

MINISTRY REFORMS

PILLAR 1: CONTENT REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT

- **Revising our curriculum to bring it to par with the curriculum of Schools in Australia, New Zealand and India.** A more comprehensive work on this will be carried out next year with the help of experts from outside Fiji.
- **Appointment of Specialist Officers in our Curriculum Division.** This year, following budgetary allocation by government to appoint subject matter specialists in our curriculum division, we have appointed Senior Education Officers with good quality Master's degree in relevant subject area.
- **Standardization of Syllabus for all schools in Fiji.** The Ministry has produced Video and Audio on syllabi content and should be quite helpful to teachers when using syllabus to plan and prepare lessons, scheme of work and other material involved in teaching and learning.
- **Reinstating the external exams into the schools from Years 6 to 13.** All students across Fiji, for a particular Year, for a subject, will now sit for a standard exam paper. This will ensure that every Teacher completes full syllabus and all students are tested on the same material immaterial of which School they attend.
- **Preparation of examination papers.** Exam papers will now be prepared by our subject matter specialists based in our Curriculum office.
- **Automatic progression of students into Year 12.** Examinations are a diagnostic tool only and not to fail or discourage a student. There will be automatic progression up to Year 12 for students.
- **Examination Marks will no longer be scaled.** Original raw subject marks will be given to students which will ensure all parties gets true picture on the true stock of knowledge a student has acquired.
- **Establishment of Technical College Campuses around Fiji.** Three Campuses has been established with over a thousand students enrolled with them. At least 7 more Colleges will be established and there have been expressions of interest from 10 more institutions to be converted to Campuses of the Technical College. Level II Certificate will be provided in key trade areas to those who have an aptitude in Technical Education. The criteria for Schools to be converted to a Campus of technical College includes:
 - a. Schools that have good infrastructure that no longer serves the original purpose/ need when it was established
 - b. Schools with low student numbers and having nearby/ neighboring schools within 5 km in proximity
- **First Aid skills and Basic OHS training for our teachers** so that they will impart these knowledge and skills to all our students.
- **Year 6 and Year 8 Programme after the students exam.** The following will be made compulsory for the Y6 and Y8 students for the next 7 weeks after they have completed their exams in week 4:
 - Year 6: Values/Virtues and Civic Education
 - Year 8: Girl Guides/Scouts, National Identity/Constitution and Citizenship Education

PILLAR 2: DELIVERY BY OUR TEACHERS

- **Induction for new teacher graduates.** Induction ceremonies started at the beginning of this year for the new Teacher Graduates. Teachers received training and awareness on all the new changes of the education system, information's on capacity building and policies. The inductions are being done to improve teacher quality, enhance student achievements and accelerate effectiveness of teaching.
- **Adoption of common curriculum by all teacher training institutions.** The Ministry has engaged in talks with teacher training institutions to adopt a common education curriculum by 2016. Under this strategy all teachers no matter what University or teacher training institution they graduate from, will learn the same skills and have the same teacher training and subject delivery skills. Teachers must have a reasonable grounding in the subject area
- **Use of GPA to recruit teachers.** In areas where we have over supply of graduates, the Ministry will recruit teachers based on their grades (GPA). The Ministry wants to place the best and brightest minds in our class rooms.
- **Teacher qualification upgrading.** The Ministry encourages not only urban but also teachers from remote and maritime areas to upgrade their qualification through in service- courses and continuous professional development workshops.
- **Basic English proficiency test for teachers.** From 2016, all non-English subject teachers in all our High Schools will be required to undertake online training on Basic English proficiency and sit for a diagnostic test. This test is a diagnostic tool to ensure competency of teachers in both oral and written English. The idea here is for all subject teachers to also check student submissions for proper English.
- **Teacher assessment.** Students have also been given the opportunity to contribute to the assessment of their teachers. The other forms of assessment will be carried out by their immediate supervisors and the outcome of the external examination results will also now feature in their overall performance rating.
- **Professional development for teachers.** Forums were conducted for all school heads in the four divisions at the beginning of the year to update them on new initiatives undertaken by the Ministry of Education. The Head Teachers and Principals Association also have their forums where the Senior Managements from the Ministry presented on the latest reforms and initiatives undertaken by the Ministry of Education as well as sharing of good practices to address challenging issues faced by teachers in the classroom. The Honourable Minister personally make it a point to attend these forums to outline the vision that the Ministry have, the vision that Govt has and where they feature in terms of realizing that vision.
- **Experience and specialists teachers for Year 1 and 2 students.** The Ministry is in the process of incentivizing experienced and specialist teachers to teach Year 1 and 2 students from 2016. These students need special attention and teachers with relevant experience should be appointed to teach these children at this vital development stage.
- **Increased absorption of teachers.** There will be a gradual increase in the number of teacher intake over the next 4 years. The number of teachers in primary schools with less than 8 teachers will also be increased to meet a target of 8 teachers for these schools.

- **Counselling.** The Ministry is now providing strategic counseling services to all our students through:
 - a. Placing full time counselors at our 9 District offices. These counselors will reach out to schools with any serious case.
 - b. Equipping every teacher with basic counseling skills. The Ministry have been undertaking Counselling workshops for our Teachers beginning May this Year.
- **Attachment of ECE Centres to Primary Schools.** All Primary schools will have an ECE Centre attached to it by 2017. This is to ensure that all children around these schools can first attend ECE before entering Year 1.
- **Free Tuition Grant for ECE Student.** Government has now made Early Childhood Education free. No child is now required to pay a single cent for tuition fees.
- **Temporary appointment of Roving Head Teacher and Principal.** They are experienced and proven Head teachers and Principals who have been auditing the schools and how they are operated, school infrastructure, class delivery and staff professional conduct. Roving Principal have also been placed to fix underperforming School for a short period of time while mentoring the new appointee.
- **Establishment of Junior Secondary Schools.** The Ministry is embarking on a new model to establish Junior secondary schools in remote areas where there will be resource optimization between the newly established junior secondary school and an existing primary school. In this new model, we optimize by having common playground, common library, IT lab, ablution block and utilities. The Ministry will only offer Years 9 and 10 via this model. This will start in the Northern Yasawa in 2016 and venture into other remote areas where we can do the same to allow students to access secondary education without having to establish a fully-fledged High School with major financial outlay.

PILLAR 3: IMPROVEMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE

- **Improved school infrastructure.** More financial assistance will be provided to rural schools in terms of providing proper infrastructure and utilities, providing water tanks and generators, upgrading computer labs, resourcing libraries and building more classrooms and carrying out long overdue maintenance work. Works has begun in the Yasawa and Kadavu schools and will continue to other related schools.
- **Digital literacy programme.** The Ministry intends to embark on a major digital literacy program from next year. A total of 5,000 tablets have been secured with the kind generosity of the Government of India to be distributed to rural and remote schools. This will ensure that the students in rural and remote schools also gain and experience the same digital exposure our students in well-resourced urban schools have.
- **Electronic mobile policy.** To ensure that students are not exposed to risky materials on social media, the Ministry have developed and approved an Electronics and Mobile Policy for all schools across Fiji following extensive consultation with all stakeholders.