



Remarks
The Hon. Diallo Rabain, JP, MP
Minister of Education

Press Conference – Education Updates
December 6th, 2018

Today I stand before you as the Minister of Education. More importantly the father of Layla Rabain who is P5 student at Elliot Primary. You may ask why that is relevant. It is relevant to me, because decisions that affect the Bermuda Education System have a personal effect on my legacy...my daughter. My family showed the ultimate confidence in our educational system by entrusting our gift, our love, our treasure to the Bermuda Public School System.

The Ministry and the Department of Education have been criticized for not having the will to fix problems within the Bermuda Public School system. I strongly disagree with that assertion. When this Government took office, we stated in our election platform that Education is a priority. We meant what we promised, and we will not be deterred from facing issues and challenges within the entire system head-on.

As a parent who has a child in the public school system, I have faith in our system to deliver a high-quality educational experience to our children. However, this cannot be achieved with these constant disruptions we have been experiencing lately. It is having a negative effect on all of our students and their educational experience.

The Ministry and Technical Officers have been doing everything we can to listen and meet with the BUT to discuss the various challenges brought to our attention by the Union and discuss solutions. Despite what I would term positive

discussions, we are still faced with action from the BUT and their members at an unsustainable rate.

Last week Thursday, the BUT forwarded us a list of 23 items of concerns based on the outcome of their membership meeting held last Tuesday. On Monday, we met with the BUT for just over 3 hours to address these concerns. In what I can term a very positive meeting, we were able to identify 8 of those items that fall within the current Collective Bargaining Agreement negotiations that the BUT is currently engaged in with the Bermuda Government and will be handled that way. For the rest, of the list, some of the concerns had already been addressed or were in the process of being addressed. The concerns remaining require long-term solutions and ways to go about addressing them were also discussed.

We did not get here overnight, but we are committed to making the necessary changes that are required. We will put in infrastructure and the changes necessary to deliver on our promises to reform education in Bermuda. We will continue to operate in good faith with the students, parents, teachers and the BUT and we will come together to accomplish what needs to be done.