

PRIMARY & SECONDARY SCHOOLS – CURRICULUM REFORMS

(No. B/1161) Mr N. Bodha (First Member for Vacoas and Floreal) asked the Minister of Education, Culture and Human Resources whether, in regard to curriculum reforms, he will state if Government will consider introducing arts, sports and civic values as examinable subjects at primary and secondary levels.

Reply: In the context of reforms which are being undertaken by my Ministry in the education sector, due consideration has already been given to Arts, Sports and Civic Values in the school curriculum. The National Curriculum Framework for the Primary Sector which was developed in 2006 places a lot of importance of the teaching and learning of these.

With regard to the Primary Sector, Arts is covered as a component in the teaching of other subjects at Standards I and II levels. Arts exist as a subject from Standards III to VI.

Sports, for its part, is already covered in the subject of Health and Physical Education in the primary sector and will be further strengthened as from January 2010. Civic Values, on the other hand, are integrated into the different subjects across the curriculum from Standards III to VI.

These subjects are not examinable but with the introduction of Continuous Assessment at primary level, consideration is being given to these subjects being assessed.

At Secondary level, Visual Arts is an examinable subject from Forms I to III. In addition, Art and Design, is offered as an optional subject from Forms IV to VI and is examinable.

Music is also offered as a subject in Forms I and II but is not examinable presently.

Sports, also known as Physical Education, are practised by students in classes starting Form I to Form VI. An evaluation is carried out at school level in Forms I and II. Consideration is being given to extending the evaluation exercise to students of Form III, and also for the introduction of Physical Education as an examinable subject at School Certificate as from 2011. In this context, a pilot project is being initiated as from 2010 in Form IV in fourteen (14) secondary schools, both State and private, to offer it as an examinable subject.

"Civic Values" is integrated in the various subjects taught at secondary level and the question of making it an examinable subject does not arise. Moreover, I am informed that, the subject "Civic Values" or "Citizenship" is not available as an international syllabus for examinations at either Ordinary or Advanced Level.

FORM V – SUBJECT SCIENCE

(16)

(No. B/1173) Mrs L.D. Dookun-Luchoomun (Third Member for La Caverne and Phoenix) asked the Minister of Education, Culture and Human Resources whether, in regard to the project to render compulsory the taking of science as a subject up to Form V level, he will state where matters stand.

Reply: The project to which the Hon. Member is referring is entitled "Broadening the Curricular base at Form V project". This project does not concern Science only. It aims at ensuring that our students at Form IV and V are exposed to a broader curriculum and subject base in order to make them better equipped, once they reach the age of 16 years, to face the requirements of an increasingly multidisciplinary world of work. I wish, therefore, at the very outset, to clarify that the project was not intended to make sciences compulsory.

The project which is currently being piloted in 14 state and private secondary schools in Mauritius and Rodrigues, provides for Form IV students to study a broader curriculum than is presently the case in non pilot schools. All Form IV science students in these pilot schools are thus studying an 8th subject which is either a social science subject or literature, and all Form IV non-science students are studying a new general science subject called 21st Century Science. This subject is taught in the UK.

The new 21st Century science subject contains several elements departing from the classical sciences. These are very much in line with modern-day topical science issues, such as pollution and global warming, management of natural disasters and as keeping healthy.

As part of the on-going evaluation, meetings have been organised with Educators and their proposals to improve the piloting are being taken on board. Furthermore, a survey form has been prepared and discussed with these pilot colleges to obtain feedback on the third term examination performance of the students in these colleges.

My Ministry will, subsequently and in the light of the performance of students in 2009 in the pilot schools, come up with a project evaluation in early 2010. This evaluation taken will help to decide on the need to expand the project to other State and private schools in 2011 (or otherwise). In the decision to expand or not to further colleges in 2011, my Ministry will take into consideration the needs for additional teachers and their training to sensitize them on the new subject.