, social, emotional and physical deficits that they may experience.

There have been several significant developments in the early childhood sector. In addition to the Early Childhood Commission and the Early Childhood Act (2005) mentioned at the start of this chapter, these include:

- a new Early Childhood Curriculum for birth–5 years, on pre-trial in 2006-7, will be piloted in 26 schools in four parishes, Kingston & St. Andrew, St. Ann and Manchester, during the 2007-8 academic year. This curriculum will apply to all school types: infant, basic, day care centres and preparatory
- new measures to encourage naming and registration of children at birth.
- Jamaica's ratification in 2007 of General Comment Seven in the Convention on the Rights of the Child protecting the rights of children 0 – 8 years old and recognising them as specially important, since it is in this age group that the foundations of their physical, psychic, emotional and social being are laid.

Box 3.13

Early Childhood Standards

relate to:

1. Staffing
2. Developmental & educational programmes
3. Interactions & relationships with children
4. Physical environment
5. Indoor & outdoor equipment, furnishing and supplies
6. Health
7. Nutrition
8. Safety
9. Child rights, child protection & equality
10. Interactions with parents and community members
11. Administration
12. Finance

Moving forward

Jamaica's Early Childhood Act (2005) is visionary and forward thinking. But two years after being passed by the Parliament, its provisions are not yet law because the corresponding Regulations have not been prepared. Regulations are the legislation that is used to implement an Act. However the 12 Early Childhood Standards are now being distributed and registration of Early Childhood Institutions starts from 2007. Thirty five inspectors will be monitoring these standards while Education Officers will continue monitoring the developmental components.

While the previous Progress Report looked at children between the ages of four and five years, this report is

concerned with the entire early childhood phase — from birth to eight years old. This expanded focus is in keeping with the UNICEF designation. Looking at four to five year olds alone is too narrow for making good policies on early childhood learning as critical cognitive and social development takes place between birth and age three. Jamaica has become the first country to ratify General Comment Seven in the Convention on the Rights of the Child which specifies the rights of children in this age group.

1. REGISTERING AND NAMING A CHILD AT BIRTH

Registering and naming children at birth upholds one of the first rights of children – the right to an identity (see Goal 2, Social Integration, p xx for a more detailed discussion of this point). Approximately 30% of children born in public hospitals and clinics are not named at birth (Registrar General's Department. Retrieved 22 January 2007 from http://www.rgd.gov.jm/name-Your-Child). By law every child entering primary school should be registered and immunized. No school should refuse to register a child without a birth certificate although some principals may initially turn away children in order to pressure the parent to get the birth certificate. At the end of Grade Six a school cannot by law provide a parent or guardian with their child's GSAT results if they do no have the birth certificate. The parent/guardian has to go to the Ministry of Education and provide some official document of identity. This regulation is to safeguard against fraud.

2. READINESS FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL

Performance

The percentage of pupils assessed as ready for grade one is increasing slowly, but is still less than half our children and remains far from the 2010 target (Table 3.17). The government's current emphasis on early childhood education and the attention being paid to improving the quality of teachers suggests there should be advances in this area over the coming years.

Improved Measurement of Readiness Needed

The Grade One Readiness Inventory was developed to measure students' ability to manage the primary level curriculum and is administered during the first term of grade one. It is the only assessment tool used for children at the pre-school level, and although the curriculum has changed substantively since it was introduced in 1990, the readiness assessment has not. It tests the cognitive but not the social aspects of readiness. Its contents and timing are under review by the Ministry of Education (Office of the Cabinet, 2006).

If given at the right time and under better conditions the test would provide a more accurate picture of the types of interventions needed and the best time for them to be made. At the present time there is an urgent need for standards to be set with regard to the actual conditions under which the Readiness Inventory is administered, including the arrangement of the children, the space between them etc.

The Early Childhood Commission has recommended using a more comprehensive readiness tool at age four and conducting a second assessment towards the middle or end of the second year in primary school, when children have become accustomed to school.

Tracking Indicator *Grade 1 Readiness Inventory*

Table 3.17 Percentage of students who enter Grade 1 that are assessed as 'ready to learn' based on their mastery of all four areas tested

School Type	Targets	2000/1	20001/2	2002/3	2003/4	2004/5	2005/6	2006/7
Mastery of all 4 levels tested	*2010*	29%	26%	37%	43%	39%	42%	
	90%	F: 35%	F: 31%	F: 43%	F: 50%	F: 45%	F: 49%	
National	*(MOEY)*	M: 24%	M: 22%	M:32%	M:37%	M: 33%	M: 36%	
Preparatory				71%	71%	69%	68%	
				F: 75%	F: %	F: 73%	F: 72%	
				M: 66%	M: %	M: 64%	M: 65%	
Primary				36%	42%	38%	42%	
				F: 42%	F: %	F: 44%	F: 49%	
				M: 30%	M: %	M: 32%	M: 34%	
Primary & Junior High				32%	38%	34%	34%	
				F: 38%	F: %	F: 41%	F: 39%	
				M: 27%	M: %	M: 27%	M: 30%	
All Age				30%	36%	32%	36%	
				F: 35%	F: %	F: 39%	F: 42%	
National Percentages by mastery of specific areas:				M: 25%	M: %	M: 26%	M: 30%	
• Visual motor co-ordination		82%	82%	86%	87%	90%	88%	
• Visual perception		54%	58%	54%	61%	62%	69%	
• Audio perception		57%	45%	57%	65%	63%	65%	
• Number & letter knowledge		62%	61%	69%	68%	59%	60%	

Source: Student Assessment Unit, Ministry of Education and Youth

Supporting the children who are not yet ready

A critical gap presently existing is the capacity to deal with the large percentage of children entering primary school who are assessed as not yet ready – 58% in the 2006/7 school year. The system should include further assessment to diagnose why these children are not ready. Primary schools do not have the human or material resources to deal with children who have serious readiness problems and who need a rich learning environment which allows them to experience and learn the skills required to 'catch up' with the other children. An appointment at the MICO assessment centre, one of the only two government centres which can diagnose and advise in these cases, takes 1-2 years because of the overload. Principals sometimes feel overburdened and 'saddled' with these children and ways of 'deselecting' them may on occasion be found.

Expand criteria for measurement

It is not just the formal learning setting that contributes to a child's readiness for school. Many of the other factors – health, nutrition, and parental involvement – relate to the conditions in which children find themselves. This means early childhood interventions have to take into consideration the various things outside the classroom that can contribute to, or hamper, a child's development.

Future National Progress Reports will track progress in establishing separate K - Grade 2 facilities in primary schools.

Note **New Early Childhood Standards**

The physical facilities for early childhood learning are as important as the curriculum and the ability of teachers to deliver the new curriculum. The way in which classrooms are now set up for Grades 1 and 2 and teachers' skills are not entirely appropriate for early childhood learning. The Task Force on Educational Reform has recommended the separation of children in Kindergarten through

Grade 2 from the rest of the primary grades. It has suggested that where possible, not only should the physical facilities for younger children should be separate, they should also have a different schedule from older children in order to reduce contact between the two groups during school hours. Implementing these measures has cost and personnel implications. The process for meeting these standards will be developed based on the audit findings which should be completed by mid-2007.

3. TEACHER QUALITY

Implementing and monitoring the teacher quality policy

Jamaica now has a clear framework for improving teacher quality at the early childhood level. The Ministry of Education has committed to providing one trained teacher to all early childhood institutions with 100 or more students on their roll. This provision will be made to all eligible private and state institutions. Although the majority of children in early childhood institutions are enrolled in private basic schools, these institutions have a very low percentage of trained teachers (Table 3.18). The situation in basic schools in particular needs to be monitored to ensure improvement. In 2006 there were 220 trained teachers in basic schools (Office of the Cabinet, 2006, p. 63), which is equivalent to 4% of all basic school teachers. This compares to 529 trained teachers in infant schools and infant departments (sections of primary, primary & junior high, and all age schools). However there are far fewer infant schools and departments so these trained teachers form 89% of the teaching staff (Table 3.18). In 2007 another 131 trained teachers were added to make a total of 880 in early childhood institutions. The percentage of trained teachers in private preparatory schools is comparable to infant schools in the state sector.

Tracking Indicator ***Trained Teachers in Early Childhood Institutions***

Table 3.18 No of Teachers in Early Childhood Institutions and Percentage who are Trained

Indicator	Targets	2000/1	2001/2	2002/3	2003/4	2004/5	2005/6
Total number of teachers and percentage who are trained:	*One trained teacher in each basic school*						
• No. of teachers in all Basic schools & % trained		4,524	5,477	5,399 **(3%)**	5,154	6,152	5,543 **(4 %)**
• No. of teachers in Infant schools/ Infant depts & % trained		489 **(76%)**	560 **(81%)**	558 **(84%)**	581 **(83%)**	648 **(89%)**	595 **(89%)**
• No. of teachers in prep schools* & estimated % of those trained		n/a	n/a	n/a **(88%)**	n/a	n/a	n/a
Teacher :Student ratio and enrolment	*Maximum class size 1:20 up to Grade 3.*						
• Basic schools (recognised and unrecognised)		**1:26** (117,567)	**1:23** (125,351)	**1:21** (117,633)	**1:23** (117,904)	**1:19** (117,677)	**1:21** (117,737)
• Infant schools/departments		**1:45** (17,048)	**1:36** (15,870)	**1:27** (15,022)	**1:25** (14,580)	**1:22** (14,005)	**1:23** (13,658)
• Kindergartens (prep schools)*		n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Source: Ministry of Education and Youth

*The absence of some data is due to non-compliance by some private schools. There are no sanctions for this.

Certification of newly trained practitioners

The Early Childhood Act (2005) says that all practitioners in early childhood institutions should have at least a vocational qualification in early childhood education. Having this kind of policy is a good first step towards improving the quality of early childhood education, but the follow-on steps of implementing the policy and putting in place measures for consistent monitoring are crucial.

The Task Force on Educational Reform has recommended HEART Level 2 as the minimum qualification for early childhood practitioners in basic schools, and Level 3 as the minimum for principals. To minimise disruption and displacement, this requirement will have to be phased in with an appropriate grandfather clause that would make it possible for all practitioners to upgrade their skills. HEART's cumulative training target for Level 1 practitioners for the last four years has been exceeded by 48%, but its target for the more important Level 2 grade is behind by 35% (Table 3.19).

