

DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION

NATIONAL REPORT OF GUYANA

THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
GUYANA

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ACRONYMS

ACEO	Assistance Chief Education Officer
BCCP	Basic Competency Certification Programme
BEAMS	Basic Education Access Management Support Programme
CHS	Community High School
CPCE	Cyril Potter College of Education
CSEC	Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate
EFA/FTI	Education For All/Fast Track Initiative
ESP	Education Strategy Plan
GEAP	Guyana Education Access Project
GOG	Government of Guyana
HFLE	Health and Family Life Education
IFMAS	Integrated Financial Management Accounting System
IRI	Interactive Radio Instruction
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MOE	Ministry of Education
NDS	National Development Strategy
PEIP	Primary Education Improvement Project
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategy
SIPs	School Improvement Plans
SSEE	Secondary School Entrance Examination
SSRP	Secondary School Reform Project
UPE	Universal Primary Education
USE	Universal Secondary Education

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INTRODUCTION

The twenty-first century brought new challenges for Guyana's Education System even while the search continues for solutions to the existing ones facing this developing country. In spite of its current challenges, the Government of Guyana recognizes that Guyana's development can be achieved only if its stock of human capital attains the level of growth that encourages the flexibility and versatility necessary for this highly technological, global economy. This is clearly articulated in the National Development Strategy (NDS), the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS), and the Education Development Plan (ESP) 2003-2007.

The international emphases of Education For All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goal (MDGs), have provided an extra impetus in the drive to provide an education service that is relevant and appropriate for a contemporary society.

The main thrust of the Ministry of Education, therefore, is to improve the quality of its service so that the graduates of its system would acquire the requisite knowledge and skills for life in the twenty-first century.

1. Major reforms and innovations introduced in the education system at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

A. The legal framework of education

Chapter 39 of the Laws of Guyana still provides the legal basis for education in Guyana. However, a process has begun for a new Education Act to ensure that the education service provided is more relevant to Guyana's present needs. Some areas to be amended address the following:

- a) Effective decentralization of education to the regional level.
- b) Restructuring education management to allow Central Ministry to be a strictly policy-making entity with more responsibility for monitoring and evaluation, and less of an implementer of education policies.
- c) Re-defining the roles and functions of Central Ministry officials.

B. Organization, Structure and Management of the Education System

Management reforms in education are a part of a wider reform of the Public Sector currently being implemented by the Government of Guyana (GOG). The Ministry of Education has been affected mainly in the areas of financial and human resource management.

Financial Management: The Government of Guyana (GOG) has recently passed a new Financial Management Accountability Act that provides for the regulation of the preparation and execution of the annual budget; the receipt, control and disbursement of public monies; the accounting for public monies; and other matters connected with or incidental to the transparent and efficient management of the finances of Guyana. With the introduction of this new Act, the GOG has introduced a computerized accounting system called the Integrated Financial Management and

Accounting System (IFMAS) which is expected to create greater efficiencies in processing transactions and improving financial controls and reporting. This system replaced the previous manual system for recording and reporting government financial transactions. The effectiveness of this new system is yet to be determined but its initial implementation has created new challenges for the management of education.

Human Resource Management: An Organisation Capacity Assessment done at the end of the second phase of the Primary Education Improvement Project (PEIP), informed the MOE of the need for reformation to increase its effectiveness. Some of the recommendations made in this Capacity Assessment, became the reference point for the present Public Sector reforms within the MOE that are being financed and managed by an IDB funded project, the Basic Education, Access and Management Support (BEAMS). The main objective of these reforms is for the MOE to become a more cohesive and more effective entity, with a high level of accountability. The restructuring of Central Ministry's Organisational Structure, the re-organising of Central Ministry's Personnel Section; the method of recruitment of teachers and Ministry's staff; the effective decentralization of the Georgetown Education District from Central Ministry, are some areas being addressed under these reforms.

C. Curriculum Policies, Educational Content and Teaching/Learning Strategies

The MOE observed that within the last decade or so, many of its graduates were leaving school with a level of literacy and numeracy much lower than was required for higher education and the world of work. To combat this grave situation, a systemic reform was envisaged, with special emphasis at the Pre-primary, Primary and Secondary levels.

Early Childhood Education: This curriculum spans the two years of Pre-primary (Nursery) and the first two years of primary education. It was introduced to lay the foundation for early literacy and numeracy through its child-centred approach to pre-reading, pre-writing and the teaching of life skills. This reform is currently being implemented through BEAMS. The innovations introduced under BEAMS include:

- i. A balanced approach between the whole word and phonic methods to the teaching of reading.
- ii. The teaching of mathematics using the Interactive Radio Instruction Programme (IRI), an activity-oriented approach, intended to encourage a change in the role of the teacher from repository of knowledge to facilitator of learning.

These innovations stimulated changes in other key areas such as teacher training and the acquisition of teaching/learning materials. As a result, BEAMS also focuses on the inclusion of these strategies in the curriculum of the Teacher Training College, the Cyril Potter College of Education (CPCE), the revision of the main text books and the acquisition of complementary text books/materials for the Pre-Primary and Primary levels.

