

EDUCATION *MATTERS*

CSEC

Kasan Troupe

DENBIGH HIGH: WE AIM TO BE THE NO.1 SCHOOL IN CLARENDON

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The Secondary Ivy League RANKING

2015

On behalf of the Educate Jamaica Team, I would like to welcome you to our third publication and third season of the **EDUCATION MATTERS** magazine.

THE RANKINGS ARE BASED ON THE CSEC RESULTS OF 2014.

Welcome

Educatejamaica.org is a Social Enterprise Education Project (SEEP), which combines a think tank platform with education services for education stakeholders. It's an online platform, which focuses on innovation and development within the education sector in Jamaica.

Our vision for education is bold and ambitious and, our aim is to aid in creating a world class education system that produces well rounded individuals, who have been prepared adequately to contribute socially and economically to the society. Our focus is on all key stages of the education system, namely early childhood, primary, secondary, tertiary and special education.

About educatejamaica.org

What we have done at Educate Jamaica is to look at each school and calculate what percentage of students they are turning out at the end of grade 11, with a minimum of 5 CSEC subjects (including Mathematics and/or English) and based on the percentage obtained, they are ranked. The percentage of students is based on the cohort and schools that are successful in turning out 80% or more achieving 5 subjects (Maths and/or English) meet the CSEC Secondary Ivy League.

What did we use to measure the performance of schools?

Ainsworth Darby M.A. B.ed (hons) Dip.ed
Chairman
Educate Jamaica

A Potential Disaster in the Making:

Schools & Parents Be Aware!

The government has announced in a small way, the beginning of a model operated in countries such as the USA and the UK called 'catchment'. What that simply means is that children in Jamaica will be sent to the school closest to their homes.

The Ministry of Education (MOE) have said the rationale for introducing this model on a small scale is to facilitate parents. According to MOE, this will help with costs such as bus or taxi fare as well as make the journey for children short and more hassle free.

Students who have not been admitted to the school of their choice will be sent to the school closest to their home. According to the Ministry of Education this is the approach they will take and as it stands, only on a small scale.

We have spoken to a number of individuals on the matter including board chairmen and Principals, who have said they are not entirely convinced the Ministry of Education will stop at a small amount and at some point in the future, may roll it out for all students across the country.

In light of this possibility, where does the future of schools like Hampton Girls rests, who have always enjoyed the privilege of students from all over Jamaica as well as international countries? What about children in some inner city communities who have been able, because of the location of schools, to socialise outside of their communities and have benefited tremendously from that?


Many people currently criticise some schools for its elitist culture. What do you think will happen to an Immaculate, Jamaica College, Calabar, Queens or Campion? By virtue of their location they will become even more elitist and the property prices around these schools will go through the roof as people try to get homes close to these schools.

Not only will house price close to these schools go up; you will also see a massive growth in squatter communities close to these schools as people try to get closer to the schools. We will also see the level of poverty increase and the window of opportunity narrowing.

Affordability is an issue and many parents would rather not have the expenses, however, they unfortunately do because we do not have a system similar to other countries where the Government covers the costs of getting an education. If parents were consulted on the decision of sending their daughter/son to a school of their choice or to the school nearest to their home, what would they say? Should we look to further remove choice from parents or look to enhance it?

I believe that the Ministry of Education should continue to maintain its "policy of choice," whilst focusing on removing the barriers/reasons why parents do not want to send their children to the school closest to their home. The answer to this question is the reason/barrier, that when addressed, will solve this issue. The question is: Why would a parent who lives in St. Thomas or Portland for example send their child to an immaculate, Queens or Holy Childhood, when there are at least 4 secondary schools in that parish?

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You are not alone.

Do Schools Have a Role to Play in the Fight Against Sexual Exploitation of Young Girls and Boys?

The Government of Jamaica is being faced with the challenge of how to effectively safeguard the nation's children and the task is getting more difficult as the years roll by.

Families with children are faced with fighting this evil perpetrated by, not only strangers but also, by their own family members. Sexual exploitation of children by strangers is a big issue, however, a more worrying and bigger issue is sexual exploitation of children by their own family members.

How do we safeguard them from this? Do parents need to do more? Do schools have a role to play in the fight against sexual exploitation of children?

In asking this question, the idea isn't to create more work for schools. The idea is to fight this issue with the best tools available to us and what we do know is that children spend a lot of time at school interacting with their peers and teachers.