The HEART Level 1 early childhood training course is a nursery attendant qualification, rather than a specific early childhood pedagogical qualification. And while this level of training is important, it is equally important that it be recognised for what it is and not assumed to be more. Up to 2005/6 no Level 3 course had been offered.

Tracking Indicator ***Early Childhood Practitioners Levels 1 & 2 graduating from HEART***

Table 3.10 Number of Early Childhood Practitioner Graduates at HEART levels 1 and 2

No. of persons graduating as Early Childhood Practitioners (ECPs)	Target	2002/3	Target	2003/4	Target	2004/5	Target	2005/6	Totals Target Actual
Level 1	*182*	**91**	*258*	**210**	*230*	**351**	*160*	**578**	*830* **1,230**
Level 2			*589*	**307**	*770*	**543**	*900*	**623**	*2,259* **1,473**

Source: HEART/NTA

4. CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Lack of adequate data

The education system does not have adequate data on children with special needs in Jamaica. Despite the importance of early screening and intervention, there is very little assessment of children within the system. Without adequate assessment and the data it yields, it is impossible to have a complete picture of the situation and design appropriate interventions for children with special needs. The earlier the intervention the more successful and less costly is the long term outcome. The Ministry of Education in collaboration with the University of the West Indies is now carrying out research in Region 6 (St. Catherine) which is expected to give a true picture of what is happening in that region as it relates to children with special needs. Similar research is needed in the other regions.

The data in table 3.20 are drawn from the island's 14 special schools for children with disabilities (deaf, blind and mentally challenged), and do not include all the children with learning difficulties who are receiving attention. Of greater concern, however, are the children who require assistance but whose needs are not being met because they have not been identified through screening. The small numbers are worrying and are even less than the numbers of special children at primary level who are receiving assistance (Table 3.26), although early intervention is vital for optimal management of disabilities.

Comprehensive screening for learning difficulties at the pre-school stage allows for early interventions that can help children be more successful in their first school experiences and ultimately improve their educational outcomes. Instead of intervening once children have failed, early screening allows for necessary support to be put in place before children flounder.

Tracking Indicator ***Assistance to children with special needs aged 0 – 6 years.***

Table 3.20 No. of children with learning difficulties receiving special assistance.

Indicator	Target	2005/6
Total No. children 0 – 6 yrs with learning difficulties receiving assistance:		**420**
• In special schools		101
• In centre or home-based programmes		319

Source: Ministry of Education and Youth

Integrated approaches to dealing with special needs

Children with behavioural problems are at an even greater disadvantage than those with learning difficulties as their particular needs often go unmet. Behavioural problems are sometimes linked to learning difficulties; children's frustration with their educational experience, for example, may manifest itself as behavioural problems.

The ratio of children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder in Jamaica is 1:3.[8] As with learning difficulties, early identification of problems and delivery of appropriate interventions are vital. Problems that manifest themselves in infancy can develop into antisocial behaviours later on in childhood through adolescence and into adulthood. Addressing the needs of children with learning difficulties or behavioural problems requires holistic interventions that should not only include remedial assistance but also involve social workers and clinical psychologists, as appropriate.

8 *Interview with Acting Head, Special Education Unit, MOEY, Caenwood, June 16, 2006 conducted by Danielle Fearon, JASPEV Research Assistant.*

SUB-GOAL 2
Primary school attendance and learning outcomes

Key Issue	Indicators	Case Studies
1. GRADE SIX ACHIEVEMENT TEST (GSAT)	• % of students passing all GSAT subjects	
2. ATTENDANCE	• % of students with full daily attendance	
3. QUALITY - teacher training - class size and teacher/student ratio	• % of trained teachers • Teacher/student ratio • Distribution of Teacher/Student ratio	Good Practice: Revolving Loan Fund for teachers Case Study: Do girls and boys perform better in single-sex classrooms? Case Study: Change from Within
4. CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS	• N° students with learning difficulties receiving assistance	

Positive developments
The high level of primary school enrolment (97.9% in 2005/6) is one of the achievements of Jamaica's educational system. Although there are concerns about attendance, the fact that so many children enter the system suggests there is a basic acceptance of the need for education and once children are known to the system, targeted measures can be put in place to encourage regular attendance.

Moves to speed up elimination of the shift system reflect a commitment to doing away with one area of disparity in the education system in the short term.

Moving forward
Now that every child is guaranteed a place in secondary school, the need to reform the Grade Six Achievement Test (GSAT) so that it does the kind of assessment it was designed to do is ever more urgent.

1. GRADE SIX ACHIEVEMENT TEST (GSAT)

The Grade Six Achievement Test is intended to measure the effectiveness of the primary education curriculum and to indicate a student's readiness for Grade Seven in high school. Performance on the GSAT in state-run primary schools continues to be well below the 2015 target. At the current rate of progress the 2015 target will not be met. Unlike the Grade One Inventory Test or the Grade Four Literacy Test, there has been little variation in performance in the test's component subject areas between the 2000/01 academic year and 2005/6 (Table 3.21)

On average - but not in all cases - state-run primary level schools do not compare well with private preparatory schools. Over the last four years just over 50% of their students passed in the four subject areas, while the latter always have more than 75% of their students passing. There is disparity in performance within the state sector as well, with primary schools achieving slightly better results than primary & junior high schools and all age schools slightly below both. Boys continue to perform less well than girls.

Tracking Indicator ***School Performance on the Grade Six Achievement Test (GSAT)***

Table 3.21 **Percentage of students passing all GSAT subjects**

	Target	2000/1	2001/2	2002/3	2003/4	2004/5	2005/6
Primary level school students passing all GSAT subjects	***2015*** *85%*	The Ministry of Education does not disaggregate the GSAT results to give this figure					
• **Maths**		**52%**	**51%**	**48%**	**44%**	**58%**	**53%**
National		F: 56%	F: 55%	F: 51%	F: 47%	F: 62%	
By gender		M: 47%	M: 47%	M: 45%	M: 41%	M: 53%	
Preparatory				**74%**	**69%**	**82%**	**79%**
Primary				**48%**	**44%**	**58%**	**53%**
Primary & Junior High					**40%**	**53%**	**48%**
All Age				**41%**	**38%**	**52%**	**47%**
• **Science**		**55%**	**53%**	**48%**	**46%**	**52%**	**55%**
National		F: 59%	F: 57%	F: 51%	F: 49%	F: 55%	
By gender		M: 51%	M: 50%	M: 45%	M: 44%	M: 48%	
Preparatory				**71%**	**69%**	**74%**	**79%**
Primary				**48%**	**46%**	**52%**	**55%**
Primary & Junior High					**42%**	**48%**	**50%**
All Age				**42%**	**40%**	**46%**	**49%**
• **Social Studies**		**57%**	**53%**	**54%**	**50%**	**57%**	**51%**
National		F: 62%	F: 57%	F: 58%	F: 53%	F: 61%	
By gender		M: 52%	M: 50%	M: 50%	M: 47%	M: 52%	
Preparatory				**79%**	**73%**	**81%**	**75%**
Primary				**54%**	**50%**	**57%**	**51%**
Primary & Junior High					**46%**	**53%**	**46%**
All Age				**47%**	**45%**	**50%**	**46%**
• **Language Arts**		**57%**	**54%**	**52%**	**48%**	**54%**	**54%**
National		F: 63%	F: 58%	F: 57%	F: 52%	F: 59%	
By gender		M: 51%	M: 49%	M: 47%	M: 44%	M: 48%	
Preparatory				**77%**	**73%**	**79%**	**79%**
Primary				**48%**	**48%**	**54%**	**54%**
Primary & Junior High					**44%**	**49%**	**49%**
All Age				**41%**	**42%**	**47%**	**48%**
• **Composition***		**69%**	**61%**	**68%**	**53%**	**40%**	**50%**
National		F: 74%	F: 68%	F: 73%	F: 60%	F: 47%	
By gender		M: 63%	M: 54%	M: 62%	M: 47%	M: 33%	
Preparatory				**81%**	**75%**	**64%**	**75%**
Primary				**67%**	**53%**	**39%**	**50%**
Primary & Junior High					**49%**	**36%**	**50%**
All Age				**66%**	**50%**	**36%**	**50%**

Source: Ministry of Education and Youth * Communication Tasks until 2006

Placement test vs indicator of readiness for further study

Use of the GSAT as a placement examination has detracted from its intended purpose and ultimately weakened the very reforms to the education system that it was intended to support. With high scores favouring placement in a traditional high school with a good reputation, the exam helps rank schools according to quality and plays into the inequalities of

the education system. Currently 60% of children are placed in one of their choices. However since they have to fill in five choices this is not as meaningful a statistic as might first appear. The GSAT is, in fact, being used much like the Common Entrance Examination of old which it was meant to replace.

Attainment not ability – the potential backlash

The test currently facilitates coaching and emphasises attainment rather than ability, unlike the Common Entrance Exam, which in fact measured both. Tremendous pressure is put on many young students through hours of extra lessons and homework in Grades 5 and 6, along with the pressure that is often wittingly or unwittingly passed on by parents and teachers. Mistakes made now threaten in years ahead to bring a potential backlash in behaviour problems, stress-related emotional problems, and mediocre performance from children who are suffering intellectual 'burn out' by mid-high school.

Because learning at the primary school level is now geared towards gaining a high GSAT score for placement purposes, and because the test does not emphasise logical thinking and analysis or creativity, many students enter grade 7 without the full skill-set needed to master that stage of the curriculum and beyond.

The way forward

The Ministry of Education is developing a new placement policy and the GSAT will be reviewed as part of this. It is strongly recommended that parents be involved in this review as their perceptions are very important in this process. Using GSAT as a placement tool needs to end. As originally intended, there should be an appropriate measure of primary school outcomes that does not lead to primary education being distorted to satisfy a placement test.

Teachers and parents should be encouraged to read their child's GSAT report, now given to schools electronically where possible, which details the areas tested, the national averages and each child's performance in these areas. Public education should be used to ensure parents can access data and to overcome fear of the data – on the part of principals and teachers who are afraid of the reflection of poor results on the school, and on the part of parents whose expectations may exceed their child's capabilities, given their circumstances. The new Inspectorate System recommended by the Task Force Report 2004 will help schools to use the data for monitoring purposes towards improving performance in their weak areas.