The Secondary School Entrance Examination (SSEE) has been the only avenue for entry into Secondary School. This has also been problematic because of its potential to stagnate the development of primary school leavers who are not fortunate to be placed in the “best” secondary schools. Under BEAMS, the MOE is piloting a Continuous Assessment Programme at Grades Two, Four and Six, which allows teachers to identify weaknesses and strengths and make appropriate interventions. The Pupils’ performances are recorded at the three stages and it is proposed that this will be used instead of the SSEE for entrance to secondary schools.

The promotion of Child Friendly Classrooms in primary schools is a strategy being used to enhance the teaching/learning process. This child-centered approach emphasizes cordial relationships such as a teacher/child, child/child, teacher/teacher and teacher/pupil/child in a supportive environment, and aims to promote discovery learning and independent thinking. Another important component of Child Friendly Classrooms/Schools is pupils' involvement in school management through Student Government. This strategy allows the students to have a say in the administration of their schools and provides invaluable opportunities for leadership training.

The Life skills, Health and Family Life Education, Guidance and Citizen curriculum is being included in the curricula of grades 1-9 (the primary level and the first three years in the secondary level). Its “aim is to provide teachers with an integrated and consistent approach to the application of Value Education. Student should learn critical life skills that are necessary for applying values, become independent thinkers, and active, participating responsible citizens.”

Secondary Reform: In its drive to achieve Universal Secondary Education (USE), the MOE is striving to increase access to quality secondary education by: 1) eliminating the unequal three tiered system and 2) restructuring the curriculum to include other subjects that will provide secondary school leavers with requisite skills for the world of work and/or higher education. These reforms are being piloted through three main donor-funded projects: the Secondary School Reform Project (SSRP), Guyana Education Access Project (GEAP), and the Basic Competency Certificate Programme (BCCP). More information will be given later in the relevant section.

D. Objectives and principal characteristics of current and forthcoming reforms

Current Reforms

Reform	Objectives	Principal characteristics
Amendment of Education laws	To provide a law that reflects changes in light of national policies and educational development	• The governance of schools by boards • Private education institutions • Health & family Education • Establishment of Accreditation Board • Community involvement
Management Reform	To become a more cohesive and more effective entity, with a high level of accountability	• Computerized Accounting System • Multi-year budgeting • Restructuring of Personnel Management
Curriculum Reforms - Early Childhood - Primary - Secondary	To improve the quality of the delivery of education	• Interactive Radio Instruction Programme • Linking early childhood with Primary education • Balance approach with whole word method and the phonic approach • Including accelerating instruction with slow learners
Stakeholders' participation in education management	To increase the level of commitment of students, parents and communities to the education process and to human rights.	• Developing School Improvement Plans (SIPs)

1.2 Major achievements, both quantitative and qualitative, and lessons learned especially in terms of:

A. Access to Education

Our most recent data reveals that at the Pre-Primary (Nursery) and Primary levels, access to education is high, with gross enrolment rates of 101 at both levels. This is encouraged by (i) the construction of new primary and nursery schools, (ii) the limited provision of snacks/meals and iii) the provision of school uniforms to some economically disadvantaged children.

Lessons learnt

- 1) Formalization of Pre-Primary education and the heightened awareness of the Early Childhood Education, increases enrolment and coverage in the Primary level by encouraging easier transition and assimilation of pupils to a more 'rigid' academic environment and the higher demands of the Primary curriculum.
- 2) Continuous Assessment of Primary pupils at the Grades 2, 4 and 6 encourages higher levels of achievement by pupils and teachers throughout the cycle, instead of the traditional importance that is placed at Grade 6 when the SSEE is taken.

B. Equality in Education

One of the strengths of Guyana's education system is the equal opportunity for access to 'free' education from Pre-Primary to Secondary level. However, geographical factors, historical trends and some cultural norms have hampered efforts to provide equal opportunity to children with special needs and the Indigenous people who live mostly in the remote areas of Guyana.

C. Quality of Education

The country's urgent priority is to significantly improve the quality of education. Even though improvements have been made through the implementation of projects and policies mentioned earlier, these have not been significant enough to be considered as major achievements. On the contrary, there are many crucial issues that the MOE has to address before education service can be improved. These will be discussed in 1.3.

D. Content of education (major trends and challenges for curriculum development processes)

The introduction of the Life Skills, Health and Family Life and Citizen Education (See Section 2.3 for more details) into the Primary and Lower Secondary curricula, has posed challenges for curriculum development and teacher training. This is as a result of the traditional emphasis on rote learning of a body of knowledge. This new curriculum demands a change in teaching strategy from knowledge-based to skill-based. Herein lies the difficulty. The teaching of skills, such as, decision-making does not utilize as much knowledge as know-how.

E Policy dialogue, partnerships and participation by civil society in the process of educational change.