What does spending a lot of time at school have to do with the fight against sexual exploitation? Fortunately it has a lot to do with it and it is very helpful as other countries have found, in their fight against this evil looking to poison their society as well as harm the future generation.


Research has found that children who are being sexually exploited, may at some point whilst it is happening or after it has happened, make a


disclosure and this disclosure is often to a general friend or a friend at school. It has also been discovered that these children display telling signs and if teachers spend more time observing the children in class and the conversations they have with their peers, they would be better able to identify these children. Research also tells us that single female parents who are low-income earners tend to be the ones whose children are at the highest risk of sexual exploitation. We also know that appropriately educating the children about this will help them keep themselves safe (I am mainly thinking 13-15 years old). Research has also discovered that schools who actively engage children within school and create an ethos in which children feel safe and comfortable to disclose things, find that children often do so.

The ultimate fight lies with parents and the community in which the child lives. In a nut shell, the first line of defence against this monster is the home and the second line of defence is the immediate community in which the child lives and the third line of defence should be schools.

Whatever decisions we make as a society or whatever course we take, we need to do something urgently, so as not to allow these acts to erode the virtues in our society.

In Jamaica we have sections of our society that believes 'informers should die' and this negative influence proves to be a hindrance in the fight against such acts. How do we create such an ethos among our children that will allow them to feel comfortable disclosing?

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Reid, Troupe & Molloy: Future Education Thought Leaders

As an educator, I believe we have an education system that has many great qualities and has produced many great Jamaicans. It has played a great role in nation building, however, we have been at a crossroads for some time now, being faced with the big decisions that will either take us forward or make us stand still.

What will it take for us to move forward? What we need are individuals who have the right minds, ideas and the know how to take the 'game' to the next level.

I am not a Political advocate nor am I an advocate of nepotism or cronyism. I am simply an advocate for a better Jamaica and a Jamaica that rewards talent and hard work. I am an advocate of a Jamaica that rewards Jamaicans who get it right.

How will we reward a Kasan Troupe, a Nadine Molloy or Senator Reid and the many other individuals in our education system that have the know-how and are great leaders? Why should Principals who get it right be reward the exact same way and the same amount of money as those who get it wrong? Should we pay bonuses to those principals who do get it right?

Take one of Jamaica's oldest and most legacy-filled schools that became one of the worst performing all boys' school. This school was existing only by its brand, and by the late 90s there was very little substance left. Jamaica College went from being the school previous described, to a school which is now turning out 68% of its students, having achieved five (5) or more subjects (Mathematics and/or English included). Senator Reid has set himself a 2016 target of making it the best performing all boys' school on the island. Is not this performance worthy of a reward? Are performances like these worthy of a seat on our great 'Education Council'? Is anybody interested in hearing how he did it? Is good practice and good modeling worthy of a national discussion?

I stand up for the nation's interest, is there anybody else who wants to stand with me? A line in our National Anthem says: To our leaders, great defenders, grant true wisdom from above. For us what does true wisdom look like? Or should I ask this question of our great defenders? Are defeaters and defenders interchangeable words?

So many unanswered questions, however, in the end, 'Justice and Truth Be Ours forever, Jamaica Land We Love'.

Nadine Molloy, Kasan Troupe and Ruel Reid are the who of whom in today's education landscape. They are all principals of secondary schools and they have all managed to impact education in a game changing, transformational way.



Each of their resume has a long list of achievements that often makes them stand out whenever they are in a room or spoken about. They are impactful individuals with a love for education and achievement.

We have placed these 3 individuals on our EDU-WATCH list to check in yearly to see what each individual is up to and what has been the latest piece of work they have completed or embarked on.

Kasan has shown us that newly upgraded secondary schools can enjoy some success, despite having a limited budget and for showing us that the focus should be on what you have and how best to use it and not on what you don't have. Efficacy is the order of the day.

To be a game changing, transformational leader, one has to be able to put their ego aside and recognise that they don't know everything and be prepared to sit at the feet of those who know.

Where next for Nadine? Many have said she only takes on big assignments and Ardenne High has been said to be only a reflection of 70% of her ability. What project or assignment will enable us to see her at full capacity? Is she worthy of being the next permanent secretary or head of the NEI? Well, only time will tell what her just reward will be.



59% 68%... 80%... 90%

by 2016 at Jamaica College. Will They Make It?