The fact is that as a society we face a real problem changing this historic inheritance of an unequal educational system that we are only tackled in a piecemeal way until now. At the present time factors of parent choice - based on perception since there is no ready way of knowing current high school performance[9] and other attributes; the child's performance in the GSAT - which hinges on many factors including school attended and ability to absorb coaching, as well as the home environment and parents' ability to afford extra.lessons; and school spaces - which differ by geographic area with the Ministry sometimes having to play 'catch-up' with population increases not always foreseen by planners, all influence which school a child attends. Moreover the major challenge is upgrading the capacities of the newly upgraded high schools for whom preparing students for the CSEC curriculum is a new task. In this last respect a critical component that can smooth the process and fast track this upgrading, whatever the challenges, is school leadership. The Ministry would do well to undertake a study of the factors that produce effective schools. Local experience seems to suggest that leadership, learning support and a safe environment are key. Such a study could address the question: Are we empowering our schools and parents to perform effectively?

Finally it is well known and accepted that going back to the beginning of the education and socialisation process is where improving the education system has to start because the problems start here. This is why the present focus on early childhood from birth to eight years is vital and needs to be maintained until we get it right. The present strength of the leadership of the Early Childhood Commission gives much hope for the future once it is fully supported. Implementation and monitoring of the entire system must also be maintained and strengthened (Fig. 3.3).

9 *It is available on the NCE website www.nce.gov.jm*

Figure 3.3 Monitoring of the Processes that lead from Input to Output

2. ATTENDANCE AT PRIMARY LEVEL

The target for average daily attendance in primary schools was 90% by 2005. Although the data suggested an average attendance of 80 percent in 2005/6 there is a concern about the data's accuracy as this rate includes the lower secondary level of All Age and Primary/Junior High Schools. Every school is supposed to submit their daily attendance records on a monthly basis to their Regional Office. However this is not done consistently and there are no sanctions for those schools who do not adhere to the regulations. The Ministry of Education's census day each October remains the only complete set of data and it provides data on enrolment, not on attendance. The other source for attendance data is the household sample in the Jamaica Survey of Living Conditions (SLC), which is a relatively small sample of around 1,500 households (in certain years, to enable measurement by parish, this expands to over 5,000). Existing data point to lower attendance among boys than girls. In the 2002 SLC survey "money problems" were cited by the highest percentage as the reason for absence (48%), followed by "rain" (30%) and illness (14%). It is noted that the major flood rains in 2002 had a devastating effect on schools and communities and had a negative impact on attendance.

Tracking Indicator ***Attendance***

Table 3.22 % of Students with Full Daily Attendance over 20-day period by region, income & school

Factor	2001		2002	
National	**78%**	(1,668)	**73%**	(5,859)
Regional				
KMA	**90%**	(344)	**81%**	(1,024)
Other Towns	**76%**	(213)	**75%**	(1,100)
Rural Area	**74%**	(765)	**70%**	(3,735)
Income Level				
Poorest 20%	**60%**	(321)	**56%**	(1,329)
2nd poorest quintile (20%)	**79%**	(279)	**70%**	(1,326)
3rd quintile	**82%**	(259)	**77%**	(1,258)
4th quintile	**89%**	(278)	**81%**	(1,153)
Wealthiest 20%	**87%**	(185)	**85%**	(793)
School Level				
Primary level	**75%**		**72%**	
Secondary level	**82%**		**74%**	

Source: PIOJ: Jamaica Survey of Living Conditions 2000 and 2002

3. QUALITY

a. Teacher training

There has been a consistent rise in the percentage of trained teachers in all schools at primary level over the last six years. Female teachers lead but the 12.5% of male teachers at this level are not far behind and have been moving faster in recent years. This is a significant achievement of the education system (Table 3.23).

Tracking Indicator ***Trained Teachers at Primary Level (Grades 1-6)***

Table 3.23 **Percentage of teachers in Grades 1-6 that are trained**

School type	*Target*	2000/1	2001/2	2002/3	2003/4	2004/5	2005/6	2006/7
Primary	*All teachers trained and with a first degree by 2010*	**85%** F:86% M:73%	**86%** F:88% M:77%	**87%** F:90% M:79%	88% F:90% M:81%	**90%** F:90% M:84%	**90%** F:91% M:83%	**90%**
Primary/ Junior High (Gds 1-6)		**85%** F:87% M:67%	**86%** F:87% M:77%	**87%** F:89% M:76%	90% F:91% M:82%	**92%** F:93% M:88%	**91%** F:92% M:85%	**90%**
All Age (Gds 1-6)		**76%** F: 78% M:66%	**82%** F: 83% M:71%	**84%** F:85% M:75%	85% F:87% M:74%	**88%** F:89% M:81%	**89%** F:90% M:86%	**90%**

Source: Ministry of Education and Youth

b. Class Size and Teacher: Student ratio

Data on class size are not presently available from the Ministry of Education and therefore the teacher:student ratio is used as a proxy. This is not equivalent to class size as all the teachers, including Vice-Principal and specialist staff such as P.E. teachers, are included in calculating the ratio. The trend since 2000/1 suggests that real progress has been made in the last two years with the average teacher:student ratio at primary school level now at 1 teacher to 26 students, compared to 1 to 35 four years ago (Table 3.24).

Tracking Indicator ***Average teacher/student ratio in state sector primary schools***

Table 3.24 **Average Number of Students per Teacher at Primary Level**

School Type	Targets	2000/1	2001/2	2002/3	2003/4	2004/5	2005/6	2006/7
National	*Max. class size Grades K-3 1:20 Grades 4-6 1:30*	**1:33**	**1:34**	**1:35**	**1:34**	**1:34**	**1:28**	**1:26**
Primary			**1:30**	**1:36**	**1:35**	**1:35**	**1:28**	**1:27**
Primary & Junior High (Gds 1-6)			**1:29**	**1:31**	**1:31**	**1:31**	**1:30**	**1:26**
All Age Schools (Gds 1-6)			**1:35**	**1:32**	**1:31**	**1:31**	**1:25**	**1:25**

Source: Ministry of Education and Youth

Whereas the above table shows the average across the system, the Ministry of Education also produces data that show the distribution on the ground (Table 3.25). Again an improvement is seen over recent years. Whereas in 2002/3 1 out of every 3 students was trying to learn in a situation where the teacher:student ratio was anywhere from 1 teacher to 36 students to 1 teacher to 50 students (and more), in 2006/7 this applied to only 1 out of every 8 students.

Tracking Indicator ***Breakdown of teacher/student ratio in state sector primary schools***

Table 3.25 **Distribution of Teacher/Student ratio in state sector primary schools**

No. of Students per Teacher	2002/3	2003/4	2004/5	2005/6	2006/7
20 or less students to one teacher	8.6%	8.4%	8.2%	12.4%	12.7%
21-34 students per teacher	52.3%	52.1%	60.5%	64.3%	70.1%
35 students per teacher	4.8%	5.2%	5.6%	6.1%	3.8%
36-50 students per teacher	33.0%	32.9%	24.9%	16.5%	12.4%
Over 50 students per teacher	1.4%	1.4%	0.8%	0.8%	1%

Source: Ministry of Education and Youth

Gap between the attainment of boys and girls

The difference between male and female performance throughout the education system is an ongoing concern. At the primary school level, male students' underachievement in literacy and their poor attendance continue to be areas of preoccupation. While girls also perform below age and grade levels, boys lag further behind (Management Systems International, 2005).[10]

One response has been to separate boys and girls in the classroom. An experiment with single-sex classrooms in a coeducational school has yielded positive academic and behavioural results at the rural Polly Ground Primary School and is now being replicated by other schools in the area (Box 3.13).

10 Management Systems International. 2005. A Gender Analysis of the Educational Achievement of Boys and Girls in the Jamaican Educational System. Prepared for USAID/Jamaica. Washington D.C.: Management Systems International.

Box 3.13

Do girls and boys perform better in single-sex classrooms? The case of Polly Ground Primary School

There is a growing body of research that shows students sometimes perform better in single-sex learning environments and the experience of the Polly Ground Primary School in rural St. Catherine supports this. In response to the performance gap between male and female pupils, the school's staff checked the research on this problem and decided in 2004 to experiment with separating boys and girls in grade six. This bold move has resulted in improved academic performance among both boys and girls, and better behaviour among boys in particular.

As part of the experiment, boys and girls were assigned to separate classes with teachers of their sex. How the children were taught changed. Popular and classical music (e.g. Bob Marley and Mozart) played in the background during the boys' classes, for example, because boys tend to have a shorter concentration span and they respond well to music. Drama, poetry, videos, and multimedia systems were used with the girls, because in the teachers' experience they love using these media.

Along with these innovations, the school introduced a range of complementary programmes. These included setting up a learning centre, developing community outreach programs, introducing workshops for teachers, and holding regular parent conferences. The school also became part of the joint US Agency for International Development /Government of Jamaica New Horizons for Primary Schools project, which set out to increase levels of literacy and numeracy of students in 72 selected primary schools throughout the island.

These changes bore fruit as early as 2005. The school saw significant improvements in the boys' and girls' scores in that year's Grade Six Achievement Test (GSAT). Based on this accomplishment, the staff and principal decided to continue the programme and introduce it at grade 1. The 2006 GSAT results did not disappoint. The school's top ten places were shared equally between the boys and girls, with boys averaging 86.4% and the girls averaging 86.6%. These scores compare very favourably with the 2006 national average scores between 51%-55% and fit in the prep school rather than the primary school range (Table 3.21 above).

There have been other changes in the students as a result of the experiment. During the 2004/5 academic year, for example, the boys behaved better than the girls did, and where girls used to dominate in student leadership, boys are now emerging as leaders and participate more enthusiastically in school and class activities. Teachers have also noticed that before the students were separated, more girls had their textbooks than boys did, but since the separation the boys now have their books in class as well.

The pupils seem to appreciate these innovations and value being taught by teachers of their sex. According to one sixth grade boy, "[when you have] all boys in class, he [the teacher] can talk with us, share with us and be friends with us". A sixth grade girl finds female teachers more sympathetic, "Female teachers [are] not that harsh, [they] understand our situation; [there are] certain things that we cannot discuss with males, [but] we can discuss with females". The students also report improved concentration in a same sex environment. According to one boy, he can "concentrate more without girls". His sentiments are echoed by girls in his cohort who feel they "think better, do work better," and are "more comfortable".

So significant has Polly Ground's achievement been that the nearby schools of Linstead Primary and Junior High, McGrath High, and Guys Hill Primary have been inspired to introduce similar changes. And the Ministry of Education, which was not supportive of the innovation at the beginning, now recognises the difference that the experiment has made.

