

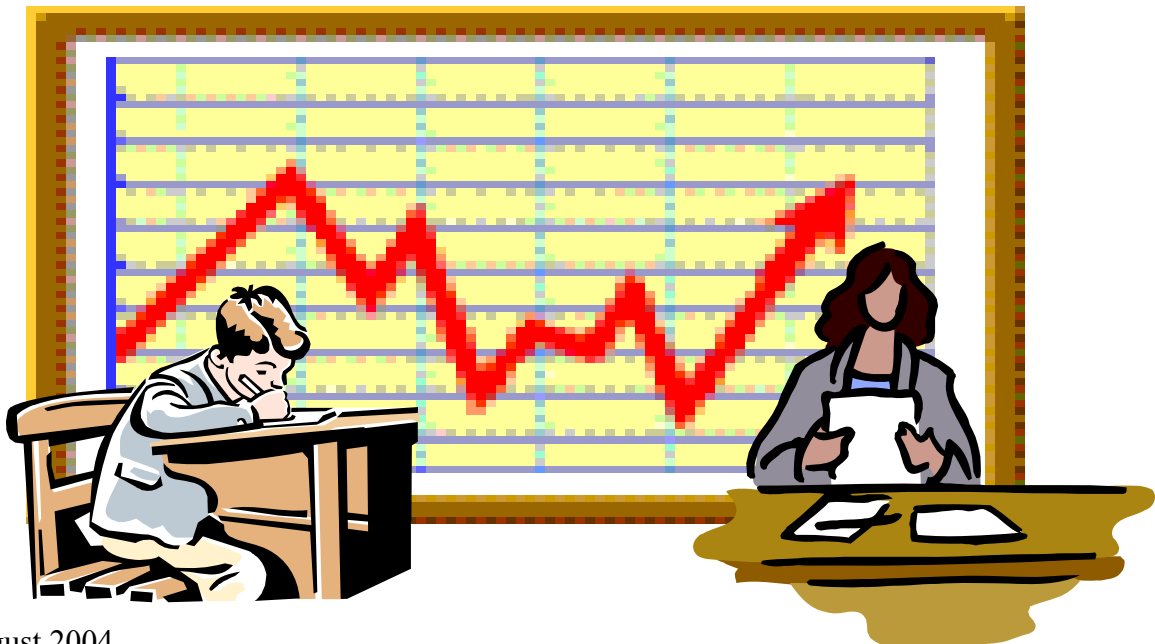


REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO  
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

**DIVISION OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND  
EVALUATION**

**SECONDARY ENTRANCE  
ASSESSMENT 2004**

**REPORT ON THE  
MONITORING OF THE  
SECONDARY ENTRANCE  
ASSESSMENT**



August 2004

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Executive Summary</b> .....	1
<b>Introduction</b> .....	2
<b>Monitoring the SEA</b> .....	2
<b>Methodology</b> .....	3
<b>Limitations</b> .....	3
<b>Findings</b> .....	3
<b>Conclusion</b> .....	8
<b>Recommendations</b> .....	8
<b>Appendices</b>	

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Secondary Entrance Assessment (SEA) was administered on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> March, 2004 to approximately 20 814 students throughout Trinidad and Tobago.

The Division of Educational Research and Evaluation, which has the responsibility for monitoring the administration of the SEA, assigned one hundred and forty five (145) monitors to visit the examination centres, observe the examination in progress and give feedback on the administration. The purpose of the monitoring exercise is to collect data which would be used to strengthen the administration of the assessment in the future.

Overall, it has been found that there were no major problems that hindered or affected the successful administration of the SEA 2004. Nevertheless, some of the findings point to areas of weakness, which need to be addressed in order to ensure that candidates are afforded the best conditions for writing their examination.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The Secondary Entrance Assessment (SEA) was administered on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> March, 2004 to approximately 20 814 students. In keeping with the decision to have students write the examination at their respective schools, 530 examination centres were established throughout Trinidad and Tobago.

The assessment consisted of three free-response test papers – Creative Writing, Language Arts and Mathematics.

In preparation for administering the SEA, all key personnel involved in the administration of this examination were trained. These personnel included staff of the Examination Section, school supervisors, principals, vice-principals and teachers. A diagrammatic representation of how the training was conducted is set out at Appendix I.

