

Statement from Shadow Education Minister Cole Simons.

As the Shadow Minister of Education, I am very distressed with the state of play with our teachers, para-professionals, principals, the BUT and the Minister.

We all, as stakeholders, should remember why we are involved in the delivery of educational services to our young people. We all made a commitment to help and support our students, so that they can reach their potential, be good citizens and are positioned to succeed professionally.

This tension, dysfunction and challenge that we see today truly demonstrates how the Minister and the Ministry are disconnected from what really transpires in our schools from a teaching, para-professional, administrative, professional development and support perspective and, more importantly, parental perspective.

There needs to be more synergy and better communications with all stakeholders so that there is a higher level of trust. All parents, teachers, para-professionals, principals, educational officers the Bermuda Union of Teachers, the Ministry and the Minister should all be on the same page in regards to ensuring that a vision for Bermuda's education and our young people is achieved.

Is it time to consider, as others have suggested, an Education Authority to take the politics out of education? We said in our Reply to the Throne Speech in relation to the success of the Bermuda Tourism Authority that "We believe that an Independent Education Authority would do similar great things for our children".