

# Call for mixed ability schools

Amid talks of abandoning the annual Barbados Secondary Schools' Entrance Examination (BSSEE), a former educator is calling for mixed ability schools.

Dr Cheryl Weekes, former acting principal of the Barbados Community College, made the call Wednesday while speaking to the media during a cheque presentation at the Barbados Seventh-Day Adventist Secondary School.

"It is my belief that this model of mixed ability schools has worked and it will continue to work.

Perhaps it is something that can be looked at in terms of our education system going forward, where the stronger students can help the weaker students," she said.

## Donation

The president of the Flodden Abingdon Alumni Association, who donated a "couple thousand dollars" to SDA principal Annette Alleyne, said students who attended the Dalkeith, St Michael school were not necessarily the island's top students.

"We recognise

that many students who would not have performed well in the [BSSEE] have come to this school and have blossomed. We have a record of excellent performance and . . . in this school the boys outperform a lot of the boys in other schools," she said.

Although not against abandoning the BSSEE, popularly referred to as the Common Entrance Examination, she said there must be a system in place that determined where children would go and how it would affect their ability to perform.

"I wouldn't say that abandoning is bad, but whatever we go



Principal of the Seventh-Day Adventist Secondary School, Annette Alleyne (left), receiving the sponsorship cheque from president of the Flodden Abingdon Alumni Association, Dr Cheryl Weekes. (Picture by Nigel Browne.)

into must be a system that allows for the fair distribution of students, so that everyone can have the opportunity to achieve as those of us who would have gone through the system," she said.

She was also agreed

that specialist schools should be established, expressing the view that it would benefit a small country like Barbados.

"If you have specialist schools, it means that the ministry can put the kind of infrastructure in place that supports

that area. For example, if it is a tech/voc (technical/vocational) kind of school, then all of the equipment [and] necessary training is in place so that it becomes a school of excellence," she said. (RA)

# UWI launches School of Governance

Barbadian public sector workers will soon receive training in anti-corruption strategies.

That area will be one of the focuses of a School of Governance and Public Policy, which begins classes in May and will also tutor public service employees in essentials of corporate governance, policy formulation and development strategic planning in the public sector and practical research for policy and government professionals.

The school falls under the Department of Government, Sociology, Social Work and Psychology in a partnership with the Faculty of Social Sciences.

Training will be geared toward entry-level, middle management and senior leadership. Classes may take the form of whole-day seminars or last up to a few weeks.

Principal of the University of the West Indies Cave Hill Campus, Professor The Most Honourable Eudine Barriteau, announced the initiative during the school's launch at the campus on Tuesday.



"We cannot seek to improve public sector performance without an examination of the legislative framework in which these services are delivered, and whether or not our legislative architecture facilitates or constrains the work of delivering improved services and other public goods," Barriteau said.

The educator, who came up with the idea, said the UWI had the ability to improve public sector leadership, strengthen management capabilities and enrich research skills, with the new school's main purpose being to build resilience and innovation within Caribbean public sectors.

She added that the campus intended to utilise the expertise of its faculty along with that of retired senior public servants, national and regional, to improve

the functioning of Government agencies, boards and institutions.

"At the university, we know that to advance the optimal functioning of Government and parastatal organisations, we need to review and appreciate the critical importance of the legislative, administrative, regulatory and public processes of 21st century governance procedures and, where necessary, government operations.

"In the 21st century, we have to offer interdisciplinary programmes that abandon balkanised, rigid, disciplinary boundaries . . . We are going to see a lot of abandoning of those boundaries when we create the programming in the new Faculty of Culture Creative and Performing Arts," Barriteau said. (RA)

From left, principal of UWI Cave Hill, Professor The Most Honourable Eudine Barriteau; dean, Faculty of Social Sciences, Professor Justin Robinson; and Head of Department of Government, Sociology, Social Work and Psychology, Dr Wendy Grenade, during the launch of the new school.

(Picture by Lennox Devoniish.)

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