## **2. MONITORING THE SEA**

### **2.1 *Rationale***

The objective of the monitoring exercise is to gather data that will be used to provide feedback to all personnel involved in the administration of the SEA. It is hoped that the information provided will be used to strengthen the administration of the assessment in the future.

### **2.2 *Procedure***

The Division of Educational Research and Evaluation (DERE) has the responsibility for monitoring the administration of the SEA. In this regard, the DERE assigned 145 monitors to visit all the centres. Staff of the DERE conducted three briefing sessions for the monitors in order to fully prepare them to discharge their function. Two sessions were conducted in Trinidad and one in Tobago.

Monitors were allotted an average of four centres. They were required to visit all of their assigned centres at least once, observe the examination in progress and submit a report in respect of each centre based on a pre-designed checklist, a sample of which is attached as Appendix II.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

This report was prepared using the data collected via the monitors' reports. The data collected were analysed against indicators of attendance, the testing environment, test administration and security, all of which are considered critical to the efficient and effective administration of the SEA.

### **4. LIMITATIONS**

The report is based on the observations of the monitors at the time of their visit to the centres.

Monitors' reports were not received in respect of forty three (43) centres. Several attempts were made to recover same but with no success. Appendix III refers.

### **5. FINDINGS**

The findings of the report are presented under the headings of attendance, testing environment, test administration and security.

#### ***5.1 Attendance***

##### ***5.1.1 Candidates***

Candidates attendance at the examination was very high. Approximately 99.3% of the candidates entered to write the examination did so. Although three candidates arrived late at their centres they were allowed to write the examination.

Three candidates had to be withdrawn from the examination due to illness.

Table I provides a breakdown of absenteeism, unpunctuality and candidates who were withdrawn due to illness.

Table I  
Absenteeism, Unpunctuality and candidates withdrawn due to illness by Education District

<b>Education District</b>	<b>No. absent</b>	<b>No. late</b>	<b>No. withdrawn</b>
Caroni	27	0	0
North Eastern	6	0	0
Port of Spain & Environs	27	0	1
St. George East	30	3	1
St. Patrick	16	0	0
South Eastern	5	0	0
Victoria	18	0	1
Tobago	2	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>

**5.1.2. Examination Personnel**

Absenteeism among examination personnel, particularly the testers, was lower than last year. From reports received, two (2) examination supervisors, eight (8) assistant supervisors and 89 testers (4%), were reported absent. Table II provides a breakdown of absenteeism and unpunctuality among examination personnel.

Table II  
Absenteeism and Unpunctuality among Examination Personnel by Education Districts

Education District	No. of Centres	Examination Supervisor		Assistant Supervisors		Testers		
		No. Assigned	No. Absent	No. Assigned	No. Absent	No. Assigned	No. Absent	No. Late
Caroni	69	69	1	68	0	366	17	3
North Eastern	40	26	0	18	1	91	2	2
Port of Spain & Environs	89	83	0	97	0	442	21	0
St. George East	105	94	0	77	1	497	20	8
St. Patrick	60	60	0	64	2	282	7	1
South Eastern	52	46	0	46	2	163	6	0
Victoria	77	72	0	81	0	240	8	1
Tobago	38	36	1	33	2	132	8	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>530</b>	<b>486</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>484</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2213</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>19</b>

## **5.2 Testing Environment**

The testing environment in most of the centers appeared to be satisfactory. Nevertheless, shortcomings/inadequacies were identified in approximately 24 centres. The problems highlighted included inadequate lighting and ventilation, disturbances from vehicular traffic, nearby construction work and other environmental disturbances. Appendix IV is relevant.

## **5.3 Test Administration**

Overall, the administration of the examination was good, monitors noted few irregularities. Reported irregularities included the starting time of the examination, problems associated with administering the test, examination materials and other discrepancies which are detailed hereunder.

### **5.3.1 Starting time and duration**

In the majority of centers the examination began at the designated time i.e. 8:30 a.m. and remained on schedule. However, in 21 centres, the examination started late. (Appendix V refers).

### **5.3.2 Administering of the test**

Monitors reported few discrepancies in administering of the test. These are detailed below.