The Polly Ground Primary School model shows that it is possible to have the benefits of a single-sex learning environment in a co-educational school by separating pupils during teaching time. This is a less costly alternative to establishing same-sex schools and may also have healthier social consequences than separating the sexes completely.

Source: Research undertaken by Danielle Fearon, JASPEV Research Assistant

Another experiment was tried at the St. Peter Claver Primary School in Kingston. Here boys and girls were separated for one year (grade four) in one subject area (Science) to ascertain if there would be any differences in their academic performance. At the end of the school year, both sexes were performing equally well and were brought back together for classes. In this case however the entire school was involved in a much broader experiment called "Change from Within" (Box 3.14). As its story shows, a depressed inner city school, existing in a community subjected to frequent violence, found a way to overcome and give its children, parents and staff the motivation to shine.

Good Practice

Box 3.14

Change from Within at the St Peter Claver Primary School

You never know what impact your words will have. "Miss, can I be frank?" a young girl asked Mrs. Margaret Brisset Bolt, the newly appointed principal of the St. Peter Claver Primary School, who encouraged student openness. The analytic young student continued, "If everyday yuh come school teacher tell yuh seh yuh wutless and yuh nah go come to nutten, an wen yuh go home yuh madda tell yuh seh yuh nah go amount to nutten an yuh soon breed, weh yuh a do common entrance fah?"

The St. Peter Claver Primary School in Kingston was chosen to launch the Change From Within Programme in 1992 partly through the power of these words. The school is one of the success stories of the programme, which is grounded in the philosophy that to bring about change, one has to modify one's values and attitudes. In other words, the change has to come from within.

Prior to the start of the programme there was little to set this inner-city school apart from other troubled schools. Students were under-performing and their morale and self-esteem were low. Their teachers' morale was also low and their parents had little enthusiasm for the school. The school's location in an area rife with gang-related activity did nothing to help its reputation and flagging morale. In fact, the gang feuds spilled over into the classrooms: students from the communities of the opposing gangs would not sit with each other. Besides being physically run down, the school was used as a shelter by community members who had little or no regard for it or its facilities. This was the state of play until the young girl's words made Mrs. Brisset Bolt determined to find a way to improve the school and student morale.

The *Change from Within* programme, initiated by Sir Phillip Sherlock and others, is a multi-faceted methodology for transformation that shares responsibility among a school's stakeholders. Teachers, students, parents, and the community are targeted through the programme and empowered to have their say and play a role in making things different. It encourages creative problem solving and finding new ways to do old things. Thirty primary and secondary schools are part of the programme. The programme found that "Whenever positive changes were underway, the schools were headed by Principals with vision, able to see beyond the day to day management of problems and to believe in the capacity of the children to change." (Chevannes, 2004).

Under Mrs. Brisset Bolt's leadership the programme has been a success for St. Peter Claver Primary and the surrounding community. The students are positive, self-assured and confident - on and off the school premises and the school boasts an environment in which students are disciplined and where disorderly behaviour is not tolerated.

The students' academic performance has surpassed all the other 15 schools in their territory and mirrors that of students in private preparatory schools. Scores on the Grade 4 Literacy Test are at the top in their territory, with average 89% mastery rates literacy achieved, compared to the national average of 60%-65% (Table 3.11 above). The school produced the top boy in the 2006 GSAT as well as the top boy for the region in 2004. The students who fail to achieve are the ones who need special help.

When the programme first began the boys were not performing well and were consistently placed in the lower streamed classes. The school stopped streaming students and efforts were made to ensure that boys were equally represented in all areas of academic and extra curricular school life. These measures have all helped to raise the boys' self esteem and consequently their performance.

A gender experiment undertaken as part of the programme separated boys and girls for one year (grade four) in one subject area (Science) to ascertain if there would be any difference in their academic performance. There was. At the end of the school year, both sexes were performing equally well and were brought back together in co-ed classes.

Another benefit of the *Change from Within* programme has been greater empowerment of teachers who participate actively in decision-making and now display a high level of commitment to the school and students. For example, teachers are at school from 6.30 each morning until 5.00 in the afternoon and some even show up on Saturdays and Sundays. St. Peter Claver Primary also enjoys a high level of support from parents, its Board and community members (see p. 17 above).

Since the programme was introduced, violence in the surrounding community has declined and community members display greater levels of interest in the school. The school has been integrated into the fabric of community life. It is used to host events in the community and community members can access counselling services through the school.

Source: Research by Danielle Fearon, JASPEV Research Assistant

Teaching Assistants

In light of the still high number of students per teacher, the quality of education could be improved by using teaching assistants in primary schools. Even in a cramped environment, an assigned assistant teacher in each class could make a difference to the level of instruction and individualised attention available to pupils, with assistants playing a useful role in providing additional in-class reading and maths support. The Task Force on Educational Reform recommended that teachers' colleges commence training approximately 5,000 Teachers' Aides over the medium term (by March 2007).

What is not being advocated is the use of assistants who are compensated on a lower scale than qualified teachers to address the problems of class size, but rather the introduction of a practical scheme aimed at providing teachers and pupils extra support to address in the words of the Task Force "Chronic Underachievement of the Education System" (p. 84). Another benefit of such a scheme is that it would give individuals who are planning to enter the teaching profession an opportunity to gain hands-on experience in the classroom prior to formal training. Incentives such as partial tuition-fee waivers at accredited teacher training institutions could be built into the scheme, which could be linked to the National Youth Service programme.

In some private preparatory schools and state-run primary school parents volunteer to provide remedial reading support to students. This is a practice that should be strengthened where it exists and encouraged where it does not.

Background and security checks

Background checks are obligatory for all people who work in the early childhood sector, whether they do so on a voluntary or paid basis in order to ensure the children's safety and protect them from abuse. This practice should be extended to the entire educational system.

5. CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Automatic screening for learning difficulties

The Ministry of Education is in the early stages of elaborating a policy for special children including gifted children. A joint Ministry of Education - Ministry of Health initiative to screen all children entering primary schools is slated to get off the ground by ____. Screening will be integrated into the Grade One Readiness Inventory to determine if students are ready to be taught in the standard way. As the joint Ministry of Education - Ministry of Health screening initiative gets off the ground it will be important to ensure that there are adequate facilities and personnel to provide the required assistance to all children whose needs have been uncovered. There are now only two centres that specialise in assessing special needs – the Mico College Child Assessment and Research in Education Centre in Kingston and the Sam Sharpe Teachers College in Montego Bay. Each region needs to have at least one such centre.

> Future National Progress Reports will track the number students screened and number of those who receive help.

Children with special needs

The international estimate of children with special needs is 10% of the child population. Table 3.26 indicates that our educational system is barely scratching the surface since 10% of the primary school population would be around 20,000 children.

Tracking Indicator ***Assistance to children at primary level with special needs***

Table 3.26 No. of children with learning difficulties receiving assistance in special schools or in special education units in regular schools.

Indicator	Target	2005/6
Total no. children at primary level with learning difficulties receiving assistance:		**1,760**
• in special schools		860
• in special education units in regular schools		357
• in centre or home-based programmes		543

Source: Ministry of Education and Youth

Children with behavioural problems

Although there is a strong link between behavioural problems and learning disabilities, the soon-to-be-introduced grade one screening procedure will not include diagnostics for emotional difficulties. More and more children are experiencing trauma and, as with learning difficulties, it is important for emotional problems that require professional intervention to be identified and dealt with as early as possible. There are currently very few provisions for dealing with severely traumatised students, whose problems require professional skills beyond those of a guidance counsellor. The Executive Chairman of the Early Childhood Commission, Professor Maureen Samms-Vaughan, has urged schools to address children's behavioural and emotional health: "Too many of our schools focus on IQ and learning school subjects without thinking about children's emotional health…To me this doesn't make logical sense because when we look at what teachers have reported as their main problems in the classroom over the years, we find that things have changed dramatically." She noted that from chewing gum and talking in class as the main problems in the 60s, today they are child-on-child violence, sexual abuse, attacks on teachers by students and parents, guns and gangs in school. "When our children arrive at school in the mornings many of them leave situations where their emotional health has been affected." She said that by the time children are six years old, four out of 10 parents report no relationship with each other (Gleaner, May 2007).

SUB GOAL 3
Secondary school access, attendance and learning outcomes

Key Issues	Indicators	Case study
1. EXTERNAL EXAMINATIONS	• Achievement in CSEC English Language • Achievement in CSEC Maths • No. & % of students leaving high school qualified to enter tertiary institutions	
2. QUALITY a. Teacher training b. Class Size and Teacher/student ratio c. Shortage of qualified teachers	• Trained Teachers • Teacher:Student ratio	Transforming Education: Technical/Vocational Rationalisation project

Positive developments

In 2005 the Government of Jamaica set the national target of universal secondary education by 2015. This is one area where it has gone beyond the internationally agreed targets of the Millennium Development Goals to set a target that is consistent with the national situation.[11]

1. External examinations

CSEC performance

The performance of Jamaican students on Caribbean Secondary Examinations Council (CSEC)[12] exams continues be low. For the two critical matriculation subjects, English Language and Mathematics, just over half (56%) of the eligible cohort[13] took English Language in 2006 and of these, half (51%) passed (Table 3.27). Less than half of the eligible cohort took Mathematics (47%) and of these just over a third (36%) passed (Table 3.28). So looking at the eligible cohort in terms of passes, almost three students out of four (72%) leave secondary school without a pass in English Language, and over four students out of five (83%) leave without a pass in Mathematics - basic expected outcomes of secondary level education.

As mentioned earlier, the outcome of the lack of equity in Jamaica's secondary education system is most evident in the levels of achievement in this examination. Performance at the traditional high schools is better than at technical high schools and far surpasses that of the upgraded schools. In 2006, while 62% of the eligible cohort in traditional high schools passed English Language and 41% passed Mathematics, respective passes of their eligible counterparts in technical high schools were 31% and 10%, and in upgraded high schools, respective passes were just 11% and 4%. Yet the students at the upgraded high schools represent over half (56%) of the secondary level school population, almost 22,000 in 2006 alone (Tables 3.27 and 3.28). In 2006 27,915 ended school without matriculating in English Language and 32,457 ended without matriculating in Maths.

11 Millennium Development Goal 2 is to achieve universal primary education. Many Caribbean and middle income developing countries where this has already been accomplished are using the international framework to raise the bar and work towards universal secondary education.

