



REMARKS BY:

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

**PRESS CONFERENCE
Paget Primary School Demonstration**

**Wednesday, 26 June, 2019
12:30 pm**

Good Morning,

The Ministry of Education recognizes and acknowledges the concerns that have been expressed by parents at Paget Primary in regards to class size and teacher placement.

The Commissioner of Education and I met with PTA representatives and the Paget Primary Principal this morning. The PTA Representatives were forthright in sharing that the teachers of the schools had reached out to them and asked for their support

After speaking with the parents and Principal this morning, it is unfortunate that the narrative of teachers possibly losing their employment was driven by some of the teachers themselves. I can state that there will be no loss of employment only one teacher from Paget Primary will be reassigned.

Every year the Department of Education reviews enrollment and allocation of teaching resources and makes adjustments in the best interests of our students. This includes the routine reassignment of teachers within the system. Keeping with that practice, Paget Primary, as well as several other schools, was identified as a school that needed a review of staff allocation. This process was discussed with Principals approximately six weeks ago. I have been assured by the Principal at Paget Primary that she had discussed the potential reassignments with the potentially affected teachers as well.

The Ministry is committed to working with parents, teachers and students to insure that our students receive a quality education in a safe environment with the best teachers and resources made available. With declining enrollment at a number of schools, the Ministry and Department of Education is obligated to examine what measures best allow us to maintain our commitment to students and teachers.

Based on the response from the Principal and assessment of the needs of the schools and students, it was decided that one teacher from Paget's teaching staff would be reassigned to another public school for the 2019/2020 school year. This will result in a P4 class of 22 students having one classroom teacher.

This means that the staffing levels at Paget Primary will be reduced by one teacher only at the P4 level. The surplus P4 teacher will be relocated to fill an existing gap at another school where enrollment remains high.

The enrollment data for public schools clearly indicates a decline in the number of students, as was seen in the enrollment for 2019/ 2020 school year. A decline is projected to continue up to the year 2026. This reality will require us to continue to examine staffing allocation at our schools and also means that we will continue to reassign staff.

One of the benefits of reviewing class sizes and staffing allocations is that we are able to reassign teaching staff to fill vacancies within the public school system.

We will continue this practice, and note that the restructuring of staff will insure that we keep our teachers in the system, staffing gaps are filled and quality education continues within the Bermuda Public School System.

Our focus in the upcoming year is on ensuring excellent teaching occurs to help our students to achieve their highest potential. We are committed to working with parents, teachers and students to insure that our students receive a quality education in a safe environment with the best teachers and resources made available to them.