



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Education Towers, No.5 St. Vincent Street, Port of Spain, Trinidad

Seventeenth Report of the Joint Select Committee on
Social Services and Public Administration –

An Inquiry into the Ministry of Education's strategies for
ensuring continuity in the delivery of education amidst the
COVID-19 Pandemic

OBJECTIVE 1: TO EXAMINE THE GAPS IN THE CONTINUITY MEASURES OF THE MOE DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC.

FINDINGS (page 26-28)

- ii. *User challenges with the SLMS have deterred teachers and students from fully harnessing the potential of the online platforms. However, an equally significant issue was the lack of internet access and appropriate electronic devices among the student and teacher populations.*

The Training Division of the Ministry of Education (MOE) responded to these challenges by equipping teachers and principals with the necessary pedagogies and aligned competencies to facilitate online and blended instruction and assessment. See Appendix I for a comprehensive list of training workshops, webinars and courses provided for teachers.

With respect to lack of internet access and appropriate electronic devices among the student and teacher populations a number of initiatives were put in place as follows:

- Distribution of laptops in stock to primary and secondary school teachers to facilitate online teaching and learning.
- Discussions with foreign stakeholders such as the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the European Union (EU) and CAF for the provision of devices for students. To date:
 - An agreement has been entered into with Corporacion Andina de Fomento CAF/UNICEF for the provision of US\$ 75,000 for the acquisition of 1,000 devices. To date, tender documents have been prepared to facilitate the procurement exercise;
 - An agreement has been entered into with UNICEF. Under their Generation Unlimited Initiative, a total of US\$195,500 has been provided to facilitate teacher training and for mitigation of the impact of COVID-19.
- Discussions have been held with local organisations and stakeholders for the provision of electronic devices to be utilised by students in need;
- The Adopt-a-school initiative to leverage corporate Trinidad and Tobago was launched with 21,175 devices pledged, of which 2,400 have been received;
- A Memorandum of Understanding was signed with the Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago (TATT) for the provision of 10,000 devices with SIM cards. Delivery is under way with students in examination classes being targeted for distribution;

Inquiry into the Ministry of Education's strategies for ensuring continuity in the delivery of education amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic

With respect to connectivity The Ministry collaborated with the Telecommunication Association of Trinidad and Tobago (TATT), the Ministry of Public Administration (MPA) and service providers Digicel and TSTT to expand Internet connectivity to all locales. These service providers made internet access zero rated to students who access the SLMS for the three-month period ending July 31, 2020. Negotiations are ongoing to facilitate continued connectivity.

- vi. *It was evident that a large segment of the student population who are eligible for food support was unable to access same due in part to the miscommunication among key stakeholders.*

Response:

In March 2020, the Ministry of Education embarked on a data collection drive to acquire the names of the students who access the School Nutrition Programme under the National School Dietary Services Limited (NSDSL). This information was provided to Ministry of Social Development to facilitate the provision of Food Cards.

RECOMMENDATIONS (page 26-28)

- A. *There is a need for the MoE to host urgent consultations with all stakeholders to discuss the following:*
- i. *Challenges faced by schools in relation to preparing for examinations and the reopening of schools;*

The Ministry of Education consulted with stakeholders on challenges related to the COVID-19 Pandemic inclusive of Exam related issues on several occasions inclusive of:

- Meeting with the Catholic Education Board of Management - April 14, 2020 (This meeting was requested by the Board);
- Meeting with UNICEF – April 16, 2020
- Meeting with Denominational Boards - April, 24, 2020
- Meeting with Principals' Associations - April, 24, 2020
- Meeting with TTUTA – April 28, 2020
- Meeting with IDB – May 4, 2020
- Meeting with TTUTA – May 5, 2020
- Meeting with COHSOD – May 8, 2020
- Meeting with TTUTA – May 12, 2020
- Meeting with IDB – May 13, 2020
- Meeting with UNICEF – May 13, 2020

Inquiry into the Ministry of Education's strategies for ensuring continuity in the delivery of education amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic

- Letter to CXC dated June 3, 2020 outlining recommendations for adapting the 2020 examinations, based on feedback from teachers and Curriculum Officers who are engaged in varying capacities with CXC – June 8, 2020
- Meeting with CAF/UNICEF – June 23, 2020
- Meeting with NaPSPA – June 26, 2020
- Meeting with NaPSPA – July 7, 2020
- Meeting with Ministry of Health – July 9, 2020
- Meeting with TTUTA – July 9, 2020
- Meeting with stakeholders (NaPSPA, APASS, APPSS, ADBE, TTUTA, Private Primary Schools Association, NPTA) – July 21, 2020
- Meeting with NaPSPA, APASS, APPSS, ADBE, TTUTA, Private Primary Schools Association, NPTA – July 28, 2020
- Meeting with – NaPSPA, APASS, APPSS, ADBE, TTUTA, Private Primary Schools Association, NPTA – August 3, 2020
- Letter to CXC dated September 25, 2020 outlining recommendations for adapting the 2021 examinations, based on feedback from teachers and Curriculum Officers who are engaged in varying capacities with CXC – September 25, 2020

The National Advisory Committee on Education also hosted education Stakeholder Meetings throughout this period. At these meetings the views, major concerns and recommendations of stakeholders were garnered with respect to the hosting of examinations, health and safety guidelines, provision of materials for cleaning and sanitising, and teacher training, inter alia.

While schools were closed effective March 16, 2020, provisions were made for the conduct of Secondary Entrance Assessment (SEA) and School Based Assessment (SBA) completion and preparations for conducting SEA and Caribbean Examination Council (CXC) 2020 examinations.

These include the communication of guidelines for remote learning as follows:

- By memorandum dated March 16, 2020, schools were asked to provide data on challenges experienced with respect to online teaching and learning. Teachers were also asked to volunteer to record teaching lesson topics for upload to the SLMS and for radio and Television broadcast.
- On March 17, 2020, schools were asked to provide information on Standard 5 students who were unable to benefit from the online links for educational material due to lack of devices and connectivity. This was intended to facilitate exam preparation.
- On May 26, 2020, guidelines for School preparedness for SBA completion and School preparedness for CXC Examinations 2020 were disseminated to Principals (Secondary) via two (2) memoranda. These documents contained detailed

Inquiry into the Ministry of Education’s strategies for ensuring continuity in the delivery of education amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic

guidelines on physical infrastructure, prominent signage, classroom and staffroom readiness, cleaning and sanitising, personal responsibility, hygiene, screening rooms, stay-at-home policy for persons with flu like symptoms, respiratory etiquette, washroom facilities, examination rooms and seating, entry and exit protocols, student attendance, sharing of resources and conduct of moderation exercises for SBAs.

- On June 8, 2020 a letter was sent to CXC outlining recommendations for adapting the examinations, based on feedback from teachers and Curriculum Officers who are engaged in varying capacities with CXC.
- On August 13 and 14, 2020 Ministry officials met with selected principals of Secondary and Primary respectively to discuss their reopening plans as per the MOE guidelines. Challenges of various school types (as it relates to physical infrastructure, school enrolment, socio-economic status of students, geographical location etc) and rotational models of class scheduling were also discussed. These discussions informed the MOE document entitled “Guidelines for the Reopening of Schools”.

ii. Funding for the COVID-19 measures within schools;

To date the Ministry of Education has expended \$5,192,881.66 on various items related to the mitigation of the effects of COVID-19. These include cleaning items such as hand soap, hand sanitizer, hand tissue paper, toilet paper and disinfectant; paper, ink and toner for the preparation of printed packages; and tissue dispensers. In additions, \$2,126,798.36 was expended on plastic sink installation, soap and hand towel dispenser installation and sanitisation of schools.

iii. The way forward for education with respect to online and distance learning;

Face-to-face delivery of the curriculum was not permissible for Term I of the 2020 – 2021 academic year by the issuance of Legal Notice 292 of The Public Health Ordinance, Ch. 12 No. 4, 17th August, 2020 which states that:

Notwithstanding subregulation (1)(i), a public or private pre-school, early childhood education centre, primary school, secondary school or tertiary institution may provide classes to its students by electronic or such other means as may be approved by the Minister

On August 27, 2020, guidelines for the reopening of school were revised to facilitate remote teaching and learning. These guidelines facilitated online classes for those with devices and connectivity, and a distance learning package system for those students who did not have access to devices and connectivity. Stakeholders were given the opportunity to comment on these guidelines and their recommendations were incorporated.