The 250 years old school that was created for the wealthy in Jamaica, is re-emerging as a powerhouse. The number of students currently leaving Jamaica College having achieved at least 5 subjects (including Mathematics and/or English) currently stands at 68% and this has been a significant improvement on the 'below 50% that it was registering in the late 90s and early 2000.

They have not met our criteria to be considered a leading CSEC school, however they appear to have the right leadership and recipe to get there. The current principal is under a lot of pressure to get the school back to its glory days of being the premier all-boys institution.

Many of Jamaica's elite and aristocratic families have strong ties to the school and they are keen to see it return to its glory days. The old boys of the school have thrown their weight behind it; many of whom are leading businessmen on the island.

It is rumoured to have been said, within the old boys' circle, that whatever it takes and whatever the price, they are prepared to pay it to bring back the prestige of the school. It has been further rumoured that there is a 'war chest' being created to pump at least \$100 million into the school's development over the next 10 years.

As businessmen, they have sought them a principal whose cognition is rooted in business and believes that what gets measured gets managed. Senator Reid has so far been able to find the sweet spot in education and business and has managed to find the enviable link between the two.

The leadership at the school has so far managed to bring massive sporting success to the school without comprising their academic agenda.

They have begun to create boarding facilities for students as well as accommodations for their staff.

I saw a recent advert in the newspaper, in which Jamaica College was recruiting teachers for various roles. If I read it correctly, the adverts were asking for teachers who apply to have Master's Degrees. There are places in the world where a Master's Degree is the minimum to teacher. Is Jamaica College setting a new trend?

The jury is still out on Jamaica College and only time will complete the story of the rise and rise or the short term rise and fall of a once mighty school. Whatever people's views of the school, it has certainly been exciting to see the work that is being done at Jamaica College and the transformation that is happening there.

Schools who are using a School Data Management System are facing the greatest risk since Jamaican schools began using these systems.

Schools are being encouraged by both international and local providers to give up their paper system in return for their computerised system. A paper system has far lesser risks than a computer system as it relates to data loss. We are in no way advocating for a paper system, as this would be a backward step in the development of schools as well as a backward step in the focus on schools being data driven. What we are advocating for, is greater safety as it relates to student's data.

Educate Jamaica have examined the practices of the providers who provide these services to schools (both local and international products) and have found a lack of consistency and credibility into their practices as it relates to data back-up and the prevention of possible data loss.

We have found inadequate systems and provisions being offered by these providers and we have found that some of these providers have been making false promises to schools about the safety of their data.

We will not name the inadequate providers in this article and we will not say if they are local or international, however, what we will say is that schools need to act urgently to mitigate against these risks.

At this stage there is no point calling your provider to ask how safe is your data. Reason being they will say yes, to keep you as a client. Following this article they may summon their staff to try to improve the level of safety, however, there is no guarantee.

School Data Management System & the Risk of Data Loss

How to Mitigate Against These Risks



1. Liaise with the best ICT person you have on your staff. If you are not confident in your ICT person, then get a reputable IT company from outside to come in. I know you're probably thinking about the cost for the consultation, however, losing the entire school's data will carry a more serious cost and have graver implications.
2. Do not try to buy or be encouraged to buy data back-up service from your current school data management provider or any other school data management provider. This will put you back to square one. Seek to get an in-house system that will be consistently managed by the school or a reputable independent provider. There are cloud back-up services such as Google Drive that you can subscribe to. Again, I encourage you to get more specialist advice. Please do not seek advice from your current school data management provider, as it might reflect their own self-interest.
3. Find out from your ICT person/IT company what are the best, most affordable and easy to manage systems available to back-up the school's data. You can go for in-house (operated within the school) or an independent provider. Where possible, I would encourage the in-house option, however, it has to be well managed.
4. Once you have identified your choice, act quickly. There is no time to waste. If you think losing your mobile phone and some of your personal contact numbers is heart wrenching, multiply that by 100 for a school's data loss.

Specialist Secondary Schools!

Is There a Place For This in Jamaica's Education System?

It was recently announced that Calabar High School was selected as the first school to receive a synthetic track to facilitate better track & field development at the school. Calabar is not the only school who will receive a synthetic track, it just happens to be the first. It would have been nice for all schools to receive it at the same time, however, as we know resource are limited.

