



ADDRESS BY

Mr. John Roopchan

DIRECTOR CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

(For The Minister of Education)

AT

LAUNCH OF THE INTEGRITY COMMISSION'S

"DO RIGHT CHAMPIONSHIP"

2014-2015

AT

QUEEN'S HALL

THURSDAY 25TH SEPTEMBER 2014

Mr Kenneth Gordon, Chairman, Integrity Commission

Justice Sebastien Ventour, Deputy Chairman

Mr Martin Farrell, Registrar

Dr Shelly-Anne Lalchan, Commissioner & Feature Speaker

Other Commission members

School Supervisors

Curriculum Coordinators and Curriculum Officers

Principals

Teachers

Students

Other specially invited guests

Members of the Media

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Morning!

It is my pleasure to be here this morning and to bring greetings on behalf of Doctor, The Honourable Tim Gopeesingh, Minister of Education, who sends best wishes for another successful launch of the “Do Right Champions Primary and Secondary School Competitions”.

Let me first give the assurance that the Honourable Minister endorses the **Do Right Champions** and is particularly pleased about the Ministry’s continued partnering with the Integrity Commission in this initiative. Some of you may recall key points from his previous speeches and know that such an opportunity is not one that he will normally forego. However, Thursdays are devoted to Parliament, and today the Honourable Minister is expected to defend the Ministry’s budgetary allocation in the wind up of the Budget Debate - which explains his absence from today’s launch.

Nevertheless, with disappointment comes opportunity and today I am given the chance to comment appropriately on today’s activity. Firstly, on the Minister’s behalf, I applaud the Integrity Commission for sustaining its public education focus and for reaching out to the most prized asset of this country, our young people, through this Championship.

The standards of integrity promoted by the Integrity Commission of Trinidad and Tobago are indeed shared and supported by the Ministry of Education. We have in our Strategic Plan 2011 - 2015 clearly articulated, five Value Outcomes for our children. There is obvious alignment

between the values of integrity and morality expressed in the Do Right Championship and the Value Outcomes of the Ministry.

The Ministry of Education continues to promote high standards among our schools. National curricula speak to the holistic development of our students and to excellence in education. From infancy all the way through to Secondary level, we have designed positive learning experiences that build skills and competencies across a wide range of subjects including Character and Citizenship Education, Health and Family Life Education, and Religious Education.

Admittedly, Religious Education was not implemented in as many schools as we would like but through our recently completed Secondary Curriculum Review, a separate curriculum was developed for implementation at the lower secondary level starting in the current academic school year.

I am aware that since 2011, the Commission has spearheaded this initiative focusing on cartoons, poetry, scenario and short story both at the primary and secondary schools with monologue and Speech Band (for Tobago participants) being introduced in 2013.

I am aware too, that this year's **Do Right Championship** will give expression to students' efforts in Dance, Drama, Music, Visual Arts and English Language Arts. All of these subjects are currently prominent in our national primary and secondary curricula featuring in the Continuous Assessment Component (CAC) of the Trinidad and Tobago Secondary Entrance Assessment (SEA) at the primary level and the National Certificate of Secondary Education (NCSE) at the secondary level.

“Do the Right Thing- Always!” has been the slogan of the Do Right Championship from its inception three years ago. It is certainly a powerful message to our students and to us all. “Doing the right thing always” is the hallmark of integrity. But who determines exactly what is the right thing? Some argue that it is what most people believe is right, but you know what? We are blessed with a conscience that helps us to know in our heart what is right.

C.S. Lewis, the famous writer of children's books such as the 'Chronicles of Narnia' offered a definition of integrity that I wish to share with you. Students, have you read 'The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe'? What about Prince Caspian? Maybe you've seen the exciting movie versions also? Well, according to C.S. Lewis, ***“Integrity is doing the right thing, even when no one is watching.”*** What great advice that is! Isn't it? I shall repeat it for you....

Today, I ask you to follow that advice throughout your preparation for the new Do Right Championship. This year we recommended an Integrated Arts Approach so you will be portraying your interpretation of integrity using the Visual and Performing Arts. We look forward to the wealth of creativity in the original scripts, songs and dialogues you create during your Language Arts classes on the theme of integrity. And we are eager to see how these will be performed on stage during your school presentations. This is truly a wonderful opportunity to see our curriculum come alive! And it is you students and teachers who will make this happen. To be successful in this championship itself you will have to show excellence in both the Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA) and the Language Arts. As you would have learnt today, you will be judged on your

- On-stage production/performance on the theme “Do the Right Thing Always’
- Portfolio, which will have evidence in writing and images of your original creative pieces and of your experiences as you prepare for the production/performance

The 2014 Do Right Championship will require students to collaborate as creative teams, to arrive at solutions to problems through critical and creative thinking and to be innovative in their responses to the theme. All of these are twenty-first century skills that will be necessary at school and for living beyond school. I know you will find the experience worthy of your time and effort.

As Director of the Curriculum Division at the Ministry, I am proud to speak of the national curricula currently being implemented. In addition to the new primary curriculum, we have revised our secondary curriculum in ten broad areas which we began implementing at the Form 1 level at the start of the school year earlier this month, so you have a head start on employing newer initiatives in your efforts. We are certainly mindful of the needs of our twenty-first century students and of their innate relationship with technology as tools of learning. And even as students use the technology, there is the need for integrity in how it is used and what it produces... (dealing with plagiarism, copy right issues, and so on)

The Ministry of Education provides the enabling environment for the holistic development of students. Our broad-based curriculum

- promotes the health and wellness of students through Physical Education, HFLE, VAPA and Science
- promotes ethical behaviour, good citizenship and respect for self and the environment through the study of Social Studies, HFLE and Literature
- focuses on literacy and numeracy across curriculum areas

As a valued partner, the Integrity Commission has collaborated with the Ministry since 2011 in promoting literacy development through its Do Right Competitions. I thank the Commission for publishing students' winning entries: *stories, poems, drawings and other forms of written expression* and making the publication available to schools! It is motivational for students to see their entries in print. Thank you for this! We anticipate that our partnership will be strengthened and sustained as we widen the focus with this years' Integrated Arts approach that has literacy embedded within it.

Ladies and gentlemen, in conclusion, I reiterate the firm commitment of the Ministry of Education in working with the Integrity Commission of Trinidad and Tobago to ensure another successful Do Right Championship in 2014-2015. We continue to stand ready to support the event to ensure curricular relevance.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Stakeholder engagement in the change and transformation process is critical as the Ministry continues to improve the quality of education we offer. In fact it stands out as one of our sixteen (16) Ministerial priorities in achieving the outcomes for our children as articulated in the Mission statement of the Ministry of Education. Accordingly, I wish to once again underscore our appreciation to the Integrity Commission for their lead in this project and also extend best wishes to all schools here and hope that you have an enjoyable and productive session. Be sure to register for the championship and remember throughout the process, to '***Do the Right Thing Always!***'

Ladies and Gentlemen, I thank you most kindly and God Bless.

Wisdom is knowing the right path to take.....integrity is taking it. M.H. McKee

25th September 2014