Additionally, given the impact of COVID-19 on curriculum implementation, the Ministry of Education has:

Inquiry into the Ministry of Education’s strategies for ensuring continuity in the delivery of education amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic

- extended teaching time by scheduling the examinations later in the year, during June 2021.
- revised the SEA Assessment Objectives for 2021-2023. For the next three years, there will be a reduction in the number of items on the SEA English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics Paper
- declared the type of writing assessed in the ELA Writing Paper for 2021, so that attention can be directed at developing and deepening skills in one writing type.
- initiated the development of another SEA ELA specimen paper that illustrates the revised objectives and items for 2021-2023. This is in addition to the two SEA ELA Specimen Papers, ELA Writing Exemplars, ELA Item Bank and SEA ELA past papers currently available in support of candidates
- planned residual technical ELA training for newly assigned SEA teachers
- developed video lessons that specifically target the skill areas assessed for the SEA as well as other primary school levels. These, which are available on the SLMS, promote self-directed learning. They are also broadcasted by TTT in their SEA Time and MOE time segments and re-broadcasted on channel 4 daily.
- in recognition of the limited screen time recommended for younger students, developed a newspaper pull out (Sunday Guardian) targeting ECCE and Infant years I and II.
- Developed a radio programme which works in tandem with the ECCE pull out is also aired on Talk City 91.1
- prepared and disseminated to selected stakeholders, an Exemplar document advising on implementation of a blended approach to instruction to deliver topics from all 9 subjects at primary and 9 subjects at lower secondary as well as various subjects for forms 4-6.

iv. Drafting and implementation of Guidelines/Protocols for the reopening of schools;

The Ministry of Education has produced the following documents for the reopening of schools:

- Guidelines for the reopening of schools “The New Normal” Term II January 2021 (used in conjunction with the Ministry of Health Guidelines)
- Adapted primary school curriculum for academic year 2020-2021:
- Adapted secondary school curriculum for Academic Year 2020-2021:
- Guidelines and Procedures for Managing Remote Learning and Professional Development for Online and Blended Teaching and Learning

These documents were also forwarded to key stakeholders associated with the Ministry of Education:

- President, Private Special Schools Association of Trinidad and Tobago
- Private Secondary Schools Association
- MIC Institute of Technology
- Association of Denominational Boards
- Private Primary Schools Association

Inquiry into the Ministry of Education's strategies for ensuring continuity in the delivery of education amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic

- National Parent Teachers Association (NPTA)
- Association of Principals of Public Secondary Schools
- National Primary School Association
- Trinidad and Tobago Unified Teachers Association (TTUTA)
- Pentecostal Assemblies of the West Indies

The deadline date for submission of comments and feedback is November 19, 2020.

National Consultations are also ongoing for the period November 4, 2020 to December 4, 2020 to discuss the following topics:

- Conduct of SEA and transition to secondary school
- The Concordat
- Parental Involvement in Education
- Blended Learning
- Curriculum Reform
- Teacher Training
- Teaching Service Commission

The ensuing discussions and written recommendations will inform the way forward with regard to Term II and beyond.

B. The MoE upgrade the user interface of the SLMS for it to become more user-friendly as well as integrate the ability for principals to monitor the work of teachers while on the SLMS platform;

The Ministry of Education has upgraded a separate version of the SLMS with integrated usability enhancements which is yet to be reviewed and launched. The SLMS is currently under technical review by a cross functional educational sector team for a period of two (2) months with the initial kick off meeting taking place on November 6th 2020. The technical review seeks to:

- (a) obtain an assessment of the overall SLMS performance to date as against project goals and desired results;
- (b) establish Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) and a Results Framework that would facilitate future comparisons;
- (c) provide as far as possible a listing and analysis of the lessons learnt in respect of SLMS design, implementation, management and sustainability;
- (d) provide an assessment of the project's contribution to Curriculum delivery; and
- (e) devise and present to the Ministry's Senior Management a Monitoring System or Tool that can be used for monitoring the SLMS.

The ability for monitoring by Principals of work conducted is currently present on the SLMS either via in person monitoring or end user reporting.

Inquiry into the Ministry of Education’s strategies for ensuring continuity in the delivery of education amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic

- C. The MoE incorporate the following recommendations of the Trinidad and Tobago Blind Welfare Association and the Trinidad and Tobago Association for the Hearing Impaired (DRETCHI) to upgrade the user interface of the SLMS for special needs students:
- i. *additional videos to help special needs children understand the work being done online;*
 - ii. *smart Boards and multiple types of visual aids in the online platforms;*
 - iii. *access should be given to assistant Interpreters to communicate and help the deaf and hard-of-hearing children with their school work;*
 - iv. *allow for activities uploaded on the platform to be read by computer screen readers; and*
 - v. *training for teachers delivering video content to ensure that when teaching, everything is described audibly.*

Response:

The Ministry of Education has upgraded a separate version of the School Learning Management System with integrated usability enhancements.

Relevant interventions have been implemented for students based on their individualised needs. The “**Designing Online Tools for Special Needs Students**” workshop was conducted for General and Special Education Teachers of blind and visually impaired students. The workshop provided special educators with information on creating subject content using technological tools and applications for special needs students.

Teachers of the deaf as well as assistant interpreters are already assigned to work with the deaf and hard of hearing students as they engage in virtual learning. Whilst classes are being conducted synchronously through a web conferencing platform interpreter will interpret the class for the students during the session. To compensate for the shortage of interpreters, they receive the work from the class and subject teachers and translate it into sign language for the students. This ensures that deaf and hard of hearing students keep pace with the other students in the class.

Seven (7) interpreter assistants assumed duty on 2 November 2020 on short-term contract. The Ministry of Education is in the process of advertising for additional interpreters.

Inquiry into the Ministry of Education’s strategies for ensuring continuity in the delivery of education amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic

- D. Given that the COVID-19 and the impending CSEC, CAPE and SEA examinations can cause increased anxieties and stress in students, an urgent outreach project should be launched to encourage students and parents to assess mental health support services via the Student Support Services Division. MoE should also seek the support of mental health professionals in the private sector to provide assistance with this initiative on a voluntary basis.**

Response:

The Developmental Assessment and Intervention (DAI) Unit has initiated a project titled Promoting Mental Health in Education: A Post COVID-19 Initiative. The project seeks to investigate and mitigate the psychological impact on children and adolescents during the COVID-19 pandemic. It also promotes sensitisation on mental health for all students, and highlights the areas that require specialised support, provides insight into coping strategies and preventative care, both during and after the pandemic.

The DAI has collaborated with internal divisions at the MOE, and other governmental agencies such as the Ministry of Health and Office of the Prime Minister.

Other outreach measures include:

1. Development of virtual support groups for students and parents: there are specific groups for parents and students. These include:
 - a. Mental Health support group for students
 - b. Building Emotional Intelligence support for students
 - c. Greif and Loss support for students
 - d. Parenting in Education Support group
2. Perception surveys were conducted to investigate the impact of COVID-19 on students, parents, and teachers.
3. Student Support Services Hotline hotline contacts were dissemination for students, parents and other stakeholders to access relevant psychosocial support.
4. SSSD provided examination preparation debriefings focusing on examination techniques, testing anxiety and coping strategies for students. Parental support was also provided. These sessions were conducted virtually.

- E. The MoE consider incorporating aspects of the APPSST&T’s draft online policy for teaching and learning (Appendix VII) in the MoE’s National Policy for Teaching and Learning Online.**

Inquiry into the Ministry of Education’s strategies for ensuring continuity in the delivery of education amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic

Discussions have been held with internal stakeholders with regard to the APPSST&T’s draft online policy for teaching and learning and have incorporated elements into the draft remote learning policy.

F. There is a need to provide a period of “catching up” for students who have fallen behind or had a break in their education before proceeding with the next stages of the syllabi.

The usual practice of diagnostic assessment and strategies for bridging the identified gaps were shared with both primary and secondary schools in September 2020, at the beginning of the new academic term.

To that end schools are required to develop a departmental work plan, determine curriculum gaps with the implementation of diagnostic testing and implement strategies for bridging any identified gaps. Support is provided to schools through the curriculum division.

G. The MoE consider the opinion of the PSSBE and the ASJA Board of Education that each school has an HSE officer assigned for the duration of the examination period within schools.

The Ministry of Education is constrained in the hiring of staff by budgetary considerations as well as standard public service recruitment policies and procedures. There has been a freeze in the hiring of public officers, while the budgetary allocation for contract and short-term employees does not facilitate the hiring of additional staff. As such the Ministry is unable to consider this proposal.

H. The MoE circulate standardized HSE guidelines for the preparation of schools for the re-opening of schools and conduct of examinations.

The Ministry of Education, with input from the Ministry of Health, has developed and circulated ‘Guidelines for the reopening of schools “The New Normal” Term II January 2021 (to be used in collaboration with the Ministry of Health Guidelines) and Support for Parents, Students and Teachers

I. A comprehensive review/assessment of the MoE’s response to this unexpected public health emergency must be executed as a means of determining successes, failures and lessons learned to inform future responses to similar emergencies.

The Ministry of Education is currently developing its Emergency Operations Plan with support from the Ministry of National Security and the Office of Disaster Preparedness Management (ODPM), which will treat with issues related to emergencies and the required responses.

J. That the MoE collaborate with the MoSDFS to establish standardized/documented criteria to assist with selecting students/families for food support initiatives.

The Ministry of Education has convened a multi-disciplinary team to develop a Means Test to inform distribution of electronic devices. The Ministry of Social Development and Family

Inquiry into the Ministry of Education's strategies for ensuring continuity in the delivery of education amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic

Services has representation on this Committee. Once developed the Ministry will investigate the possibility of utilising this Means Test for wider purposes.

