

SECONDARY

PSSA

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14/10/09

BRADLEY, BYRON AND GRAND BOIS COLLEGES –GRANTS

(B/850) Mr E. Guimbeau (First Member for Curepipe and Midlands) asked the Minister of Education, Culture and Human Resources whether, in regard to the Bradley College, the Byron College and the Grand Bois College respectively, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Private Secondary School Authority, information as to if the Authority is proposing to cease the payment of grants thereto and, if so, the reasons therefor, indicating in each case, the remedial measures taken in relation to the

- (a) pupils;
- (b) teachers and other staff members, and
- (c) owner of the building.

Reply: In a letter dated 31 October 2008, the PSSA informed my Ministry that in the context of the registration/renewal registration of private secondary schools to function in 2009, the PSSA Board had identified three schools in respect of which grant should no longer be payable in 2009. These schools were Bradley College, Byron College and Grand Bois College.

According to the PSSA, these schools did not have the minimum student population of 175 as per the approved policy. Secondly, Byron College and Grand Bois College suffered from strained industrial relations.

Following representations made by the Federation of Managers of private secondary schools to the effect that they resent an abrupt closing down of any school at the beginning of the year, the PSSA Board had exceptionally agreed that a moratorium period of one year be given to the Managers to allow them to plan and prepare their closing down in the subsequent year. The schools were informed accordingly by the PSSA.

As regard remedial measures in case of closure of schools, arrangements are normally made as follows -

- (a) pupils will be transferred to other schools in the vicinity where vacancies exist;
- (b) teachers and other non-teaching staff will be absorbed in MEDCO and redeployed in either MEDCO schools or other State Secondary School as appropriate, and
- (c) compensation as recommended by the Management Audit Bureau would be paid to the Managers. The computation is based on school population, number of years of school existence and grants on specialised assets.

In January 2009, representations were made against the decision of the PSSA from Bradley College especially in regard to the student population figure quoted by the PSSA and disputed by the Management of the College.

Fresh representations were made again in July this year. The management has drawn attention to the fact that it caters for a large number of pre-voc students (over 90 students) coming from deprived areas in the region namely Cité La Cure, Roche Bois, Carreau Kalyptis, La Briquetterie and Camp La Boue. I am informed that this fact is current in the event the school is made to close down, this may cause undue hardship and prejudice to the pre-voc students. Taking into consideration, the social implication of such a step, my Ministry has asked that this matter be reviewed as a matter of urgency. My Ministry is closely following up the situation.
