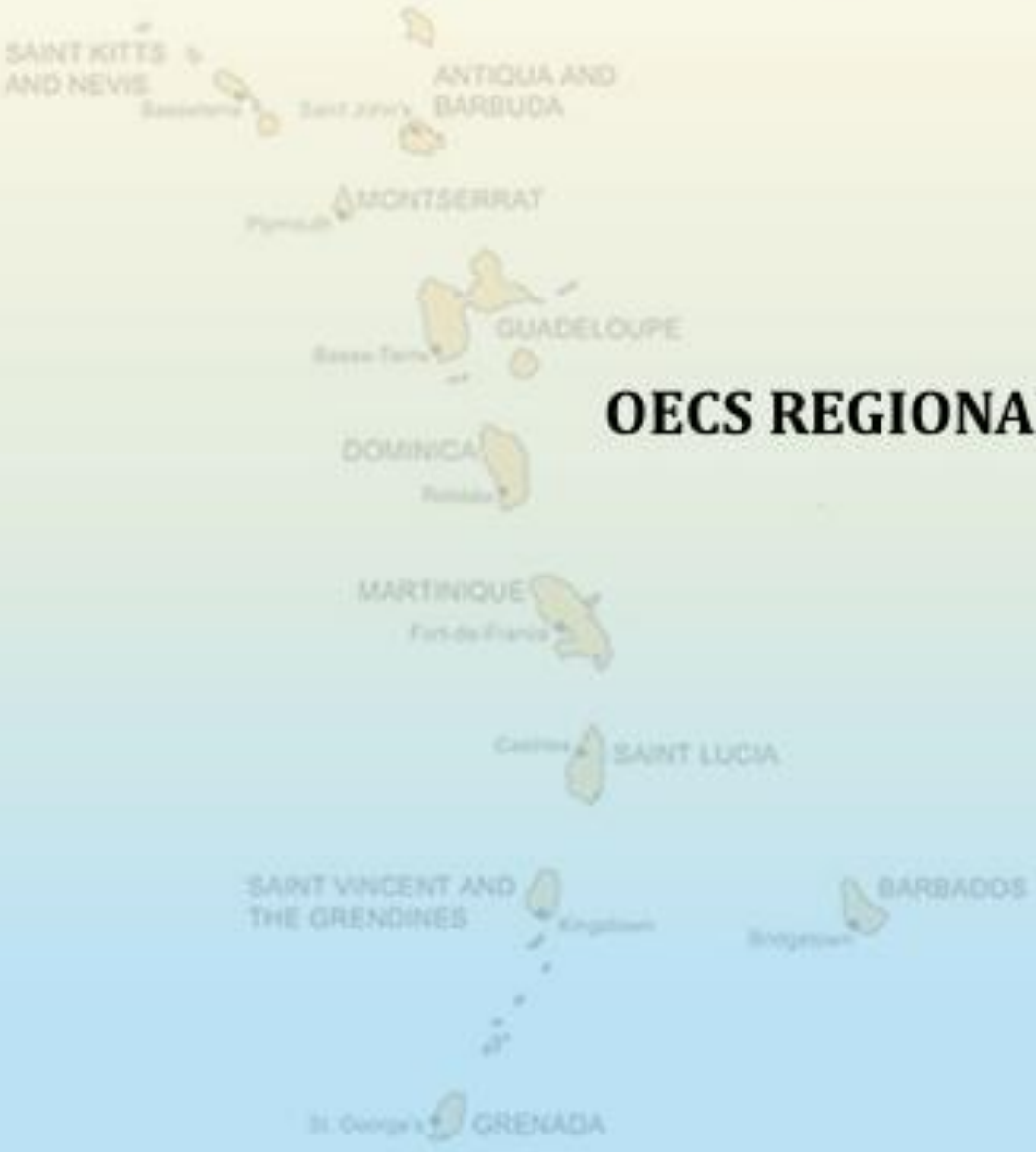
An Investigation into the Factors that Influence Students' Academic Performance in the Caribbean:

Home and School Factors



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Caribbean Educational Research Centre

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A Pre- and Post-COVID-19 Pandemic Comparison of Home and School Factors that Influence Students' Academic Performance

ORGANISATION OF EASTERN CARIBBEAN STATES REGIONAL REPORT

Caribbean Educational Research Centre

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This research was planned and executed by:

The Caribbean Educational Research Centre

The University of the West Indies

Cave Hill Campus, Barbados

- Professor S. Joel Warrican, Director
- Dr Coreen J. Leacock, Research Coordinator
- Dr Erin Mahon, Research Fellow
- Dr Laurette Bristol, Project Officer
- Ms Talyjah Hyatt, Research Assistant
- Ms Jimelle Roberts, Research Assistant
- Ms Judy Ann Auld, Research Assistant
- Ms Crescentiana Alfred, Research Assistant
- Ms Jonielle Alleyne, Research Assistant
- Mrs Paula Alleyne, Research Assistant
- Ms Desiré Collins, Research Assistant
- Ms Bethlene Ferdinand, Research Assistant
- Ms Rachel Frame, Research Assistant
- Mr Don Howell, Research Assistant
- Mrs Nitha Mauricette-Philip, Research Assistant
- Dr Allison DaSantos, Research Fellow
- Dr Chloe Walker, Research Fellow

Global Campus, Barbados

- Ms Melissa Alleyne, Planning Officer

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Executive Summary

Overview

Educational practices that are remnants of education systems put in place when Caribbean nations were colonies of European countries still exist today despite the unsuitability of these practices in the modern Caribbean context. Recently, there has been a push for evidence-informed policymaking to address this issue. An evidence-based approach is essential for small island developing states with limited resources. This study is a partial response to the increased demand for empirical data that can support policymaking in the Eastern Caribbean. It aims to provide information to enhance understanding of the home and school factors affecting students' academic progress in the region.

Objectives

This report describes and compares data collected across six Caribbean nations pre- and post-COVID-19 pandemic in two phases. The first phase of data collection was completed in 2017, and the second phase in 2022. The data were collected from primary and secondary school students, teachers and principals to gain insight into the home and school factors influencing students' academic achievement in the Eastern Caribbean region.

This report is Report 1a, the first in a two-part report on the home and school factors influencing student academic achievement. Report 1b will explore the potential of these factors to predict student achievement at the primary and secondary levels.

Methodology

Surveys were used to collect quantitative data from primary and secondary school students, teachers, and principals in Antigua, Dominica, Grenada, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, and St Vincent and the Grenadines. The study targeted key factors affecting academic achievement, including school, personal, and home influences. A representative sample of public and government-assisted primary and secondary schools was selected for each district in each country.

For primary schools, the focus was on students before primary exit exams in Grade Five and for secondary schools, Second and Fourth Form students were surveyed.

Participants

Phase 1 (2017):

- 975 primary students, 184 primary teachers, and 13 primary school principals from four countries (Antigua, Grenada, St Kitts and Nevis, and St Vincent and the Grenadines) were surveyed.
- 1253 secondary students, 178 secondary teachers, and ten secondary school principals from four countries (Antigua, Grenada, St Kitts and Nevis, and St Vincent and the Grenadines) were surveyed.

Phase 2 (2022):

- 635 primary students, 329 primary teachers, and 34 primary school principals from five countries (Dominica, Grenada, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia and St Vincent and the Grenadines) were surveyed.
- 1073 secondary students, 331 secondary teachers, and 22 secondary school principals from five countries (Dominica, Grenada, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia and St Vincent and the Grenadines) were surveyed.

Key Findings

Primary Schools

From 2017 to 2022, primary education in the Caribbean underwent notable changes, reflected in the experiences and perspectives of students, teachers, and principals in this study. For students, there were shifts in several areas.

- Primary students' access to most electronic devices at home, including laptop and desktop computers that they can use for schoolwork, declined across the period.

- A significant portion of students in 2022 reported challenges during online schooling, including internet connectivity issues and limited access to devices. These declining resource access trends may contribute to widening educational inequality, particularly in contexts where online teaching and learning have become more prevalent due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The presence of certain books, such as books to assist with schoolwork, classic literature, and poetry in primary students' homes slightly decreased, as did the proportion of students who read in their leisure time and were read to by adults. The decrease in home literacy support may negatively impact students' reading skills and overall academic achievement, particularly in the critical primary years.
- Primary student participation in extracurricular activities significantly decreased from 2017 to 2022, with a higher percentage of students in 2022 not engaging in these activities. This lack of involvement in extracurricular activities may affect primary students' social skills, physical health, and holistic development. Further, lack of participation could indicate broader socioeconomic challenges or shifts in student and parent priorities post-pandemic.
- While most primary students viewed school as valuable, reported attitudes towards school and learning were less positive in 2022, with increased feelings of uncertainty and dissatisfaction. More students expressed that school is boring and that they would rather stay home than attend school in 2022 compared to 2017. Primary students' growing negative perception of school may signal deeper issues within the educational system, including potential disengagement with the curriculum or pandemic-related stressors.
- Principals reported significant improvements in their qualifications, with an increase in advanced degrees, particularly master's degrees, and more school leadership and management training. This has led to more strategic and effective leadership practices, including improved communication of school goals, heightened supervision of instruction, and more substantial support for teachers and students.
- Primary teachers also showed progress, with more obtaining higher degrees and adopting democratic teaching practices that foster a more inclusive and engaging learning environment. However, there was a decline in education-related qualifications among

teachers, potentially leading to gaps in specialised training for primary education. This could impact the effectiveness of instruction, especially in foundational subjects.

- The mixed impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on teachers' attitudes towards teaching was evident, with some reporting adverse effects, highlighting the ongoing challenges they face.
- Across primary teachers and principals in both years, there was a mixed response to traditional educational practices such as the Common Entrance Examination, streaming by academic ability and grade retention. While some support for these practices remains, there is also growing opposition, particularly from principals and teachers, reflecting a shift towards more contemporary educational theories that emphasise inclusivity and equity.
- Increased principal perceptions of the absenteeism of students and teachers as challenging suggest a growing issue in maintaining consistent attendance, which is crucial for a stable learning environment.

The data indicate that while progress has been made in leadership, teaching practices, and overall qualifications, significant challenges remain that could impact the quality of education and student outcomes. Declining access to resources and extracurricular activities could exacerbate educational inequalities, particularly for students from marginalised backgrounds, and hinder their overall development. A decrease in home literacy support and the negative perceptions of school reported by students are particularly concerning, as they could lead to lower academic achievement and increased disengagement from education. Finally, mixed attitudes towards the Common Entrance Examination, streaming, and grade retention highlight ongoing debates within the educational community about the appropriateness of these practices in the context of the Caribbean. The growing opposition to these practices suggests that they may no longer align with contemporary educational goals, which increasingly focus on inclusivity, equity, and the holistic development of students.

Secondary Schools

Between 2017 and 2022, secondary education in the Caribbean experienced significant shifts, reflected in the perspectives and experiences of secondary students, teachers and principals.

- Similar to the primary student sample, secondary students' home environments changed between 2017 and 2022, with a slight decrease in parents working full-time and an increase in part-time employment.
- Access to technology varied, with declines in some devices but increased access to tablets, smart TVs, educational software, and the internet, reflecting a shift towards digital engagement at home.
- The COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted students' online learning experiences, with many facing challenges like unreliable internet and device issues, which may exacerbate educational inequalities, particularly for secondary students in under-resourced communities.
- Secondary students' home literacy environment also deteriorated, with fewer students reading for leisure and a decline in the variety of books available at home, which could negatively impact literacy skills.
- There was a decrease in participation in extracurricular activities, which, when combined with students citing a lack of interest, confidence, or time, suggests a potential disengagement from school life, potentially having long-term implications for their social and emotional development.
- Secondary principals continued to report challenges with student and teacher absenteeism in 2017 and 2022, with increased variability in responses indicating that while absenteeism remains a concern, its impact differs across schools. This variability suggests that some schools may struggle to maintain consistent attendance, which is crucial for a stable learning environment.
- During this period, the availability and use of school facilities changed, with the decline in the use of spaces like libraries and industrial arts rooms, while facilities such as computer labs, canteens and music rooms saw increased usage. In combination with declines in

positive home literacy environments, the decrease in the use of libraries and specialised rooms may further impact literacy and the development of key skills.

- Mixed ability grouping in classes became more prevalent, with nearly three-quarters of principals adopting this practice by 2022, reflecting a trend towards inclusive education.
- The sharp decline in the adoption of reading policies and timetabled leisure reading raises further concerns about the potential negative impact on students' literacy development. In contrast, the growing emphasis on extracurricular activities, with more schools implementing supportive policies, highlights a recognition of the importance of these activities in holistic student development. Why an increase in policies that support extracurricular activities has not fostered increased student participation must be investigated.
- Teachers also experienced significant changes during this period. The proportion of teachers with education-related qualifications declined, while there was a notable increase in those with non-education-related or unspecified qualifications. This shift could impact the quality of instruction, particularly in specialised subject areas, and highlights the need for more targeted professional development.
- Despite challenges, there was a positive shift towards democratic and student-centred teaching practices, with significant increases in the use of problem-solving approaches, demonstrations, and differentiated instruction, suggesting a move towards more inclusive and engaging teaching methods.
- Teachers' attitudes towards teaching generally improved, though the pandemic presented ongoing challenges, reflecting mixed impacts on their feelings about teaching.
- The perspectives of secondary school principals and teachers on traditional educational practices such as the Common Entrance Examination, streaming by academic ability, and grade retention evolved during this period. In 2022, both groups expressed increased support for using the Common Entrance Examination for secondary school placement, although principal opposition to this method also grew, reflecting ongoing debates within the educational community. The divide and opinions on streaming classes by academic ability and views on grade retention indicate that these practices remain the subject of

debate, with growing consideration of alternative approaches that align with contemporary educational goals focused on equity and inclusivity.

A multifaceted approach is necessary to address these challenges at the primary and secondary levels. Continued investment in professional development for teachers and principals is essential to ensure they are equipped to effectively meet students' diverse needs and implement inclusive teaching and leadership practices. This should focus on specialised training for primary education to fill any qualifications gaps and improve instruction effectiveness in foundational subjects. Policies should be reviewed and updated to ensure equitable access to resources, particularly in under-resourced schools, to prevent widening educational inequalities. This includes providing adequate facilities and materials for science, the arts, and extracurricular activities, which are crucial for a well-rounded education. Efforts should also be made to increase home literacy support and to engage parents and communities in fostering a positive reading culture. Addressing the negative perceptions of school reported by students may require a more engaging and relevant curriculum, the increased use of technology in instruction, and the creation of more supportive school environments that address students' social and emotional needs. Finally, research and contemporary educational theories prioritising equity and inclusivity should inform the ongoing debates about the Common Entrance Examination, streaming, and grade retention. Policymakers should consider the potential impact of these practices on marginalised students and explore alternative approaches that are parallel with the educational goals of the region.

What's Next…

In the pre-COVID-19 (2017) and post-COVID-19 (2022/2024) periods, data were collected from primary and secondary students, teachers and school principals from Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean to investigate certain home and school factors that are known to influence academic achievement, both at the individual level and school level. This report focused on the data collected in seven OECS countries. It provides a descriptive summary of the responses from the various participant groups in Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, and St Vincent and the Grenadines that shed light on the home and school factors investigated and, in some cases, discusses implications.

A follow-up to this report is imminent. The follow-up report will examine the relationship between home and school factors summarised in this current report and academic achievement at the school level. Using primarily correlational analysis, we will explore, for example, the link between:

- school leadership and students' attitudes to school and learning
- school leadership and teachers' instructional practices
- students' home literacy behaviour and school achievement
- students' attitudes to school and learning and school achievement
- students' perceptions of their school and school achievement

Such issues will be explored for the pre- and post-COVID-19 periods.

Introduction

Over the years, education in the region has been a subject of extensive discussion and debate, with many contentious issues rooted in practices from the colonial era. These debates have focused on various aspects, such as curriculum content and teaching methods, the transition from primary to secondary education, the hierarchical structure of schools, and teacher recruitment processes. These conversations, held in the media, during parliamentary debates, and across various regional forums, frequently lead to the development and implementation of policies. However, policymaking in the Caribbean often depends on "policymakers who base decisions on ideas, as well as ad hoc or outdated data" (United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, 2012). Despite this, recent calls have been for evidence-based policymaking and practices. Recognising the limitations of financial resources, regional stakeholders understand the importance of making educational decisions - an area of high value - based on rigorously collected and analysed empirical evidence.