OBJECTIVE 2: TO DETERMINE THE LEVEL OF ACCESSIBILITY OF ELECTRONIC DISTANCE LEARNING INITIATIVES TO POOR AND MARGINALISED STUDENTS OF ECCE, PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC;

FINDINGS (page 31-33)

- iii. The Committee is awaiting the MoE's official strategy for the distribution of the laptops to teachers and students given that the academic year is expected to officially end in the first week of July, 2020 (or thereabouts). The Committee expects that arrangements will be made to prioritise standard 5 teachers and students who are expected to resume classes from July 20, 2020 until the date of SEA examinations.*

On April 9, 2020 the Ministry of Education commenced the data collection exercise on teacher access to laptops. Thereafter, the approval of the Cabinet to distribute approximately twelve thousand (12,000) computers in stock to teachers was sought and obtained. A Memorandum of Agreement was developed, comments from TTUTA incorporated, and distribution to teachers commenced in June, 2020. Teachers who did not avail themselves of this opportunity at that time, collected laptops as required in October 2020.

RECOMMENDATIONS (page 31-33)

- A. The MoE should consider the proposal of the NAPSPA in Appendix VIII in adopting a dedicated multi-media approach to the provision of distance learning classroom for students.**

As indicated above, the MOE has incorporated the use of television, radio and newspaper pull-outs into the remote learning repertoire.

- B. The MoE in collaboration with the relevant stakeholders should undertake additional studies on the 'digital divide' and internet penetration rate among junior primary and junior secondary students (forms 1 to 3) as a means of developing its data bank to guide and inform future policy decisions.**

The Ministry has held talks with the Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago (TATT) and the Ministry of Public Administration and Digital Transformation and internet service providers in terms of documenting the internet penetration and connectivity coverage throughout Trinidad and Tobago. In addition, information on individual student (Primary and Secondary) access is being collected at intervals. This information will inform strategies

Inquiry into the Ministry of Education's strategies for ensuring continuity in the delivery of education amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic

for distribution of 45,000 MiFi devices (as promised in the budget) and implementation of additional strategies for augmenting connectivity.

- C. That consideration be given to prioritising the distribution of laptops to standard 5 teachers and students who are expected to resume classes from July 20, 2020 until the date of SEA examinations. In this regard, a method of assessing eligibility should be developed.**

The Ministry of Education has prioritized the continuous distribution of laptops to all teachers and students. With respect to teachers, the Ministry has distributed 2,146 devices in July 2020; 1,075 devices in October 2020; and 2,514 devices are also assigned to teachers situated at their Secondary School. Total distribution to date is approximately 5,735 laptop devices.

Devices for students are being facilitated via several avenues. The Adopt-a-School initiative has received 20,175 pledges of devices thus far. Further, the MOE's fiscal package, provided by the Government, in the amount of \$50 Mn dollars to procure devices subject to a means test is currently underway. Additionally, the Government has pledged to provide 45,000 MiFi devices for students who may have connectivity issues throughout Trinidad and Tobago. A committee has convened to determine the criteria for eligibility through a means test for the distribution of these devices.

Additionally, the Ministry of Education has also entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago (TATT) to supply a further 10,000 devices with connectivity options supplied by TSTT and Digicel. These devices, when received, will be distributed to students of Standard Five, Form Five and Sixth Form.

- D. That a feasibility study be conducted on a proposed schools broadcasting network which may comprise a dedicated free-to-air television channel and a radio frequency. This initiative will be aimed at benefiting the marginalized student who may be unable to access the internet or an appropriate electronic device. However, the committee acknowledges that such an intervention may add limited value to special needs students.**

Inquiry into the Ministry of Education’s strategies for ensuring continuity in the delivery of education amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic

The Ministry began working with the TTT broadcast services for the production of televised lessons in March 2020. Production of lessons for airing on TTT is currently ongoing. The Government Information Services Limited (GISL) Television 4 (TV4) channel is now dedicated for the broadcasting of lessons developed by the MOE. Broadcasts are from 8:00 am to 2:00 pm and lessons are repeated in the afternoon every day of the week. TTT continues to broadcast MOE SEA Time and Open Classroom (Infants to Std 4) at 9:15 am and 1:15 pm daily. Televised lessons are also available on the MOE’s YouTube channel.

Additionally, MOE has implemented the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) and Infants Activity Pack to assist students without connectivity. The ECCE pull-out is published every Sunday Guardian. A radio programme which works in tandem with the ECCE pull out is also aired on Talk City 91.1.

These broadcasts facilitated serve to address key concepts in subjects taught at both the primary and secondary levels as well as serve as exemplars to teachers of how online instruction may be facilitated, as well as provide access to learning for students without devices or internet.

OBJECTIVE 3: TO ASSESS THE MOE’S SUPPORT INTERVENTIONS FOR LOW ACHIEVERS AND SPECIAL NEEDS ECCE, PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS;

RECOMMENDATIONS *(page 37-39)*

A. Given that special needs students were significantly disadvantaged during this period of public health emergency, the MoE should give consideration to the following:

- i. Holding consultations with organisations, parents and teachers who support children with special needs to determine appropriate responses and interventions strategies that can be implemented during situations which require schools to be prematurely closed.**

The Student Support Services Division (SSSD) continues to collaborate with stakeholders as required. During the pandemic, additional training to support Special Education Teachers and parents in strategies for home-based learning were implemented. Parents of students referred to the SSSD have been receiving direct support and strategies to empower them to assist with their children while at home.

B. In furtherance of the recommendation above, the MoE should collaborate with the NPTA and organisations representing children with special needs to explore options/avenues for providing basic training in teaching/learning techniques to parents/guardians of students with special needs. For example, the teaching of sign

Inquiry into the Ministry of Education’s strategies for ensuring continuity in the delivery of education amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic

language classes to parents online as a means of empowering them to assist their children in a more effective manner.

The MOE’s Inclusive School’s Project has organised several stakeholder engagements at which NPTA was represented. A major stakeholder consultation was held over a three-day period at the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine campus in November, 2019.

Consultations continued in 2020 via virtual platforms under the remit of Inclusive School’s Project Advisory Committee (ISPAC) whose mandate ensures continued stakeholders engagement.

C. That the MOE adopt an equal access to information policy that will guide the Ministry’s approach to disseminating information to stakeholders in a consistent, fair and accurate manner.

The MOE currently provides information via its website, Facebook and Instagram whereby salient information is accessed by stakeholders. In addition, documents are shared with key stakeholders for comments as required.

OBJECTIVE 4: TO EXAMINE TEACHERS’ RESPONSE AND TEACHER SUPPORT SYSTEMS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

FINDINGS (page 43-44)

- ii. The work done by teachers during the COVID-19 period was not standardized and was based solely on the discretion of teachers. However, it appeared that some teachers of students with pending examinations attempted to sustain the delivery of the respective syllabi/curricula. Notwithstanding, when schools reopen teachers should be asked to dedicate some time to assess the learning gaps of their students.**

All schools are supplied with a standardised syllabus for each primary level (Infant 1 to Standard 5) and lower secondary levels. These syllabi are accessed online via the MOE website. Delivery of teaching and learning is monitored and evaluated via established structures and procedures utilising the curriculum and school supervision divisions.

Learning gaps will be addressed through diagnostic testing and remediation strategies as needed.

- iii. It was concerning that there was generally no arrangement in place to monitor or evaluate the content that was being delivered by teachers via online platforms. As this method of teaching may become a permanent component of teaching**

Inquiry into the Ministry of Education’s strategies for ensuring continuity in the delivery of education amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic

methodology, an appropriate mechanism for adequately monitoring the output of teachers must be developed and or introduced.

As indicated above, the delivery of teaching and learning is monitored and evaluated via established structures and procedures utilising the curriculum and school supervision divisions.

Additionally, content developed for uploaded to the SLMS were evaluated including seven hundred and ninety-one (791) links submitted by NALIS, one hundred and ten (110) eLearning videos accessed from Jamaica, and fifty (50) EMA submissions.

Teachers and CPDD officers have also been trained to select OERs so as to reduce incidents of copyright infringement.

- iv. Teachers’ experiences and challenges using the on-line platform have been varied as most were required to abruptly learn about and/or switch to a new instructional modality while learning the technology.**

These challenges were addressed via intensive blended learning training for teachers and administrators. Attached is the comprehensive list of training conducted to mitigate the challenges faced by teachers delivering the curriculum utilising remote modalities as detailed in Appendix I. It should be noted that prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, teacher training programmes incorporated the use of productivity which was developed to support the MoE’s ICT 5 STAR initiative that includes building ICT competencies among staff.

RECOMMENDATIONS *(page 43-44)*

- A. It is imperative that the MoE collaborate with the Chief Personnel Officer, TUTTA, the Teaching Service Commission and any other relevant stakeholders to determine the legal obligations and implications of incorporating online teaching and learning in the terms and conditions of employment of teachers.**

The Ministry of Education has written to the CPO on this matter. Additionally, a meeting with the Teaching Service Commission is carded for late November 25, 2020 and the MOE will raise this issue at that forum.