The role of civil society (community) in the provision of education was recognized as being crucial since Guyana became independent. This has been stated in the Education Policy documents of 1990, and 1995. In its most recent Strategic Plan of 2003-2007 the Ministry reiterated its intention to actively involve the community in education delivery and management. This plan states:

Strategic Objective	Intermediate Objectives	Strategies/Action	Target Date/s	Performance Indicators
To increase the level of commitment of students, parents and communities to the education process and to human rights.	Increasing stakeholders participation and commitment.	MOE will strengthen its existing policy of promoting the participation of stakeholders through training of PTA's and School Improvement Action Committees (SIACs) to participate in school improvement plans/action.	2005	75% of schools will have active PTAs and/or SIACs)
			2007	50% increase in the number of parents active in PTAs and SIACs. 10% improvement in attendance Attendance up to 90% in coastal areas and over 80% in hinterland areas.
		Regional and local advisory councils will be set up to monitor schools and to advise and recommend strategies to regional and local school authorities.	2005	No. of councils set up.
		National Advisory Commission on	2005	Reports/recommendations from NACE to Ministry.

		Education (NACE) will be strengthened through the provision of a regular budget.		
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In addition, the process for the amendment of the Education Act will further support this plan since school governance by boards and the decentralization of education management to Regional stakeholders are two major issues to be addressed.

In the mean while, stakeholders' participation and partnerships are integrally imbedded in the modus operandi of education reforms.

Programme/ Activity	Evidence of Stakeholders' Participation
1. Development of Strategic Plan 2003-2007.	Thirty-four (34) meetings in eleven geographical areas across the country were held in three phases. The objectives were to give stakeholders an opportunity to discuss strategic issues, identify the major challenges of MOE, and to suggest strategies that would allow MOE to successfully deal with the challenges and strategic issues identified.
2. The development of the EFA/FTI Plan	Discussions held with Regional Education Officers, Local Government Officers, Teachers, Community members, Indigenous Peoples' representatives, among others.
3. Inter-Ministerial collaboration – MOE, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Amerindian Affairs, Ministry of Labour, Human Services & Social Security and Ministry of Culture Youth and Sports	The development of the HIV/AIDS intervention programme and other educational programmes

1.3 Main problems and challenges facing the education system

Although the mission of the Ministry is to provide “equal access to all Guyanese children and young people to quality education”, the provision of quality education is its major challenge. This concern has been succinctly expressed in the NDS by representatives of civil society who stated that:

“a) number of economic and social factors...have led to a most unsatisfactory and unacceptable state of affairs: learning rates in the schools are extremely low; a proportion of the teaching force is unqualified and untrained; absenteeism on the part of both teachers and students is rife; and textbooks and other instructional materials are often unavailable...”

Guyana’s success in attaining universal access to primary schools... has been eroded and has been replaced by rising repetition and dropout rates. More over (there are) alarmingly high levels of functional illiteracy.”¹

The situation is no better at the Secondary level according a study done on functional literacy:

“Primary education is not enough for young adults who have to meet the demands of today’s world. The educational offering of the CHS (Community High School) is inadequate. A good secondary education is perhaps the minimum requirement, even though it appears that it is from a tertiary level of education that young adults are most likely to acquire the level of functional literacy... this, however, is

¹ (Civil Society of Guyana. National Development Strategy. May 2000, Mimeo, p.197)

probably a function of the erosion of quality in the lower levels of the education systems...”²

In addition to the bleak scenario described above, is the debilitating hemorrhage of qualified experienced teachers to the Caribbean, North America and even Africa. However, there is the political will to initiate strategies that would halt and hopefully reverse these trends. The Government of Guyana has made education a priority in its PRS and has allocated increasing amount to education. The MOE is developing a culture of education planning through its five-year plans, the most recent being the Strategic Plan 2003-2007. The quality issues/goals identified in the Strategic Plan are as follows:

- a) To provide better Early Childhood Education (ECE)
- b) To develop a more relevant curriculum at all levels of the education system
- c) To make tertiary education more relevant and capable of contributing to the development of Guyana.
- d) To achieve significantly better levels of literacy and numeracy among students
- e) To define standards for inputs, processes and outcomes
- f) To provide infrastructure and equipment.

These issues are being addressed with the help of different donor-funded projects and programmes discussed earlier.

² (Zellynne Jennings. Nipped in the Bud. Guyana Education and development Services, Inc., 1998, p.24)

2.0 Quality education for all young people: challenges, trends and priorities

2.1 Education and Gender equality

Unlike some countries in Asia and Africa, there is an absence of cultural barriers to the education of girls and women in Guyana. The table below reveals almost an even percentage of attendance between male and females in educational institutions, with females registering slightly higher attendance at the higher levels of the education system.

Table 1 Average Attendance

Year	Nursery		Primary		Secondary	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
1998-99	78.2	72.1	77.2	77.9	78.7	80.0
1999-2000	69	72	77	78	78.1	79.9

Further, the number of graduates for the corresponding years shows that more females than males graduate annually from the University of Guyana, as is shown below.

Table 2 Percent of Graduates at the University of Guyana

Year	Male %	Female %
1998-99	38	62
1999-2000	39	61
2000-2001 ³	39	61

One may conclude that gender inequality at the Secondary and Tertiary levels may be a male issue in Guyana. The challenge is therefore what can

³ The recent (2003) population census results have not been published and the publication of the MOE's Educational Digest is behind schedule.

be done to ensure that more males complete secondary and tertiary education. However, it has been observed that females are clustering in traditional female dominated subject areas such as the Faculty of Social Sciences and the Faculty of Education.