In line with the current emphasis on using evidence to guide practice, this study aims to enhance our understanding of the factors that either support or impede students' academic progress in the Eastern Caribbean region. This report, which forms part of a broader investigation into the home and school factors affecting student academic achievement, seeks to present key findings on pre and post-COVID data on:

1. Primary and secondary school characteristics, including student and teacher absenteeism, school facilities, class structure, reading policies and extracurricular activities.
2. Primary and secondary school students reports on home environment, participation in extracurricular activities and attitudes towards school and learning.
3. Primary and secondary school teachers' qualifications, professional status, democratic teaching practices, attitudes toward teaching, the Common Entrance Examination, streaming, grade retention and use of technology for teaching and learning.
4. Primary and secondary school principals' qualifications and training, perspectives on school leadership, attitudes toward the Common Entrance Examination, streaming and grade retention.

This report is Report 1a, the first in a two-part report on the home and school factors influencing student academic achievement. Report 1b will explore the potential of these factors to predict student achievement at the primary and secondary levels.

Literature Review

Introduction

This literature review examines various factors influencing student academic achievement, focusing on Caribbean and international perspectives. The discussion spans key areas such as the definition of academic achievement, the legacy of colonialism in Caribbean education, and evidence-based education reform. Additional sections explore specific influences on academic outcomes, including home environments, absenteeism, student attitudes, school climate, and leadership. The review also highlights the impact of post-colonial practices, such as academic tracking, and the role of technology in education, particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic on student achievement.

Student Academic Achievement Defined

Steinmayr et al. (2014) define academic achievement as a representation of the outcomes that reflect how individuals have met specific educational goals within instructional settings, including schools, colleges and universities. These goals often centre on cognitive development, either spanning multiple disciplines (e.g., critical thinking) or focusing on the mastery of specific content areas such as literacy, numeracy, science or history. Steinmayr et al. (2014) state that it is a multifaceted construct that is context-dependent and shaped by the indicators used to measure it. These indicators range from general markers, such as procedural (knowledge of a process, skill, or procedure, e.g., conducting a science experiment) and declarative (knowledge of a concept or idea, e.g., knowing what a noun is) knowledge gained through education, to curriculum-based measures, such as grades and performance on achievement tests. Other indicators include cumulative outcomes such as degrees and certifications.

In modern societies, academic achievement is critical in determining a person's opportunities for further education and professional success. For example, performance measured by Grade Point Average (GPA) or other measures often dictates whether a student will succeed at college or university (Kobrin & Michel, 2006). This can be extended to the Caribbean, where admission to community colleges and universities relies on the results of the Caribbean Secondary Education

Certificate (CSEC) and the Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Exam (CAPE). Beyond individual implications, academic achievement has national significance, influencing a country's economic prosperity and social well-being. International assessments, such as the Programme for International Assessment (PISA), assess academic achievement across nations, offering insight into the strengths and weaknesses of educational systems. The results of these studies are used to inform policy decisions aimed at improving educational outcomes (OECD, 2023).

Education in Post-Colonial Caribbean Contexts

The legacy of colonialism continues to shape education systems in the Caribbean, and inequities continue to be perpetuated by educational structures that are in place today (Brissett, 2021; Bristol, 2012; Thompson et al., 2011; Warrican, 2005, 2020; Williams, 2016). Brissett (2021) emphasises that these inequities are a direct result of colonial-era education systems that served a small elite, leaving marginalised populations, particularly those of African descent, with limited access to quality education. Similarly, Williams (2016) describes the persistence of hierarchical systems in Trinidad's education, where students from lower socio-economic backgrounds are marginalised through outdated curricula and disciplinary practices. When viewed through a postcolonial lens, we can thoroughly investigate the relationship between culture, education and research (Bristol, 2012).

While education reforms have aimed to address these inequities, Jules (2010) argues that global pressure to conform to Western educational norms often hinders truly localised efforts. The challenge, therefore, is not just one of access but of ensuring the relevance of education to local socio-economic contexts. Sappleton and Adams (2022) add an international perspective, comparing efforts to decolonise education in the Caribbean and South Africa with the ongoing challenges of racial inequalities in United States (U.S.) education. They point out that while diversity initiatives in the United States are gaining traction, they often fail to address the deep Eurocentrism embedded in the system, a challenge similarly faced in the Caribbean.

Warrican (2015) is aligned with these ideas, highlighting how the divide between home and school cultures affects literacy development in the Commonwealth Caribbean. He argues that many

students, particularly those from working-class backgrounds, are disengaged from literacy instruction that prioritises Standard English (SE) and ignores the Creole languages spoken at home. The persistence of colonial education practices devaluing local languages and cultures results in poor literacy outcomes and broader educational disengagement. Warrican calls for reforms integrating students' home languages into the classroom, fostering a more inclusive learning environment, and redefining literacy to include critical thinking and multiliteracies, which are necessary for success in modern society.

Progress has been made in certain realms, such as providing Universal Secondary Education throughout the Eastern Caribbean. Still, challenges remain in how children are placed into secondary school, with students who are more academically able being placed in prestigious schools that were historically grammar schools (Leacock, 2009; Thompson et al., 2011). Further, special and inclusive education in Barbados has transitioned from charity-based models to more inclusive practices; however, resource challenges and societal attitudes remain (Blackman, 2017).

This literature suggests that education in the Caribbean is at a crossroads. While efforts to decolonise and reform systems have made great strides, significant colonial legacies remain. Without addressing the inequities that persist in regional systems, especially those rooted in our shared colonial past, educational outcomes in the region will remain uneven, with marginalised groups continuing to face barriers to achievement.

Importance of Evidence-Based Education Reform

The impact of the Caribbean's colonial legacy on equitable access to quality education and increased globalisation necessitates ongoing educational reform in the Caribbean, and this reform is a focus of governments in the region (Jules & Williams, 2016). However, educational reform must be grounded in evidence-based research (Slavin, 2020). Further, evidence-based approaches can transform education systems by fostering continuous cycles of innovation, evaluation and improvement (Slavin et al., 2021).

The origins of evidence-based practice and policymaking trace back to the early 1990s in the medical field (Sackett & Rosenburg, 1995) and have since expanded to healthcare (Hoffmann et

al., 2023), business (Luthans et al., 2021) and psychology (APA Presidential Task Force on Evidence-Based Practice, 2006). In education, it now plays a crucial role in areas such as higher education (Diery et al., 2020), remote (online) education (Greenhow & Galvin, 2020), and special and inclusive education (Mitchell & Sutherland, 2020).

Although evidence-based policymaking has gained global acceptance, many educational policies, both internationally (Gorard et al., 2020) and in the Caribbean, are often developed without sufficient evidence (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, 2012). The United Nations (2024) highlights the unique challenges faced by small island developing states (SIDS) in implementing evidence-based policymaking, noting that:

> Small island developing states face significant challenges in data collection, analysis, technical and institutional capacity, which hinders evidence-informed policymaking, monitoring progress and accessing development financing; and we emphasise that capacity-building for stronger data governance and management will allow SIDS to support better data collection, protection, transparency and data sharing (pp. 4-5).

Shah and Kelman (2024) similarly emphasise the need for evidence-based policymaking in SIDS using both "big" data (e.g., extensive datasets) and "small" data (e.g., case studies) integrated with local expertise and extensive Indigenous datasets. Moreover, "small" data (e.g., case studies) should be integrated with local expertise and indigenous knowledge.

Researchers in the Caribbean face challenges related to the dominance of Western paradigms in educational research. Warrican (2020) critiques the imposition of Western research frameworks on Caribbean education, stating that this practice leads to the misinterpretation of local realities. For instance, educational behaviours, such as students' language use, are often misinterpreted when analysed through a Western lens. Warrican (2020) advocates for a shift towards more contextualised research methodologies that reflect the Caribbean region's socio-cultural history and educational needs.

The uncritical adoption of international education policies facilitates practices of policy transfer that overlook the unique social, cultural and economic realities of small island developing states,

leading to ineffective reform (Crossley, 2019). Crossley emphasises the need for context-sensitive approaches to education reform, particularly in the Caribbean, where global benchmarks and policies, such as those from PISA, may not be appropriate. He further discusses the importance of equitable partnerships between global and local stakeholders to ensure policies are adapted to fit the local context rather than imposed without regard for local needs. Crossley advocates for a greater focus on qualitative research and Indigenous knowledge systems to support sustainable development goals, moving beyond the often quantitative-driven global governance models that dominate educational policymaking. This focus on Indigenous knowledge further contributes to the efforts to decolonise education by including the voices of those who both create and are impacted by policy.

Evidence-based education reform can transform governance and educational practices by enabling more effective resource allocation, fostering accountability, and ensuring policies address Caribbean education systems' unique sociocultural and historical context (Shah & Kelman, 2024; Slavin, 2020). Integrating "big" and "small" data with local expertise bridges gaps in equity and access while promoting sustainable development through continuous cycles of innovation, evaluation, and improvement (Crossley, 2019; Slavin et al., 2021). This approach empowers educators and institutions to enhance teaching practices, improve student outcomes, and align reforms with the region's developmental goals.

Academic Achievement Indicators in the Caribbean

The Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) and Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE) are widely regarded as key achievement indicators in the region. They provide measurable benchmarks for assessing student performance and the effectiveness of secondary education systems (Caribbean Examinations Council, 2022). These standardised exams are often used by policymakers, educators, and researchers to evaluate trends in academic achievement, identify areas requiring intervention, and inform curriculum development.

To date, achievement indicators from the Caribbean region show significant improvement in specific curriculum areas. In contrast, other areas have stagnated or declined, and the impact of the

COVID-19 pandemic remains to be fully understood. In 2019, just before the pandemic and subsequent lockdown, the overall CSEC pass rate was 75%, marking a 5% increase from the 70% pass rate in 2018 and up from 67% in 2017 (Press Release, 2019). Notably, there was a significant increase in performance in English A, with the pass rate rising from 67% in 2018 to 79% in 2019. However, in a more recent report from the Caribbean Examinations Council (2022), there has been a further decline in passing grades in most subjects since the first phase of this study was conducted in 2017, and this could be due to several factors, including the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The number of students obtaining passing grades in the core compulsory subjects of English A and Mathematics is of particular concern. In English A, the pass rate fell in 2022 to 71%, compared with 74% in 2021, 83% in 2020 and 79% in 2019. Similarly, a decline was noted in Mathematics, with a 37% pass rate in 2022, compared to 41% in 2021, 53% in 2020, and 46% in 2019.

Significant declines in passing grades since 2019 have been noted for most other subjects, including Social Studies (52% in 2022, 65% in 2019), Geography (62% in 2022, 75% in 2019), Spanish (55% in 2022, 70% in 2019), Information Technology (80% in 2022, 92% in 2019), Technical Drawing (75% in 2022, 87% in 2019), Textiles, Clothing and Fashion (71% in 2022, 83% in 2019), Religious Education (59% in 2022, 75% in 2019), Physics (64% in 2022, 73% in 2019), Chemistry (60% in 2022, 68% in 2019), Additional Mathematics (63% in 2022, 71% in 2019), Principles of Business (80% in 2022, 87% in 2019), Principles of Accounts (69% in 2022, 75% in 2019), Music (69% in 2022, 75% in 2019), Electronic Document Preparation and Management (EDPM) (88% in 2022, 94% in 2019), IT (Mechanical) (80% in 2022, 86% in 2019). Slight declines in passing grades between 1% and 5% were observed between 2019 and 2014 in Economics, Portuguese, French, Information Technology (Building and Electrical), Physical Education and Sport, Food and Nutrition, and Office Administration.

The most significant increases in passing grades since 2019 are in Human and Social Biology (67% in 2022, 52% in 2019) and English B (71% in 2022, 65% in 2019). Increases in passing grades between 1% and 5% are noted in Caribbean History, Integrated Science, Family and Resource Management, Biology and Theatre Arts. Agricultural Science and Visual Arts passing grades remain the same in 2022 as in 2019. These trends suggest a need to reconsider traditional

measures of academic achievement, such as standardised exam pass rates, and explore alternative assessment methods that capture a broader range of student competencies.

This study aims to examine a range of factors that may influence students' academic achievement, including those that may be contributing to the decline in passing grades observed across most subjects at the CSEC level in secondary schools and the large percentage of children who do not achieve high marks on the Common Entrance Examination at the end of primary school (Leacock et al., 2007).

Factors Affecting Academic Achievement: International and Caribbean Perspectives

Academic achievement is influenced by many factors, many of which vary across educational and cultural contexts. International research provides valuable insights into these influences, while regional studies offer a more localised understanding of Caribbean education systems' unique challenges and opportunities. By examining international and Caribbean perspectives, we can better understand the complex interplay of psychological, social, and instructional factors that shape student outcomes. This offers a comprehensive view of the variables affecting academic success in this region.

In a systematic review of 169 studies using meta-analysis, which included over 250 variables, Kocak et al. (2021) used effect sizes to determine the strength of each variable on academic performance across education levels. The study categorises these variables into nine domains: psychological characteristics, teaching and learning strategies, socio-economic and socio-demographic characteristics, family, teacher, school, educational technology, special education and violence-related factors. They found that psychological factors such as self-efficacy and academic emotions (feelings about learning and school) had the largest positive effect sizes, indicating that psychological traits such as motivation and emotional regulation play a significant role in academic success. Concerning teaching and learning strategies, creative drama, constructivist and collaborative learning, and learning strategy instruction had substantial positive impacts on academic achievement. Higher socioeconomic status was consistently associated with better academic performance. Family variables included parental expectations, attitudes and

involvement as critical predictors of academic success, with large effect sizes, especially when parents were actively involved in their children's education. Teachers' judgement of students' abilities and academic performance had significant effects, as well as the quality of teacher-student relationships. In schools, the incorporation of physical activities also positively impacts student achievement. The presence of reading disabilities and behavioural disorders impacted academic achievement negatively. Finally, tools such as computer-aided instruction and one-to-one laptop programmes positively impacted academic outcomes.

These findings are echoed in research that has been conducted in developing nations. For example, Farooq et al. (2011) found that higher socioeconomic status and higher levels of parental education predicted higher levels of academic achievement in a sample of secondary school students in Pakistan. In the Caribbean, a study conducted with middle-school students in Jamaica found that behavioural engagement, specifically participation in class activities and homework completion, positively predicted academic achievement (Martin et al., 2016). Another study in Barbados and Trinidad found that secondary school students' academic achievement improved after teachers trained in and used relational group work in their classes (Layne et al., 2008). Further, in a study conducted with primary school children in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, difficulties with attention were linked to lower academic achievement (Jimerson et al., 2006), which may connect with the findings on behavioural disorders in the "special education" domain in Kocak et al.'s (2021) review. Other Caribbean studies related to various factors contributing to student academic achievement are presented in the sections below.

Home Environment and Academic Achievement

Nursery-Enrolment and Early-Childhood Education

Research on early childhood education (ECE) consistently shows its significant role in improving long-term academic outcomes. For example, Haslip (2018) found that public Pre-K attendance in the U.S. significantly improved first-grade literacy, particularly for economically disadvantaged children. However, socio-economic status (SES) is not the sole determinant of early educational outcomes. Other factors, such as programme quality, teacher training, and culturally relevant

curricula, also play critical roles in shaping the effectiveness of ECE programs (Escayg & Kinkead-Clarke, 2018; Hogrebe & Strietholt, 2016). Moreover, early development of skills such as attention regulation and social competence – identified by Rabiner et al. (2016) as critical predictors of academic success – can amplify the benefits of high-quality ECE programmes across all socio-economic groups.

On an international scale, Hogrebe and Strietholt (2016) used data from nine countries to explore preschool's effects on reading achievement and concluded that programme quality plays a crucial role in outcomes. Similarly, Eshetu (2015) in Ethiopia and Agirdag et al. (2015) in Turkey highlighted how socio-economic disparities affect access to preschool, with wealthier students benefiting more from early education. These studies highlight the importance of targeting intervention to close achievement gaps between SES groups and socio-economically disadvantaged populations by addressing variability in programme quality and access.

Escayg and Kinkead-Clarke (2018) call for integrating culturally relevant, decolonised curricula, shifting away from Eurocentric teaching models in the Caribbean. They argue that Caribbean ECE can foster positive racial identities and create more relatable and practical learning environments for children by incorporating local traditions such as storytelling and music.

These studies suggest that while SES is an important factor, it must be considered alongside programme quality, accessibility, and cultural relevance when designing and implementing ECE programmes. Moreover, fostering foundational skills like attention regulation and social competence can enhance the effectiveness of these interventions. To close achievement gaps, a concerted effort must be made to target socio-economically disadvantaged children while ensuring that these programmes promote academic and social development to support local cultural identities.