- B. The introduction of appropriate mechanisms in the MoE’s online learning platforms to monitor the usage/output of teaching staff (and by extension students and other users).**

Currently, principals are able to monitor work conducted on the SLMS either through in person monitoring or end user reporting. The existing protocols for supervision of students by teachers/deans and teachers by department heads/principals apply. Instruments to

Inquiry into the Ministry of Education's strategies for ensuring continuity in the delivery of education amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic

facilitate checks of online classes and Clinical Supervision have been revised and disseminated.

C. That the MoE collaborate with TUTTA to provide training to teachers (on a needs basis) in the use of online teaching and learning platforms.

The MOE holds monthly meetings with TTUTA executive members which provide a forum for discussion on matters of concern, such as teacher training. Kindly refer to Appendix I for a comprehensive list of teacher training that dealt specifically with remote learning that would have addressed any concerns raised by TTUTA.

**INQUIRY INTO THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION'S STRATEGIES FOR ENSURING CONTINUITY IN
THE DELIVERY OF EDUCATION AMIDST THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

**TO EXAMINE TEACHERS' RESPONSE AND TEACHER SUPPORT SYSTEMS DURING THE COVID-19
PANDEMIC.**

**NOVEMBER 12, 2020
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
Teacher Education, Teacher Performance and Professional
Development Division**

Teacher Education, Development and Performance Division

Contents

Aligned to the division's vision of using online teaching as a tool for professional development for educators, Teacher Education launched its Online Blended Learning for Educators (ECCE, Primary, Secondary and Administrators) on February 21st, 2020 - the long term goal is an increased immersion to online teaching, therefore with the advent of Covid-19 the Division was equipped to launch its online professional development.

..... 6

3.	Access, navigate and use Microsoft Teams, Office 365 and Google Classroom.....	16
4.	Monitor and support online learning – Pedagogy, Methodology and Assessment.....	16
5.	Gain an understanding of strategies to de-escalate challenging online behaviour and manage stressors,16	
6.	Support the needs of diverse learners in an online environment.	16

Response to Joint Select Committee:

OBJECTIVE 4: TO EXAMINE TEACHERS' RESPONSE AND TEACHER SUPPORT SYSTEMS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: Online Training and Professional Development from the period March 14th, 2020 to December 31st, 2020.

Responsible Division: Teacher Education, Performance and Professional Development

The Teacher Education, Performance and Professional Development Division (TEPPDD) is responsible for the professional development and monitoring of performance standards and performance. This component ensured that teachers, school administrators and supporting monitoring and evaluation officers are equipped with the necessary pedagogies and aligned competencies to facilitate online/blended instruction and assessment.

TEPPDD responded to quarantine with a sudden shift to online learning. Nonetheless, online teaching requires careful thinking about how learners and teachers are equipped for the shift and serious consideration about whether the teaching style is still effective when taken from the classroom and transposed to technological devices. Teachers felt overwhelmed and lonely and some courses were started at a later date to give teachers time to process Covid-19.

All teacher education projects continued while others were rescheduled in light of the pandemic; however, response to Covid-19 increased the visibility and use of both the online platform for Learning for Teachers and the use of the Open Educational Resources as a viable alternative to face-to-face teaching and learning. Use of OER and online platforms required collaboration with international organisations for sharing and re-using open educational resources (OER); exploring novel ways to enable interaction between learners and other learners, learners and teachers, learners and content using online platforms; and to use appropriate technologies to decrease those left behind.

1.1.1 STRATEGIES EMPLOYED Immediately after March 14th, 2020

What was done to immediately address the impact?

The Teacher Education and professional Development Division took the proactive stance to:

1. Immediately send a video on March 12th via WhatsApp Professional Learning Community to inform teachers about the move to online continuous professional development and gave instructions on the processes and procedures needed to access the training.

Teacher Education, Development and Performance Division

2. Compile a list of suitable resources in collaboration with the Commonwealth of Learning to use online distance technologies to promote learning. This was a collaboration amongst several key international universities which offered free of charge a comprehensive resource kit for student and teachers. Teachers were informed about the online TEPPDD Course: *“How to teach and learn from home.”*
3. Webinar; A Webinar was conducted by TEPPDD on March 17th, 2020 to orient teachers on the teaching and learning in an online environment.
4. Develop and Design teacher education courses: Introduction to Technology-Enabled Learning (TELMOOC5) five (5) week started on April 5, 2020. Registration <http://www.telmooc.ca/>
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7. Also teachers accessed short courses on Understanding Open Educational Resource at <https://learnoer.col.org>

The following highlights further information:

Induction 2020	100%	20th April, 2020
Continuous Professional Development (2020, 2019, 2020)		20th April, 2020
Online Courses: Designing, Developing and Teaching Online. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understanding Open Educational Resources https://learnoer.col.org 2. Blended Learning Practice (BLPMOOC2) https://www.blpmooc.org/ Other offered courses were available from the period April 5th to December 31st.		Completed
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Teacher Education, Development and Performance Division

- 4. Open Educational Student Resources (added April 26th)**
- 5. Game based Design**
- 6. Pedagogy and Methodology**

1.1.2 STRATEGIES EMPLOYED before the reopening of the online term:

Online Training and Professional Development June 1st 2020 to September 11th, 2020.

This project is a two- year ongoing one; since, response to Covid-19 has increased the visibility and use of both the online platform for Learning for Teachers and the use of the Open Educational Resources as a viable alternative to face-to-face teaching and learning.

Use of OER and online platforms required collaboration with COL for sharing and re-using open educational resources (OER); exploring novel ways to enable interaction between learners and other learners, learners and teachers, learners and content using online platforms; and to use appropriate technologies so that no one is left behind.

The goal of online professional development is to develop 21st century educators, and enhance technological approaches to educational practices.

This professional development formed part of several online courses and webinars that were offered by TEPPDD from March 17th to present; however, this course was designed specifically for MOE's context and educators by Mrs. Conrad Christopher and the Commonwealth of Learning. The course was open to the following: (1) all teachers (Ecce, Primary and Secondary); (2) all Principals and School Administrators (3) Monitoring and Evaluation Officers: Curriculum Coordinators, Student Support Services Staff, and School Supervisors; (4) TVET institutions such as MIC and YTEPP and (5) All Special Education Schools. Courses were offered to both Trinidad and Tobago primary and secondary schools; all TEPPDD courses include Tobago. Names were submitted to TEPPDD through the THA and SSIII, II Tobago

The objectives of online professional development:

- Guide and support teachers, administrators and monitoring, support and evaluation officers to be effective and efficient in their profession;
- Ensure continuous teacher training and professional development;
- Ensure quality teaching for every student;
- Develop online teaching as a viable alternative and addition to traditional classroom teaching for use during temporary school closures and for out of school students; and
- Enhance teachers' capacity and pedagogical methodologies in using technology as a vehicle for both professional development and teaching.

Teacher Education, Development and Performance Division

As at 21st August, 2020:

- The project was successful with a 95% attendance and completion rate: 5.66% of Secondary Schools across Trinidad and Tobago had no teacher trained to 21st August 2020, 94.4% of Secondary schools in Trinidad and Tobago had teachers trained to deliver online classes. 5.33% of Primary Schools had no teacher trained to above date. 94.66% of primary schools in Trinidad and Tobago had teachers trained to deliver online classes.
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The actual impacts of the project as at August 30th, 2020 follows:

- The enhancement of teachers' ability to plan, develop, design and assess instructional material with Open Educational Resources.
- The improvement of teachers' professional approach to teaching and engaging students.
- Increased competencies to plan develop, design and assess online instructional materials, instruction and assessments.

The following activities were completed over the period July 1st, 2020 to September 30th, 2020:

- Continuation of Open Educational Resources training in collaboration with Common Wealth of Learning.
- Collection and compilation of statistics and data analytics of the participants for training.
- Establishment of a master mentor team to help support teachers as they transition from face-to-face to online teaching.
- Planning and implementation of webinars to provide training and support to educators, inclusive of teachers, principals, vice principals, heads of departments and senior teachers.

1.1.3 STRATEGIES EMPLOYED after the reopening of the online school term: Online Training and Professional Development. October 1st 2020 to December 31st, 2020.

Implementation and Development of Continuous Professional Development: Guidelines for Reopening of schools

TEPPDD utilised core questions to determine the needs of educators and the type of support that would be needed to ensure quality instructional delivery: (1) How ready and able are teachers and educational authorities to adapt to online/blended teaching and learning approaches? (2) What instructional delivery options/tools/resources are needed and how do

Teacher Education, Development and Performance Division

educators transition content to online formats while accounting for laws and regulations around content and privacy?

Core Components of course and Webinar design.

1. Professional development on planning for instruction and developing strategies for adjusting existing curriculum to support distance learning, copyright and supporting special needs students.
2. Professional Development on assessment tools, types and assessing unfinished learning and “just in time” instructional support to fill potential gaps in student learning.
3. Professional development on learning management systems (LMS) or content management systems (CMS) that schools currently use or plan to use in the 2020-21 school year and web conferencing tools.
4. Professional development on social-emotional and trauma-informed instruction.
5. Professional Development on managing stress and professional growth.
6. Professional Development on ICT tools.

