



## Barbados

Ronald D. Jones  
Minister of Education and Human Resource  
Development



*Ronald D. Jones. MP. was born on November 23rd, 1957 at Wilcox in the Parish of Christ Church. He was initially educated at the St. Bartholomew Boys' School and then at the Washington High School. After Graduating from Secondary School he went on to further his studies at the Barbados Community College. This was followed by teacher training certification at Erdiston Teachers' College. He then went on to study for his Bachelors degree at the University Of The West Indies Cave Hill where he studied History and Sociology. He further completed a Masters Degree in Educational Management and Administration at the University of London, England. For Ronald Jones, education is the greatest liberating force in human life and generally encourages individuals to become involved in lifelong learning. Ronald Jones is an Educator, Trade Unionist, Credit unionist and Sports Administrator. He educated thousands of young Barbadians within the formal education sector as part of his profession and impacted on several hundreds in his capacity as a leader in civil society, through other formal and informal education strategies. Since January 2008, the Hon. Ronald Jones has been a Minister of Education and Human Resource Development.*

### **Inclusive Education - A Spectrum in which Each One Matters**

Progressive societies view education as the vehicle on which we have relied to improve our economic and social development. Barbados, like other Caribbean societies, has always valued education as a means of transforming its people into successful citizens capable of competing on the world's stage.

To this end, it was therefore necessary to ensure that all children have access to quality and appropriate education, and several initiatives were undertaken to facilitate this mandate. These initiatives are:

- Curriculum reform
- Pursuing the concept of inclusion for all children
- Expansion of the coverage of early childhood education to reach all three-year olds.

The revised curricula give students the opportunities to think divergently and operate at different levels within the classroom; it also ensures that a constructivist philosophy underlies the reform process. Students, irrespective of their disability type, are provided with adaptive curriculum programmes indicated by their Individual Educational Plans (IEP) in chronologically age-appropriate general education classrooms.

Inclusion is a term that expresses commitment to educate each child to the maximum extent possible, in the school and classroom he or she would otherwise attend. Promoting inclusive school environments means building schools in which everyone belongs, is accepted, supported and is supported by his or her peers and other members of the school community in the course of having his or her needs met. There are several excellent examples of inclusionary schools where the students themselves are the best promoters of inclusion and acceptance by

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virtue of their achievements, and have provided us with models from which we can learn.

The Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development also continues to make provision for those students who will not be able to benefit fully from regular secondary school curricula or attain the Caribbean Examinations Council qualifications. In these instances, the students will enter those schools that offer an alternative secondary curriculum.

I send best wishes for a successful conference, and we in Barbados wait eagerly for the results of your deliberations to assist in the further development of inclusive education.