Parental Involvement & Home Literacy Environment

Parental involvement is a widely recognised determinant of student academic achievement, with its effects varying based on the type of involvement, socioeconomic status and regional context. Research demonstrates that parental engagement, such as setting high academic expectations and

providing home-based support, is associated with improved academic outcomes (Boonk et al., 2018; Wilder, 2014). However, direct involvement in homework can yield mixed results, especially as students advance through grade levels, highlighting the importance of the quality of engagement over its frequency (Boonk et al., 2018). Socioeconomic factors also significantly influence parental involvement, as families from higher socioeconomic backgrounds generally have greater access to resources that support their children's education. In contrast, parents in lower socioeconomic settings often face financial difficulties and work-related constraints that limit their ability to engage fully (Marshall et al., 2014).

In the Caribbean, these socioeconomic disparities are pronounced, and strong school leadership and community support play a pivotal role in fostering parental involvement, particularly in under-resourced areas (Edgerton et al., 2023; Marshall & Jackman, 2015). School leaders act as intermediaries, bridging the gap between families and schools to enhance student outcomes. Furthermore, addressing the "secondary slump", or the decline in parental involvement as students progress through secondary education, is critical for sustaining academic motivation and performance (Marshall et al., 2014; Marshall & Jackman, 2015). Therefore, policies that provide resources and opportunities for sustained parental engagement, particularly in marginalised communities, are essential for improving student achievement in the Caribbean.

Research also consistently emphasises the importance of the home literacy environment (HLE) in shaping children's academic success. Schlee et al. (2009) found that parental resource capital – such as education level, income, and home literacy practices – strongly predicts early academic performance in reading and mathematics, highlighting the importance of a well-resourced home environment. This finding aligns with Heppt et al. (2022), who concluded that physical books, especially children's books, are key predictors of academic success. Neuman and Moland (2016) introduced the concept of "book deserts", showing that income segregation limits book access in disadvantaged U.S. neighbourhoods, exacerbating literacy gaps. Neuman (2017) further demonstrated that access to books alone is insufficient; meaningful interaction between children and caregivers, such as reading together, is crucial for developing literacy skills.

Studies in other contexts reinforce these findings. In the UK, Hartas (2012) demonstrated that while socioeconomic status (SES) plays a significant role in literacy development, simple home learning activities like reading cannot entirely close the achievement gap for lower SES families. van Bergen et al. (2017) explored the interaction between genetic and environmental factors, concluding that while parental reading skills can be hereditary, environmental factors such as access to books independently improve literacy outcomes. Similarly, Lesemen and De Jong (1998) highlight the multifaceted nature of the HLE, where opportunities for reading, parent-child interactions and instructional quality collectively predict early reading success. This view is supported by Darling and Westberg (2004), who found that structured parental involvement – where parents are trained in reading activities – significantly impacts children's literacy outcomes. In the United States, Albee et al. (2019) tackled summer reading loss by distributing culturally relevant books and involving parents in literacy activities, reducing reading loss among disadvantaged students. Sammons et al. (2015) extended this to the long term, showing that early HLE strongly predicts later academic success, particularly for low-income students.

Similar patterns emerge regarding the influence of the HLE in the Caribbean. Martin et al. (2016) studied middle school students in Jamaica and found that parental engagement and motivation were critical for academic success, though socioeconomic limitations often hinder access to literacy resources. This reflects broader international findings, where socioeconomic factors limit the availability of literacy materials, contributing to persistent achievement gaps (Neuman & Moland, 2016; Schlee et al., 2009).

Student and Teacher Absenteeism

The literature consistently demonstrates that student absenteeism negatively impacts academic performance, with various causes producing different effects. Klein et al. (2022) found that truancy and sickness-related absences are particularly harmful; Jamil & Khalid (2016) found student delinquency to be a predictor of low academic achievement, while Keppens (2023) highlighted that unexcused absences, especially during critical periods like exams, have the most detrimental effects. Allen et al. (2018) focused on health-related absenteeism, emphasising the role of chronic illness and mental health issues. The authors advocate for early interventions involving healthcare

professionals, families and schools to prevent long-term academic decline due to absenteeism. These findings suggest the need for targeted interventions considering the reasons for and timing of absences.

Further, Hancock et al. (2017) investigated socioeconomic factors and absenteeism, finding that absenteeism negatively affects academic performance across all demographics. In the Caribbean, absenteeism is also tied to socioeconomic challenges. Cook and Ezenne (2010) found that factors such as financial difficulties, family responsibilities, and poor infrastructure contribute to absenteeism in Jamaica. Also, in Jamaica, Jennings et al. (2017) found financial difficulties experienced by parents as the leading cause of absenteeism. In Guyana, Bristol (2017) noted that teacher absenteeism contributes to student absenteeism, as students perceive little value in attending school when teachers are absent. Similarly, in Barbados, Lewis (2020) found negative correlations between teacher absences and student performance in core subjects such as science and math, though a positive effect was seen in English. This research in the Caribbean suggests that absenteeism is one of several factors influencing student outcomes and calls for solutions involving school, community and government intervention.

Students' Perceptions of Learning and School Climate

Student Attitudes Toward Learning and School

The influence of students' attitudes towards school and learning (ATSL) on motivation and achievement has long been acknowledged (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Recent research by Veresová & Malá (2016) demonstrates a strong correlation between ATSL and academic achievement. Slovak secondary school students who displayed positive attitudes toward learning achieved higher Grade Point Averages (GPAs), with a cognitive component (beliefs about their ability to succeed) being the strongest predictor. The study also uncovered gender differences, with girls having more positive attitudes than boys, though this did not translate into a significant GPA difference.

Similarly, a study in Nigeria, Kpolovie et al. (2014) found that both interest in learning and attitude towards school were significant predictors of academic performance in secondary school students.

This study suggests that these factors collectively account for over 20% of the variance in academic achievement, with interest in learning being slightly more influential. This reinforces the importance of student engagement and a positive learning attitude in driving academic success. Knight and Obidah (2014) explored student perceptions of secondary education under the Universal Secondary Education (USE) policy in the Caribbean context. Students from low-performing schools expressed dissatisfaction with teaching methods and student-teacher relationships, negatively impacting their attitudes towards learning. This demonstrates that the relationship between attitudes toward learning and academic achievement is not unidirectional. Additionally, Bowe (2012) conducted research with Caribbean students in the UK and noted that negative attitudes towards school and risky behaviour were prevalent among boys and contributed to an academic achievement gap between boys and girls.

These findings suggest that fostering positive attitudes towards school and learning can significantly contribute to better academic outcomes. Gender differences in ATSL, particularly favouring girls, indicate a need for targeted interventions aimed at enhancing boys' attitudes where significant differences exist. Additionally, as highlighted by several studies, the importance of cognitive beliefs about academic success suggests that building students' confidence in their academics is crucial.

School Climate and Academic Achievement

Research consistently highlights the critical role of school climate in shaping student well-being and academic achievement across various international and Caribbean contexts. Akey (2006), in a study of U.S. urban high schools, found that supportive teacher-student relationships and clear behavioural expectations positively influenced student engagement and perceived competence, which enhanced academic achievement. Similarly, Steinmayr et al. (2018) emphasised that a positive school climate significantly predicted student well-being, although its direct effect on academic achievement was weaker. Instead, self-efficacy emerged as the strongest predictor of academic performance, indirectly supporting school climate through enhanced student well-being.

In Australia, Maxwell et al. (2017) demonstrated that student perceptions of a positive school climate, mainly through a sense of school identification, were associated with better performance in literacy and numeracy. Staff perceptions of school climate also positively influenced academic outcomes, underscoring the importance of a supportive environment for students and teachers. In their meta-analysis, Dulay and Karadağ (2017) further reinforced the importance of school climate, showing a medium-level positive effect on student achievement across multiple countries, with the impact observed in subjects such as English and social sciences.

Leadership plays a critical role in shaping school climate. Allen et al. (2015) found that transformational leadership positively influenced teachers' perceptions of school climate, mainly through fostering collaboration and a sense of order. However, the impact of school climate on student achievement was more nuanced, with significant effects observed primarily in reading but not mathematics. Veletić et al. (2023) highlighted the importance of distributed leadership, where shared decision-making among staff contributes to a more positive perception of school climate, especially in Scandinavian countries. This aligns with Zysberg and Schwabsky (2020), who found that a positive school climate in Israel, characterised by strong interpersonal relationships and a sense of belonging, enhanced students' academic self-efficacy, improving academic outcomes in core subjects.

In the Caribbean, Bartley (2024) examined the role of school climate in fostering resilience and well-being among Jamaican secondary school students. The study emphasised that supportive relationships between students and teachers, coupled with clear expectations and a safe environment, were crucial for promoting student resilience, particularly in the context of challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. La Salle et al. (2021) also found that students in Jamaica reported higher levels of school connectedness, which was linked to better mental health outcomes, further reinforcing the importance of a positive school climate for overall student well-being.

In summary, positive interpersonal relationships, a sense of belonging, and strong leadership that fosters collaboration are critical elements of a healthy school climate. While school climate has a

more indirect effect on academic performance, its role in supporting student engagement, self-efficacy, and resilience is vital across diverse educational contexts.

Democratic Classrooms and Student-Centred Instruction

The literature across international and Caribbean concepts underscores the importance of democratic classrooms and student-centred instruction in improving student outcomes, both academically and socially. Print et al. (2002) highlight how democratic participation in Danish schools fosters active citizenship and critical thinking. In Albania, Bara and Xhomara (2020) found that problem-based learning and student-centred methods led to significant improvements in science achievement, with problem-based learning showing a particularly strong effect. Similarly, Asoodeh et al. (2012), in their study of Iranian elementary students, demonstrated that student-centred learning significantly improved academic performance in subjects like mathematics, science, and reading. Additionally, they found that this approach had a lasting positive impact on students' social skills, such as communication and adaptive behaviour, with benefits persisting even months after the intervention. Further, a recent meta-analysis also demonstrated that student-centred approaches in mathematics improved academic performance and reduced anxiety, especially in middle school students (Emanet & Kezer, 2021). Finally, Yildirim (2023) similarly found that student-centred methods in life sciences significantly boosted achievement, reinforcing the broad applicability of these approaches across subjects.

Student-centred methods have also been found to be effective in developing nations. In Nigeria, Precious and Feyisetan (2020) showed that student-centred approaches, such as discussions and field trips, improved biology performance, outperforming traditional teacher-centred methods. These findings align with research from the Caribbean, where Warrican and Leacock (2011) explored democratic education in Caribbean classrooms. Leacock and Warrican's (2011) study of online learning environments illustrates both the potential and challenges of promoting democratic practices. Their findings show that while online platforms can foster greater student participation and recognition of individual needs, issues such as technological barriers and isolation hinder their effectiveness. The study highlights the cultural tensions between online learning and traditional oral communication in the Caribbean, calling for more interactive components to fully support

student-centred approaches. Similarly, Layne et al. (2008) demonstrated that group work in Trinidad and Barbados significantly improved academic performance, particularly for low-achieving students. Further, Warrican (2019) highlighted that while Barbadian teachers expressed support for learner centred instruction, practical barriers such as lack of resources and mentorship limited its full implementation.

School Leadership

School leadership plays a pivotal role in shaping both student outcomes and the broader school environment. Internationally, transformational and distributed leadership styles have been identified as particularly effective in fostering positive school climates and supporting student achievement. Veletić et al. (2023) demonstrated that distributed leadership, where decision making is shared among staff, was associated with improved school climate perceptions across different regions, although its impact varied, with particularly strong results in Scandinavian countries. This leadership model, emphasizing collaboration and shared responsibilities, creates a more inclusive organizational structure that contributes to better school outcomes. Further to this, Leithwood (2021) highlighted the importance of equitable leadership, focusing on culturally responsive practices that engage diverse communities and address the needs of all students. These leadership practices are essential for promoting inclusivity and ensuring that schools serve as equitable learning environments for students from various socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds. The link between transformational leadership and improved school climate is further emphasized by Allen et al. (2015) and Tan et al. (2021), who found that leadership styles that inspire and motivate staff indirectly improve student outcomes through their positive effects on the school climate. However, the direct impact of leadership on student achievement remains modest, highlighting the importance of combining leadership with strong instructional practices.

In the Caribbean, Miller (2016) pointed out that effective school leadership in this region often blends formal training with experiential learning. Principals in the Caribbean face unique socioeconomic and cultural challenges, requiring them to adapt leadership strategies to their specific local contexts. This contextual adaptation is crucial for addressing the complex needs of Caribbean schools. Leacock (2009) echoed these findings, showing that in the Caribbean,

transformational leadership is particularly effective in improving student outcomes, especially in core subjects like English and mathematics. Principals who motivate their staff create a collaborative school environment that enhances both teacher performance and student engagement. This leadership style is key to fostering positive academic outcomes in Caribbean schools. Further supporting this, Brown et al. (2014) in their study of primary schools in Trinidad and Tobago, demonstrated how professional networks among teachers, facilitated by strong leadership, positively impact academic performance. Schools where principals fostered collegial trust and encouraged teacher collaboration, particularly around the use of assessment data, had higher student proficiency levels on national tests. However, the study noted that despite these gains, resource limitations and a lack of external professional support hindered the full implementation of collaborative teaching practices. These findings reinforce the idea that leadership, when focused on building collaborative school climates, directly influences teacher effectiveness and student achievement.

However, leadership alone may not be enough. Jennings et al. (2017) stressed that a combination of strong leadership and teacher quality is necessary for improving academic performance, particularly in schools serving low income communities. Leadership's role in supporting teacher effectiveness is critical to overcoming resource constraints and ensuring that all students have the opportunity to succeed. Finally, Heaven and Bourne (2016) in their study of Jamaican schools, found only a weak correlation between instructional leadership and student achievement, suggesting that broader contextual factors, such as socio-economic conditions, also play a crucial role in shaping educational outcomes. This highlights the complex interplay between leadership and external factors in influencing student success.

Post-Colonial Education Practices

Academic Tracking, Ability Labelling and the Use of the Common Entrance Exam for Secondary School Placement

Academic tracking, ability labelling and the Common Entrance Examination (CEE) for secondary school placement have profound effects on both student outcomes and educational equity. These

practices often reinforce existing socioeconomic disparities, disproportionately impacting students from disadvantaged backgrounds. For example, research which drew on data from the UK Millennium Cohort Study demonstrated that early academic streaming tends to benefit students in higher streams while disadvantaging those in lower streams (Parsons & Hallam, 2014). Students in lower academic tracks, particularly in subjects like mathematics and English, often receive less challenging curricula, which diminishes their academic performance over time. Similarly, Boliver and Capsada-Munsech (2021) found that lower-tracked students in UK primary schools reported reduced enjoyment of key subjects, leading to decreased engagement and academic achievement.

The psychological effects of tracking and ability labelling are also significant. Research by Odongo et al. (2021) in Uganda revealed that students in lower ability streams had significantly lower self-esteem than their peers in higher streams. This is further emphasized by Papachristou et al. (2022) who found students in lower ability groups were more likely to exhibit behavioural and emotional issues, such as hyperactivity and emotional challenges, reinforcing the socio emotional divide between high and low achievers. Tracking and labelling significantly affect students' self-concepts, particularly in subjects like mathematics. Campbell (2021) found that girls placed in lower math groups developed negative self-concepts, which were further reinforced by teacher judgments. This finding aligns with Bradbury (2019) who highlighted how teachers often adopt a fixed ability mindset limiting students' opportunities for growth. Once labelled as "low ability" students are less likely to be exposed to challenging material or higher achieving peers, creating a self-fulfilling cycle that further widens the academic gap between high and low performers.

These trends are mirrored in the context of the Caribbean. Warrican et al. (2019) found that in Trinidad and Tobago's bi-dialectal context, peer effects substantially shaped individual literary achievement, where group performance significantly impacted individual outcomes. Students surrounded by higher-achieving peers performed better, regardless of their socio-economic background or individual characteristics, underscoring the importance of peer dynamics in shaping academic success. However, students in lower academic tracks, who are often separated from higher-achieving peers, lose these beneficial peer effects, further entrenching the academic divide. From a psychological standpoint, Lipps et al. (2010) reported that students in lower academic

tracks in Caribbean countries, like Jamaica and St Vincent, exhibited higher levels of depressive symptoms, highlighting the emotional toll of being labelled as having “low ability”.