Aligned to the division’s vision of using online teaching as a tool for professional development for educators, Teacher Education launched its Online Blended Learning for Educators (ECCE, Primary, Secondary and Administrators) on February 21st, 2020 - the long term goal is an increased immersion to online teaching, therefore with the advent of Covid-19 the Division was equipped to launch its online professional development.

Courses commenced for new teachers on March 17th 2020 with a Webinar (COL and Teacher Education). Professional Development Courses were staggered from April 20th, 2020 to August 31st, 2020) March 17th.

All courses were for Teachers (ECCE, Primary and Secondary) Administrators and Supporting Officers (CPDD, SSMD, and SSSD).

Course	Core Learning Objective	Duration/ Start Date
1. Webinar-How to Teach and Learn online from home.	To sensitise teachers to what online teaching entails and to support them in their online instructional journey. To assist teachers to teach online and equip	March 17 th , 2020 List of Planning Online Resources Links to STEM and Virtual Learning Links and Resources Links to Teacher Instructional Resources

Teacher Education, Development and Performance Division

	them with open educational resources for classroom use.	(Primary and Secondary)
2. IBM: Certified Artificial Intelligence	In order to prepare students for an increasing automated and technology-dependent world, the Ministry of Education considers it essential to infuse Artificial Intelligence (AI) into the teaching and learning process. This can take the form of “consumers of AI”, whereby AI systems are used to improve the teaching and learning process. Additionally, it can take the form of “producers of AI”, by exposing students to AI from a young age in the hope that they may go on to create the AI systems of tomorrow.	March 16 th to April 6 th , 2020
3. Overarching Course: Learning Theories of Online Teaching and Learning (April 20 th , 2020) COL comprised of (3) three five week courses. Teachers could choose any or all courses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding Open Educational Resources • Blended Learning Practice I 	Equip educators to understand the theories, components, of online teaching. How to use open educational resources and links to such resources for classroom use.	Five Weeks each/ April 13 th , May 12 th , and 23 rd June, 2020.

Teacher Education, Development and Performance Division

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technology Enabled Learning I 	<p>Introduce educators to the blended learning, instructional strategies used in blended learning. Introduction to technology in education, and using technological tools to support instruction and assessment.</p>	
4. Integration of Technology and Pedagogy	Procedure and process of use of integrating technological tools and pedagogy	Four weeks/ May 4th
5. Designing and Developing Online Content	Design Process and principles of structure, assessment, content, and activities.	Four weeks/ May 11th
6. Learning methods and technology Based Examples	Evaluate and determine methods and technology applicable to context.	Five weeks/ July 13th
7. Using Open Educational Resources for online learning.	The course was designed with TEPPDD with reference to copyright and intellectual property rights in the creation and upload of online content, as well as assessment and curriculum development.	Five Cohorts: July 8 th to September 29 th , 2020
8. Introduction to Technology-Enabled Learning TELMOOC (1 and 2) Participants will:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Explore easy-to-use technologies for classroom and online teaching Evaluate best fit technologies for 	<p>October 4, 2020 to November 7, 2020.</p> <p>5-weeks 3-5 hours per week</p>

Teacher Education, Development and Performance Division

	<p>teaching/ learning contexts</p> <p>3. Experience a fun and collaborative learning environment via the Internet</p> <p>Receive a certificate on completion of required activities</p>	
<p>9. Cybersecurity Training for Teachers (CTT 1)</p>	<p>1. Understand cybersecurity and its relevance in digital learning.</p> <p>2. Identify and mitigate various cybersecurity threats and attacks.</p> <p>3. Outline various techniques that students can use to protect themselves when using technology.</p> <p>4. Incorporate best cybersecurity practices through protective and preventive measures; and</p> <p>5. Demonstrate understanding of cybersecurity laws, acts and relevant regulatory organizations and bodies.</p>	<p>October 5, 2020 to October 30, 2020.</p> <p>5-weeks 3-5 hours per week</p>
<p>10. Mobile Learning with Multimedia (MLM1)</p>	<p>Participants will learn how to use audio and multimedia tools to develop micro learning lessons as Open Educational Resources for</p>	<p>October 12, 2020</p>

Teacher Education, Development and Performance Division

	delivery on radio, dial-in access, among other low bandwidth options for last mile mobile learning.	
11. Designing Online Tools for special needs students	Create modifications to content using technological tools, apps for special needs.	November 16 th to December 14 th , 2020.
12. Instructional Methods, Tools and Design. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E-Learning Ecologies: Innovative Approaches to Teaching and Learning for the Digital Age. • The Virtual Teacher. • Get Interactive: Practical Teaching with Technology. • Powerful Tools for Teaching and Learning: Web 2.0 Tools • Learning to Teach Online. • Teaching Character and Creating Positive Classrooms. • Supporting children with difficulties in reading and writing. • Music Education for teachers • Teaching impacts of Technology in Education • Lesson Design and Assessment • Using Google Jamboard for Student Learning 	Participants will learn how to use various apps and other technology enabled tools to foster student online achievement and promote student engagement.	September 12 th to December 31 st , 2020.

Teacher Education, Development and Performance Division

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving Classroom Management with Class Dojo <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Creating Interactive Videos with Edpuzzle. 		
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Courses to support instructional design: Open March 13th, 2020.

Target Group	COURSE	DESCRIPTION
Teachers: ECCE, Primary and Secondary	The Teaching of Visual Arts: Intra-disciplinary Approaches	This course is designed to assist teacher pedagogical growth and professional development. Each module uses an instructional, blended learning, scaffolding approach. Towards the development of teachers' skills, knowledge and competencies in the teaching of visual arts, learning activities are both practical (hands-on) and theory based. By the end of this course, teachers would have experienced teaching to the Arts in authentic, metacognitive ways. They would have also developed an appreciation for the Integration of the Arts across the curriculum. Understandings of visual arts as alternative assessment and informed teacher reflective practice would have also been fostered.
Teachers: Secondary TVET	The Teaching of Technology Education in Secondary School	This course is intended to prepare you as a Technical Vocational Teacher to teach Technology Education at the

Teacher Education, Development and Performance Division

		<p>Lower Secondary level. It will provide you with an understanding of the historical perspectives, theoretical underpinnings, and pedagogical requirements as well as how to use the Technology Education Curriculum Guide, for the Teaching of Technology Education in Trinidad and Tobago.</p>
<p>Teachers: ECCE and Primary</p>	<p>Introduction to the Implementation of STREAM Education Activities in Primary Schools</p>	<p>The goal of STREAM Education is to implement learning activities that may help increase student engagement behaviourally, emotionally, and cognitively, thereby positively impacting student learning and achievement.</p> <p>This course conveys an overview of the background, concept, skills and assessment involved in the implementation of STREAM Education activities in the classroom for primary school students. Teachers will develop the skills necessary to assist students in developing 21st Century Skills as they engage in a series of STREAM Education activities.</p>
<p>Teachers: ECCE, Primary and Secondary</p>	<p>Game-based Learning Robotics I and II</p>	<p>This course aims to introduce the concept of game-based learning as an alternative to traditional teaching strategies. There has been a dominant perception of gaming as a leisure pursuit with no pedagogic value. Game-based learning is often experience-based or exploratory, and therefore</p>

Teacher Education, Development and Performance Division

		relies upon experiential, problem-based or exploratory learning approaches.
Teachers: Primary and Secondary	Valuing Diversity	This course focuses on the strategies of the diversifying the classroom and the fundamentals of effective classroom management.
Teachers: ECCE, Primary and Secondary	How to Teach Online and Work from Home	This course is comprised of teacher instructional resources for both primary and secondary schools, together with international school services.
Teachers: ECCE, Primary and Secondary	Open Education Student Resources	This course comprises of open resources for all students to access for online learning.
Administrators	Leadership: Leading and Managing Effective Teams	This course applies teaching on organisational theory. The course will cover the fundamental aspects of the organisational structure of schools and the expected operations of middle management/leadership in effectively performing their roles in the implementation of the School Development Plan. It utilises concepts on collaboration, effective communication, team dynamics and school culture. There is also an emphasis on critical feedback for team development and cohesion for effective performance.
Teachers: ECCE, Primary and Secondary	Teacher Education in Collaboration with Commonwealth of Learning: Developing,	This course includes a compilation of modules of open-education resources with emphasis on technology-

Teacher Education, Development and Performance Division

	Designing and Teaching Online	enabled learning, design and development.
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WEBINARS

To support educators in classroom and administrative practice and use of their online courses, the Teacher Education, Performance and Professional Development Division (TEPPDD) hosted webinars and offered professional development courses to support educators in their transition to online learning and teaching.

September Webinars:

(1) Digital KORU/Microsoft Education Webinars

Participants are expected to:

1. Learn how to use Microsoft 365 and Teams to empower teaching in any modality: face-to-face, hybrid, and distance learning in the Caribbean
2. Learn how to help your children use Microsoft 365 and Teams for learning in any modality: face-to-face, hybrid, and distance learning
3. Interactive workshops to discuss how to use Microsoft 365 and Teams for learning in any modality: face-to-face, hybrid, and distance learning.

