



Bahamas

Carl W. Bethel
Minister of Education



The Honourable Carl W. Bethel was born in Nassau, New Providence, The Bahamas on 1st July, 1961. Minister Bethel received his primary and secondary education at Queen's College in Nassau, Bahamas, Wilton House and Yateley Manor in the United Kingdom and at St. Andrew's School in Nassau, Bahamas. He then continued with his tertiary level education at Lester B. Pearson College (UWC) in Canada where he completed his International Baccalaureate; The London School of Economics where he earned his L.L.B with Honours; and the Holborn Law Tutors in London, England. He is also a proud member of Lincoln's Inn, London, the United Kingdom. Minister Bethel was called to the Bar of England and Wales, and The Bahamas, in 1985, and is a Barrister and Counsel and Attorney-at-Law. He has served as Minister of State for Economic Development, Minister of Economic Development, and Attorney General under the Free National Movement (FNM) Government (August 1992 to May, 2002). In May, 2007, he was elected as the FNM's representative for the Sea Breeze Constituency and was appointed to his present post of Minister of Education.

Inclusive Education: Our Right, Our Responsibility

Education, which is critical to a country's economic growth, and to its ability to compete with the rest of the world and sustain itself, is a fundamental right of every citizen. Therefore, it is our ethical and humanitarian responsibility to ensure that it is accessible to all learners. Through inclusive education, we may empower not only our special needs students, but all youth regardless of their race, ethnicity, and abilities.

The Bahamas along with other nations has committed to providing equal educational opportunities for all through inclusion. This is a goal which we take very seriously and have embarked upon several major initiatives as a result, which comprise: (a) "National Strategic Plan" to transform the National Curriculum; (b) Early Childhood Care Legislation to provide national standards for preschool education; and (c) Increased number of Merit, Academic and Technical Scholarship Grants awarded for tertiary education. These initiatives have all been designed to transform our educational system so that it is more relevant to the needs of our country and its citizens. We are proud of the success that we have had thus far as we are beginning to see positive results. We realize, however, that there is still much work to be completed in further integrating and facilitating inclusion into our learning environments.

The Bahamas is on a mission "To provide all persons in The Bahamas an opportunity to receive an education that will equip them with the necessary knowledge, skills, beliefs and attitudes required for work and life in a democratic society guided by Christian values." We will remain steadfast in our commitment to this mission as we realize that a country's standard of education determines its forward progression.

We in the Ministry of Education believe that the pursuit of knowledge should not be for a chosen few, but for the masses. Inclusion, therefore, is the way to ensure equity for all of our citizens.