Since it is the goal of the Education Ministry to provide “equal access to all Guyanese”, there has been no need for special measures to be taken to promote gender equality, especially when the scenario described above is considered.

2.2 Education and social inclusion

Traditionally, children and youth who are physically and mentally disadvantaged, were hidden by their parents. The education system therefore did not cater for them. This continues to be a major challenge for education in Guyana. In attempting to address this issue, the MOE has:

- a) created a position for and employed a Special Education Officer to co-ordinate the Ministry’s programme at the Central level.
- b) introduced Special Education programme in the curriculum of the Teachers’ Training College with the long term objective of mainstreaming children and youth with special needs in the school system.
- c) upgraded the teaching staff and physical facilities in the limited number of centres for people with special needs.

Some of the Indigenous People who live in the forested, mountainous and remote areas of Guyana maybe described as being excluded because of their cultural norms and poor economic situation. There is a disparity in the education service that is offered to these communities and those who live on the coastland. In Guyana’s PRS 2000 and its EDP (2003-2007),

this issue is being addressed. The Education For All – Fast Track Initiative (EFA/FTI) that is about to be implemented, seeks to rectify this disparity through three main initiatives:

Initiative 1: Improving the Quality of the Teaching Force in the Hinterland

- ✓ Training of unqualified teachers using the Guyana Basic Education Teacher Training (GBET) distance education approach.
- ✓ Continuous professional development for all trained teachers.
- ✓ Establishing satellite learning centres for teachers within a school cluster
- ✓ Improving the conditions of service for teachers (by providing teachers' houses and additional monetary incentive as an allowance).

Initiative 11: Enhancing the Teaching/Learning Environment in Primary Schools

- ✓ Accelerating the establishment of the Escuela Nueva Learning Model.
- ✓ Establishing Child-Friendly classrooms in Coastland schools.
- ✓ Improving the status of utilities across all schools.
- ✓ Provision of textbooks.

Initiative 111: Strengthening School Community Partnerships

- ✓ Accelerating the implementation of School Improvement Plans (SIPs) in all schools.
- ✓ Upgrading the present School Feeding Programme in the Hinterland.

Initiative One will provide services only for teachers in the remote areas of Guyana described as the hinterland, while Initiatives Two and Three have only one aspect that is unique to the schools in the more populated areas

of Guyana. This shows the degree of the effort being made to address the disparity of service in the education system.

The issue of equality for Indigenous Peoples is also addressed by donor agencies, such as the World Bank (IBRD). The chart below is an extract from the Indigenous Peoples' Outreach Strategy, a document that was required by the IBRD with reference to the implementation of EFA/FTI:

Factors increasing risk and vulnerability of indigenous community	Proposed Interventions
1. Poverty and associated factors (literacy, unemployment)	- Promote economic development and local jobs especially for indigenous women through the school feeding programme that would support community developed proposal for local production and preparation of lunches for students.
2. Low quality of education (resulting in high drop-out and repetition rates)	- Provide training for active teachers in indigenous communities to complete secondary education and obtain teaching certificate. - Create Teacher Resource Centers with didactic and pedagogical resources that are accessible to teachers in indigenous areas some of whom are indigenous themselves. This includes resources that promote knowledge of Amerindian culture and history. - Design and provide refresher courses for teachers to keep skills updated.
3. Lack of trained teachers, especially Amerindian trained teachers	- Incentivize teacher retention in indigenous areas by providing an increase to the remote areas incentives allowance and improving living conditions for teachers in the Hinterland. - provide distance training programme to hinterland teachers and ensure a proportion of those teachers are an Amerindian ethnicity in order to upgrade skills.
4. Inadequate access to schools and	- provide potable water, electricity, and

educational opportunities	sufficient sanitary facilities for schools in indigenous areas.
5. Threat to indigenous cultural heritage and identity	- Increase participation of indigenous in the planning and functioning of their schools through involvement in the creation and implementation of SIPs and Escuela Nueva. - Provide appropriate texts and supplementary reading materials for schools in indigenous areas that support and nourish indigenous identities.

2.3 Education and competencies for life

Presently, entry into secondary schools is regulated by the 'one-shot' SSEE that allows about 60% of primary school leavers to access secondary schools that are at the top of the three-tiered system know as General Secondary Schools. The remaining 40% is shunted to Community High Schools (CHS) and Primary Tops or All-Age Schools. The CHS' comprise of the second tier, while primary Tops make up the lowest tier. It goes without saying that the General Secondary Schools receive the 'best' performing students and the lion share of financial, material and human resources. The issues of equity, access, and quality are embodied in this situation. The MOE, in its ESP 2003-2007 and Secondary Policy Paper declare its intention to:

- Eliminate the three-tiered system by converting CHS and Primary Tops to General Secondary Schools (the achievement of USE).
- Improve physical facilities and increase the number of secondary schools.
- Develop a unified curriculum for all secondary schools for Grades Seven to Nine.
- Up-grade through training the human resource available in all levels, particularly the CHS' and the Primary Tops.
- Increase the number of qualified teachers in the secondary system.
- Increase the financial resources for non-salaried expenditure.