12 Formerly called the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC).

13 All the students in Grade 11 in all schools.

Table 3.27 Achievement in CXC/CSEC English Language 2001-2006 by school type and by gender in 2006

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	
JAMAICA TOTAL:							
Total Eligible Cohort	36,572	36,830	36,491	35,720	36,969	39,068	F: 51% M: 49%
Total Entries	17,970	19,117	20,351	18,633	19,586	21,783	
% Total Eligible Cohort entered	**49%**	**52%**	**56%**	**52%**	**53%**	**56%**	**F: 66% M: 45%**
Total Awards	10,379	10,236	9,236	7,603	11,893	11,123	
% of Total Passes: Eligible Cohort	**28%**	**28%**	**25%**	**21%**	**32%**	**28%**	**F: 38% M: 19%**
% of Total Passes: Entries	58%	54%	45%	41%	61%	51%	F: 57% M: 42%
Traditional High Schools							
Eligible Cohort	12,324	12,256	11,741	11,544	12,393	12,841	F: 58% M: 42%
Entries	9,825	9,909	9,974	9,686	10,751	11,209	
% Eligible Cohort entered	**80%**	**81%**	**85%**	**84%**	**87%**	**87%**	**F: 90% M: 83%**
Total Awards	7,227	7,005	6,461	5,292	8,336	7,939	
% of Passes: Eligible Cohort	**59%**	**57%**	**55%**	**46%**	**67%**	**62%**	**F: 71% M: 50%**
% of Passes: Entries	74%	71%	65%	55%	78%	71%	F: 79% M: 59%
Technical High Schools							
Eligible Cohort	3,933	4,292	4,312	4,826	4,646	4,526	F: 48% M: 52%
Entries	2,760	2,855	2,972	2,959	2,358	2,730	
% of Eligible Cohort entered	**70%**	**67%**	**69%**	**61%**	**55%**	**60%**	**F: 69% M: 52%**
Awards	1,101	1,046	895	894	1,042	846	
% of Passes: Eligible Cohort	**28%**	**24%**	**21%**	**19%**	**22%**	**19%**	**F: 26% M: 12%**
% of Passes: Entries	40%	37%	30%	30%	44%	31%	F: 37% M: 23%
Upgraded High Schools							
Eligible Cohort	20,315	20,282	20,438	19,350	19,930	21,698	F: 48% M: 52%
Entries	5,385	6,353	7,405	5,988	6,477	7,844	
% Eligible Cohort entered	**27%**	**31%**	**36%**	**31%**	**32%**	**36%**	**F: 48% M: 25%**
Awards	2,051	2,185	1,880	1,417	2,515	2,338	
% of Passes: Eligible Cohort	**10%**	**11%**	**9%**	**7%**	**13%**	**11%**	**F: 17% M: 5%**
% of Passes: Entries	38%	34%	25%	24%	39%	30%	F: 34% M: 21%

Source: Compiled from data supplied by National Council of Education Nos do not reflect students who sit subject in Gd 10.

Table 3.28 Achievement in CXC/CSEC Mathematics 2001-2006 by school type and by gender in 2006

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	
JAMAICA TOTAL							
Total Eligible Cohort	36,560	36,830	39,491	35,720	36,969	39,038	F: 51% M: 49%
Total Entries	16,376	16,176	16,795	15,362	15,635	18,153	
% of Total Eligible Cohort entered	**45%**	**44%**	**43%**	**43%**	**42%**	**47%**	**F: 53% M: 39%**
Total Awards	4,741	5,849	6,086	3,609	6,195	6,581	
% Total Passes: Eligible Cohort	**13%**	**16%**	**15%**	**10%**	**17%**	**17%**	**F:19% M:15%**
% Total Passes: Students Entered	29%	36%	36%	23%	40%	36%	F:36% M:37%
Traditional High Schools							
Eligible Cohort	12,324	12,256	11,741	11,544	12,393	12,814	F:58% M:42%
Entries	9,103	8,869	8,885	8,437	9,445	10,414	
% of Eligible Cohort entered	**74%**	**72%**	**76%**	**73%**	**76%**	**81%**	**F:84% M:78%**
Total Awards	3,616	4,374	4,490	2,648	4,843	5,225	
% Passes: Eligible Cohort	**29%**	**36%**	**38%**	**23%**	**39%**	**41%**	**F:42% M:39%**
% Passes: Students Entered	40%	49%	51%	31%	51%	50%	F:50% M:50%
Technical High Schools							
Eligible Cohort	3,933	4,292	4,312	4,826	4,646	4,526	F: 48% M: 52%
Entries	2,072	2,426	2,354	2,379	1,584	1,905	
% of Eligible Cohort entered	**52%**	**57%**	**56%**	**55%**	**34%**	**42%**	**F:69% M:52%**
Awards	535	638	629	442	503	431	
% Passes: Eligible Cohort	**14%**	**15%**	**15%**	**9%**	**11%**	**10%**	**F:26% M:12%**
% Passes: Students entered	26%	26%	27%	19%	32%	23%	F:37% M:23%
Upgraded High Schools							
Eligible Cohort	20,303	20,282	20,438	19,350	19,930	21,698	F: 48% M: 52%
Entries	5,201	4,881	5,556	4,546	4,606	5,834	
% of Eligible Cohort entered	**26%**	**24%**	**27%**	**23%**	**23%**	**27%**	**F:33% M:21%**
Awards	590	837	967	519	849	925	
% Passes: Eligible Cohort	**3%**	**4%**	**5%**	**3%**	**4%**	**4%**	**F: 5% M: 4%**
% Passes: Students Entered	11%	17%	17%	11%	18%	16%	F:14% M:19%

Source: Compiled from data supplied by National Council of Education Nos. do not reflect students who sit subject in Gd 10.

Differential gender achievement remains a continuing concern with boys performing well below girls in English Language although much less so in Mathematics in 2006 (the only year in which data is differentiated by gender in this Report).

Matriculation for tertiary education, further training and the world of work

Educational attainment is an important factor in the school to work transition and there are specific matriculation requirements for tertiary education. In the past this requirement was four CXCs at Grades 1-3 of which one had to

be English Language and the other Mathematics. The bar has now been raised to five subjects with the same two compulsory components. Only a minority of school leavers attain this level. While there is movement forward, it is far too slow and emphasises the need for transformation that will lay the basis for rapid forward leaps.

Table 3.29 Percentage and no. of students leaving high school qualified to enter tertiary institutions

	2000/1	2001/2	2002/3	2003/4	2004/5	2005/6	2006/7
% of students	**10%**		**11%**				**20%**
Number of students	**3,494**		**3,980**				**7,901**

The Caribbean Certificate of Secondary Level Competence

At this point in time the CSEC (formerly called CXC) exams are considered appropriate for 30-40% of the eligible cohort, which raises questions about the suitability of the examination to the Jamaican context and the extent to which the education system is preparing students for this external qualification.

The Ministry of Education intends to introduce the Caribbean Certificate of Secondary Level Competence during the 2007/08 academic year. This Caribbean-wide qualification will be offered in addition to the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) and is intended to give students an opportunity to gain an alternative secondary qualification.

With the introduction of a secondary school qualification offered at a lower level than the CSEC, there is a danger of institutionalising a two-tiered system that will perpetuate elitism and attract stigma. Efforts should focus on ensuring that this Caribbean-wide benchmark for secondary school attainment is appropriate to all students and reflects a level of achievement that prepares students equally for further formal study or training or entry into the work force. Students wishing to go on to further study would prepare for the CSEC and other comparable external examinations. Critical to avoiding any stigmatisation is its acceptance by Government offices and other employers for certain entry points in the working world.

2. QUALITY

Trained Teachers

While there has been an increase in trained teachers in some sections of the secondary school system, noticeably among teachers in All Age Schools at the Grades 7-9 level (Table 3.30), overall it has not matched the rate or levels among primary school teachers (Table 3.23). In Secondary High Schools, which in 2005/6 employed 76% of the 12,656 teachers at the secondary level, there has only been a slight increase over the last six years.

Tracking Indicator ***Trained Teachers at Secondary Level (Grades 7-11)***

Table 3.30 Percentage of all teachers in Grades 7-11 that are trained

School type	Target	2000/1	2001/2	2002/3	2003/4	2004/5	2005/6	2006/7
Secondary High	*All teachers trained and with a first degree by 2010*	79% F:83% M:70%	**79%** F:83% M:70%	**78%** F:83% M:69%	79% F:83% M:70%	79% F:83% M:69%	82% F:85% M:75%	**82%**
Technical & Agric. High		**78%** F:83% M:72%	**78%** F:83% M:71%	**76%** F:82% M:68%	**78%** F:83% M:70%	**81%** F:86% M:71%	**80%** F:86% M:69%	**79%**
Primary/ Junior Hgh (Gds 7-9)		84% F:88% M:71%	**83%** F:86% M:76%	**83%** F:86% M:76%	86% F:89% M:81%	87% F:89% M:80%	87% F:89% M:83%	**87%**
All Age (Gds 7-9)		**76%** F:81% M:68%	**78%** F:82% M:72%	**81%** F:86% M:73%	86% F:89% M:81%	87% F:90% M:78%	88% F:89% M:85%	**86%**

Source: Ministry of Education and Youth

Where there has been a signficant increase in qualification has been at the trained graduate level and quite dramatic increases since 2000/1 can be seen in all types, with the highest levels (over 1 in 3 teachers – 1 in 4 men and approaching 1 in 2 women) at the secondary high level (Table 3.31). It is questionable whether the Ministry's laudable target of all teachers trained and with a first degree by 2010 is within the capacity of the tertiary system at this point.