Chaguanas Government	Testers arrived after 8:00am
Cumuto Presbyterian	Two testers and an examination supervisor were assigned to four candidates. Candidates could feel intimidated.
Eastern Boys' Government	Candidates were reviewing Creative Writing questions before the actual start of the examination.
El Socorro Hindu	Testers were observed reading newspapers.



### 5.3.3 Examination materials

Monitors reported that some centers were supplied with inadequate quantities of Supervisors' and Testers' Manuals. This seems to be a perennial problem.

Other reported cases concerning examination materials were at a minimum and are detailed below.

Valencia South Government was not supplied with the 'summary of returns' form. At Cumuto Presbyterian the package with the additional test materials was opened and no plausible explanation was given.

At Petit Valley Boys R.C. one large print booklet was missing. Arrangements were being made to assess a copy.

### 5.3.4 Other discrepancies

Other discrepancies observed are detailed below.

- At Eastern Boys' Government the principal was in the same room with the examination supervisor when the scripts were being packaged.
- Snacks for students at Paramin R.C. arrived close to the end of the break period.
- The principal at Barataria A.C. was unaware of the monitoring procedures.
- During the break period (10:55am) the principal of the Tortuga Government School was giving instructions to the students.
- At Petit Valley Boys' R. C. a tester had to be taken to hospital by ambulance.
- A fight broke out among some boys during the break period at the Diego Martin Boys' R.C. School.

### 5.4 Security

There were many more security breaches this year than in previous years. These reports are detailed below.

Balmain Presbyterian	A tester brought his/her child to the center.
Eastern Girls' Government	A teacher and two students who were on the compound were asked to leave after their presence on the compound was brought to the attention of the examination supervisor.
Eastern Boys' Government	A teacher was in the library viewing a video/television.
El Socorro South Government	A teacher and parent were observed on the compound. They were asked to leave.

St. Mary's A.C.	Two teachers were present in the reception area throughout the examination.
St Joseph Girls' R.C.	Three members of the school's staff were on the compound during the examination. They were told to leave.
Delhi Road Hindu	Supervisor had to ask class teacher to leave the compound.
La Brea R.C.	Unauthorized Creative Writing scripts were found under a candidate's desk during the Mathematics examination. Examination supervisor was told to secure scripts.
North Trace Gov't.	Workers on URP placement were on the compound.
St. Nicholas Private	The principal of the school was observed speaking to the candidates during the break period. Two other unauthorized persons were also in the office and mixing with the candidates. These observations were reported to the Centre Supervisor.

## **6. CONCLUSIONS**

In general, administration of the SEA 2004 was good. However, there were areas of shortcomings which need to be addressed in order to ensure that the integrity of this examination is not comprised in anyway and that candidates are afforded the best examination conditions.

Absenteeism among testing personnel is a serious issue to which school supervisors in the Educational District Offices must direct attention. The absence of invigilating staff, however small, could jeopardize the smooth conduct of the examination.

## **7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The recommendations in this report are based on the analysis of data obtained from the monitors' spot checking checklists.

- Standby pools of testers should be established at strategic locations to ensure that absent testers are replaced promptly.

- More focused and intensive training should be done with all testing personnel. These key players should be fully sensitized as to how their actions on testing day could compromise the integrity of the examination.
- The Supervisor of Examination should ensure that adequate supply of test materials, especially Supervisors' and Testers' Manuals, are provided.
- Center managers should ensure that classrooms are adequately prepared in terms of the type of desks used, ventilation and lighting.
- District Supervisors should submit names, in a timely manner, of personnel who they are certain would be able to monitor.
- Monitors need to report more accurately the information they record on the spot-checking forms.