These disparities are further engrained in the context of high-stakes exams like the CEE in Barbados. Pilgrim and Hornby (2019) noted that students from wealthier backgrounds with access to better preparatory resources consistently outperformed their less affluent peers, securing places in top-tier schools. This dynamic exacerbates existing educational inequalities, as students placed in lower-ranked schools receive fewer resources and face more significant academic challenges. Additionally, students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are disproportionately placed in lower-ranked schools based on their CEE performance. This is due to a number of factors including low levels of psychoeducational assessment, weak referral systems and inadequate supplies of SEND teachers and classes, further removing them from many educational opportunities.

Despite the persistence of tracking and ability labelling, several studies call for reform. Pilgrim and Hornby (2019) advocate for abolishing the CEE in Barbados in favour of a zoning system that allows students to attend schools within their communities, thus reducing socioeconomic segregation. Similarly, Bradbury (2019) and Boliver and Capsada-Munsech (2021) proposed mixed-ability teaching to mitigate the adverse effects of tracking and ability labelling, and must be supported by resources, training and strong student support systems, providing students with more equitable educational experiences.

Overall, the literature highlights the significant academic, emotional, and social inequalities perpetuated by academic tracking, ability labelling, and high-stakes exams like the CEE. These practices, while intended to tailor education to student ability, often exacerbate socioeconomic disparities and psychological distress, particularly among students in lower academic tracks. Reform efforts and the allocation of resources to these efforts must promote inclusivity, reduce reliance on tracking, and ensure that all students, regardless of background, have access to the resources and support they need to succeed.

Grade Retention

The literature consistently shows that grade retention negatively affects students' academic performance and motivation. Rodriguez-Rodriguez (2022) found that retained students did not see significant academic improvement and experienced decreased motivation, often focusing more on avoiding failure than achieving success. Similarly, Valbuena et al. (2020) observed that any short-term academic benefits of retention tend to diminish over time, with retained students facing a higher risk of dropping out and poorer labour market outcomes compared to their peers.

The long-term consequences of retention are not limited to academic performance. A study from the Netherlands found that while retained students eventually achieved similar educational qualifications as their peers, they entered the workforce later, resulting in lower lifetime earnings due to delayed labour market entry (ter Mullen, 2023). Further, Mariano et al. (2018) studied retention in New York City schools. They found that retained students were less likely to graduate on time, accumulated fewer credits, and were more likely to be placed in special education programmes, further contributing to their higher dropout rates. Retention policies can exacerbate these issues, especially when they disproportionately affect younger students. Jerrim et al. (2022) highlighted how rigid school entry laws in Spain, which require children to start school based on calendar year rather than readiness, increased retention rates among younger children born later in the year.

Goos et al.'s (2021) meta-analysis of 84 studies on retention across various countries found that while about 24% of the studies reviewed found some positive short-term academic and psychosocial benefits for retained students, the majority (76%) reported negative outcomes or at least no benefits. Their review highlights that retention can slightly improve psychosocial functioning, such as motivation and academic self-concept, but these are often short-lived. Long-term retention generally leads to higher dropout rates, increased placement in special education, and diminished job prospects. Moreover, retention is notably less effective in countries with separation systems like Belgium and Germany, where it is paired with ability grouping and tracking. In contrast, countries like the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand that use this approach as a last resort with additional support see better outcomes.

Given these findings, Goos et al. (2021) emphasise that educational policymakers should shift away from retention as a solution for underperformance and focus instead on early interventions and targeted support. Valbuena et al. (2020) similarly suggest that interventions, such as remedial programmes and personalised academic support, can help struggling students catch up without the adverse long-term effects of retention.

Overall, the evidence points to grade retention's detrimental impacts on educational attainment and future economic prospects. Rather than relying on retention, which disproportionately affects vulnerable students, educational systems would benefit from flexible policies and support mechanisms that address students' academic needs early on, providing them with the resources to succeed without repeating a grade.

Technology in Education and the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic

Before the pandemic, technology and education were increasingly integrated into learning environments, but their use varied widely across contexts. For instance, George (2015) found that while some Caribbean countries had introduced technology-enabled learning, rural and low-income communities faced significant barriers to accessing these tools.

The COVID-19 pandemic radically transformed the role of technology in education. The sudden closure of schools worldwide led to an unprecedented reliance on online learning platforms. Pokhrel and Chhetri (2021) reported that the pandemic disrupted the education of over 1.6 billion students globally, forcing students to shift to emergency remote education. However, this shift exposed significant technological access disparities, particularly in rural and underprivileged areas. Winter et al. (2021) documented how teachers in Ireland struggled to engage students online, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds, due to a lack of adequate infrastructure and digital training.

In developing nations, such as those studied by Tadesse and Muluye (2020), the lack of digital infrastructure, particularly in rural areas, makes it difficult for students to continue their education. Parents in these regions often lacked the resources to support their children's online learning, worsening educational inequalities. The digital divide between urban and rural populations was

also highlighted in Fikuree et al. (2021), who studied the Maldives education system during the pandemic.

Post-pandemic, blended learning models that combine online and in-person instruction are increasingly being adopted. Bubb and Jones (2020) suggested that the creative use of technology during home-schooling should be maintained to enhance student engagement. However, the pandemic also underscored the need for more equitable access to technology and infrastructure. Leacock and Warrican (2020) reported that in the Eastern Caribbean, many teachers were not adequately trained for online instruction, and students in rural areas struggled to access the necessary technology for effective learning.

In countries like Barbados and Jamaica, the pandemic exposed deep-rooted inequities and access to education. Blackman (2022) found that although the government distributed devices and set up online learning platforms, many students, particularly those from low-income households, remained disconnected. Further, Pokhrel and Chhetri (2021) noted that while online learning presented opportunities for innovation, the shift to digital platforms highlighted the need for better teacher training and infrastructure to ensure continuity and learning.

Despite these challenges, studies conducted before the pandemic have shown that technology can improve student outcomes when effectively implemented. Fraser (2018) demonstrated that computer-aided instruction in Caribbean Studies led to significant academic improvements among students. Further, Viera et al. (2014) demonstrated in an action research project in St Vincent and the Grenadines that while students were initially hesitant to use more formal platforms such as Google Groups and a school website, they embraced familiar social media tools, showing that technology use can bridge formal and informal learning environments. However, as Abdullah et al. (2015) pointed out, the relationship between technology and academic achievement is complex, and effective outcomes depend on how well the technology is integrated into the teaching process.

While the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the use of technology in education, it has also exposed significant disparities in access and readiness, particularly in developing regions like the Caribbean. Increased use of technology offers the potential for improving academic outcomes.

However, its success depends on equitable access, teacher preparedness, and infrastructure development. Investments in digital infrastructure, ongoing teacher training, and blended learning models will be essential for creating resilient and inclusive education systems.

Conclusion

This review highlights the multifaceted nature of student academic achievement, demonstrating how factors ranging from socioeconomic conditions and home environments to school climate and leadership influence outcomes. Both international and Caribbean perspectives emphasise the importance of addressing inequities that stem from colonial legacies, socioeconomic disparities, and access to quality education. While the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed gaps in educational infrastructure, it has also accelerated the use of technology, presenting opportunities for reform. The studies reviewed underscore the need for evidence-based, inclusive strategies that promote equitable access to education and support students' academic success across diverse contexts.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Whether viewed from a psychological, sociological, or economic perspective, it is widely recognised that numerous factors influence children's academic performance and achievements. In larger countries with more substantial resources for research, extensive data is analysed to assess the impact of multiple factors on student academic achievement. However, in the Caribbean, which factors are most influential, how they interact to produce the observed outcomes, and the best strategies for maximising positive influences while minimising negative factors are often unclear. As a result, educational policy and education planning in the region are frequently based on incomplete information. This may lead to the inefficient use of resources and funds, devastatingly affecting small Caribbean countries with limited resources. Therefore, it is crucial to identify the factors affecting academic achievement in the region, keeping in mind that solutions from other countries may not be applicable in this context.

In countries such as the United States, the term 'achievement gap' typically highlights performance disparities between white students and students of colour. Opportunity gaps have been identified as crucial in explaining these differences in achievement among students from diverse

backgrounds. Richard Milner (2012) introduced the opportunity gap explanatory framework to analyse these disparities in highly diverse and urban contexts in the United States. A vital component of this framework is the myth of meritocracy. Alongside other constructs such as colour blindness, cultural conflicts, low expectations, deficit mindsets, and context-neutral mindsets, this framework helps to "explain both positive and negative aspects and realities of people, places, and policies in educational practice." It serves as a basis for researchers to "explain and systematically name what they observe and come to know inductively" (Milner, 2012, p. 699). Although the educational context in the Caribbean differs significantly from that of the United States, the myth of meritocracy remains relevant for understanding how opportunities may be obstructed for students in the Caribbean.

The myth of meritocracy posits that educators may tend to believe that "their own, their parents, and their students' success and status have all been earned" and any individual failure regarding educational outcomes "is solely a result of making bad choices and decisions" (Milner, 2012, p. 704). While acknowledging achievement gaps, educators may overlook how socioeconomics intersect with education, even though they "appear to be more at ease, confident, and comfortable reflecting about, reading, and discussing how socioeconomics, particularly resources related to wealth and poverty, influence educational disparities, inequities, outcomes, and opportunities" (Milner, 2012, p. 704). For example, those subscribing to the myth may overlook the role of economic privilege in their success, whether earned or unearned and may assume that all have equal or equitable opportunities for success. This myth can serve as a mechanism for understanding how teacher quality, teacher training, curriculum, the digital divide, wealth and income, healthcare, nutrition, and quality childcare affect achievement (Irvine, 2010).

In our examination of academic achievement within the current initiative, we recognise the potential for the myth of meritocracy to operate in Caribbean contexts, potentially obscuring and overlooking opportunities that impact the academic outcomes of young people. Smith (2020) has demonstrated the presence of Eurocentric mechanisms within the Caribbean educational landscape, which implicitly influence literacy and its role in student performance. Consequently, our investigations consider numerous opportunities such as school resources, technology, teacher and principal characteristics, and curriculum to understand better and uncover underlying patterns

in achievement within Caribbean contexts. Through this exploration, we aim to develop frameworks that elucidate achievement and opportunity within the unique educational experience of the Caribbean region.

Theoretical Framework

Whether viewed from psychological, sociological, or economic perspectives, it is widely acknowledged that various factors shape children's academic performance and achievements. In larger countries with greater research capabilities, extensive data is available to assess the impact of these factors on student success. However, in the Caribbean, the most influential factors, their interactions, and the optimal strategies for enhancing positive effects while mitigating negative ones are often less understood. This lack of clarity frequently results in educational policies and planning based on incomplete or outdated information, leading to inefficient use of limited resources, which can have severe consequences for small Caribbean nations. Thus, it is essential to identify and understand the specific factors affecting academic achievement in the Caribbean, recognising that solutions from other contacts may not be directly applicable here.

In the United States, the term "achievement gap" often underscores performance disparities between white students and students of colour, with opportunity gaps identified as critical in explaining these differences (Milner, 2012). Richard Milner introduced the opportunity gap framework to analyse these disparities in diverse urban settings, focusing on the "myth of meritocracy." This myth posits that success is purely earned through individual effort, thereby overlooking the significant role that socioeconomic factors play in educational outcomes. While this framework was developed in the US, it is also relevant in the Caribbean, where similar beliefs may obscure the impact of economic privilege and unequal access to opportunities on students' academic achievements.

In the Caribbean context, the myth of meritocracy can lead educators to mistakenly attribute academic success or failure solely to individual choices, failing to consider how factors like teacher quality, curriculum, and resource availability influence educational outcomes (Milner, 2012). This myth provides a valuable lens for understanding the effects of various elements, such as the digital divide, healthcare access, and socioeconomic status, on academic disparities (Irvine, 2010). Moreover, Eurocentric influences in the Caribbean educational system, as demonstrated by Smith (2020), significantly affect literacy and student performance. Recognising this, our investigation will explore how factors like school resources, technology, and curriculum contribute to academic

achievement in the region. Through this exploration, we aim to develop context-specific frameworks that more accurately explain achievement and opportunity within the unique educational landscape of the Caribbean (Smith, 2020).

Methodology

In this section, a summary of the research methodology employed is provided.

Research Design

This study followed a survey design, and the larger project included data collection in four Eastern Caribbean countries (Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines) and Barbados in 2017. The second data collection phase occurred in 2022 across five Eastern Caribbean countries (Dominica, Grenada, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines) and in 2024 in Barbados.

Sampling Strategy

Given the number of schools in the countries under investigation and resource constraints, including all schools in the study was impractical. Therefore, a sampling guide was developed to select a representative sample of schools. A general sampling guide, outlined in Table 1, was established to guide the process. Additionally, recognising the difficulty in accessing private schools, the decision was made to limit the selection to public schools or government-assisted schools.

Table 1: General Sampling Guide

PRIMARY SCHOOLS	SECONDARY SCHOOLS
1. Four schools will be selected from each district/zone. 2. If schools are small, additional selections may be made 3. The sample should include single-sex schools, including at least one girls' and one boys' school, where possible 4. Efforts will be made to ensure the representation of different groups in cases of significant diversity (e.g. language, ethnicity) within the selected schools 5. Only students in the grade level preceding the level at which primary exit examinations are typically taken will be included. 6. This guide is provisional and subject to adjustment upon obtaining information on the number of students in each school.	1. Two schools will be selected from each district/zone. 2. The sample should encompass former grammar school(s) 3. The sample should include single-sex schools, including at least one girls' and one boys' school, where possible 4. Only students in the second and fourth form levels will be included. 5. Efforts will be made to ensure the representation of different groups in cases of significant diversity (e.g. language, ethnicity) within the selected schools 6. This guide is provisional and subject to adjustment upon obtaining information on the number of students in each school.

Information was obtained from the Ministries of Education in participating countries to facilitate the selection of schools. A list of schools categorised by zone in each country was acquired. Additionally, data regarding the enrolment numbers of students in the required grades and the count of teachers at the selected schools were acquired to ensure an adequate supply of questionnaires. Although all attempts were made to follow the general sampling guide, alterations had to be made in some cases for practical reasons. Some schools could not participate for various reasons (e.g., lack of time to schedule survey administration and challenges reaching the principal to gain entry to the school).

Procedure

Hard-copy surveys were distributed to each participating school's principal and all teachers. In many instances, the questionnaires had to be left at the schools and collected at a later arranged time due to the busy schedules of teachers and principals. For primary schools, surveys were administered to Grade Five students and for secondary schools, to Form Two and Four students. Where class sizes were small, classes were combined to collect the maximum number of responses, and where classes were streamed according to ability, the “middle” group of students was surveyed.

Surveying was conducted using the traditional face-to-face method. Trained researchers administered all questionnaires directly to students in their classrooms. This approach was chosen to ensure the highest quality of data. Two researchers visited each classroom whenever possible: one read the questionnaire aloud and the other to aid students with reading difficulties. Student questionnaires were administered and collected on the same day to streamline the data collection process.

All participants were instructed not to write their names or other identifying information on the surveys.

Data Analysis

Questionnaires were coded with unique identifiers, and responses were entered into six separate databases: one each for primary students, teachers and principals, and one each for secondary students, teachers and principals. Quantitative data analysis techniques using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) were employed to analyse the collected data. Descriptive statistics were utilised to compute frequencies, means, standard deviations and ranges for individual questions and scales within the questionnaire. Where open-ended response options were provided, responses were compiled and coded where necessary (e.g. secondary students' planned career choices). Finally, the statistics were tabulated to compare data gathered in 2017 with data collected in 2024.

Results: Primary Schools

Data were collected from 13 primary school principals from 3 countries (Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada, and St Vincent and the Grenadines) in 2017 and compared with data from 34 primary school principals from 5 countries (Dominica, Grenada, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia and St Vincent and the Grenadines) in 2022.

The primary school principals who responded in 2017 were from schools with between 65 and 326 students (M=168) and between 7 and 23 teachers (M=12), an average student-teacher ratio of about 14:1. In 2022 principals responded from schools with between 22 and 433 students (M=199) and between 4 and 45 teachers (M=17), with an average student-teacher ratio of about 12:1.

Primary Schools: Key Findings

Primary Student and Teacher Absenteeism

Absenteeism is an issue of concern in schools internationally and regionally. Principals were asked to indicate the extent to which student and teacher absenteeism challenges their school. The distribution of responses can be found in Table 2.