Tracking Indicator ***Trained Graduate Teachers at Secondary Level (Grades 7-11)***

Table 3.31 Percentage of all teachers in Grades 7-11 that are trained *and* have a degree

School type	Target	2000/1	2001/2	2002/3	2003/4	2004/5	2005/6	2006/7
Secondary High	*All teachers trained and with a first degree by 2010*	**24%** F:29% M:14%	**25%** F:30% M:15%	**23%** F:34% M:17%	**30%** F:36% M:18%	**35%** F:42% M:20%	**37%** F:44% M:24%	**37%**
Technical & Agric. High		**21%** F:26% M:13%	**19%** F:25% M:11%	**23%** F:30% M:13%	**23%** F:30% M:13%	**33%** F:41% M:21%	**33%** F:39% M:23%	**33%**
Primary/ Jun. High (Gds 7-9)		**13%** F:14% M:8%	**12%** F:14% M:8%	**18%** F:19% M:11%	**23%** F:25% M:17%	**28%** F:31% M:19%	**30%** F:33% M:21%	**31%**
All Age (Gds 7-9)		**14%** F:15% M:12%	**14%** F:14% M:12%	**15%** F:16% M:14%	**23%** F:25% M:21%	**21%** F:22% M:20%	**25%** F:25% M:25%	**26%**

Source: Ministry of Education and Youth

Good Practice

Box 3.15
Revolving Loan Fund for Teachers

A $500m revolving loan fund to assist teachers to take a Bachelor's degree or a post-graduate Diploma in Education was launched in May 2007. Four fifths of this fund has come from Government and one fifth from a private sector source, Capital and Credit Merchant Bank, who will administer the fund. Over 17,000 of the island's 30,000 teachers do not presently have a degree although most at primary and secondary level are college trained teachers. Interest rates are low at 7¾% on the reducing balance. Teachers who are studying part-time or are on no-pay study leave can access up to 90% of their fees, while teachers on paid study leave can access up to 50%. In establishing this fund the Government is implementing one of the recommendations of the Task Force on Education.

Class Size and Teacher:Student ratio

Class size is one of the factors that influences student learning and achievement, with smaller classes linked to better outcomes. The Task Force on Educational Reform has recommended a maximum class size of 25 pupils at the secondary school level. Judging by the proxy data for number of students per teacher this target seems to have been reached and sustained (Table 3.32). However Table 3.15 (p. 20) shows that to maintain this for the required expansion is an expensive option.

Tracking Indicator ***Teacher:Student Ratio***

Table 3.32 Number of Students per Teacher at Secondary Level

	Targets	2000/1	2001/2	2002/3	2003/4	2004/5	2005/6
Teacher: Student Ratio (No. of students)	Max. class size	**1:19 (227,056)**	**1:20 (226,552)**	**1:20 (231,248)**	**1:20 (236,949)**	**1:19 (237,553)**	**1:19 (236,410)**
All Age: Grades 7-9/10	1:25	1:19	1:20	1:22	1:19	1:16	1:15
Primary & Jun. High: Gds 7-10/11		1:19	1:21	1:22	1:21	1:18	1:18
Secondary High		1:19	1:20	1:20	1:20	1:20	1:19
Technical High		1:17	1:19	1:18	1:18	1:17	1:17
Agricultural High		1:9	1:10	1:12	1:8	1:7	1:7

Source: Ministry of Education and Youth

While class size is important, it is not the only factor that influences the schooling experience. The leadership of the principal, the competency and enthusiasm of teachers and the interpersonal relations between students and teachers and among students are all critically important (see Boxes 3.14 & 3.15). Also vital, once these components are in place, are the learning resources available and the school's physical facilities.

Participants in a 2004 Local Forum on education convened by JASPEV in Brown's Town, St. Ann reiterated students' desire for the use of more creative and innovative teaching methods and more technological aids, as well as for adequate physical facilities and resource materials. The Forum also called for a more student-centred approach that encourages teacher- student dialogue, greater freedom in oral and written expression, and individual effort. The matter of building student's self esteem was considered important, as were smaller class sizes that support individualised attention for students (Cabinet Office/JASPEV, 2006). These recommendations mirror those made by the 2004 Task Force on Educational Reform in Jamaica.

Shortage of Qualified Teachers in Science and other Subjects

The scarcity of qualified teachers, in areas such as maths and science in particular, has implications not only for the options available to individual students at the secondary school level and beyond, but also more generally for the country's skill base and competitiveness. The technical rationalisation project has responded to this challenge for technical and vocational subjects (Box 3.16). Another way of overcoming this problem could be through distance learning that links students and teachers through tele-conferencing or the Internet. This is part of the target for e-learning, a collaborative project between the Ministries of Industry, Technology, Energy & Commerce and Education & Youth.

Box 3.16

Transforming Education: Technical/vocational rationalisation project

The Technical/Vocational Rationalisation Project, under which each student has to take at least one echnical/vocational subject, has been run as a pilot for the last seven years. It is designed as a complement to the CSEC to fill a number of gaps:

1. It offers a work-based certification. The CSEC subjects offered at technical proficiency level do not reflect the competencies that employment requires of persons for various occupations.
2. A large majority (85%) of Grade 11 students indicate a desire to make the transition from school to work, even though many may later pursue tertiary studies.
3. The current system does not make specific provision for students at the terminal grade to leave school with work-based certification. This project provides this certification.

The Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Project was established in 1999 as a joint venture between the Ministry of Education and Youth and the HEART Trust/NTA. Seventeen secondary schools arranged in five clusters in St. Elizabeth and Westmoreland are in the pilot. The project was evaluated by external evaluators between 2005/6. The objectives of the project included:

- Establishing high class technical vocational education and training laboratories or centres of excellence to facilitate better articulation with programmes offered by the National Training Agency (NTA). The offering of Level 1 programmes in secondary schools would allow the NTA academies and other TVET institutions to focus on delivery of programmes at higher levels

- Ending the age-old practice of relegating to the technical/vocational areas those students perceived as not being able to manage the academic subjects (thereby stigmatising these skills)

- Further putting an end to the stereotyping of certain occupational trades by insisting that appropriate numeric and language skills be a pre-requisite for entry to grade 10 and 11 programmes.

Box 3.16 *(cont'd)*

Transforming Education: Technical/vocational rationalisation project

• To attract and retain quality instructors by establishing well-equipped training laboratories and providing them with skills and upgrading opportunities.

The model allows for an array of 12 high quality labs offering 10 subject areas located in three schools in a cluster. Each school has four labs and is known as a Centre of Excellence. Schools decommissioning poor laboratory facilities are to gain new classrooms. By utilising the principle of shared resources students can access all the labs within a cluster. For the cluster to work efficiently an integrated Cluster Timetable and an efficient Shuttle Bus Service are two indispensable cluster requirements. The Evaluation Report indicated that both elements worked well in the pilot with the main problems being timetabling shift schools and delays from student lunch purchasing. There was also reluctance on the part of schools to decommission labs although the space utilization, where the cluster concept was operational, was excellent.

The National Council of Education was asked by the Minister of Education to recommend the next critical steps in ensuring that the findings from the evaluation are incorporated into the transformation thrust. The following are their recommendations:

1. The Centres of Excellence be introduced in all secondary schools as a resource optimization device
2. The Governance machinery of public schools be amended to facilitate free movement of students and teachers across schools within a cluster
3. A standard parent-school contract be developed and implemented to secure the agreement of parents re. the movement of their children from one location to another
4. The Task Force recommendation to abolish the shift system be expedited to ensure that the issues of timetabling encountered during the pilot be minimised.

With regard to financing, the present capital costs of J$40m be year are met by HEART Trust/NTA and recurrent costs by the MOEY. According to the Evaluation Report the cost of the national rollout could approximate J$2.5 billion for the establishing of laboratories and J$128m to acquire approximately 40 buses. The Report noted that this does not include the significant costs of training key administrators, instructors and counsellors nor the recurrent facility and transport maintenance costs.

The National Council of Education also noted that any attempt to embark on a national rollout must be tempered by the following observation from the Task Force Report: "*We are concerned that a significant sector of the secondary system did not participate and was not mandated to implement this programme in their institutions, despite the huge amount of public funds invested. Also, there needs to be a greater degree of coherence between the common curriculum[1] and the Grade 10 and 11 programme, which terminates in the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC). In addition, a number of subjects in the programme are seen as lacking in depth and there are some inexplicable overlaps and gaps e.g. inadequate content in ROSE Social Studies to meet the requirements of History and Geography CSEC.*"

Source: Compiled from National Council of Education's "Review of the Evaluation of the Technical/Vocational Rationalization Project", 2006.

1 ROSE Grades 7-9

SUB-GOAL 4
Post secondary access to opportunities for learning and skills development, and outcomes

Key Issues	Indicators	Notes
1. LABOUR MARKET FORECASTING		
2. CAREER GUIDANCE	• Average length of job search	• Note on Cultural Industries & the Education System
3. ACCESS AND COST	• Enrolment in post-secondary HEART programmes • No. of graduates by level in post-secondary HEART programmes • Enrolment in post-secondary HEART programmes by subject area • Enrolment in selected tertiary institutions • No. of graduates from selected tertiary institutions	
4. REGISTRATION/ ACCREDITATION		• Note on difference between Registration and Accreditation
5. LIFE-LONG LEARNING CONTINUAL EDUCATION	• Enrolment in HISEP • Enrolment in Literacy Programmes	

Positive developments

Positive developments in the post-secondary/tertiary sector include the expansion of the HEART programme and the establishment of a consortium of teacher training colleges that will begin offering degrees through fully articulated programmes by 20__.

At the recommendation of the Task Force on Educational Reform, a Post-Secondary/Tertiary Commission that will be convened by _____. One of the first tasks of this group will be to prepare a strategic plan for tertiary education.

Moving forward

A national plan for tertiary education is needed to focus post-secondary education and training to meet current and emerging needs. Components of a national agenda can be found in various reports and documents, such as the cross parliamentary agreement, the Task Force Report on Educational Reform, and the JASPEV Annual Progress Report 2003. But these separate pieces have not been brought together in a coherent and comprehensive framework. Without an overarching framework for tertiary education, the guiding philosophies of individual institutions do not dovetail into a clear national philosophy and there is no consensus on what the country wants its post-secondary and tertiary education sector to produce.

Much of the post-secondary education on offer now is geared towards developing technical skills to the exclusion of "soft" interpersonal skills such as mediation and negotiation, which are critical for success in the workplace. The sector is also disjointed with little articulation between the various programmes that are available, making it difficult to transfer credits between institutions and to move between different types of institutions. As a national agenda is developed, it will be important to take a consultative bottom-up approach to identifying needs and goals.

1. LABOUR MARKET FORECASTING

Understanding current labour market needs and anticipating future ones is critical for the success of a national tertiary education plan. Forecasting is a planning tool that allows for better matches to be made between labour market needs and tertiary training programmes. With the introduction of the Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME), there is now a regional context for labour market forecasting, in addition to the national one. Indeed, forecasting in the Jamaican context has to take into account the emigration trends and plan for this in training.