- g) Reform the curriculum to include alternative learning paths.
- h) Improve the organization and management of schools.
- i) Increase community participation in school management.

Through the Secondary School Reform Programme (SSRP) which concluded in 2004, and the Guyana Education Access Project (GEAP) that was completed in 2003, the Ministry began to address all of the above except (f) which is being tackled by another project – the Basic Competency Certificate Programme (BCCP). This programme will be discussed later.

How is Secondary Education responding?

The recognition that Secondary Education was failing in its mandate and the effort to rectify the situation was the first step in the right direction. It was also recognized that secondary education lacked the balance in skill-training that was essential to the preparation of graduates for higher education and the technologically-based work environment. Therefore, the curriculum is being adapted to include two new areas:-

- I. The Alternative Pathway
- II. Life Skills, Health and Family Life Education, Guidance and Citizenship Education

The Alternative Pathway: This new area is expressed in the Basic Competency Certificate Programme. According to the Chief Education Officer:

“ an education system that prepares young people only for careers limited to skills and knowledge, acquired from what can be referred to as traditional education, is not giving full consideration to the varying needs and capacity for our young people.”⁴

⁴ The Basic Competency Certificate Programme Draft

According to the draft document, the rationale of the BCCP is as follows:

“In order to have a cadre of skilled personnel at the engineer, technician and craftsman levels available to the nation, it is necessary to provide basic training at the secondary level. The BCCP at grade 10 is intended to satisfy this need. This initiative will provide an opportunity for more secondary school students to pursue technically oriented careers, thereby alleviating the shortage of skilled persons. The certificate will facilitate, employment, access to CSEC and post-secondary institutions, and also serve as an entry requirement for apprenticeship training.

To enable students to decide on their subjects of specialization for the BCCP, they will be exposed to a general introductory programme in Agricultural Science, Visual Arts, Home Economics, Industrial arts and Vocational Guidance and Counselling from Grade 7 to Grade 9.”

(See table at the end of this section for articulation of CSEC-BCCP)

General Objectives

The BCCP aims to:

- ***“Provide an opportunity for secondary school students to develop technical competencies, functional literacy and numeracy at grade 10;***
- ***Equip students with life, citizenship and vocational skills to support national development;***
- ***Expose students to a modularized career education programme with emphasis on supervised work experience/attachment and/or, individualized work-related projects;”***
- ***“Develop students’ potential in good occupational and environmental health and safety practices;***

- ***Develop problem-solving and creative-thinking skills through project work.”***

Duration

“The duration of the programme shall be for one academic year. Students who complete the programme by the end of the academic year will be certificated. The programme may be extended for an additional term to accommodate those students who did not satisfy the minimum requirements for certification. Student wishing to remain in the secondary school system may spend an additional one to two years to pursue CSEC.”⁵

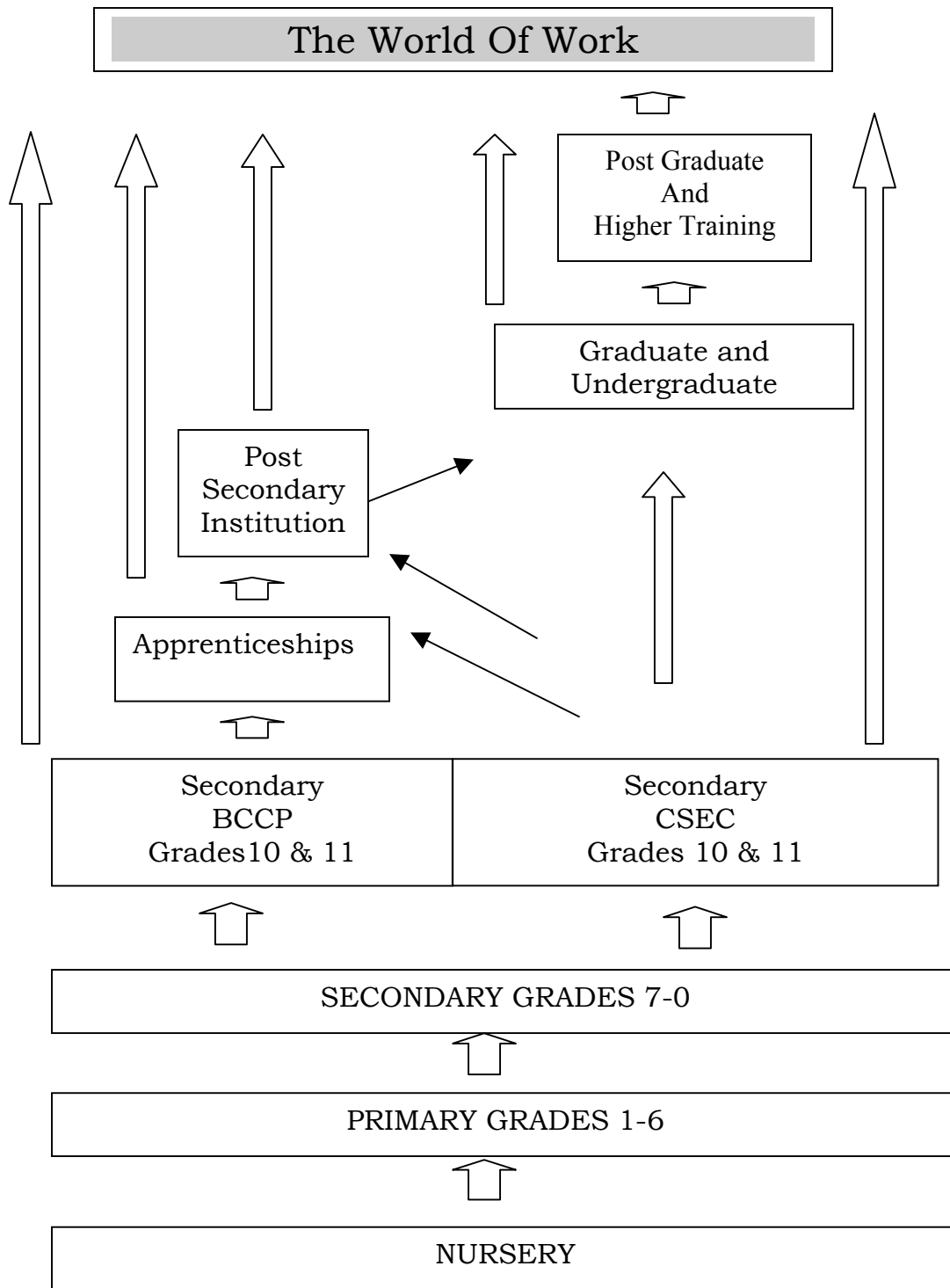
⁵ The Basic Competency Certificate Programme Draft