## **APPENDICES**

**Centres in respect of which monitors' reports were not received**

<b>Education District</b>	<b>Centre</b>
North Eastern	Guaico Presbyterian Guaico Government Grosvenor Presbyterian  Sangre Grande Gov't North Oropouche Gov't Fishing Pond Presbyterian  Matura Gov't Rampanalgas Gov't Salybia Gov't Cumana R.C.  Sans Souci R.C. Grande Riviere A.C. Matlot R.C. L'Anse Noire Moravian
Port of Spain & Environs	Laventille Girls' R.C. Success R.C. Laventille Boys' R.C. St. Dominic's R.C. Lower Morvant Gov't Hockett Baptist
St. George East	La Horquetta North Gov't Arima New Gov't Carapo R.C. Arima Presbyterian La Horquetta South Gov't Guiseppi Preparatory

St. George East (cont'd)	D'Abadie Gov't Arima West Gov't Arima Boys' Gov't Eden Way Preparatory
South Eastern	Rio Claro Hindu St. Theresa R.C. Rio Claro ASJA Liberville TML Rio Claro SDA Private Rio Claro Presbyterian
Victoria	San Fernando TML Grant Memorial Presbyterian San Fernando Methodist San Fernando ASJA San Fernando SDA
Tobago	Whim A.C. Scarborough SDA

**Breakdown of Centres with reported inadequacies/shortcomings  
and environment disturbances**

<b>Education District</b>	<b>Centre Name</b>	<b>Nature of inadequacies/shortcomings or environmental disturbances</b>
Caroni	Longdenville Presbyterian Orange Field Hindu Montrose Vedic Chaguanas R.C.	Noise made by water trucks delivering water. Tester's cell rang during examination. School café was open with five employees who had contact with students during break. Seventy eight (78) students were seated in one large room with fifteen (15) testers.
North Eastern	Sangre Grande Hindu	Candidates had bags with them on desks.
Port of Spain & Environs	Exel Composite Morvant A.C.	Disturbances from vehicular traffic. Debris was being burnt adjacent to school. Fire services had to be called in.
St. George East	Bourg Mulatresse R.C. San Juan SDA Febeau Gov't. El Socorro Central Gov't. La Veronica R.C. Arima Boys' R.C.	Disturbance from logging development. Supervisor was asked to remove mathematics chart. Disturbance from CEPEP workers outside center. No water available within the immediate examination environment. Noise from workers using brush cutter adjacent to school. Workers were asked to continue work after the end of the examination. Inadequate lighting.
St. Patrick	Rousillac Presbyterian Brighton A.C.	Disturbances from vehicular traffic. Disturbances from vehicular traffic.

<b>Education District</b>	<b>Centre Name</b>	<b>Nature of inadequacies/shortcomings or environmental disturbances</b>
South Eastern	Baserre R.C. Rock River R.C. Santa Maria R.C. Poole R.C. Mayaro Gov't.	Room not well ventilated. Disturbances from use of power saw. Disturbance from road workers. Room clustered. Disturbance from construction site adjacent to school.
Victoria	Woodland Hindu Union Presbyterian St. Peter's Private	Disturbances from vehicular traffic. Disturbances from vehicular traffic. Inadequate ventilation and disturbances from vehicular traffic.
Tobago	Goodwood Methodist	Disturbance from workmen operating equipment near to school. Electricians on the compound up to 8:20am doing electrical work in the testing room. Disturbances from vehicular traffic.



### Breakdown of centres at which the examination started late

Education District	Centre Name	Number of minutes late	Reason
Caroni	Brasso Venado Government	10	No reason given
	Warrenville Presbyterian	13	No reason given
	Chandernagore Presbyterian	10	No reason given
	Bamboo Grove Presbyterian	5	No reason given
North Eastern	Valencia Government	none given	No reason given
Port of Spain & Environs	Petit Valley Boys' R.C.	45	Tester collapsed and had to be taken to hospital via ambulance.
St. George East	San Juan Presbyterian	none given	No reason given
	El Socorro TIA	5	No reason given
	El Socorro North Gov't.	5	No reason given
	St. Benedict's R.C.	none given	No reason given
	St. Joseph TML	10	No reason given
	St. Joseph's Boys R.C.	none given	No reason given
	New Dawn Preparatory	10	No reason given
St. Patrick	Fyzabad Presbyterian	6	No reason given
	Forest Reserve A.C.	10	Testers began reading instructions at 8:30am.
South Eastern	North Trace Gov't.	5	No reason given
	Hindustan Baptist	5	No reason given
	Sixth Company A.C.	3	No reason given
Victoria	Anstey Memorial Girls'	none given	No reason given
	Piparo Presbyterian	15	Candidate was missing admission slip.
Tobago	Mt. St. George Methodist	none given	No reason given