While there is a need for comprehensive national labour market forecasting through the Planning Institute of Jamaica, companies also need to be able to read and understand their sector's market signals so they too can identify where job growth will take place and what skills will be needed in the future.

Supply and demand for training in early childhood education illustrates the importance of labour market forecasting and manpower planning. The current emphasis on early childhood education has led to growing demand for training in this area in all parts of the island. But as a result of the Ministry of Education's project to rationalise teacher-training institutions some seven years ago, there is no early childhood teacher training available in the centre of the island.

2. CAREER GUIDANCE

Career guidance and counselling programmes are taking on increased importance all over the world and the education system needs to place much greater focus on this area. Navigating the range of career options and training programmes on offer can be daunting and a good career guidance and counselling system can lead to better course selection by students. Because the job-for-life model is no longer relevant in today's world, workers can expect to change jobs, and even careers, several times throughout their working life. Employers want flexible and autonomous workers with a solid basic education who can train on the job to meet needs as they emerge or change. In this context transferable life skills and analytical abilities are ever more important.

While career guidance is traditionally seen as having a place in the secondary school curriculum, it is actually appropriate at all levels. The ROSE curriculum includes an approach to career education that integrates it with a range of subjects, but due to capacity constraints this has not been implemented as intended and this aspect of the curriculum is not achieving what it set out to do.

Career guidance has to be perceived as part of the job of all teachers, not just guidance counsellors. Teachers need to be aware of labour market trends and teacher training colleges ought to integrate career education into their programmes. In general our secondary schools to do not exhibit any system wide approach to career guidance. It seems to depend on the individual school and the interest of principal and staff. Even simple guidance as to when to apply for entry to tertiary training at traditional institutions such as the teacher training colleges and the universities, is not readily available to Grade 10 and 11 students in some technical and upgraded high schools. Career guidance needs to explore a wide range of careers, point out the training and professional paths, encourage self-reflection on the part of students with regard to their own personality and goals, as well as set aside the periods in which to train students in practical skills like preparing resumes, writing a letter of application, taking an interview etc. Table 3.33hows the length of time it can take for a young person to find a job, especially if they are not moving from another job. Young people need to have resilience to deal with this period and career guidance could prepare them for this. The weeks after external exams are completed should not be so exclusively focused on one afternoon's graduation exercises as to omit important debriefing for entry into the job market, skills training or tertiary education.

Table 3.33 Average Length of Job Search among 15-24 years

	Not Working Youth	Employed Youth
15-17 years	11 months	7 months
18-20 years	1 year & 4 months	7 months
21-24 years	1 year & 10 months	9 months
Male	1 year & 6 months	8 months
Female	1 year & 6 months	9 months
Kingston/Montego Bay	1 year & 4 months	7 months
Parish Capitals/Major Towns	1 year & 5 months	8.months
Other Towns	1 year & 5 months	6 months
Rural Areas	1 year & 8 months	9 months
No exam passed	1 year & 7 months	9 months
CXC Basic/JCE/SSC	1 year & 8 months	7 months
CXC: 4 subjects	1 year & 4 months	9 months
CXC 5 subjects + or A-Level	1 year & 2 months	5 months
Degree	1 year & 2 months	6 months
Other	1 year & 4 months	7 months
Vocational training received	1 year & 6 months	7 months
No vocational training	1 year & 6 months	1 year & 6 months
Have work experience	1 year & 6 months	7 months
No work experience	1 year & 6 months	9 months
Low per capita household income	1 year & 6 months	8 months
Medium " " "	1 year & 5 months	6 months
High " " "	1 year & 3 months	6 months

Source: compiled from PIOJ/ILO 2006 *N.B Months have been rounded.*

Box 3.17

Cultural industries and the education system

Jamaica's culture, its music and dance in particular, has wielded a level of global influence that belies the country's size. But despite its great impact and even though cultural industries are growing rapidly world wide, Jamaica has not managed to take full advantage of its potential for growth and development in this sector. The education system could play an important role in building the country's capacity in this sector, but for this to happen a number of things are needed:

1. Linkages between social policy and national cultural policy have to be made and explicitly stated.
2. There has to be national consensus on the role of cultural education in the country's development.
3. Attitudes towards cultural industries have to change so that they are perceived as economic pursuits and legitimate professional career choices by parents and teachers.
4. Adequate financial and human resources have to be made available to cultural training institutions to develop and expand their practical programmes, research agendas and community outreach activities.

3. ACCESS AND COST

A key concern in the area of access to post-secondary training is affordability. Cost is increasingly affecting qualified students' ability to take up post-secondary training. Students are either unable to enrol in programmes because they are cannot cover the cost of tuition, books and other expenses, or in some cases, they are forced to interrupt their studies. For example, 100 second and third-year students were unable to return to the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts during the 2006/07 academic year because they were unable to cover their fees and expenses.

HEART/NTA is the major national institution assisting young people with the transition from school to work as well as offering training to existing workers and developing national certification standards for skills. It is a major achievement

in the education system and in the last four years has made a significant contribution to increasing access to affordable training by expanding its programmes. This expansion comes against the backdrop of HEART's overall goal of achieving one-half of the workforce being certified with a target of certifying about 400,000 workers by 2010. Enrolment in HEART training programmes has almost tripled in the last six years (Table 3.34 and Figure 3.4) and the organisation has changed the way in which it delivers it training programmes by offering 'unit competencies', making it easier for full time workers as well as for students who work or have other responsibilities to attend part time.

HEART Trust funded programmes are aimed at achieving the National Vocational Qualification-Jamaica (NVQ-J) awarded by the National Council on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (NCTVET). This award is recognized by the Association of Commonwealth Examining and Accrediting Bodies (ACEAB). The NVQ award is now being fashioned into a Caribbean Vocational Qualification or CVQ in cooperation with CARICOM and the Caribbean Association of National Training Agencies (CANTA.).

Tracking Indicator ***Access and achievement in post secondary HEART programmes***

Table 3.34 Enrolment in post secondary HEART programmes and no. of graduates by level

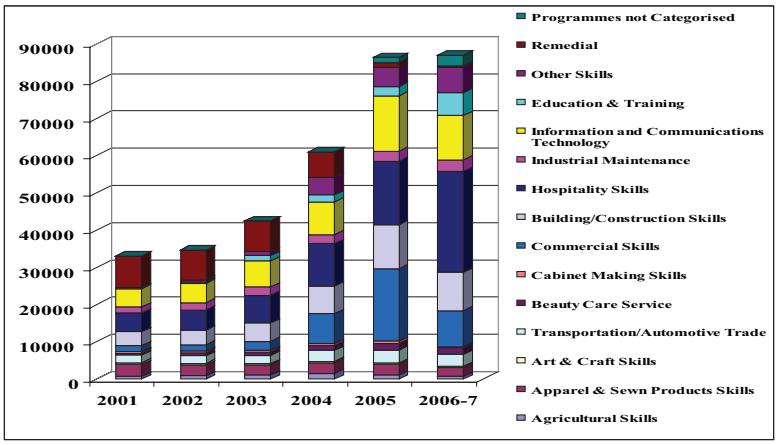
Programme	Targets 2006/07	2001/2	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07
Enrolment in Post-Secondary HEART Training Institutions	***97,682***	**33,647**	**35,249**	**42,490**	**61,040**	**85,854**	**87,037**
% Females	***55%***		**56%**	**57%**	**58%**	**55%**	**58%**
Level 1	*27,543*		17,486	15,656	20,078	27,596	32,724
Level 2	*14,001*		4,052	4,919	7,024	8,487	13,614
Level 3	*3,359*		2,682	3,117	3,850	2,430	2,560
Level 4 & Over	*4,248*		112	1,260	1,762	3,863	3,639
Unit Competency - Level 1			-	-	16,635	29,881	24,268
Unit Competency - Levels 2 - 4	*36,991*		-	-	2,321	2,855	3,732
Other Certifications	*11,540*		7,822	5,363	8,620	10,742	6,500
Continuing/Remedial Education			2,525	1,063	750	-	-
No of Certified graduates - NVQ and/or NCTVET certified	***74,040***		**22,657**	**28,233**	**46,401**	**63,048**	**67,275**
Level 1	*15,865*		12,148	10,210	11,165	14,757	18,826
Level 2	*11,686*		311	743	1,850	3,959	5,320
Level 3 & Above	*4,077*		2	118	1,722	2,210	2,396
Unit Competency - Levels 1 - 4	*32,336*		-	2,972	17,890	28,572	32,269
Other Certifications	*10,076*		10,196	14,190	13,774	13,550	8,464

N.B. Level 1 to Level 4 & above represents full NVQ-J Qualification programmes. Other certifications include NCTVET joint certifications and Non-NCTVET certificates issued by the training provider.

Source: PIOJ

HEART enrols both unattached youth and existing workers in institution-based training at 28 locations, on-the job-training in over 1,200 firms, workforce development programmes in firms, and community based training at over 100 locations, with a total 2006-07 enrolment of 87,037. Figure 3.4 shows both the growth in enrolment and the distribution of training across subject areas. Subject areas showing greatest growth are Hospitality, Information & Communications Technology, Commercial skills, Building/Construction Skills and Education and Training.

Figure 3.4 Enrolment in HEART Trust-NTA by subject area 2001-07.



Box 3.17

National Youth Service opening opportunities for young people **Good Practice**

Notwithstanding the cost issue, there are also other opportunities for post-secondary training. One such programme is the National Youth Service's Corps Programme, which provides short-term, intensive skills training and socialisation, followed by a six-month job placement, during which students receive a small stipend. The programme now has the capacity for approximately 2,000 young persons per year.

Another is the Jamaica Values and Attitudes Project for Tertiary Students (JAMVAT), also run by NYS. The government provides grants of up to 30% of students' tuition fees in exchange for 200 hours of public service .The programme was developed to help students who qualify for enrolment in a tertiary level institution but are unable to meet the full cost of their course. JAMVAT aims to ensure that all qualified students have access to tertiary education regardless of their economic status. It also aims to develop and strengthen the participating students' sense of civic responsibility while fostering positive values and attitudes towards community development and nation building (www.nysjamaica.org).