Articulation in the Secondary System (Grade 10)						
		Compulsory Core Areas				
BCCP	Practical Option Areas: Agricultural Science, Visual Arts, Home Economics, Industrial Technology	Work study/ Work attachment	English Language	Mathematics	Integrated Science	Social Studies Including Health and Family Life Education and Citizenship Skills
CSEC related study areas:	Agricultural Science, Visual arts, Home Economics, Industrial Technology	Grade 10 Work Study/Work attachment	English A	Mathematics	Integrated Science	Social Studies History Economics

Options following Grade 10
BCCP student graduates and continues in the secondary system CXC year 1 or 2 in Mathematics/ English/Industrial technology/Home Economics/Visual Arts/Social Studies/Integrated Science or any available subject for which they show aptitude. Year of entry dependent on attainment grade at the end of BCCP.
BCCP student graduates and exits Secondary System at the end of grade 10. Technical Institute or equivalent Craft level course
BCCP student graduates and exists Secondary System at the end of grade 10. Entry to Post Secondary Institution, apprenticeship training and/or employment
CSEC student continues in the secondary system Continues into year 2 dependent on year 1 attainment.

Subject Groups Form 4 BCCP

Practical Skills	Work Study/Work Attachment	English Language	Mathematics	Integrated Science	Social Studies including HKLE and Citizenship
(300 hrs)	(140 hrs)	(120 hrs)	(120 hrs)	(90 hrs)	(120 hrs)
Technology and basic skills covering 'key' practical, problem solving and creative thinking areas.	Awareness of opportunities in employment, education and training. TERM 1 Visits and presentations by members of the local business community. Three work-related visits (15 academic hours) given to business/manufacturers. TERM 2 Job shadowing-a total of 25 hours TERM 3 Work attachment or school based project a total of 100 academic hours (4 weeks)	Literacy Skills based on areas of concern highlighted in the CXC report papers and MOE experience integrated with the specific practical options	Numeracy Skills based on areas of concern highlighted in the CXC report papers and MOE experience integrated with the specific practical options	Integrated Science based on essential cross curricula areas of general "science" based study integrated with the specific practical options. Referenced to the CARICOM science technology guidelines.	Focus on student interpersonal skills and awareness of their position or stake in society, as a support to and integrated with the Work Study/Work Attachment programme and the Specific practical options



The Flow in the Education System in relation to the BCCP

Life Skills, Health and Family Life and Citizenship Education

“Health and Family Life Education is a process in which the family, school and community work together to promote health and wellness by providing learning experiences and an environment that develop and maintain positive attitudes, values, life skills and practices.”⁶

This curriculum aims to serve two main purposes: to encourage students to i) inculcate essential life skills including the making of wise choices; and ii) acquire the values that will allow them to live peaceable in the pluralist, multicultural Guyanese society. The main themes of this curriculum are education, family, health, human rights, and human sexuality that will be taught from Grades Seven to Nine. It is also being taught at the Primary level. Below is a summary of the curriculum of this new programme.