Table 2: Student and Teacher Absenteeism in Primary Schools

Issue	2017 (% of respondents) (N=13)				2022 (% of respondents) (N=34)			
	No Challenge at All	**A Moderate Challenge**	**A Big Challenge**	**No Response**	**No Challenge at All**	**A Moderate Challenge**	**A Big Challenge**	**No Response**
Student Absenteeism	**38.5**	**38.5**	0.0	23.1	23.5	**67.6**	2.9	5.9
Teacher Absenteeism	**46.2**	30.8	0.0	23.1	**50.0**	41.2	2.9	5.9

In 2017, student absenteeism was perceived as a moderate challenge for under half of primary school principals, rising to just over two-thirds in 2022. Teacher absenteeism was perceived as a moderate challenge in 2017 for about one-third of the principals, and while in 2022, half of the principals saw it as no challenge at all, the number of principals who viewed it as a moderate to big challenge rose significantly.

Primary School Facilities

To gain insight into the environments of the participating schools, attention was directed toward the available facilities and their utilisation. To accomplish this, school principals were asked to complete an item prompting them to indicate the presence of certain facilities at the school and, if available, whether they were currently in use. The percentages of primary principals' responses to each facility listed are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Primary School Facilities Present and in Use

School facility	2017 (%) (N=13)				2022 (%) (N=34)			
	Present & In Use	**Present & Not in Use**	**Not Present**	**No Response**	**Present & In Use**	**Present & Not in Use**	**Not Present**	**No Response**
Library	**53.8**	7.7	15.4	23.1	**85.3**	11.8	2.9	0.0
Computer Lab	7.7	7.7	**61.5**	23.1	**52.9**	14.7	32.4	0.0
Canteen	**38.5**	0.0	**38.5**	23.1	38.2	2.9	**50.0**	8.8
Sickbay	23.1	7.7	**46.2**	23.1	38.2	2.9	**52.9**	5.9
Playing Field	**38.5**	0.0	**38.5**	23.1	**58.8**	2.9	29.4	8.8
Hard Courts	23.1	7.7	**46.2**	23.1	35.3	8.8	**50.0**	5.9
Science Labs	0.0	0.0	**76.9**	23.1	20.6	2.9	**70.6**	5.9
Art Rooms	0.0	0.0	**76.9**	23.1	0.0	2.9	**88.2**	0.0
Industrial Arts Rooms	0.0	0.0	**76.9**	23.1	2.9	0.0	**79.4**	17.6
Home Economics Rooms	0.0	0.0	**76.9**	23.1	0.0	2.9	**79.4**	17.6
Music Room	0.0	0.0	**76.9**	23.1	0.0	2.9	**85.3**	11.8
Special subject rooms (e.g. math room, geography room)	7.7	0.0	**69.2**	23.1	17.6	0.0	**76.5**	5.9

In the sample in 2017, libraries, canteens, and playing fields were commonly present and in use, while facilities like computer labs, sickbays, hard courts and specialised rooms like art, science and music rooms were often not present or not in use. In 2022, there was an increase in the presence of libraries, computer labs and playing fields, with most respondents indicating they had these facilities. The availability and use of sickbays, hardcourts, science labs and special subject rooms significantly increased. However, most principals in the sample still reported a lack of these facilities.

Primary School Class Structure

Principals were asked to indicate if classes were best described as grouped by ability or mixed ability grouping. Principal responses to this item can be found in Table 4.

Table 4: Ability Grouping in Primary Schools

Class organisation	2017 (N=13)		2022 (N=34)	
	n	%	n	%
Ability Grouping	0	0.0	2	5.9
Mixed Ability Grouping	10	76.9	31	91.2
No Response	3	23.1	1	2.9
TOTAL	**13**	**100.0**	**34**	**100.0**

In 2017 and 2022, most schools used mixed ability grouping for class organisation, with a significant increase in reports of this approach in 2022.

Primary School Reading Policies

Principals were asked to indicate if their school had a reading policy and if their school's timetable included a designated time for leisure reading. Principal responses to these items can be found in Table 5.

Table 5: Primary School Reading Policies

	2017 (N=13)		2022 (N=34)	
School has a reading policy?	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
Yes	2	15.4	18	52.9
No	8	61.5	14	41.2
No Response	3	23.1	2	5.9
TOTAL	**13**	**100.0**	**34**	**100.0**
Timetabled reading for leisure?	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
Yes	8	61.5	26	76.5
No	2	15.4	8	23.5
No Response	3	23.1	0	0.0
TOTAL	**13**	**100.0**	**34**	**100.0**

In 2017, few schools had a policy on reading, though about two-thirds of schools reported having timetabled reading for leisure. By 2022, more than half of primary school principals reported having a reading policy, and about three-quarters reported having timetabled leisure reading time for students.

Primary School Extracurricular Activities

Principals were asked to indicate if their school had a policy on extracurricular and/or co-curricular activities and if their schools' timetables included a designated time for extracurricular and/or co-curricular activities. Principal responses to these items can be found in Table 6.

Table 6: Primary School Extracurricular Activities

	2017 (N=13)		**2022 (N=34)**	
School has a policy on extracurricular and/or cocurricular activities?	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
Yes	0	0.0	8	23.5
No	10	76.9	24	70.6
No Response	3	23.1	2	5.9
TOTAL	**13**	**100.0**	**34**	**100.0**
Timetabled extracurricular and/or co-curricular activities?	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
Yes	2	15.4	20	58.8
No	8	61.5	11	32.4
No Response	3	23.1	3	8.8
TOTAL	**13**	**100.0**	**34**	**100.0**

In 2017, none of the responding principals in the primary school sample reported having a policy on extracurricular and/or cocurricular activities, and only 15% reported having these activities as part of their school's timetable. By 2022, nearly one-quarter of principals reported having a policy on extracurricular and/or co-curricular activities, and almost two-thirds reported having these as timetabled activities.

Summary

Several key findings in primary school between 2017 and 2022 are important. The increased perception of absenteeism as a challenge suggests a growing issue in maintaining consistent

student and teacher attendance, which could negatively impact educational outcomes and the overall learning environment. While there has been some improvement in primary school facilities, the persistent lack of essential facilities could hinder the quality of education, particularly in science and the arts. It could also affect student health and safety. The shift towards mixed-ability grouping suggests a growing recognition of the benefits of inclusive education. However, this approach requires teachers to be skilled in differentiating instruction to meet diverse student needs. The increased emphasis on reading policies and timetabled reading suggests a positive trend toward fostering a reading culture in primary schools, which is crucial for literacy development. Similarly, the growing recognition of the importance of extracurricular activities is positive, as these activities can enhance student engagement, social skills, and overall development. However, these policies' relatively low adoption rate indicates room for improvement.

Primary School Students

Data were collected from 975 primary school students (485 boys and 486 girls), in 2017 across four countries (Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada, St Kitts and Nevis and St Vincent and the Grenadines) and from 635 primary school students (313 boys and 320 girls), in 2022 across five countries (Dominica, Grenada, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia and St Vincent and the Grenadines). The results of the primary student survey are presented in the following section.

Table 7: Distribution of Primary Students by Sex and Country

Country	2017 (N=975)								2022 (N=635)							
	Male		Female		No Response		Total		Male		Female		No Response		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Antigua & Barbuda	**137**	48.9	**143**	51.1	-	-	**280**	**100.0**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dominica	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**44**	73.3	**16**	26.6	-	-	**60**	**99.9**
Grenada	**82**	55.4	**64**	43.2	**2**	1.4	**148**	**100.0**	**72**	47.1	**79**	51.6	**2**	1.3	**153**	**100.0**
St Kitts & Nevis	**77**	43.8	**98**	55.7	**1**	0.6	**176**	**100.1**	**63**	45.3	**76**	54.7	-	-	**139**	**100.0**
St Lucia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**65**	50.4	**64**	49.6	-	-	**129**	**100.0**
St Vincent & the Grenadines	**189**	50.9	**181**	48.8	**1**	0.3	**371**	**100.0**	**69**	44.8	**85**	55.2	-	-	**154**	**100.0**

The data were compiled and analysed using descriptive statistics to create a profile of the students in the primary school sample. All students in the samples in 2017 and 2022 were in Grade 5 between 8 and 13 (M=10.10, SD=0.71) in 2017 and between 9 and 13 (M=10.47, SD=.66) in 2022. The distribution of the sample by sex and country can be found in Table 7.

Primary School Students: Key Findings

Primary Students' Home Environment

Several changes were noted in primary students' home environments between 2017 and 2022. The proportion of students who reported their mothers worked full time in 2017 fell slightly from 57.6% to 54.2%, while those who reported that their mothers were not working but looking for a job rose from 9.8% in 2017 to 12.3% in 2022. A similar trend was noted in students' reports of fathers working full-time for pay, which dropped from 69.4% in 2017 to 63.3% in 2022, with a slight increase in reports of fathers working part-time for pay between 2017 (15.5%) and 2022 (17.5%).

Regular access to most types of technology in the home fell slightly between 2017 and 2022, though access to electronic tablets and the internet increased in that period. Table 8 shows the two samples' access to several technological devices and software.

Table 8: Primary Students' Access to Electronic Devices at Home

Regular access to a device at home	2017 (N=975)		2022 (N=635)	
	n	%	n	%
Smartphone	664	68.1	355	55.9
Electronic tablet	637	65.3	473	74.5
Laptop computer	526	53.9	247	38.9
Desktop computer	255	26.2	73	11.5
Smart TV	658	67.5	403	63.5
Internet	789	80.9	567	89.3
A computer to use for schoolwork	580	59.9	305	48.0
Educational software	455	46.7	257	40.5

Students in the sample in 2022 were asked several questions about their access to devices and the internet at home during the COVID-19 pandemic. 82.2% of students reported that they attended

classes online, though 67.4% experienced challenges during online schooling, including difficulties with logging into meeting spaces (45%), internet access dropping out frequently (31.8%), devices not always working (23.6%), challenges using learning platforms (14.3%), having to share a device (13.7%), not owning a device (12.8%), and no internet access (8.2%). When primary students were asked about their preference for attending school, 40.9% responded that they prefer face-to-face instruction only, 18.1% prefer online instruction only, and 36.7% prefer a hybrid model of some face-to-face and some online instruction.

Several changes to the home literacy environment are also evident in the data. While the overall number of reported books in the home remained relatively constant between 2017 and 2022, there were declines in the number of students who reported having certain kinds of books in their homes, and these can be seen in Table 9. Furthermore, the proportion of students who reported reading in their leisure time dropped in 2022 to 52.3% from 62.2% in 2017. The number of students who reported being read to by an adult also decreased to 49.3% in 2022 from 59.8% in 2017. This trend was noted across all categories of adults who reportedly read to primary students, including mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters and other family members.

Table 9: Primary Students' Access to Specific Books at Home

Student has at home:	2017 (N=975)		2022 (N=635)	
	n	%	n	%
A dictionary	832	85.3	478	75.3
Books of poetry	433	44.4	222	35.0
Books to help with schoolwork	772	79.2	480	75.6
Classic literature	249	25.5	141	22.2
Technical reference books or manuals	323	33.1	210	33.1

Primary Students' Participation in Extracurricular Activities

From 2017 to 2022, the proportion of primary students participating in extracurricular activities dropped significantly, although participation rates were fairly high overall. See Table 10 for a breakdown of primary student responses. Over one-quarter of primary students reported not participating in extracurricular activities compared to only one-tenth in 2017. Primary students in

both years reported engaging in various activities, including dance, choir, music, Brownies and Cub Scouts, and sports like cricket, football, karate, basketball, tennis, and track and field.

Table 10: Primary Students' Participating in Extra-Curricular Activities

Participate in extra-curricular activities	2017 (N=975)		2022 (N=635)	
	n	%	n	%
Yes	863	88.5	461	72.6
No	100	10.3	162	25.5
No Response	12	1.2	12	1.9
TOTAL	**975**	**100.0**	**635**	**100.0**

Students who reported not participating in extracurricular activities gave various reasons, including not wanting to, having to go home early (e.g. mummy works late and have to care for my siblings), lack of confidence (e.g. I am too nervous; I am not good at physical things; I am insecure about my voice but I am interested in singing), parents or guardians not giving permission (e.g. because my aunty does not want me to go), additional costs to participate (e.g. because my mom doesn't have the money), and health-related reasons (e.g. because I have asthma).

Primary Students' Attitudes Towards School and Learning

Primary students were presented with a list of statements about school and learning and were asked to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed with each statement. They were also allowed to indicate that they did not know if they agreed or disagreed. The frequency of primary student responses to each statement is presented in Table 11.

One of the most notable shifts in the attitudes toward school and learning is the significant increase, across every item, of the number of students who responded "unsure", indicating that more primary students are uncertain about, or unwilling to share, their feelings about school. Some consistent trends were found between 2017 and 2022. In both years, most students agreed that going to school would help them get a good job when they are older, prepare them for the future, help them know many things and think better and that school is important for everyone. Most students in both years also agreed that school is fun and learning new things at school is fun, that they like to do schoolwork and the various activities at school, and that they would rather be at school than at

home playing video games or watching TV. However, fewer students agreed, and higher proportions of students disagreed with all of those items in 2022 than in 2017, indicating a slight decrease in perceptions of the usefulness and enjoyment of school. In addition, higher proportions of students agreed with statements such as “School is like a prison”, “School is boring”, “I would rather be at home alone than at school”, and “All we ever do at school is work, work, work” in 2022 when compared to 2017.

Primary school students in 2022 were asked about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on their feelings about school. The most significant proportion of students reported that the pandemic has had a bad effect on their feelings about school (35.9%), slightly fewer reported that it had a good effect on their feelings about school (33.5%), and no effect on their feelings about school (23.8%).

Summary

There are several key findings from the primary student data collected in 2017 and 2022. In this period, there were notable changes in students’ home environments. The employment rates of parents shifted slightly, with a small decline in full-time employment and an increase in part-time employment for fathers. Access to most electronic devices at home declined, except for electronic tablets and the internet. A significant portion of students in 2022 reported challenges during online schooling, including connectivity issues and limited access to devices. Preferences for face to face, online, or hybrid learning varied. These trends in access to resources may contribute to widening educational inequality, particularly in contexts where online teaching and learning have become more prevalent due to the pandemic. The presence some types of books in the home slightly declined, as did the proportion of students who read in their leisure time and were read to by adults. This decrease in home literacy support may negatively impact students’ reading skills and overall academic achievement, particularly in the critical primary years. Participation in extracurricular activities significantly decreased from 2017 to 2022, with a higher percentage of students in 2022 not engaging in such activities. This decline in participation may affect student social skills,

Table 11: Primary Students' Attitudes Towards School and Learning

Statement	2017 (N=975)					2022 (N=635)				
	Responses (%)					Responses (%)				
	Agree	Disagree	Don't Know	No Response	Total	Agree	Disagree	Don't Know	No Response	Total
Going to school will help me get a good job when I am older.	**92.9**	1.3	3.2	2.5	99.9	**91.5**	1.9	3.5	3.2	100.1
School is fun.	**73.8**	11.3	9.6	5.2	99.9	**67.9**	13.9	14.3	3.9	100.0
I wish we didn't have to go to school at all.	14.3	**71.3**	9.1	5.3	100.0	16.1	**64.3**	14.8	4.9	100.1
I would rather stay at home than go to school.	14.3	**71.6**	8.5	5.6	100.0	18.0	**56.7**	19.4	6.0	100.1
I would rather go to the doctor or dentist than go to school.	16.3	**67.6**	10.3	5.8	100.0	12.9	**66.1**	16.2	4.7	99.9
Learning new things at school is fun.	**83.9**	5.5	4.5	6.0	99.9	**81.7**	6.6	6.9	4.8	100.0
In school all we ever do is work, work, work.	44.3	**44.9**	5.9	4.8	99.9	**45.8**	41.7	8.0	4.4	99.9
School will help me know many things.	**92.3**	2.2	1.7	3.8	100.0	**88.0**	4.3	3.8	3.9	100.0
School will help me think better.	**89.4**	3.0	2.9	4.7	100.0	**83.0**	4.4	9.6	3.0	100.0
School will get me prepared for the future.	**81.6**	7.2	4.9	6.2	99.9	**79.7**	4.9	11.0	4.5	100.1
School is boring.	16.0	**67.1**	10.6	6.3	100.0	21.3	**60.6**	15.1	3.0	100.0
I don't like school.	15.3	**70.6**	8.1	6.0	100.0	14.3	**64.7**	15.3	5.7	100.0
I like to do schoolwork.	**62.3**	23.4	7.7	6.6	100.0	**54.5**	25.0	16.2	4.3	100.0
I will never use what I learn at school.	15.8	**69.5**	7.2	7.5	100.0	11.0	**72.3**	10.1	6.6	100.0
School is like a prison.	23.2	**60.2**	9.9	6.6	99.9	26.0	**52.8**	15.6	5.7	100.1
I would rather be at school than playing video games	**57.2**	28.1	9.0	5.6	99.9	**47.2**	31.5	16.4	4.9	100.0
I hate to do schoolwork.	15.0	**71.6**	6.2	7.2	100.0	17.5	**62.5**	15.1	4.9	100.0
I would rather be at school than at home watching T.V.	**57.1**	29.3	8.0	5.5	99.9	**48.2**	31.7	15.0	5.2	100.1
I don't need school to get a job.	12.6	**75.9**	4.9	6.5	99.9	13.5	**73.1**	9.9	3.5	100.0
I like all the different things we do at school.	**82.2**	7.9	4.8	5.0	99.9	**78.1**	9.9	7.2	4.8	100.0
What I learn at school is good for my brain.	**91.8**	2.4	1.9	3.9	100.0	**87.4**	3.8	6.0	2.8	100.0
School is important for everyone.	**86.8**	4.3	3.2	5.7	100.0	**85.7**	4.3	6.5	3.6	100.1
I would rather be at home alone than at school.	12.8	**72.4**	10.2	4.6	100.0	19.4	**63.5**	13.4	3.8	100.1

physical health, and holistic development. Lack of participation could also indicate broader socioeconomic challenges or shifts in student and parent priorities post-pandemic. Students attitudes towards school and learning became more negative in 2022, with increased feelings of uncertainty and dissatisfaction. A higher number of students expressed that school is boring and that they would rather stay home than attend school. The growing negative perception of school reported by primary students may signal deeper issues within the educational system, including potential disengagement with the curriculum, lack of relevance to students' lives, or pandemic related stressors.