NEEDS TEXT TO INTRODUCE

Tracking Indicator ***Enrolment and certification in tertiary education***

Table 3.35 Enrolment and certification in selected tertiary institutions

Programme	Targets	2000/1	2001/2	2002/3	2003/4	2004/5	2005/6	2006/7
Enrolment rate (and number) in Tertiary courses in tertiary institutions (20-24 yr old popn.)	*2005 15% CARICOM Agreement*	10.4% (22,470) F: M:	12.4% (26,747) F: M:	12.8% (27,682) F: M:				
No. of graduates from tertiary institutions (UWI, UTECH & Teacher Training Colleges only)		3,953 F: 75% M: 25%						

Source: Compiled from data from MOEY

4. REGISTRATION AND ACCREDITATION OF INSTITUTIONS

The growing number of institutions offering post-secondary and tertiary level education and training programmes in Jamaica underscores the need for mandatory registration. The Jamaica Council for Adult Education's database includes 180 registered and accredited post-secondary training institutions in Kingston and St. Andrew alone. The database does not include community-based training institutions.

Box 3.18
The Difference between Registration and Accreditation

Registration indicates that an institution is a bona fide organisation operating in conformity within the laws of the country.
Accreditation is a process that validates a programme or course of study and is a mechanism for quality assurance. Accreditation indicates that the programme has been evaluated against a set of standard criteria by a peer review board of educators and other professionals, which in the case of Jamaica is the University Council of Jamaica. **An organisation can therefore be registered, but not provide accredited courses**.

5. LIFE-LONG LEARNING/CONTINUAL EDUCATION

The Government of Jamaica has set a target of 50% of citizens committed to lifelong learning by 2010.

Significant developments in this area during 2006 include the launch of the High School Equivalency Programme (HISEP) and the rebranding of the Jamaica Movement for the Advancement of Literacy (JAMAL) as the Jamaican Foundation for Lifelong Learning (JFLL). The introduction of the HISEP increases educational opportunities at the secondary level in Jamaica. Under the programme adults 18 years and older can gain a secondary level qualification and diploma through part-time study. HISEP is an important initiative towards meeting the Ministry of Education's goal of universal secondary education by 2015.

Box 3.19
The case of lifelong learning

Lifelong learning is one of the underlying principles of Jamaica's education policy. Lifelong learning is not just education and training beyond formal schooling, but an approach to learning founded in the belief that it is never too late or too early to learn. In fact the foundation for lifelong learning must be laid at the earliest stages of education. The benefits of lifelong learning to the individual include increased skills, competencies and self-confidence. Where the learning relates to an individual's job or livelihood it can translate into economic returns. The benefits to the country include a more competitive workforce in the global market. The adaptability that is required in order to keep up with rapid technological advances, improve efficiency and meet international standards can only be met through ongoing learning by the labour force.

The establishment of the JFLL marks a conceptual shift in how adult education is being delivered in order to keep apace of the changing context and changing needs. The emphasis has moved away from basic literacy to include a focus on providing learners ongoing opportunities to develop a range of skills and capacities.

Tracking Indicator ***Enrolment in continuing education programmes***

Table 3.36 Enrolment in continuing education programmes

Programme	Targets	2000/1	2001/2	2002/3	2003/4	2004/5	2005/6
Enrolment in Literacy Programmes		11,389 *(JAMAL)*	11,721 *(JAMAL)*	11,219 *(JAMAL)*	11,755 *(JAMAL)*		10,824 *(PIOJ)*
Enrolment in HISEP Programmes							250 *(PIOJ)*

The policy framework for lifelong learning needs to be expanded to include early childhood issues. Until lifelong learning is perceived as learning from infancy to adulthood, interventions will not reach their full potential. A draft lifelong learning policy has been prepared.

RECOMMENDATIONS

OVERALL

Public Sector, Private Sector, Civil Society

Short Term (FY 2008/9-2009/10)

1. The entire society - government, private sector and civil society – led by government should place a major focus on the serious functional literacy problems in the society and together develop some 'crash course' in improving functional literacy in the shortest possible time. Employing students between school and college, deploying one year volunteers in a national thrust, are some of the approaches that could be considered.

Public Sector

Short Term (FY 2008/9-2009/10)

2. Keep parents, communities, and the entire society informed on a regular basis, at least once a year, of the progress of plans for transforming the education system.

3. Find a dedicated pool of funds for Education Transformation, starting with the 'Education' Tax, as part of a thrust to prioritise major state funding to reduce as soon as possible the serious quality gaps between institutions in the education system.

4. Fast track plans for a child identification system or 'children's passport' as recommended by the Early Childhood Commission. Ensure that information on socio-economic status, family size, and geographic location are included.

5. Ensure that the citizenship education curriculum, as it develops, covers a wide range of topics from knowledge of human rights, to training young people in the stages of child development, to media literacy, to knowledge of the justice system etc. and that the appropriate curriculum is delivered from early childhood to the end of secondary level. Ensure multi-disciplinary content input from the widest cross sectors, public, private and civil society.

6. Fast track methods for collecting more comprehensive data on special needs children at all levels of the system.

7. Increase budgetary allocation to special education.

8. Introduce a policy that requires all schools to record and report violent incidents. Data should be recorded and reported by sex.

9. Undertake a review of government funded behaviour modification summer camps for youth.

10. Redefine the assignments of Education Officers to reduce their case loads and introduce more specific targets for performance management. Use Curriculum Support Officers to provide some of the clinical support required.

11. Continue the renewed focus on school supervision which is important for encouraging the successful implementation of good policies. Continuous support and encouragement is important for schools, teachers and parents.

12. Continue the focus on parent education and guide schools in finding creative ways to involve parents.

13. Introduce psychosometric testing for applicants for Guidance and Counselling training.

14. Fast track the thrust to have all persons in the position of school guidance counsellors trained for this specialist position.

15. Introduce psychosometric testing for all applicants to teacher training colleges.

16. Include in thrust to register teachers, measures for carrying out background security checks on all individuals who work with children at all levels in the educational system.

17. Include the area of innovation in teaching methodologies in performance assessment of teachers and principals.

18. Apply sanctions to schools (public and private) that do not send in the requisite data in a timely manner. Policy is guided by data and such educational institutions are impeding policy development.

Medium Term (FY 2008/9 – 2012/13)

19. Integrate psychological testing into screening for learning difficulties to identify any emotional and psychological conditions that may underlie behavioural problems.

20. Establish trauma response units that serve a cluster of schools. Units should include teams of professionals, including social workers and clinical psychologists.

21. Ensure that each of the six administrative regions has a centre that offers high quality special education services such as diagnosis, therapeutic intervention etc.

22. Provide scholarships and other incentives to encourage the development of professionals in the area of special education.

23. Explore creative ways of attracting and retaining male teachers to reduce the present gender imbalance at all levels of the system.

24. At the same time increase female mobility in the administrative ranks of the teaching profession.

25. Introduce a three to five year cycle for Panel Inspection Reviews, along with a requirement for reports to be submitted within three months of the review.

26. Implement a study on the factors that contribute to effective schools in Jamaica.

SUB-GOAL 1: EARLY CHILDHOOD COGNITIVE AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Public Sector
Short Term (FY 2008/9-2009/10)

27. Accelerate the establishment of procedures for further assessment of those children who are far behind in the readiness inventory and ensure the additional resource materials are in place.

28. Include the diagnosis of emotional factors in the design of grade one screening procedures.

Medium Term (FY 2008/9 – 2012/13)

29. Ensure all Kindergarten - Grade 2 physical facilities are appropriately reconfigured and fitted for early childhood learning and for the separation of these grades and their schedules from other primary grades.

SUB-GOAL 2: PRIMARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

Public Sector
Short Term (FY 2008-2010)

30. Continue the review of the GSAT and the impact of its present use as a placement exam and involve all stakeholders including parents in this review.
31. Develop public education around the importance of parents accessing their child's GSAT report.

32. Ensure that all primary schools are served by guidance counsellors.

33. Develop specialist teams including school psychologists and school social workers to serve clusters of primary schools.

34. Deploy master teachers to share best practices across the system through workshops.

35. Introduce a scheme that would facilitate the placement of one teaching assistant in each classroom in state-run primary schools. The Government should consider an expansion of the JAMVAT concept by which graduates from universities and for other tertiary graduates
could give 1-2 years of work as teaching assistants in return for a reduction in their student loan payments.

Medium Term (FY 2008/2013)

36. Eliminate the practice of pegging principals' salaries to the number of enrolled students and place a ceiling on the percentage of students that can be enrolled above a school's capacity. Base emoluments on performance evaluation.

SUB-GOAL 3: SECONDARY SCHOOL ACCESS, ATTENDANCE AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

Public Sector
Short Term (FY 2008/9-2009/10)

37. Implement a policy whereby school timetables cannot place gender restrictions on subject choice. Students should be positively encouraged to choose based on interest and aptitude, rather than in conformity with gender stereotypes.

38. Consider the possible negative implications, in the present educational environment, of establishing a two-tiered school leaving certification that may perpetuate elitism. Consider introducing a Caribbean-wide certificate/ benchmark for secondary school attainment that is appropriate to all students and assesses their ability for further study or entry into the work force. All students would take this certification at 10th or 11th Grade and those who wish to matriculate for tertiary education would also take a full complement of CSEC exams at 11th Grade.

39. Develop a national policy to ensure adolescent mothers return to school until they have completed Grade 11.

40. Facilitate and encourage tertiary institutions to collaborate with secondary institutions towards improving the quality of teaching.

Medium Term (FY 2008/9-2012/13)

41. Adopt the National Council of Education's recommendations on the rollout of technical/vocational rationalisation project in all secondary high schools.

SUB-GOAL 4: POST SECONDARY ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEARNING AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT, AND OUTCOMES

Public Sector
Short Term (FY 2008/9-2009/10)

42. The national plan for post-secondary education should use a bottom-up approach to identifying needs and goals and should ensure that training offered at this level is articulated nationally so that students across the board can use one level of training as a stepping stone to others.

Private Sector
Short Term (FY 2008-2010)

43. Umbrella private sector organisations need to do more regular labour market forecasting, feeding this information systematically into the national planning for education.

44. Implement the adoption of the CARICOM course on Gender in the Caribbean in all teacher training programmes.

45. Introduce mandatory registration for all post-secondary and tertiary educational institutions.

Public Sector
Medium Term (FY 2008/9-2012/13)

46. Develop a national plan to focus post-secondary education and training to meet current and emerging needs

47. Develop an integrated career guidance curriculum at secondary level ensuring that all students are aware of available training options and offering career guidance. Specialist skills could possibly be offered on a cluster basis at higher secondary levels. Teacher training colleges should integrate a career guidance module in their curriculum.

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