Who can apply	Date/Time	Registration Link
Teachers (Ecce, Primary and Secondary) Webinars Teaching with Microsoft and Teams	September 28th, 2020 5pm - 7pm (AST)	https://www.eventbrite.com/e/teaching-with-microsoft-365-and-teams-in-the-caribbean-tickets-119915912723
Parents and Students Webinar Helping my children with Microsoft 365 and Teams	September 29 th , 2020 6pm – 7pm (AST)	https://www.eventbrite.com/e/helping-my-children-with-microsoft-365-and-teams-tickets-119825576525
Education Leaders Webinar Caribbean Education Leaders Virtual Education Strategies Workshop	September 29 th , 2020 10am – 12pm (AST)	https://www.eventbrite.com/e/caribbean-education-leaders-virtual-education-strategies-workshop-tickets-119926394073
Pre-Requisite (s)	None	None

Teacher Education, Development and Performance Division

(2) Principal Webinar Series: “Leading for Change.” Series 1 (October to November 6th, 2020).

Open to all Principals, Vice-Principals and Senior Teachers from Trinidad and Tobago.

Registration Links: **Team A:** <https://www.webinarA.com>
Team B: <https://www.webinarB.com>

Principals are encouraged to adhere to their specific District schedules as sent in the memo, as the sessions run consecutively for assigned Teams.

DATE AND TIME	TOPIC	Presentations and Presenters
Thursday 1 st (Team A) Friday 2 nd (Team B) October 2020 9:00am – 11:00pm	Day 1- Selection and Navigation of an Online Platform	Presentation 1: Security in an online classroom environment/Learning platforms - <i>Raj Ramdass</i> Presentation 2: Accessing and Navigating Google Classroom - <i>Raj Ramdass</i> Presentation 3: Access and Navigation of an Online platform Microsoft Teams- Generate attendance - <i>Terrance John</i> Presentation 4: Microsoft 365 - <i>Venus Garcia and Guillermo Lopez</i>
Thursday 8 th (Team A) and Friday 9 th , (Team B) October 2020 9:00am – 11:00pm	Day 2 - Curriculum Adaptations for Online Learning	Presentation 1: Considerations for Preparation of Printing Instruction - <i>CPDD - Avenelle Fortune</i> Presentation 2: Monitoring and Support for Student Engagement - <i>CPDD - Reynold Ramlogan</i> Presentation 3: Continuous Assessment in the online Environment – <i>Dr. Kronberg</i> Presentation 4: Monitoring and Support for Online Teaching - <i>CPDD</i>
Thursday 15 th (Team A) and Friday 16 th , (Team B) October 2020 9:00am – 11:00pm	Day 3 - School Supervision - Management and Leadership in an Online Environment	Presentation 1: School Data Collection and Analysis- Tools and Techniques - <i>Sheldon Jodha</i> Presentation 2: Using Tools for efficient data collection - <i>Kenneth Suratt</i> Presentation 3: Staff Professional Development – <i>Dr. Amia Kimoy Conrad-Christopher</i>
		Presentation 1: An Overview of How to Support Blind Students in an Online Environment - <i>Blind Welfare Association - Bunny Rambhajan</i>

Teacher Education, Development and Performance Division

Thursday 22 nd (Team A) and Friday 23 rd , (Team B) October 2020 9:00am – 11:00pm	Day 4 – Supporting Visually Impaired Students/ NALIS in an Online Environment	Presentation 2: Define blindness and visual impairment; Explain the importance of understanding the specific nature of the visual impairment of your student - <i>Bunny Rambhajan</i> Presentation 3: Communication techniques to engaged with students who are blind and visually impaired which are relevant to both face & virtual classrooms; Audio- description and tactile aids in the virtual classroom - <i>Bunny Rambhajan</i> Presentation 4: Different Types of Sources and Resources of Information – <i>NALIS</i> Presentation 5: Exploring West Indian Materials for Research Purposes - <i>NALIS</i>
Thursday 29 th (Team A) and Friday 30 th , (Team B) October 2020 9:00am – 11:00pm	Day 5 – SSSD Supporting Students in Transition to Home-based/Online Learning	Presentation 1: SSSD – Social Justice Leadership: Understanding Social Justice - <i>SSSD - Jennifer Garcia/Shirma Swan</i> Presentation 2: SSSD – School Leadership: The Importance of Social Justice - <i>SSSD - Jennifer Garcia/Shirma Swan</i>
Thursday 5 th (Team A) and Friday 6 th , November (Team B) 2020 9:00am – 11:00pm	Day 6 - Intellectual Property in a New Context	Presentation 1: Copyright and Intellectual management IPO Organisation of Trinidad and Tobago Presentation 2: Search Techniques/ Boolean Operators – <i>NALIS</i> Presentation 1: Copyright and Intellectual management in an educational context- Dr. Amia Kimoy Conrad

**(3) October to November 4th, 2020- Teachers’ Supporting Teachers’ Mentorship
Webinar Series: Series I**

Participants are expected to:

1. Gain an enhanced understanding of Online/Blended/Remote Learning methodologies.
2. Develop an understanding of cybersecurity tools for classroom use.
3. Access, navigate and use Microsoft Teams, Office 365 and Google Classroom.
4. Monitor and support online learning – Pedagogy, Methodology and Assessment.
5. Gain an understanding of strategies to de-escalate challenging online behaviour and manage stressors,
6. Support the needs of diverse learners in an online environment.
7. Gain an understanding in copyright management and intellectual property.

Teacher Education, Development and Performance Division

	Day 1: Cybersecurity/Selecting /Navigating Online Platforms	Day 2: Curriculum Adaptation for Online learning	Day 3: De-escalating challenging behaviour in an online environment	Day 4: OER/ Intellectual and Copyright properties
Webinar Link	www.Teacherswebinaraday1.com	www.Teacherwebinaraday2.com	www.Teacherwebinaraday3.com	www.Teacherwebinaraday4.com
Course Duration	4 weeks			
Who can apply	Any Teacher (ECCE, Special Education, Primary and Secondary)			
How many sessions can I attend?	Participants can attend any or all sessions.			

(4) October 20th to November 3rd, 2020. Special Needs Education: Supporting the visually impaired through technology

Teacher Education, Teacher Performance and Professional Division in conjunction with Trinidad and Tobago Blind Welfare Association hosted this webinar series.

Participants are expected to:

1. Gain strategies to support blindness and visual impairment.
2. Gain awareness of the importance of understanding the specific nature of the visual impairment of your student.
3. Develop techniques to help communicate with students who are blind and visually impaired which are relevant to brick and mortar and virtual classrooms.
4. Gain supporting strategies for audio-description and tactile aids in brick and mortar and virtual classrooms.
5. Develop a virtual toolkit to support technology in a special needs context.

Registration Details	www.Teacherswebinaraday1.com
Course Duration	5-weeks 3-5 hours per week
Who can Apply?	Special Education Teachers, Special Education Officers, Teachers who have special needs students within their mainstream classes.

Teacher Education, Development and Performance Division

Pre-requisite (s)	None
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Additionally, TEPPDD provided educators with the opportunity to write or call further training needs or to be paired with a mentor. Administrators were encouraged to state their contextual staff development need, to support additional and/or specialized training needs.

1.1.4 Supporting Documents to support educators in online teaching and learning:

TEPPDD provided educators with the following documents to support their transition to online teaching and learning:

1. Remote Guidelines for managing remote learning
2. Navigating the SLMS
3. Navigating the LMS
4. Navigation online instruction

**INQUIRY INTO THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION'S STRATEGIES FOR ENSURING CONTINUITY IN
THE DELIVERY OF EDUCATION AMIDST THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

**TO EXAMINE TEACHERS' RESPONSE AND TEACHER SUPPORT SYSTEMS DURING THE COVID-19
PANDEMIC.**

**NOVEMBER 12, 2020
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
Teacher Education, Teacher Performance and Professional
Development Division**

Teacher Education, Development and Performance Division

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..... 6

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Response to Joint Select Committee:

OBJECTIVE 4: TO EXAMINE TEACHERS' RESPONSE AND TEACHER SUPPORT SYSTEMS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: Online Training and Professional Development from the period March 14th, 2020 to December 31st, 2020.

Responsible Division: Teacher Education, Performance and Professional Development

The Teacher Education, Performance and Professional Development Division (TEPPDD) is responsible for the professional development and monitoring of performance standards and performance. This component ensured that teachers, school administrators and supporting monitoring and evaluation officers are equipped with the necessary pedagogies and aligned competencies to facilitate online/blended instruction and assessment.

TEPPDD responded to quarantine with a sudden shift to online learning. Nonetheless, online teaching requires careful thinking about how learners and teachers are equipped for the shift and serious consideration about whether the teaching style is still effective when taken from the classroom and transposed to technological devices. Teachers felt overwhelmed and lonely and some courses were started at a later date to give teachers time to process Covid-19.

All teacher education projects continued while others were rescheduled in light of the pandemic; however, response to Covid-19 increased the visibility and use of both the online platform for Learning for Teachers and the use of the Open Educational Resources as a viable alternative to face-to-face teaching and learning. Use of OER and online platforms required collaboration with international organisations for sharing and re-using open educational resources (OER); exploring novel ways to enable interaction between learners and other learners, learners and teachers, learners and content using online platforms; and to use appropriate technologies to decrease those left behind.