Primary School Teachers

Data were collected from 184 primary school teachers (27 males and 146 females) in 2017 across four countries (Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada, St Kitts and Nevis and St Vincent and the Grenadines) and from 329 primary school teachers (43 males and 284 females), in 2022 across five countries (Dominica, Grenada, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia and St Vincent and the Grenadines). Key findings from the primary teacher survey are presented in the following section.

The data were compiled and analysed using descriptive statistics to create a profile of the teachers in the primary school sample. Primary teachers in the sample in 2017 had been in the teaching profession between 0 and 40 years (M=12.65, SD=10.34) and in 2022 between 0 and 43 years (M=14.43, SD=10.42). The distribution of the sample by sex and country can be found in Table 12.

Table 12: Distribution of Primary Teachers by Sex and Country

Country	2017 (N=184)								2022 (N=329)							
	Male		Female		No Response		Total		Male		Female		No Response		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Antigua & Barbuda	**1**	3.1	**29**	90.6	**2**	6.3	**32**	**100.0**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dominica	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**4**	10.0	**35**	87.5	**1**	2.5	**40**	**99.9**
Grenada	**21**	23.6	**68**	76.4	**0**	0.0	**89**	**100.0**	**13**	33.3	**26**	66.7	**0**	0.0	**39**	**100.0**
St Kitts & Nevis	**1**	12.5	**4**	50.0	**3**	37.5	**8**	**100.1**	**12**	10.1	**106**	89.0	**1**	0.9	**119**	**100.0**
St Lucia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**3**	9.1	**30**	90.9	**0**	0.0	**33**	**100.0**
St Vincent & the Grenadines	**4**	7.3	**45**	81.8	**6**	10.9	**55**	**100.0**	**11**	11.2	**87**	88.8	**0**	0.0	**98**	**100.0**

Primary School Teachers: Key Findings

Qualifications and Professional Status of Primary Teachers

Teachers were asked to indicate the qualifications that they held at the time of data collection. They could select all the qualifications held, and the results are shown in Table 13.

In 2017 and 2022, most teachers held an associate's degree, with this proportion increasing in 2022. There was a significant increase in teachers with bachelor's and master's degrees, as well as other qualification, over the period. A small proportion of primary teachers had doctorate degrees in 2022, compared to none in 2017.

Table 13: Qualifications of Primary Teachers

Qualification	2017 (N=184)		2022 (N=329)	
	n	%	n	%
Associate degree	97	52.7	211	64.1
Bachelor's Degree	30	16.3	81	24.6
Master's Degree	5	2.7	12	3.6
Doctorate (PhD)	0	0.0	5	1.5
Other Qual (e.g. CSEC)	50	27.2	53	16.1

Not only were the teachers asked to indicate the qualifications they held, but they were also asked to indicate the areas of qualification. These areas were categorised as being education-related and not or not specified. Education-related areas include primary education, primary education core areas English, Mathematics, Science and Social Sciences. The percentages of respondents who reported holding education-related qualifications are shown in Table 14.

Table 14: Proportion of Primary Teachers with Qualifications in Education-Related Areas

Education-Related Qualification	2017 (N=184)		2022 (N=329)		Noneducation-Related/ Unspecified Qualification	2017 (N=184)		2022 (N=329)	
	n	%	n	%		n	%	n	%
Associate degree	67	36.4	76	23.1	Associate degree	30	16.3	135	41.0
Bachelor's Degree	27	14.7	35	10.6	Bachelor's Degree	3	1.6	46	14.0
Master's Degree	5	2.7	6	1.8	Master's Degree	0	0.0	6	1.8
Doctorate (PhD)	0	0.0	0	0.0	Doctorate (PhD)	0	0.0	5	1.5
Other Qual	30	16.3	20	6.1	Other Qual	20	10.9	33	10.0

There was a notable decline in primary teachers with qualifications in education-related areas for teachers holding associate, bachelor's and master's degrees and other qualifications in 2022 compared to 2017. Additionally, there was a significant rise in teachers holding non-education-related degrees across all levels of qualification. Teachers with education-related qualifications held degrees in Education, Psychology, Youth Development Work, Science, General Studies, Mathematics, English, and Early Childhood Development. Other qualifications included Certificates in Teacher Education, Diplomas in Education (primary and secondary), Diplomas in Health and Family Life Education, and Diplomas in Early Childhood Education. Teachers with qualifications in non-education-related areas held degrees in graphic design, business administration, auto service repairs, information technology, performing arts and hospitality management. It is important to note that some teachers did not specify the areas in which they were qualified. Therefore, there may be more teachers with education-related qualifications not included here.

Primary teachers indicated their status as to whether they were teacher-trained and/or held at least a first degree, and their responses can be found in Table 15.

Table 15: Professional Status of Primary Teachers

Professional Status	2017 (N=184)		2022 (N=329)	
	n	%	n	%
Trained Graduate	30	16.3	81	24.6
Trained non-graduate	77	41.8	142	43.2
Untrained Graduate	3	1.6	11	3.3
Untrained non-graduate	45	24.5	51	15.5
Other Professional Status	8	4.3	14	4.3
No Response	21	11.4	30	9.1
TOTAL	**184**	**99.9**	**329**	**100.0**

In 2017 and 2022, most primary teachers were trained non-graduates, with this proportion increasing in 2022. The number of trained graduates increased significantly between 2017 and 2022, and untrained graduates increased very slightly. The number of untrained non-graduates decreased significantly over the period.

Democratic Teaching Practices in the Primary Classroom

Teachers were given a list of activities, including traditional methods, those aligned with democratic principles, and student-centred approaches. They were asked to report the frequency with which they engaged in these practices during the term. Table 16 shows the percentage of teachers using democratic teaching practices and student-centred approaches.

In 2017, the highest proportion of primary teachers reported using all of the democratic teaching practices and student-centred activities they were asked about, except learning contracts, and in 2022, the highest proportion of primary teachers reported using all of these practices. In addition, there were significant increases in the number of teachers who reported using democratic, student-centred practices. Some examples include the number of teachers who used guided reading methods in 2022 (93.6%) compared with 2017 (78.8%), peer-partner learning in 2022 (86%) compared with 2017 (74.5%), and providing support for struggling readers in the classroom which increased to 91.2% of teachers reporting this practice versus 78.8% in 2017.

In terms of disciplinary practices, the number of teachers who worked with students to establish a code of classroom behaviour and consequences for infractions rose significantly in 2022 (85.4%) when compared with reports in 2017 (72.3%), as did teachers reporting they called parents about student misbehaviour and sent home notes about good behaviour. However, using physical restraint for misbehaving students remained roughly the same in 2022 (53.2%) compared with 2017 (53.3%), as did threatening to send students out of the classroom if they did not behave. Notably, the number of teachers who did not respond to items decreased significantly in 2022, which may account for some of the differences, but it also indicates a greater willingness on the part of the teachers to participate in the research.

Table 16: Primary Teachers' Reported Use of Democratic Instructional Practices

Practice	2017 (N=184)					2022 (N=329)				
	Frequency of Use (%)					Frequency of Use (%)				
	Never Uses	Uses	Unsure / Not Applicable	No Response	TOTAL	Never Uses	Uses	Unsure / Not Applicable	No Response	TOTAL
Used didactic questions (Who? What? Where? When? How?)	0.0	**79.9**	1.1	19.0	100.0	0.3	**94.5**	0.9	4.3	100.0
Used demonstrations	0.0	**80.4**	1.6	17.9	99.9	0.3	**95.1**	0.3	4.3	100.0
Used guided methods (e.g. guided reading)	1.1	**78.8**	1.6	18.5	100.0	0.9	**93.6**	1.5	4.0	100.0
Used shared methods (e.g. Shared writing)	1.6	**79.3**	1.6	17.4	99.9	4.0	**86.9**	1.8	7.3	100.0
Used journals	22.8	**56.5**	2.7	17.9	99.9	30.1	**60.2**	4.0	5.8	100.1
Used learning logs	26.6	**43.5**	10.3	19.6	100.0	30.4	**54.7**	5.5	9.4	100.0
Used research projects	11.4	**67.9**	3.3	17.4	100.0	14.3	**75.4**	3.6	6.7	100.0
Used learning centres	14.7	**63.0**	3.3	19.0	100.0	22.5	**64.4**	5.2	7.9	100.0
Used learning contracts	**34.8**	32.6	12.0	20.7	100.1	34.3	**44.1**	11.2	10.3	99.9
Used differentiated instruction	0.5	**78.8**	2.2	18.5	100.0	1.8	**88.8**	2.4	7.0	100.0
Used problem-solving approaches	0.5	**78.3**	2.2	19.0	100.0	3.6	**86.9**	2.7	6.7	99.9
Used case-based method	21.7	**44.6**	12.5	21.2	100.0	17.3	**60.8**	10.6	11.2	99.9
Used reflective discussions	2.7	**71.7**	5.4	20.1	99.9	4.3	**84.2**	1.5	10.0	100.0
Used simulations	6.5	**70.1**	4.9	18.4	99.9	8.8	**73.3**	4.6	13.4	100.1
Used field observation	5.4	**72.8**	2.2	19.6	100.0	11.9	**75.1**	4.3	8.8	100.1
Used role play	1.6	**78.3**	2.2	17.9	100.0	4.0	**87.5**	2.1	6.4	100.0
Used service learning	16.8	**40.2**	20.7	22.3	100.0	20.7	**49.2**	12.5	17.6	100.0
Used cooperative and collaborative learning	1.6	**76.6**	2.7	19.0	99.9	4.3	**86.9**	1.8	7.0	100.0
Used controversial discussions	12.5	**63.0**	3.8	20.7	100.0	15.2	**66.3**	7.3	11.2	100.0
Used debates	31.0	**46.7**	2.7	19.6	100.0	28.6	**57.4**	5.2	8.8	100.0
Used peer partner learning	3.8	**74.5**	2.7	19.0	100.0	4.9	**86.0**	0.6	8.5	100.0
Told the students the objectives of an assessment activity	2.7	**74.5**	3.8	19.0	100.0	4.6	**86.6**	2.1	6.7	100.0

Allowed the students to rate their own work before you graded it	17.9	**62.0**	1.6	18.5	100.0	20.7	**70.5**	3.6	5.2	100.0
Allowed the students to engage in peer assessment activities	7.6	**72.3**	2.2	17.9	100.0	9.1	**80.9**	4.0	6.1	100.1
Taught students strategies for reading in your subject area	6.5	**72.8**	2.7	17.9	99.9	3.0	**87.2**	4.0	5.8	100.0
Gave time for reading books of own choice	3.8	**75.5**	2.7	17.9	99.9	3.0	**87.2**	4.0	5.8	100.0
Allowed choice of reading material	3.8	**72.3**	2.7	21.2	100.0	2.7	**86.9**	3.3	7.0	99.9
Provided support for struggling readers in your classroom	1.1	**78.8**	1.6	18.5	100.0	0.0	**91.2**	2.7	6.1	100.0
Encouraged students to read for pleasure	1.1	**77.2**	2.7	19.0	100.0	0.6	**91.5**	1.8	6.1	100.0
Encouraged students to read for information	0.0	**77.7**	3.3	19.0	100.0	0.9	**88.8**	2.4	7.9	100.0
(Re)Wrote instructional materials to facilitate diverse reading ability in the classroom	6.0	**69.0**	4.3	20.7	100.0	6.4	**78.7**	4.0	10.9	100.0
Assigned grade- and ability-appropriate open-ended mathematics problems for students to solve	5.4	**60.3**	14.1	20.1	99.9	4.6	**75.1**	11.9	8.5	100.1
Encouraged students to talk about the mathematics that they are learning in the classroom	3.3	**66.3**	10.3	20.1	100.0	4.3	**77.2**	9.7	8.8	100.0
Led the students in grade and ability-appropriate investigations of mathematics concepts	7.1	**59.8**	12.5	20.7	100.1	7.9	**70.8**	9.7	11.6	100.0
Allowed students to submit mathematics projects and investigations using different modes	19.6	**45.7**	15.2	19.6	100.1	19.8	**57.4**	12.8	10.0	100.0
Allowed students to explain phenomena scientifically	15.2	**45.7**	19.0	20.1	100.0	21.3	**50.5**	16.1	12.2	100.1
Allowed students to evaluate and design scientific enquiry	20.7	**41.8**	17.4	20.1	100.0	20.7	**52.6**	13.1	13.7	100.1
Allowed students to interpret data and evidence scientifically	9.8	**58.7**	11.4	20.1	100.0	12.8	**65.7**	10.3	11.2	100.0
Rewarded positive behaviours with incentives (e.g. stars, stickers)	0.0	**78.8**	2.2	19.0	100.0	2.4	**86.0**	2.7	8.8	99.9
Used physical restraint for misbehaving students	24.5	**53.3**	2.7	19.6	100.1	34.0	**53.2**	4.3	8.5	100.0

Threatened to send students out of the classroom if they do not behave	28.8	**51.6**	0.5	19.0	99.9	30.1	**58.4**	2.1	9.4	100.0
Sent home notes to parents about students' good behaviour	27.7	**50.5**	2.2	19.6	100.0	26.4	**64.7**	0.6	8.2	99.9
Called parents about students' misbehaviour	10.3	**67.9**	2.7	19.0	99.9	8.5	**81.2**	1.8	8.5	100.0
Worked with students to establish a code of classroom behaviour and consequences for infractions	4.9	**72.3**	3.3	19.6	100.1	3.3	**85.4**	2.7	8.5	99.9

Primary Teachers' Attitudes toward Teaching

Teachers in the sample were asked to indicate their feelings about teaching in general and at their current school. Their responses are summarised in Tables 17 and 18.

Table 17: Primary Teachers' Feelings About Teaching

I like teaching in general	2017 (N=184)		2022 (N=329)	
	n	%	n	%
Never True	0	0.0	1	0.3
Sometimes True	32	17.4	69	21.0
Always True	109	59.2	241	73.3
No Response	43	23.4	18	5.5
TOTAL	**184**	**100.0**	**329**	**100.1**

Table 18: Primary Teachers' Feelings About Their Current School

I like teaching at this school	2017 (N=184)		2022 (N=329)	
	n	%	n	%
Never True	6	3.3	10	3.0
Sometimes True	56	30.4	96	29.2
Always True	78	42.4	200	60.8
No Response	44	23.9	23	7.0
TOTAL	**184**	**100.0**	**329**	**100.0**

Similar to other survey sections, there was a notable decrease in non-responses in 2022. Between 2017 and 2022, the proportion of teachers who always liked teaching increased significantly, while those who sometimes liked teaching also increased. From 2017 to 2022, the proportion of teachers who always liked teaching at their school increased, while those who sometimes liked it decreased slightly. A few teachers in both years reported never liking teaching at their school.