UNITS RECOMMENDED FOR LIFE SKILLS, HEALTH & FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION CURRICULUM

UNIT	SUB-UNITS/TOPICS
Education	Time & Money, Management, Transition to Secondary Schools, Decent & Indecent Language, Civic Responsibility, Conflict Resolution/Problem-Solving, Stress/Anger Management, Friendships, Character Education & Moral Development, Habits/Virtues & Vices, Punishment & Discipline, Aims for Living, The Role of the Media, Listening & Interviewing Skills, Decision-Making, Choices, Peer Pressure, Work Ethics, Careers/World of Work, Implications of Globalisation and Information Technology (20 Topics)
Family	Myself/Who am I? Emotional/Social skills, Self-Esteem, Courtship, Self-Discipline before Marriage and Preparation for Marriage, My Family, Relationships at Home, Family Values, Moral/Ethical Values,

⁶ HFLE National Policy Document, Guyana, 1996, p.8

	Religious Values of Family, Parents & Parenting, Expressing Feelings, Domestic Violence including Incest & Corporal Punishment, Role Models, Suicide, Peer relationships, Diseases within the Family. (17 Topics)
Health	Physical Health & Fitness, Appropriate Eating Habits, Food Value & Myths, Social/Emotional Health, Mental & Psychological Health including Suicide, Spiritual Health, Environmental Health, Leisure & Hobbies, Attitude & Behaviour, Diseases including Vaccination & Prevention, substance use & Abuse, Addiction, Good & Bad Habits, Allergies, Care & support of Self & Others, Our Bodies-Ourselves. (15 Topics)
Human Rights	Definition of Human Rights & Civic Responsibility, Right to Name & Nationality, Role & Purpose of Education, Child Labour, Respecting Cultures & Religious Values, Equality & Non-Discrimination including Persons with Disabilities, Children, Women, Indigenous, the Elderly, Persons Living with HIV/ AIDS, Countering Stereotyping, Prejudices & Racism, Development of the Child including providing for Needs and Eliminating Poverty, Democracy including Participating Equality, Making Rules, Voting, Freedom of Expression System of Justice. (11 Topics)
Human Rights	Adolescence & Teenage Pregnancy, Stages of Growth, Thinking about Sexuality, Sexual Code of Conduct, Gender Relationships/Understanding Each Other, Sexual Abuse/Incest/Harassment, Sexuality, Love & Lust, Family Planning & Related Issues, Preventing STIs & HIV/ AIDS, Abstinence before Marriage/Not Ready for Sex, Role Models. (12 Topics)

The skills that are being focused on are decision-making, problem-solving, creative thinking, critical thinking, effective communication, interpersonal skills, self-awareness, empathy, negotiation skills, refusal skills and assertive skills. This curriculum change is accompanied by teacher training, especially since this methodology has not been taught in the established teacher training programmes.

2.4 Quality education and the key role of teachers

As a signatory to the International labour Organisation (ILO), Guyana's policies on the status and role of teachers **may** have been shaped by its recommendations. It is therefore not clear how many national policies concerning teachers were directly influenced by the forty-fifth session of the International Conference on Education (ICE) and what special measures were taken based on its declaration and recommendations.

The information given in the charts on the next few pages indicates the measures that the MOE has used to address teachers needs. However, the economic constraints experienced by the MOE greatly retarded its efforts to provide for its teachers in an adequate and efficient manner.

ICE RECOMMENDATIONS		MEASURES TAKEN IN RELATION TO THE TRAINING OF TEACHERS FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS
1.	To ensure active participation of teachers and all educational partners in the process of changing educational systems	• Networking and collaborating with project coordinators in order to promote changes in the education system. Such projects include the Caribbean Centre of Excellence for Teacher Training (Caribbean CETT) and the Basic Education and Management Support Project (BEAMS). In the CETT project College Tutors, teachers-trainees, classroom teachers, University lecturers, clerical, administrative and other staff all interact. In this project teacher educators associated with literacy (from CPCE and UG) have been receiving ongoing training from international and regional resource persons. What is learnt is passed on to teacher-trainees and/or practicing classroom teachers who help to conduct action research in Reading. The information gained is then shared nationally, regionally and internationally. • Facilitating work attachments for Pre-Vocational teacher-trainees by both Government and Non-Government Organisations. • Consulting stakeholders before introducing new programmes. • Inclusion of student representative on College board

2.	To develop and implement integrated policies designed to recruit and retain in the teaching professional motivated and able individuals of both genders; to reform pre-service and in-service education in order that they shall service the new challenges facing education; to adopt measures encouraging educational innovations; to strengthen professional autonomy and sense of responsibility of teachers; and to improve their status and their working conditions	• Introduced an annual staff retreat where experts/specialists provide training in various areas of professional competencies e.g., reflective teaching. • Changed from the trimester to a semesterised system of instruction. • Evaluated the College's programme based on recommendations and developed a new blueprint • Introduced peer counseling strategies among trainees. Related workshops were held before initiating the change.
.	To place these integrates policies within the framework of strategies intended to ensure relevance of and equality of access to high-quality education, to promote lifelong learning and to make the schools one of the main tools in achieving social cohesion and in training for democratic values and the culture of peace	• Revamped the old curriculum and introduced a more broad based, relevant and integrated curriculum, which require interactive methodologies. • All students entering College must have English and Mathematics among the required subjects. • Four new in-service teacher training centers were opened. Additionally, the secondary programmes have been introduced in two of the already existing centers.