1.1.1 STRATEGIES EMPLOYED Immediately after March 14th, 2020

What was done to immediately address the impact?

The Teacher Education and professional Development Division took the proactive stance to:

1. Immediately send a video on March 12th via WhatsApp Professional Learning Community to inform teachers about the move to online continuous professional development and gave instructions on the processes and procedures needed to access the training.

Teacher Education, Development and Performance Division

2. Compile a list of suitable resources in collaboration with the Commonwealth of Learning to use online distance technologies to promote learning. This was a collaboration amongst several key international universities which offered free of charge a comprehensive resource kit for student and teachers. Teachers were informed about the online TEPPDD Course: *“How to teach and learn from home.”*
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Teacher Education, Development and Performance Division

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Teacher Education, Development and Performance Division

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TEPPDD utilised core questions to determine the needs of educators and the type of support that would be needed to ensure quality instructional delivery: (1) How ready and able are teachers and educational authorities to adapt to online/blended teaching and learning approaches? (2) What instructional delivery options/tools/resources are needed and how do

Teacher Education, Development and Performance Division

educators transition content to online formats while accounting for laws and regulations around content and privacy?

Core Components of course and Webinar design.

1. Professional development on planning for instruction and developing strategies for adjusting existing curriculum to support distance learning, copyright and supporting special needs students.
2. Professional Development on assessment tools, types and assessing unfinished learning and “just in time” instructional support to fill potential gaps in student learning.
3. Professional development on learning management systems (LMS) or content management systems (CMS) that schools currently use or plan to use in the 2020-21 school year and web conferencing tools.
4. Professional development on social-emotional and trauma-informed instruction.
5. Professional Development on managing stress and professional growth.
6. Professional Development on ICT tools.

Aligned to the division’s vision of using online teaching as a tool for professional development for educators, Teacher Education launched its Online Blended Learning for Educators (ECCE, Primary, Secondary and Administrators) on February 21st, 2020 - the long term goal is an increased immersion to online teaching, therefore with the advent of Covid-19 the Division was equipped to launch its online professional development.

Courses commenced for new teachers on March 17th 2020 with a Webinar (COL and Teacher Education). Professional Development Courses were staggered from April 20th, 2020 to August 31st, 2020) March 17th.

All courses were for Teachers (ECCE, Primary and Secondary) Administrators and Supporting Officers (CPDD, SSMD, and SSSD).

Course	Core Learning Objective	Duration/ Start Date
1. Webinar-How to Teach and Learn online from home.	To sensitise teachers to what online teaching entails and to support them in their online instructional journey. To assist teachers to teach online and equip	March 17 th , 2020 List of Planning Online Resources Links to STEM and Virtual Learning Links and Resources Links to Teacher Instructional Resources

Teacher Education, Development and Performance Division

	them with open educational resources for classroom use.	(Primary and Secondary)
2. IBM: Certified Artificial Intelligence	In order to prepare students for an increasing automated and technology-dependent world, the Ministry of Education considers it essential to infuse Artificial Intelligence (AI) into the teaching and learning process. This can take the form of “consumers of AI”, whereby AI systems are used to improve the teaching and learning process. Additionally, it can take the form of “producers of AI”, by exposing students to AI from a young age in the hope that they may go on to create the AI systems of tomorrow.	March 16 th to April 6 th , 2020
3. Overarching Course: Learning Theories of Online Teaching and Learning (April 20 th , 2020) COL comprised of (3) three five week courses. Teachers could choose any or all courses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding Open Educational Resources • Blended Learning Practice I 	Equip educators to understand the theories, components, of online teaching. How to use open educational resources and links to such resources for classroom use.	Five Weeks each/ April 13 th , May 12 th , and 23 rd June, 2020.

Teacher Education, Development and Performance Division

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology Enabled Learning I 	<p>Introduce educators to the blended learning, instructional strategies used in blended learning. Introduction to technology in education, and using technological tools to support instruction and assessment.</p>	
4. Integration of Technology and Pedagogy	Procedure and process of use of integrating technological tools and pedagogy	Four weeks/ May 4th
5. Designing and Developing Online Content	Design Process and principles of structure, assessment, content, and activities.	Four weeks/ May 11th
6. Learning methods and technology Based Examples	Evaluate and determine methods and technology applicable to context.	Five weeks/ July 13th
7. Using Open Educational Resources for online learning.	The course was designed with TEPPDD with reference to copyright and intellectual property rights in the creation and upload of online content, as well as assessment and curriculum development.	Five Cohorts: July 8 th to September 29 th , 2020
8. Introduction to Technology-Enabled Learning TELMOOC (1 and 2) Participants will:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explore easy-to-use technologies for classroom and online teaching 2. Evaluate best fit technologies for 	<p>October 4, 2020 to November 7, 2020.</p> <p>5-weeks 3-5 hours per week</p>

Teacher Education, Development and Performance Division

	<p>teaching/ learning contexts</p> <p>3. Experience a fun and collaborative learning environment via the Internet</p> <p>Receive a certificate on completion of required activities</p>	
<p>9. Cybersecurity Training for Teachers (CTT 1)</p>	<p>1. Understand cybersecurity and its relevance in digital learning.</p> <p>2. Identify and mitigate various cybersecurity threats and attacks.</p> <p>3. Outline various techniques that students can use to protect themselves when using technology.</p> <p>4. Incorporate best cybersecurity practices through protective and preventive measures; and</p> <p>5. Demonstrate understanding of cybersecurity laws, acts and relevant regulatory organizations and bodies.</p>	<p>October 5, 2020 to October 30, 2020.</p> <p>5-weeks 3-5 hours per week</p>
<p>10. Mobile Learning with Multimedia (MLM1)</p>	<p>Participants will learn how to use audio and multimedia tools to develop micro learning lessons as Open Educational Resources for</p>	<p>October 12, 2020</p>

Teacher Education, Development and Performance Division

	delivery on radio, dial-in access, among other low bandwidth options for last mile mobile learning.	
11. Designing Online Tools for special needs students	Create modifications to content using technological tools, apps for special needs.	November 16 th to December 14 th , 2020.
12. Instructional Methods, Tools and Design. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E-Learning Ecologies: Innovative Approaches to Teaching and Learning for the Digital Age. • The Virtual Teacher. • Get Interactive: Practical Teaching with Technology. • Powerful Tools for Teaching and Learning: Web 2.0 Tools • Learning to Teach Online. • Teaching Character and Creating Positive Classrooms. • Supporting children with difficulties in reading and writing. • Music Education for teachers • Teaching impacts of Technology in Education • Lesson Design and Assessment • Using Google Jamboard for Student Learning 	Participants will learn how to use various apps and other technology enabled tools to foster student online achievement and promote student engagement.	September 12 th to December 31 st , 2020.

Teacher Education, Development and Performance Division

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving Classroom Management with Class Dojo <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Creating Interactive Videos with Edpuzzle. 		
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Courses to support instructional design: Open March 13th, 2020.

Target Group	COURSE	DESCRIPTION
Teachers: ECCE, Primary and Secondary	The Teaching of Visual Arts: Intra-disciplinary Approaches	This course is designed to assist teacher pedagogical growth and professional development. Each module uses an instructional, blended learning, scaffolding approach. Towards the development of teachers' skills, knowledge and competencies in the teaching of visual arts, learning activities are both practical (hands-on) and theory based. By the end of this course, teachers would have experienced teaching to the Arts in authentic, metacognitive ways. They would have also developed an appreciation for the Integration of the Arts across the curriculum. Understandings of visual arts as alternative assessment and informed teacher reflective practice would have also been fostered.
Teachers: Secondary TVET	The Teaching of Technology Education in Secondary School	This course is intended to prepare you as a Technical Vocational Teacher to teach Technology Education at the

		<p>Lower Secondary level. It will provide you with an understanding of the historical perspectives, theoretical underpinnings, and pedagogical requirements as well as how to use the Technology Education Curriculum Guide, for the Teaching of Technology Education in Trinidad and Tobago.</p>
<p>Teachers: ECCE and Primary</p>	<p>Introduction to the Implementation of STREAM Education Activities in Primary Schools</p>	<p>The goal of STREAM Education is to implement learning activities that may help increase student engagement behaviourally, emotionally, and cognitively, thereby positively impacting student learning and achievement.</p> <p>This course conveys an overview of the background, concept, skills and assessment involved in the implementation of STREAM Education activities in the classroom for primary school students. Teachers will develop the skills necessary to assist students in developing 21st Century Skills as they engage in a series of STREAM Education activities.</p>
<p>Teachers: ECCE, Primary and Secondary</p>	<p>Game-based Learning Robotics I and II</p>	<p>This course aims to introduce the concept of game-based learning as an alternative to traditional teaching strategies. There has been a dominant perception of gaming as a leisure pursuit with no pedagogic value. Game-based learning is often experience-based or exploratory, and therefore</p>

Teacher Education, Development and Performance Division

		relies upon experiential, problem-based or exploratory learning approaches.
Teachers: Primary and Secondary	Valuing Diversity	This course focuses on the strategies of the diversifying the classroom and the fundamentals of effective classroom management.
Teachers: ECCE, Primary and Secondary	How to Teach Online and Work from Home	This course is comprised of teacher instructional resources for both primary and secondary schools, together with international school services.
Teachers: ECCE, Primary and Secondary	Open Education Student Resources	This course comprises of open resources for all students to access for online learning.
Administrators	Leadership: Leading and Managing Effective Teams	This course applies teaching on organisational theory. The course will cover the fundamental aspects of the organisational structure of schools and the expected operations of middle management/leadership in effectively performing their roles in the implementation of the School Development Plan. It utilises concepts on collaboration, effective communication, team dynamics and school culture. There is also an emphasis on critical feedback for team development and cohesion for effective performance.
Teachers: ECCE, Primary and Secondary	Teacher Education in Collaboration with Commonwealth of Learning: Developing,	This course includes a compilation of modules of open-education resources with emphasis on technology-

Teacher Education, Development and Performance Division

	Designing and Teaching Online	enabled learning, design and development.
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WEBINARS

To support educators in classroom and administrative practice and use of their online courses, the Teacher Education, Performance and Professional Development Division (TEPPDD) hosted webinars and offered professional development courses to support educators in their transition to online learning and teaching.

