



REPUBLIC OF NAURU

Ministry of Education
'Preparing Nauru for Tomorrow'

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Presented by the:
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Minister for Education
For
Parliament Information

Monday December 19, 2011

Mr. Speaker and Honourable Members,

It is a privilege to table before this December Parliament a report on the progress being made throughout the Department of Education and the Ministry of Education as a whole, since the beginning of this 2011 – 2012, Financial Year.

Mr. Speaker,

There has been lots of tremendous change and improvement going on within the Department of Education.

I am proud to announce to this Parliament and the 'General Public' that there has been a steady progress in the number of 'Graduate Teachers in the Department Education' since the commencement of this transitional upgrading programme.

In summary reflection on the outcome of the 'Teachers Development Programme', there are currently;

- 24 Teachers who have completed their Bachelors Degree with the Divine Word University and will be expected to graduate soon after the arrival of their Award. Including;
- 30 other Teachers who have completed their Diplomas with the same University along with 26 others who have completed their Certificates with the University of the South Pacific.

Furthermore Mr. Speaker, by next year 2012, more Teachers will be undertaking further training including;

- 9 Teachers who are currently continuing their Certificate in the Early Childhood, with the University of the South Pacific, along with 13 others going to do their Degree in the same programme in Early Childhood, and 27 Diplomas in Primary School with the Divine Word University.
- Currently there are 14 Teachers still undergoing their Degree Training with the Divine Word University.
- For the first time, 8 young Trainees will be leaving Nauru next year for Papua New Guinea to undertake their 4 years Secondary Degree Training in various subject speciality with the University of Goroka.

Mr. Speaker,

By the same token, the Nauru Teacher Institute Induction Programme has prepared 25 trainee teachers for all levels of teaching. The NTI programme constitutes topics offered by UNESCO and from the local context. The purpose of this program is to award teachers with certificate 1V which is to be accredited by the Kiribati Teachers College.

Mr. Speaker,

Mr. Speaker,

Ten students were awarded Government scholarship in the recent RONSS exams to study in Fiji in 2012. Ten students have secured placements at the various boarding schools in Fiji. The two students from Australia withdrew their scholarship and the two next students (11th and 12th) were offered the scholarship instead to continue their studies in Fiji.

Congratulations to the 2011/2012 RONSS award winners as prioritized;

1. Aaren EOBOB
2. Peter-Jack GIOUBA
3. Osana HARRIS
4. Marah Britania FRITZ
5. Vinay Dash DOWABOBO
6. Romanus HARTMAN
7. Ekka Brannon SEYMOUR
8. Lourdes O'Dea HARRIS
9. Unique-lee DICK
10. Yazmine COOK
11. Viola DOWABOBO
12. Xiena WIRAM

Due to the withdrawal of Aaren Eobob and Yazmine Cook, the 11th and 12th students were offered the scholarships.

Twelve students have completed their Form 7 studies and have returned home with pleasing results. These students are currently on a work experience programme organized by the Chief Secretariat's Human Resource Training and Development Sector.

A private student (**Mr. Paul Joram of Levuka Public School**) was awarded a Bursary Scholarship this year. The special scholarship is awarded to private students studying in Fiji and who have attained results in Form 5 and 6 which placed them in the top 15% of students in their exams. Another Nauru Secondary Bursary (RONSB) was awarded to **Mr. Niga Haluaga** a Form 7 student at Levuka Public who has shown outstanding results.

There are 56 Govt. students to continue their studies in Fiji in 2012.

THAILAND SCHOLARSHIP

There are four students currently studying in Thailand. Two have successfully completed and after graduating will be returning home early in the New Year. The other two still have another 3 years to complete. Both are doing well.

The Scholarship sponsored by the Pacific Education and Medical Foundation in collaboration with the Consulate-General of the Republic of Nauru in Thailand is again offering the scholarship to four undergraduates for 2012.

TAIWAN SCHOLARSHIP

Eight students are presently studying in Taiwan under the Taiwan Scholarship Programme which is offered every year. All students are coping and doing well.

AUSAID SCHOLARSHIP

Six students were selected to further their tertiary education in Fiji in 2012 but still waiting for confirmation of placements from the institutions.

NEW ZEALAND AID SCHOLARSHIP

Three placements were offered to Nauru for undergraduate and degree studies in New Zealand in 2012. Nauru was fortunate when FSM did not utilise the scholarship thus another three placements were offered to Nauru instead.

Six students were therefore selected to study in New Zealand in 2012.

COMMONWEALTH SCHOLARSHIP

One student is currently studying in New Zealand after doing her own research and was accepted.

Other capacity building opportunities have been offered through the
Russia Scholarship
Mexico Scholarship
Japan Scholarship
Commonwealth Scholarship

Mr. Speaker,

There has been significant progress with the Education Reform agenda under the AusAID-funded Education Implementation Strategy.

A range of activities has been completed under this Strategy and there has been significant progress on others. The Department of Education has:

- Delivered the Principal Leadership Program for all Principals and Teachers in Charge.
- Completed the Science syllabus. (Final draft)
- Developing the Language syllabus. (This is almost complete)
- Have commenced work on the Maths syllabus.
- The Social Science Syllabus and the Health and Physical Education syllabus are at the initial stage of writing.
- Completed the ICT training of teachers. This training was offered to individuals at each school to ensure that ICT problems can be maintained locally.