		Replaced the Nursery and Infant Education Programmes with an Early Childhood Education Programme.
4.	To develop at the national, regional and international levels, all forms of support, particularly with teachers who are working in difficult situations, such as those of extreme poverty, armed conflict social exclusion or in remote areas.	- Introduced peer tutoring sessions. - Involved trainees in the provision of emotional; support for their peers. - Students from remote regions who were teaching before entering College are paid their salaries in addition to the normal monthly grants which all trainees receive. - The programme for hinterland teachers funded by CIDA.

Reforms in pre-service and in-service teacher education programmes

REFORMS	SPECIAL REMARKS
Semesterised instruction from 2001-2002 academic year	Pre-service students study for 6 semesters while those students on the in-service programme do 7 semesters. In-service students carry one course less for some semesters. Hence they need to carry the extra semester to cover the full complement of courses.
<u>The introduction of new subject areas in the curriculum</u> - Health and Family Life Education - Philosophical and	Done by all student

Socially Sensitive Issues - Special Needs Education - Business Education - French	Done by all students. Done by all students This is offered as a Major Option on the Secondary Academic programme. Currently however, only students on the Pre-Service programme and those at one of the in-service centres have access to this programme. Currently this is offered a Minor Option to students on the pre-service and those at one of the in-service centre.
• <u>Introduction of compulsory subjects</u> - Spanish	Emphasis in on conversational Spanish
• <u>Introduction of work attachment</u>	This is organized at the end of the second year for year II Pre-Vocational students only.
• <u>Introduction of optional courses</u>	Individuals select two course from a list of courses which cover such areas as Physical Education, art and Craft, home economics, Information technology and Music
• <u>The introduction of specialist courses</u>	These courses are designed according to the specific levels at which students-teachers operate or will operate in the classroom. For instance the course Teaching Methods for Secondary programme. This course is done in addition to a general course on Teaching Methods which is also done by students on the Primary and Early Childhood programmes. The general courses are more theoretical in nature while the specialist courses are practically oriented and are closely linked to practicum courses

2.5 Education for sustainable development

Sustainable development has been included in the curriculum and syllabi of Guyana's education system and the Caribbean region, since it has been recognized as crucial to the achievement of economic and political independence. At every level, from Pre-Primary to University, some aspects of Sustainable development have been taught within some subjects on the curricula.

Level	Programme/ Curriculum	Aspect of Themes Taught	Subject
Pre-Primary	Early Childhood Education	- Health - Environment	----
Primary	a. Early Childhood Education continued	- Health - Environment	Health Education Primary Science
	b. Primary curriculum	- Water - Human Rights	Primary Science Social studies
	c. Health & family Life Education	- Health and Environment	Primary Science Health Education
Secondary	a. CSEC Curriculum	-Health Promotion - HIV/AIDS - Environment - Human Rights - Water - Indigenous Knowledge - Intercultural understanding	Science Science & Social studies Geography & Social Studies Social Studies
	b. CAPE Curriculum	Environment	Environmental Studies
	c. HFLE	Same as above	

University	Faculty of Social Science	- Overcoming Poverty - Gender Equality - Environment - Water - Rural transformation - Sustainable consumption - Human Rights - Cultural diversity - Indigenous Knowledge	As a component of the course “ Planning for Development”
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In addition, some recognized NGOs, such as, the Environment Protection Agency (EPA), have established clubs with secondary schools to encourage the proper use of the immediate environment and bio-diversity conservation. The latter topic is taught to the Indigenous People living in the natural forest and riverain areas in Guyana. They are encouraged to learn about the flora and fauna and how to use them wisely. However, this is just added awareness because the Indigenous peoples are most knowledgeable about the natural environment in which they are quite at home.

Inter-ministry collaboration between the Ministries of Health and Education has resulted in about thirty (30) School Health Clubs being established in Primary and Secondary schools as a part of a PAHO/WHO Health Promoting School Initiative. This initiative emphasizes the need to maintain a healthy environment.

The Social issues facing our society, such as drug use and abuse, HIV/AIDS pandemic, sexual abuse, crime, poverty and domestic violence, have created the impetus for the entire society to work for solutions. As a consequence, many NGO's, religious and secular groups have been

conducting training programmes in the secondary schools to address topic such as HIV/AIDS, career guidance, substance abuse, empowerment of the poor and women, and sexual abuse.

A concerted effort is being made by all entities mentioned above to intensify the fight against the social ills, like HIV/AIDS, to ensure the Sustained development of Guyana as a nation.

Conclusion

The provision of a quality, relevant education service is dependent on the degree of flexibility to changes to which the country and the education system are capable of. In light of the continuous rapid development of technology and the removal of barriers among countries because of globalisation, the capacity of a country to provide a quality, relevant education services as stated in the introduction, is dependent on its ability to respond to changes in an efficient and timely fashion. This is a major challenge for any country but it is particularly difficult for poor developing countries.

The Ministry of Education in Guyana remains committed to meeting this challenge.

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