



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Communications Unit

Alexandra Street, St Clair

Tel: 622-1088 Fax: 628-2088

www.moe.gov.tt

News Release:

READINESS OF SCHOOLS FOR RE-OPENING ON MONDAY SEPTEMBER 3, 2007 Upgrading & Repair works at 321 schools

The Ministry of Education wishes to advise that 618 of the 621 Public Primary and Secondary schools are ready to receive students at the start of the 2007-2008 Academic Year on Monday, September 3, 2007. The remaining three schools -- Exchange R.C., Mucurapo Secondary and Bishop Anstey High Schools - will receive students for teaching and learning on September 10.

At Exchange R.C, work continues on the repair of the roof, ceiling, floors, and electrical systems. At Mucurapo Secondary, the upgrading of the teachers' toilets and student classrooms is expected to be completed in a few days and at Bishop Anstey High School, repairs are expected to be completed in a week. Mucurapo Secondary - formerly the Mucurapo Junior Secondary - is one of four Junior Secondary Schools that is being Deshifted and Converted.

The schools that will be Deshifted and Converted from September 3 include:

1. Penal Junior Secondary
2. Chaguanas Junior Secondary
3. Mt. Hope Junior Secondary

The schools that are being Converted include:

1. Chaguanas Senior Comprehensive
2. St. Augustine Senior Comprehensive, and
3. Mucurapo Senior Comprehensive.

In July 2007, the Ministry advised that students and teachers at 281 schools will find their schools in an improved condition as a result of a \$123 million School Repair and Refurbishment Programme initiated by the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. An additional 40 schools were included in the repair, upgrading and environmental works.

Construction works will continue at schools -- on evenings and weekends. This should not interfere with the functioning of the school or compromise the safety of occupants.

Senator Hazel Manning, Minister of Education extends “the appreciation of the entire Ministry to the contractors, project management consultants, the Boards of Education, Principals and Teachers for your cooperation and support in this move to ensure the upgrading of schools for quality teaching and learning. Special thanks to the Denominational Boards of Education for joining in the repair and upgrade works from August 1, 2007.”

She paid tribute to the Education Facilities Company Limited, EFCL; National Maintenance Training and Security Company, MTS; National Insurance Property Development Company, NIPDEC, consultants and contractors for the tremendous effort at repair and upgrading works at the schools.

The nation-wide School Repair and Refurbishment Programme seeks to combat the deterioration of primary and secondary schools and ensure that they are proactively maintained in a quality environment. It includes the upgrading of facilities to meet the requirements of an expanded and modernized curriculum as well as to address health and safety issues.

The on-going focus of the Ministry’s school maintenance efforts seeks to address the foremost challenges affecting schools in the following critical areas:

1. Upgrade of sanitation (toilets, sewerage disposal, plumbing and water storage systems)
2. Repairs to the roof
3. Upgrade of electrical systems
4. Structural improvements including the replacement of defective floors and walls

5. Environmental concerns (erosion, sea blast, termite infestation)
6. Security
7. Upgrading of recreational grounds
8. The provision of furniture and equipment

Some of the specific areas that will continue to be addressed include the upgrading of:

- Technology Education facilities: Workshops laboratories and electrical systems to facilitate the expanding use of computers, Internet and air-condition systems in our schools.
- Physical Education facilities: The upgrade of playfields, pavilion, gymnasium, hard courts and auditoriums
- Visual and Performing Arts facilities: The inclusion of auditoriums and Music Rooms for Theatre Arts, Dance and Music.

The Ministry of Education, as part of its risk assessment analysis, recently implemented an Asset Register as part of its Computerised Maintenance Management System to improve the capacity to track and monitor the physical condition of schools and to provide responses in real time to requests for repairs. The Ministry is of the view that the Asset Register and Computerised Maintenance Management System will facilitate identification of all assets; inform which schools are to be repaired on a more timely schedule.

30th August 2007.