When asked in 2022 to think about all of their experiences of school during the COVID-19 pandemic, the majority of primary school teachers reported that the pandemic did not affect how they feel about teaching (28.6%), while the second largest proportion said the pandemic had a fairly good effect on how they feel about teaching (27.4%). A few said it had a very good effect on their feelings about teaching (8.2%). Almost one-fifth of teachers surveyed responded that the pandemic had a fairly bad effect on how they feel about teaching (17.6%), while a very small proportion said it had a very bad effect (5.8%).

Primary Teachers' Attitudes Toward the Common Entrance Examination (CEE), Streaming and Grade Retention

Teachers in the sample were asked to express their support for specific practices embedded within their education system, linked to outdated colonial educational practices that can be viewed as unsuitable for the Caribbean context. These practices included allocating students to secondary schools based on the results of the Common Entrance Examination, streaming students based on academic ability, and grade retention (having students repeat grades until they pass). Tables 19, 20 and 21 illustrate the extent of teachers' endorsement of these practices.

Table 19: Primary Teachers' Support for Use of CEE for Secondary School Placement

Using the Common Entrance Examination for secondary school placement	2017 (N=184)		2022 (N=329)	
	n	%	n	%
I support this	112	60.9	191	58.1
I do not support this	14	7.6	73	22.2
Not Applicable/No Opinion	11	6.0	43	13.1
No Response	47	25.5	22	6.7
TOTAL	**184**	**100.0**	**329**	**100.1**

Table 20: Primary Teachers' Support for Streaming According to Academic Ability

Streaming classes according to ability	2017 (N=184)		2022 (N=329)	
	n	%	n	%
I support this	85	46.2	233	70.8
I do not support this	46	25.0	55	16.7
Not Applicable/No Opinion	7	3.8	18	5.5
No Response	46	25.0	23	7.0
TOTAL	**184**	**100.0**	**329**	**100.0**

Table 21: Primary Teachers' Support for Grade Retention

Grade retention	2017 (N=184)		2022 (N=329)	
	n	%	n	%
I support this	83	45.1	165	50.2
I do not support this	48	26.1	101	30.7
Not Applicable/No Opinion	9	4.9	39	11.9
No Response	44	23.9	24	7.3
TOTAL	**184**	**100.0**	**329**	**100.1**

From 2017 to 2022, primary teachers' support for using the Common Entrance Examination for secondary school placement, though still the majority opinion, decreased slightly, with about three times as many teachers opposing it in 2022 as in 2017. From 2017 to 2022, support for streaming classes according to ability increased significantly among primary teachers, while opposition to streaming decreased significantly. In this same period, support for grade retention among primary teachers increased slightly, as did opposition to the practice.

Primary Teachers' Use of Technology

The questionnaire included a list of activities where technology might be used in teaching and learning. Teachers were asked to reflect on their practices over the past academic year and indicate how often they used technology for these purposes. Teachers were also provided with a list of factors that impact the frequency of technology use in teaching and learning. They were asked to specify how each factor influenced their use of technology in their practice. Table 22 presents the percentages of the teachers in the sample reporting the frequency of technology use for each activity. Table 23 presents the percentages of teachers in the sample who reported the level of influence of various factors on their use of technology.

Between 2017 and 2022, primary teachers' reports of often using technology (8+ times over the year) increased across every purpose. Most teachers who reported using technology "often" in 2017 used it to access lessons from the internet, create instructional materials, formulate tests, get information from the internet for lessons, prepare homework assignments, produce handouts for students, and record student grades. This was also true in 2022, and in addition, teachers used technology when they asked students to use the internet to research subject content and use DVDs or videos to teach concepts. The most notable shifts between 2017 and 2022 include the most significant proportion of teachers reporting that they never design multimedia presentations, post homework assignments online or use software to teach concepts, shifting to sometimes engaging in these activities and never asking students to research subjects online to practising this often in 2022.

Table 22: Primary Teachers' Frequency of Use of Technology for Specific Purposes

Purpose of using Technology	2017 (N=184)						2022 (N=329)					
	Frequency of Use over the Academic Year (% of sample)						Frequency of Use over the Academic Year (% of sample)					
	Often 8+times	Sometimes 3-7 times	Seldom 1-2 times	Never	No Response	TOTAL	Often 8+times	Sometimes 3-7 times	Seldom 1-2 times	Never	No Response	TOTAL
Access lessons from the internet	**22.8**	17.9	20.1	21.2	17.9	99.9	**29.8**	27.4	24.9	13.1	4.9	100.1
Create instructional materials	**42.9**	25.0	9.2	3.8	19.0	99.9	**53.8**	35.3	4.9	1.8	4.3	100.1
Design multimedia presentations (e.g. PowerPoint)	12.5	23.9	20.7	**24.5**	18.5	100.1	20.7	**37.1**	25.8	14.0	2.4	100.0
Engage students in online discussion (e.g., blogs, chat rooms, social networking sites	2.2	2.7	7.1	**70.1**	17.9	100.0	10.6	13.7	22.8	**45.9**	7.0	100.0
Formulate tests for students.	**44.0**	20.1	11.4	7.1	17.4	100.0	**66.9**	19.1	4.9	6.4	2.7	100.0
Get information from the internet for use in lessons	**62.5**	16.8	1.6	1.1	17.9	99.9	**83.9**	11.2	1.8	0.3	2.7	99.9
Have students use the internet for researching subject content	16.3	19.6	19.0	**27.2**	17.9	100.0	**33.7**	31.0	19.5	13.1	2.7	100.0
Post homework assignments online	1.1	2.2	1.1	**77.2**	18.5	100.1	20.4	**28.3**	27.7	21.0	2.7	100.1
Prepare homework assignments	**32.6**	21.7	10.9	16.3	18.5	100.0	**57.1**	22.8	12.5	4.6	3.0	100.0
Produce handouts for students	**35.3**	25.5	10.9	9.8	18.5	100.0	**38.6**	30.7	17.9	8.8	4.0	100.0
Record student grades	**42.4**	12.5	9.8	16.3	19.0	100.0	**63.2**	14.3	8.8	9.7	4.0	100.0
Send lesson information, assignments, and other communication to students by email	1.6	1.6	6.0	**72.3**	18.5	100.0	13.7	13.4	24.3	**45.6**	3.0	100.0
Share material, ideas, and/or information with other teachers	26.1	**27.7**	19.0	9.8	17.4	100.0	36.2	**36.5**	17.9	5.8	3.6	100.0
Use digital cameras to enhance lessons	3.3	10.9	17.9	**50.0**	17.9	100.0	9.4	10.9	23.1	**51.4**	5.2	100.0
Use LCD projectors to present lessons	18.5	19.0	15.2	**29.3**	17.9	99.9	22.8	22.8	24.0	**28.0**	2.4	100.0
Use scanners to prepare for lessons	9.8	17.4	16.8	**38.0**	17.9	99.9	11.2	14.0	22.5	**47.7**	4.6	100.0
Use skill games to reinforce concepts taught	25.0	**28.3**	17.9	11.4	17.4	100.0	33.7	**41.6**	14.0	7.0	3.6	99.9
Use software for remediation of basic skills	8.7	18.5	17.9	**37.0**	17.9	100.0	17.3	24.6	**30.4**	20.4	7.3	100.0
Use software to teach concepts	12.0	25.0	17.4	**27.7**	17.9	100.0	24.0	**30.7**	23.7	16.1	5.5	100.0
Use videos or DVDs to teach concepts	23.9	**31.0**	15.2	12.0	17.9	100.0	**59.0**	23.4	7.9	7.6	2.1	100.0

Table 23: Factors Affecting the Use of Technology by Primary Teachers

Influence:	2017 (N=184)						2022 (N=329)					
	Extent of Influence (% of the sample)						Extent of Influence (% of the sample)					
	To a Great Extent	**To a Moderate Extent**	**A Little Bit**	**Not At All**	**No Response**	**TOTAL**	**To a Great Extent**	**To a Moderate Extent**	**A Little Bit**	**Not At All**	**No Response**	**TOTAL**
Not enough computers available	**48.4**	13.6	9.2	10.3	18.5	100.0	**34.3**	16.4	17.3	26.1	5.8	99.9
Unreliable computers	**39.7**	14.1	14.1	12.0	20.1	100.0	**26.4**	17.0	24.9	24.6	7.0	99.9
Internet not easily accessible	**27.2**	21.2	16.8	16.8	17.9	100.1	23.4	**27.7**	21.3	22.5	5.2	100.1
Lack of good instructional software	**33.2**	17.9	18.5	10.3	20.1	100.0	17.9	24.0	**31.3**	17.3	9.4	99.9
Inadequate training opportunities	17.4	**25.5**	17.9	20.7	18.5	99.9	12.8	25.5	**30.1**	23.1	8.5	100.0
Lack of administrative support	11.4	18.5	23.4	**28.8**	17.9	100.0	8.5	19.5	27.1	**36.8**	8.2	100.1
Lack of support regarding ways to integrate technology into the curriculum	13.0	**25.5**	20.7	22.3	18.5	99.9	7.6	27.1	24.6	**33.1**	7.6	100.0
Lack of technical support or advice	17.4	22.8	**23.4**	18.5	17.9	100.0	7.9	22.5	30.7	**31.6**	7.3	100.0
Lack of relevant computer skills	8.2	14.7	21.7	**37.0**	18.5	100.0	7.6	17.0	27.4	**40.1**	7.9	100.0
Inadequate amount of computer peripherals	**29.3**	25.5	16.8	9.2	19.0	100.0	17.9	20.7	**28.3**	22.5	10.6	100.0
Lack of knowledge in ways to integrate technology to enhance the curriculum	6.5	20.1	22.3	**33.2**	17.9	100.0	5.5	17.9	31.3	**37.1**	8.2	100.0
Use of technology not integrated into curriculum documents	17.9	15.2	**26.1**	21.2	19.6	100.0	11.9	20.1	**32.5**	26.1	9.4	100.0

Some of the factors affecting the use of technology by primary teachers have remained constant between 2017 and 2022, including not having enough computers available or computers being unreliable, affecting technology use to a great extent in both years. The accessibility of the internet affects technology use to a moderate extent, according to most teachers' reports, which is an improvement from 2017 when it affected technology use to a great extent. Another positive trend is the reduced influence of a lack of good instructional software, inadequate computer peripherals, lack of support regarding integrating technology into the curriculum, and a lack of technical support or advice between 2017 and 2022.

Summary

Based on data collected from primary school teachers, several findings are of note. The increase in higher degrees obtained by primary school teachers suggests improved qualifications. Still, the decline in education-related qualifications could indicate a gap in specialised primary education training. This may impact the effectiveness of teaching in foundational subjects. The shift towards more democratic teaching practices among primary teachers is positive, fostering a more inclusive and engaging learning environment. However, the continued use of punitive measures like physical restraint can undermine these efforts and negatively affect the school climate. There was an increase in the proportion of teachers who reported always liking teaching, with a significant decrease in non-responses. However, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on teachers' feelings about teaching was mixed, with a portion reporting adverse effects. The increased support for streaming and grade retention could exacerbate educational inequalities, as these practices often disadvantage students from marginalised backgrounds. The increased use of technology is also a positive development, but barriers could limit its full integration into teaching and learning, particularly in under-resourced schools.

Primary School Principals

Data were collected from 13 primary school principals (1 male and 12 females) in 2017 across three countries (Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada, and St Vincent and the Grenadines) and from 34 primary school principals (4 males and 30 females) in 2022 across five countries (Dominica, Grenada, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, and St Vincent and the Grenadines). Key findings from the primary principal survey are presented in the following section.

The data were compiled and analysed using descriptive statistics to create a profile of the principals in the primary school sample. Primary principals in the sample in 2017 had been in the teaching profession between 24 and 39 years (M=28.54, SD=4.27) and had been a principal for between 2 and 12 years (M=6.31, SD=3.75). In 2022, principals had been in the teaching profession between 16 and 41 years (M=29.73, SD=7.11) and had been principals for between <1 and 18 years (M=6.20, SD=4.52). The sample distribution by sex and country can be found in Table 24.

Table 24: Distribution of Primary Principals by Sex and Country

Country	2017 (N=13)								2022 (N=34)							
	Male		Female		No Response		Total		Male		Female		No Response		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Antigua & Barbuda	**0**	0.0	**3**	100.0	**0**	0.0	**3**	100.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dominica	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**1**	14.3	**6**	85.7	**0**	0.0	**7**	**100.0**
Grenada	**0**	0.0	**1**	0.0	**0**	0.0	**1**	100.0	**2**	40.0	**3**	60.0	**0**	0.0	**5**	**100.0**
St Kitts & Nevis	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**0**	0.0	**9**	100.0	**0**	0.0	**9**	**100.0**
St Lucia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**0**	0.0	**5**	100.0	**0**	0.0	**5**	**100.0**
St Vincent & the Grenadines	**1**	11.1	**8**	88.9	**0**	0.0	**9**	100.0	**1**	12.5	**7**	87.5	**0**	0.0	**8**	**100.0**

Primary School Principals: Key Findings

Primary Principals' Qualifications and Training

Principals were asked to indicate the highest qualification held at the time of data collection and their area of qualification. These areas were categorised as being education-related and not. Their responses are shown in Tables 25 and 26.

Table 25: Qualifications of Primary Principals

Qualification	2017 (N=13)		2022 (N=34)	
	n	%	n	%
Bachelor's Degree	10	76.9	15	44.1
Master's Degree	3	23.1	16	47.1
Doctorate (EdD)	0	0.0	1	2.9
Other Qualification	0	0.0	1	2.9
No Response	0	0.0	1	2.9
TOTAL	**13**	**100.0**	**34**	**99.9**

Table 26: Proportion of Primary Principals with Qualifications in Education-Related Areas

Education-Related Qualification	2017 (N=13)		2022 (N=34)	
	n	%	n	%
Bachelor's Degree	9	69.2	13	38.2
Master's Degree	3	23.1	14	41.2
Doctorate (EdD)	0	0.0	1	2.9
Other Qualification	0	0.0	1	2.9

From 2017 to 2022, there was a shift in educational qualifications, with twice as many principals holding a master's degree and a significant decrease in those holding a bachelor's degree as their highest qualification. Other highest qualifications listed by primary principals include an Associate's Degree in Education and Business Administration, a Teacher Training Certificate and certificates in various areas, including Counselling.

All primary principals, except one, in 2017 were qualified in an education-related area. The one principal not trained in an education-related area held a Bachelor's degree in Management. In 2022, 85.3% of primary principals held their highest qualification in an education-related area. Those principals who did not hold degrees in education-related fields had degrees in Business Administration and Management Studies.

Principals were also asked to indicate whether they had qualifications or training in school leadership and/or management, and if so, to report at what level and in which area. Their responses are shown in Tables 27 and 28.

Table 27: Primary Principals' Training in School Leadership/Management

Qualifications/training in school leadership/management?	2017 (N=13)		2022 (N=34)	
	n	%	n	%
Yes	10	76.9	30	88.2
No	3	23.1	3	8.8
No Response	0	0.0	1	2.9
TOTAL	**13**	**100.0**	**34**	**99.9**

Table 28: Highest Level of Training in School Leadership/Management for Primary Principals

Education-Related Qualification	2017 (N=13)		2022 (N=34)	
	n	%	n	%
Bachelor's Degree	3	23.1	9	26.5
Master's Degree	2	15.4	7	20.6
Doctorate (EdD)	0	0.0	1	2.9
Other Qual	2	15.4	10	29.4

About three-quarters (76.9%) of primary principals had qualifications or training in school leadership and management in 2017. In 2017, principals reported training in Literacy and Leadership, Leadership and Management of Primary Schools, Educational Leadership and Management and Educational Administration. Other qualifications were reported as Ministry of Education workshops in Leadership and in-service professional development in Leadership. In 2022, the number of primary principals reporting training in leadership or educational management training increased significantly (88.2%). Principals reported degrees in Educational Leadership and Management and Educational Administration. Other qualifications also increased considerably in 2022, including University of the West Indies certificate courses in Leadership and Management and other certificates and training in leadership, indicating increased levels of primary principals pursuing professional development activities.

Primary School Principals' Perspectives on School Leadership

One section of the survey was designed to provide a profile of principals' leadership. The tool utilised for this purpose was the principal form of the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS; Hallinger, 2015). This section included fifty behavioural statements that describe principal job practices and behaviours. Principals were asked to consider each statement concerning their leadership over the past academic year and circle the appropriate response based on its frequency in their practices and behaviours. Response categories range from 5 (Almost Always) to 1 (Almost Never). The distribution of principal responses to each statement can be found in Table A1. Summaries for each subsection of this section of the survey are provided below.