September Webinars:

(1) Digital KORU/Microsoft Education Webinars

Participants are expected to:

1. Learn how to use Microsoft 365 and Teams to empower teaching in any modality: face-to-face, hybrid, and distance learning in the Caribbean
2. Learn how to help your children use Microsoft 365 and Teams for learning in any modality: face-to-face, hybrid, and distance learning
3. Interactive workshops to discuss how to use Microsoft 365 and Teams for learning in any modality: face-to-face, hybrid, and distance learning.

Who can apply	Date/Time	Registration Link
Teachers (Ecce, Primary and Secondary) Webinars Teaching with Microsoft and Teams	September 28th, 2020 5pm - 7pm (AST)	https://www.eventbrite.com/e/teaching-with-microsoft-365-and-teams-in-the-caribbean-tickets-119915912723
Parents and Students Webinar Helping my children with Microsoft 365 and Teams	September 29 th , 2020 6pm – 7pm (AST)	https://www.eventbrite.com/e/helping-my-children-with-microsoft-365-and-teams-tickets-119825576525
Education Leaders Webinar Caribbean Education Leaders Virtual Education Strategies Workshop	September 29 th , 2020 10am – 12pm (AST)	https://www.eventbrite.com/e/caribbean-education-leaders-virtual-education-strategies-workshop-tickets-119926394073
Pre-Requisite (s)	None	None

Teacher Education, Development and Performance Division

(2) Principal Webinar Series: “Leading for Change.” Series 1 (October to November 6th, 2020).

Open to all Principals, Vice-Principals and Senior Teachers from Trinidad and Tobago.

Registration Links: **Team A:** <https://www.webinarA.com>
Team B: <https://www.webinarB.com>

Principals are encouraged to adhere to their specific District schedules as sent in the memo, as the sessions run consecutively for assigned Teams.

DATE AND TIME	TOPIC	Presentations and Presenters
Thursday 1 st (Team A) Friday 2 nd (Team B) October 2020 9:00am – 11:00pm	Day 1- Selection and Navigation of an Online Platform	Presentation 1: Security in an online classroom environment/Learning platforms - <i>Raj Ramdass</i> Presentation 2: Accessing and Navigating Google Classroom - <i>Raj Ramdass</i> Presentation 3: Access and Navigation of an Online platform Microsoft Teams- Generate attendance - <i>Terrance John</i> Presentation 4: Microsoft 365 - <i>Venus Garcia and Guillermo Lopez</i>
Thursday 8 th (Team A) and Friday 9 th , (Team B) October 2020 9:00am – 11:00pm	Day 2 - Curriculum Adaptations for Online Learning	Presentation 1: Considerations for Preparation of Printing Instruction - <i>CPDD - Avenelle Fortune</i> Presentation 2: Monitoring and Support for Student Engagement - <i>CPDD - Reynold Ramlogan</i> Presentation 3: Continuous Assessment in the online Environment – <i>Dr. Kronberg</i> Presentation 4: Monitoring and Support for Online Teaching - <i>CPDD</i>
Thursday 15 th (Team A) and Friday 16 th , (Team B) October 2020 9:00am – 11:00pm	Day 3 - School Supervision - Management and Leadership in an Online Environment	Presentation 1: School Data Collection and Analysis- Tools and Techniques - <i>Sheldon Jodha</i> Presentation 2: Using Tools for efficient data collection - <i>Kenneth Suratt</i> Presentation 3: Staff Professional Development – <i>Dr. Amia Kimoy Conrad-Christopher</i>
		Presentation 1: An Overview of How to Support Blind Students in an Online Environment - <i>Blind Welfare Association - Bunny Rambhajan</i>

Teacher Education, Development and Performance Division

Thursday 22 nd (Team A) and Friday 23 rd , (Team B) October 2020 9:00am – 11:00pm	Day 4 – Supporting Visually Impaired Students/ NALIS in an Online Environment	Presentation 2: Define blindness and visual impairment; Explain the importance of understanding the specific nature of the visual impairment of your student - <i>Bunny Rambhajan</i> Presentation 3: Communication techniques to engaged with students who are blind and visually impaired which are relevant to both face & virtual classrooms; Audio- description and tactile aids in the virtual classroom - <i>Bunny Rambhajan</i> Presentation 4: Different Types of Sources and Resources of Information – <i>NALIS</i> Presentation 5: Exploring West Indian Materials for Research Purposes - <i>NALIS</i>
Thursday 29 th (Team A) and Friday 30 th , (Team B) October 2020 9:00am – 11:00pm	Day 5 – SSSD Supporting Students in Transition to Home-based/Online Learning	Presentation 1: SSSD – Social Justice Leadership: Understanding Social Justice - <i>SSSD - Jennifer Garcia/Shirma Swan</i> Presentation 2: SSSD – School Leadership: The Importance of Social Justice - <i>SSSD - Jennifer Garcia/Shirma Swan</i>
Thursday 5 th (Team A) and Friday 6 th , November (Team B) 2020 9:00am – 11:00pm	Day 6 - Intellectual Property in a New Context	Presentation 1: Copyright and Intellectual management IPO Organisation of Trinidad and Tobago Presentation 2: Search Techniques/ Boolean Operators – <i>NALIS</i> Presentation 1: Copyright and Intellectual management in an educational context- Dr. Amia Kimoy Conrad

**(3) October to November 4th, 2020- Teachers’ Supporting Teachers’ Mentorship
Webinar Series: Series I**

Participants are expected to:

1. Gain an enhanced understanding of Online/Blended/Remote Learning methodologies.
2. Develop an understanding of cybersecurity tools for classroom use.
3. Access, navigate and use Microsoft Teams, Office 365 and Google Classroom.
4. Monitor and support online learning – Pedagogy, Methodology and Assessment.
5. Gain an understanding of strategies to de-escalate challenging online behaviour and manage stressors,
6. Support the needs of diverse learners in an online environment.
7. Gain an understanding in copyright management and intellectual property.

Teacher Education, Development and Performance Division

	Day 1: Cybersecurity/Selecting /Navigating Online Platforms	Day 2: Curriculum Adaptation for Online learning	Day 3: De-escalating challenging behaviour in an online environment	Day 4: OER/ Intellectual and Copyright properties
Webinar Link	www.Teacherswebinaraday1.com	www.Teacherwebinaraday2.com	www.Teacherwebinaraday3.com	www.Teacherwebinaraday4.com
Course Duration	4 weeks			
Who can apply	Any Teacher (ECCE, Special Education, Primary and Secondary)			
How many sessions can I attend?	Participants can attend any or all sessions.			

(4) October 20th to November 3rd, 2020. Special Needs Education: Supporting the visually impaired through technology

Teacher Education, Teacher Performance and Professional Division in conjunction with Trinidad and Tobago Blind Welfare Association hosted this webinar series.

Participants are expected to:

1. Gain strategies to support blindness and visual impairment.
2. Gain awareness of the importance of understanding the specific nature of the visual impairment of your student.
3. Develop techniques to help communicate with students who are blind and visually impaired which are relevant to brick and mortar and virtual classrooms.
4. Gain supporting strategies for audio-description and tactile aids in brick and mortar and virtual classrooms.
5. Develop a virtual toolkit to support technology in a special needs context.

Registration Details	www.Teacherswebinaraday1.com
Course Duration	5-weeks 3-5 hours per week
Who can Apply?	Special Education Teachers, Special Education Officers, Teachers who have special needs students within their mainstream classes.

Teacher Education, Development and Performance Division

Pre-requisite (s)	None
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Additionally, TEPPDD provided educators with the opportunity to write or call further training needs or to be paired with a mentor. Administrators were encouraged to state their contextual staff development need, to support additional and/or specialized training needs.

1.1.4 Supporting Documents to support educators in online teaching and learning:

TEPPDD provided educators with the following documents to support their transition to online teaching and learning:

1. Remote Guidelines for managing remote learning
2. Navigating the SLMS
3. Navigating the LMS
4. Navigation online instruction