- Undertaken the external appraisal of teachers. A review was done on Heads of Schools.
- Upgraded TVET. TVET instructors were assessed so as upgrade and qualify them to be Assessors of TVET. There is also a possibility of extending the offer of TVET programmes.
- Undertaken the teachers training review. This review is being carried out by the University of Waikato where assess the current training programmes offered through the Divine Word University, USP and other providers in order to establish a training programme that is suitable to Nauru's needs.
- Provided Literacy support for early years at levels Playcentre to Prep.
- Developing the Early Years Curriculum – (This document has been completed and is hoped to be implemented next year given due endorsement.)
- Developed and installed a new Education Management Information System (EMIS)
- Begun the implementation of Minimum Standards for Schools (MSS) that is supported by a school grants program.

Another significant initiative is the planned introduction of the Nauru School Grants Program (NSGP). The NSGP has been developed to provide funds directly to schools in Nauru to assist in improving the quality of education.

The school grants process includes not only provision of funds to schools, it provides a platform for devolved decision-making to schools and their school communities, introduces transparency and accountability to decision-making, planning and financial management. It is closely linked to Minimum Standards for Schools (MSS) and School-based Management – all current global best practices to improve educational outcomes for students.

It is proposed to implement the NSGP in February 2012 to coincide with the new school year.

I acknowledge the generous funding through the AusAID education program.

Mr. Speaker,

Within the Department of Education, the Education Management Information System (EMIS) has been readied for the promotion and use of information for policy planning and implementation, decision-making and the monitoring and evaluation of education systems.

The EMIS also closely monitors the equitable distribution of resources and plays an active role in providing information to management about the deployment of teachers, student performance and assessment, internal efficiency of the education system and resource allocation.

This initiative has been made possible with generous funding from NZAID.

Mr. Speaker,

The Department of Education is in the process of addressing issues concerning students who have not been attending school. Current statistics show that nearly 50% of students at compulsory schooling age are not attending school. Since the introduction of the Education Act which came in effect in July of this year measures have been taken to address the truancy issues. An outreach program in consultation with parents and community members was conducted to advise them on the consequences of students being away from school in accordance to the Act being introduced. During the consultation the Department was made aware of some constraints from parents in sending their children to school.

1. Being unable to provide the proper uniforms and necessary items for students to attend school.
2. Students who have been out of school for one or two years are not able to be integrated into the mainstream learning because they have missed out on a great deal of learning and they would need special attention to their learning needs.

The Department of Education to address the need of providing uniforms secured funds from the Australian High Commission. Students who have been identified to genuinely need support in the supply of uniforms will be given preference in provision of school uniforms with a student starter pack kit.

In addressing the problem of students being out of school for a prolonged period of time the Department of Education invited a consultant specializing in re-engaging students with learning. The consultant was able to visit different stakeholders who will be responsible for supporting students who have been out of school and at risk.

A re-entry program was planned and the implementation of this program will come in effect beginning of the next school calendar year of 2012 targeting students at secondary level at years ten, eleven and twelve.

Mr. Speaker,

One of the necessary factors to improved learning is having an environment that is conducive and safe. Projects that have been completed are on school boundary fencing, library refurbishment, play center construction, manual arts refurbishment, classroom modification at the Able/Disable Centre and installation of drinking fountains at 10 schools. Several projects have been proposed and due commitment (financial and human) will be given to ensure the realization or further projects such as additional science lab, fencing, room (internal and external) refurbishments, installation of gravity tanks and other minor maintenance to name a few.

Mr. Speaker,

Excellent working relations between the Department of Education and the Department of Health has seen the implementation of projects under the Health Promoting Schools banner such as playground for Kayser College and a greenhouse for Nauru College. There has been a comprehensive health programme which has seen health promoters' visit schools to

conduct dental check-ups and general health examinations. Schools have also participated in promotions for road-safety, no tobacco, World Food Day and the breastfeeding campaign (for senior secondary students only).

Mr. Speaker,

A lot of partnerships and assistance has been provided by our generous neighbours not forgetting the Government of the Republic of China. This year, ROC generously donated school equipment and materials, provided rich cultural exchanges for our students and maintained friendly relationships with the Department for which we are grateful. We are thankful also to other organizations which have assisted the Department in reaching its objectives and goals.

Mr. Speaker and Honourable Colleagues,

As the Minister Responsible for the Ministry of Education, I would like to extend my gratitude to all the Management Team, Teachers and Support Staff who have dedicated themselves to ensuring that the learning and development process of our children's future are being met.

Also it would be unprofessional and un-parliamentarian of me not to mention the work and achievement of the former Minister for Education and the former Minister as well.

I also wish to express a plea for continued and improved support from parents, communities, and other stakeholders in our children's learning.

Mr. Speaker, Honourable Colleagues and all,

On behalf of the Ministry of Education, I firmly appeal to all parents and guardians to ensure their children have a safe and Happy Christmas and look forward to the New Year 2012, with the resolution of wanting to go to school everyday, reminding the mum's and dad's "I don't want to be late for school!"

Mwa Tubwa Kor!