What does a synthetic track mean for Calabar High? There are a few schools on the island that have done exceptionally well in track & field at the secondary school level and Calabar is one of them. When one speaks about the development of schools, it is often suggested that a school's development should be centred on its strengths, and sports (mainly track & field) is Calabar's strength. Kingston College, St. Jago, Wolmer's Boys, Edwin Allen Vere Tech & Jamaica College amongst others, are very dominant in track & field and other sports. How might it be different if these schools were made into specialist sports secondary colleges?

One of the benefits of specialism is that it facilitates better allocation and management of resources especially if it's limited. A specialist sports school is just one on the list of specialisms that a school can have. We have schools like Campion College and Immaculate for example that do well in Mathematics & the Sciences. We have Hampton High that does very well in Humanities and we have Tivoli Gardens that does very well in performing Arts. Why not officially make Tivoli Gardens High School a specialist Performing Arts institution?


Instead of spreading the resources very thinly around all the secondary schools, why not invest in the specialist model and then use the specialist schools as a point of dissemination for the other schools in and around them. Specialism doesn't only allow for better allocation and management of resources, it also allows for the development of greater expertise, research and leadership.

Our current secondary model is built on 'the jack of all trades, master of none model and as no one is the master, where will the leadership come from? How do we intend to best use the current resources we have to build capacity? Everyone speaks about building capacity, however, how do we define the act?

Better allocations of current resources and better use of current expertise is one way we can go about building capacity and another useful approach is the early adoption of best practice.

I will not say much in this article on the importance of the early adoption of best practice, however, as an individual who have seen the success that specialist colleges (at the secondary level) can create, would strongly advocate for a MOE consideration for such a definitive secondary model.

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ALL-ISLAND

SECONDARY SCHOOL RANKINGS

THE IVY LEAGUE

| Previous Ranking | Current Ranking | Name of school | Percentage (%) of grade 11 cohort attaining five (5) subjects including English and/or Mathematics. |
|------------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|---|
| 2 | 1 | CAMPION COLLEGE | 100% |
| 1 | 2 | IMMACULATE CONCEPTION | 99.6% |
| 13 | 3 | MONTEGO BAY HIGH | 98.6% |
| 10 | 4 | ST. ANDREW HIGH FOR GIRLS | 98% |
| 6 | 5 | WOLMER'S GIRLS | 97.9% |
| 7 | 6 | WESTWOOD HIGH | 97.7% |
| 3 | 7 | ST. HILDA'S DIOCESAN HIGH | 97.5% |
| 8 | 8 | GLENMUIR HIGH | 96.55% |
| 9 | 9 | DECARTERET COLLEGE | 96.2% |
| 4 | 10 | HAMPTON HIGH | 95.7% |
| 15 | 11 | WOLMER'S BOYS HIGH | 94.75% |
| 5 | 12 | MOUNT ALVERNIA HIGH | 94.7% |
| 17 | 13 | MUNRO COLLEGE | 93.9% |
| 11 | 14 | COVENANT OF MERCY ACADEMY ALPHA | 93.7% |

| Previous Ranking | Current Ranking | Name of school | Percentage (%) of grade 11 cohort attaining Five (5) subjects including English and/or Mathematics. |
|------------------|-----------------|----------------------|---|
| 19 | 15 | ARDENNE HIGH | 93.5% |
| 22 | 16 | BISHOP GIBSON | 92.2% |
| 16 | 17 | St. GEORGE'S COLLEGE | 91% |
| 26 | 18 | MANCHESTER HIGH | 90.1% |
| 12 | 19 | KNOX COLLEGE | 89.8% |
| 23 | 20 | YORK CASTLE HIGH | 85.9% |
| 18 | 21 | HOLY CHILDHOOD HIGH | 83.7% |
| 20 | 22 | MERL GROVE HIGH | 83% |
| 14 | 23 | MORANT BAY HIGH | 82.1% |
| 28 | 24 | KINGSTON COLLEGE | 81.9% |

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- Montego Bay High School's move from 13 to 3 may seem significant, however, it's only an increase of approximately 9% in their score from 2013 to 2014. It's just a reminder of how a difference of 0.5 percent or 1 percent makes in rankings.
 - 7 of the top 10 schools are all girls (70%)
 - Just under half of the Ivy League schools are Kingston & St. Andrew based schools.



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THE IVY LEAGUE EDITION

Is an educatejamaica.org publication
EDUCATEJAMAICA.ORG PUBLICATIONS 2015

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