Framing School Goals

In 2022, primary principals reported more frequently developing focused, school-wide goals and framing these goals in terms of staff responsibilities compared to 2017. Reports of using needs assessments and data on student performance for goal development also increased, with more principals involving staff input and data in goal-setting. The clarity of goals improved, with more principals reporting developing goals that teachers easily understood.

Communicating School Goals

There was an increase in the frequency with which primary principals reported communicating the school's mission and academic goals to the school community in 2022 compared to 2017. More principals reported referring to these goals in curricular decisions, faculty meetings, and forums with students. Reports of the visibility of these goals within the school, such as on posters or bulletin boards, improved, although there was still room for growth.

Supervising and Evaluating Instruction

In 2022, principals more frequently reported ensuring classroom priorities aligned with school goals and reviewing student work during evaluations. There was an increase in the frequency of reports of informal classroom observations and the provision of both positive and constructive feedback to teachers. Primary principals in 2022 reported being more engaged in pointing out specific strengths and weaknesses in teachers' instructional practices compared to 2017.

Coordinating the Curriculum

Reports of coordinating the curriculum across grade levels improved in 2022, with principals more frequently making clear who was responsible for this task. The reported use of school-wide testing data to inform curricular decisions and monitoring curriculum alignment with objectives also increased. However, reports of participation in curricular reviews remain in mixed practice.

Monitoring Student Progress

Reports of monitoring student progress became more frequent in 2022, with principals meeting individually with teachers and discussing academic performance with the faculty. The use of tests

and other performance measures to assess progress towards school goals increased, as did reports of informing teachers and students of performance results. However, there was still variation in how consistently these practices were applied.

Protecting Instructional Time

Reported efforts to protect instructional time improved, with principals frequently limiting interruptions and ensuring students were not called out of class. The reported enforcement of consequences for tardiness and truancy, encouraging the effective use of instructional time and limiting the intrusion of extracurricular activities on instructional time also increased.

Maintaining High Visibility

Primary principals in 2022 reported being more visible within the school, talking informally with students and teachers and visiting classrooms to discuss school issues. Participation in extracurricular activities and covering classes for absent teachers also increased. More principals reported being involved in direct instruction and tutoring, though these practices varied in frequency.

Providing Incentives for Teachers

In 2022, primary principals more frequently reported reinforcing and acknowledging superior teacher performance through staff meetings, newsletters, and memos. Private compliments, written recognition in personnel files, and rewarding special efforts with professional recognition also became more common practices. Reports of creating professional growth opportunities as a reward also increased.

Promoting Professional Development

Support for professional development increased, with principals reporting they frequently ensured that in-service activities were aligned with school goals and actively supported the application of new skills in the classroom. More principals reported involving the entire staff in important in-service activities and setting aside time for sharing ideas during faculty meetings.

Providing Incentives for Learning

Principal reports of the recognition of student achievements and improvements also increased in 2022. More principals reportedly used assemblies to honour students, supported teachers in recognising student accomplishments, contacted parents to communicate exemplary performance, and used formal rewards like honour rolls.

This section-by-section analysis shows a clear trend towards more frequent and consistent application of leadership practices by primary school principals between 2017 and 2022, although some areas still need improvement.

Primary Principals' Attitudes Toward the Common Entrance Examination (CEE), Streaming and Grade Retention

Principals in the sample were asked to express their support for specific practices embedded within their education system, which are linked to outdated colonial educational practices that can be viewed as unsuitable for the Caribbean context. These practices included allocating students to secondary schools based on the results of the Common Entrance Examination, streaming students based on academic ability, and grade retention (having students repeat grades until they pass). Tables 29, 30 and 31 illustrate the extent of principals' endorsement of these practices.

Table 29: Primary Principals' Support for Use of CEE for Secondary School Placement

Using the Common Entrance Examination for Secondary School Placement	2017 (N=13)		2022 (N=34)	
	n	%	n	%
I support this	7	53.8	20	58.8
I do not support this	2	15.4	8	23.5
Not Applicable/No Opinion	1	7.7	5	14.7
No Response	3	23.1	1	2.9
TOTAL	**13**	**100.0**	**34**	**99.9**

Table 30: Primary Principals' Support for Streaming According to Academic Ability

Streaming classes according to ability	2017 (N=13)		2022 (N=34)	
	n	%	n	%
I support this	8	61.5	23	67.6
I do not support this	2	15.4	10	29.4
Not Applicable/No Opinion	0	0.0	1	2.9
No Response	3	23.1	0	0.0
TOTAL	**13**	**100.0**	**34**	**99.9**

Table 31: Primary Principals' Support for Grade Retention

Grade retention	2017 (N=13)		2022 (N=34)	
	n	%	n	%
I support this	6	46.2	15	44.1
I do not support this	4	30.8	12	35.3
Not Applicable/No Opinion	0	0.0	5	14.7
No Response	3	23.1	2	5.9
TOTAL	**13**	**100.1**	**34**	**100.0**

Support among primary principals for using the Common Entrance Examination for secondary school placement and for streaming classes according to academic ability increased slightly from 2017 to 2022, as did the number of principals who opposed those practices. There was a slight decrease in support, while opposition grew for grade retention.

Summary

Between 2017 and 2022, principals reported higher levels of advanced qualifications, particularly master's degrees, and increased education-related qualifications. There was also a significant rise in principals receiving training in school leadership and management, reflecting a growing emphasis on professional development. Leadership practices improved overall, with principals increasingly focused on setting and communicating school goals, supervising instruction, coordinating curriculum, and supporting teacher and student development. The data suggested a trend towards more highly qualified and better-trained school leaders, likely contributing to the improvements in leadership practices observed between 2017 and 2022. The enhanced focus on professional development and aligning in-service activities with school goals may lead to more effective school management and better educational outcomes. However, perspectives on

traditional educational practices such as the Common Entrance Examination, streaming by academic ability, and grade retention revealed both growing support and rising opposition, indicating a complex and evolving stance from primary school principals on these issues. This highlights ongoing debates within the educational community about the appropriateness of these practices in the context of the Caribbean. The increase in opposition to some of these practices may reflect shifting educational paradigms and the influence of more contemporary educational theories in the region.

Results: Secondary Schools

Data was collected from 10 secondary school principals from 3 countries (Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada and St Vincent and the Grenadines) in 2017 and compared with data from 22 secondary school principals from 5 countries (Dominica, Grenada, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia and St Vincent and the Grenadines) in 2022. Secondary principals were asked to report on several school factors, including the extent to which student and teacher absenteeism is challenging, school facilities, class structure, and the presence of reading and extracurricular activity policies.

The secondary school principals who responded in 2017 were from schools with between 123 and 718 students (M=412) and between 14 and 64 teachers (M=36), with an average student-teacher ratio of about 11:1. In 2022, principals responded from schools with between 44 and 708 students (M=409) and between 17 and 98 teachers (M=42), with an average student-teacher ratio of about 10:1.

Secondary Schools: Key Findings

Secondary Student and Teacher Absenteeism

Absenteeism is an issue of concern in schools internationally and regionally. Secondary principals were asked to indicate the extent to which student and teacher absenteeism challenges their school. The distribution of responses can be found in Table 32.

Table 32: Student and Teacher Absenteeism in Secondary Schools

Issue	2017 (% of respondents) (N=10)				2022 (% of respondents) (N=22)			
	No Challenge at All	A Moderate Challenge	A Big Challenge	No Response	No Challenge at All	A Moderate Challenge	A Big Challenge	No Response
Student Absenteeism	0.0	**70.0**	10.0	20.0	13.6	**63.6**	18.2	4.5
Teacher Absenteeism	10.0	**60.0**	10.0	20.0	36.4	**45.5**	13.6	4.5

In 2017 and 2022, most secondary school principals perceived student and teacher absenteeism as a moderate challenge. However, there was more significant variability in responses in 2022, with more principals reporting student and teacher absenteeism as “no challenge at all” or “a big challenge” than in 2017.

Secondary School Facilities

Secondary school principals were asked to complete an item prompting them to indicate the presence of certain facilities at the school and, if available, whether they were currently in use. These items were aimed at gaining insight into the environments of the participating secondary schools. The percentages of primary principals' responses to each facility listed are shown in Table 33.

Table 33: Secondary School Facilities Present and in Use

School facility	2017 (%) (N=13)				2022 (%) (N=34)			
	Present & In Use	**Present & Not in Use**	**Not Present**	**No Response**	**Present & In Use**	**Present & Not in Use**	**Not Present**	**No Response**
Library	**70.0**	10.0	0.0	20.0	**63.6**	9.1	27.3	0.0
Computer Lab	**80.0**	0.0	0.0	20.0	**90.9**	0.0	9.1	0.0
Canteen	**60.0**	20.0	0.0	20.0	**77.3**	4.5	18.2	0.0
Sickbay	10.0	0.0	**70.0**	20.0	**50.0**	13.6	36.4	0.0
Playing Field	**60.0**	0.0	20.0	20.0	**63.6**	0.0	36.4	0.0
Hard Courts	**50.0**	10.0	20.0	20.0	**50.0**	9.1	40.9	0.0
Science Labs	**80.0**	0.0	0.0	20.0	**86.4**	0.0	13.6	0.0
Art Rooms	**50.0**	0.0	30.0	20.0	**72.7**	9.1	18.2	0.0
Industrial Arts Rooms	**80.0**	0.0	0.0	20.0	40.9	27.3	**68.2**	31.8
Home Economics Rooms	**70.0**	0.0	10.0	20.0	**45.5**	0.0	27.3	27.3
Music Room	0.0	0.0	**80.0**	20.0	40.9	4.5	**54.5**	0.0
Special subject rooms (e.g. math room, geography room)	**50.0**	0.0	30.0	20.0	36.4	4.5	**54.5**	4.5

In 2017, most secondary school principals reported having and using all the facilities they were asked about, except sickbays and music rooms, which they reported as not being present. In 2022, there was a greater variability in the presence and use of facilities. The proportion of principals reporting having and using libraries, industrial arts, home economics, and special subject rooms declined. However, there were increases in reports of having and using computer labs, canteens, sickbays, playing fields, science labs, and art and music rooms.

Secondary School Class Structure

Secondary school principals were asked to indicate if classes were best described as grouped by ability or mixed ability grouping. Principal responses to this item can be found in Table 34.

Table 34: Ability Grouping in Secondary Schools

Class organisation	2017 (N=10)		2022 (N=22)	
	n	%	n	%
Ability Grouping	3	30.0	4	18.2
Mixed Ability Grouping	5	50.0	16	72.7
No Response	2	20.0	2	9.1
TOTAL	**10**	**100.0**	**22**	**100.0**

2017 half of secondary school principals reported mixed ability grouping in classes. Still, by 2022, this had risen to nearly three-quarters of principals surveyed, while the reported use of ability grouping declined from one-third to just under one-fifth in the same period.

Secondary School Reading Policies

Secondary school principals were asked to indicate whether their school had a reading policy and if their school's timetable included a designated time for leisure reading. Principal responses to these items can be found in Table 35.

Table 35: Secondary School Reading Policies

	2017 (N=10)		2022 (N=22)	
School has a reading policy?	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
Yes	4	40.0	3	13.6
No	4	40.0	18	81.8
No Response	2	20.0	1	4.5
TOTAL	**10**	**100.0**	**22**	**99.9**
Timetabled reading for leisure?	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
Yes	1	10.0	1	4.5
No	6	60.0	21	95.5
No Response	3	30.0	0	0.0
TOTAL	**10**	**100.0**	**22**	**100.0**

In 2017, two-fifths of secondary schools had a reading policy, though only one-tenth of principals reported having timetabled reading for leisure. By 2022, reports of having reading policies and

timetabled reading for leisure had dropped by more than half. Just under 15% reported having a reading policy, and under 5% timetabled reading for leisure in 2022.

Secondary School Extracurricular Activities

Principals were asked to indicate if their school had a policy on extracurricular and/or co-curricular activities and if their schools' timetables included a designated time for extracurricular and/or co-curricular activities. Principal responses to these items can be found in Table 36.

Table 36: Secondary School Extracurricular Activities

	2017 (N=10)		2022 (N=22)	
School has a policy on extracurricular and/or cocurricular activities?	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
Yes	3	30.0	10	45.5
No	4	40.0	11	50.0
No Response	3	30.0	1	4.5
TOTAL	**13**	**100.0**	**34**	**100.0**
Timetabled extracurricular and/or co-curricular activities?	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
Yes	2	20.0	8	36.4
No	5	50.0	14	63.6
No Response	3	30.0	0	0.0
TOTAL	**13**	**100.0**	**34**	**100.0**

In 2017, one-third of the responding principals in the secondary school sample reported having a policy on extracurricular and/or cocurricular activities and one-fifth reported having these activities as part of their school's timetable. By 2022, almost half of secondary school principals reported having a policy on extracurricular and/or co-curricular activities, and just over two-thirds reported having these as timetabled activities. It is important to note here that the increased response rates and the larger sample size contribute to a more accurate picture of secondary schools in 2022.

Summary

Between 2017 and 2022, secondary school principals reported ongoing challenges with student and teacher absenteeism, with responses in 2022 showing greater variability, indicating that while absenteeism remains a concern, its impact varies across schools. The availability and usage of school facilities also shifted during this period, with declines in the use of libraries, industrial arts

rooms, and special subject rooms, while computer labs, canteens, sickbays, and music rooms saw increased usage. There was a notable shift towards mixed ability grouping in classes, with nearly three-quarters of principals adopting this practice by 2022, reflecting a move towards more inclusive education. However, the adoption of reading policies and timetabled leisure reading declined sharply, with only a tiny minority of schools maintaining these practices in 2022. In contrast, the emphasis on extracurricular and co-curricular activities grew, with more schools implementing policies and incorporating them into their timetables, recognising their importance in student development.

Secondary School Students

Data were collected from 1253 secondary school students (547 boys and 704 girls) in 2017 across four countries (Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada, St Kitts and Nevis and St Vincent and the Grenadines) and from 1073 secondary school students (454 boys and 619 girls), in 2022 across five countries (Dominica, Grenada, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, and St Vincent and the Grenadines). The results of the secondary student survey are presented in the following section.

The data were compiled and analysed using descriptive statistics to create a profile of the students in the secondary school sample. All students in the samples in 2017 and 2022 were in Form 2 and Form 4 between the ages of 11 and 19 (M=14.19, SD=1.38) in 2017 and between 10 and 18 (M=14.51, SD=1.29) in 2022. The sample distribution by sex and country can be found in Table 37.

Table 37: Distribution of Secondary Students by Sex and Country

Country	2017 (N=1253)								2022 (N=1073)							
	Male		Female		No Response		Total		Male		Female		No Response		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Antigua & Barbuda	**99**	39.8	**150**	60.2	**0**	0.0	**249**	100.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dominica	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**65**	46.1	**76**	53.9	**0**	0.0	**141**	100.0
Grenada	**107**	36.8	**184**	63.2	**0**	0.0	**291**	100.0	**151**	45.6	**180**	54.4	**0**	0.0	**331**	100.0
St Kitts & Nevis	**73**	41.0	**105**	59	**0**	0.0	**178**	100.0	**78**	47.0	**88**	53.0	**0**	0.0	**166**	100.0
St Lucia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**46**	37.1	**78**	62.9	**0**	0.0	**124**	100.0
St Vincent & the Grenadines	**268**	50.1	**265**	49.5	**2**	0.4	**535**	100.0	**114**	36.7	**197**	63.3	**0**	0.0	**311**	100.0

Secondary School Students: Key Findings

Secondary Students' Home Environment

Several changes were noted in secondary students' home environments between 2017 and 2022. The proportion of students who reported their mothers working full-time in 2017 fell very slightly from 66.2% to 64.3% in 2022, while those who reported that their mothers were working part-time for pay rose from 7.4% in 2017 to 8.8% in 2022. A similar trend was noted in students' reports of fathers working full-time for pay, which dropped slightly from 70.1% in 2017 to 68.5% in 2022.

Regular access to some types of technology in the home also fell slightly between 2017 and 2022. However, access to electronic tablets, smart televisions, educational software, and the internet increased during that period. Table 38 shows the two samples' access to several kinds of technological devices and software.

Table 38: Secondary Students' Access to Electronic Devices at Home

Regular access to a device at home	2017 (N=1253)		2022 (N=1073)	
	n	%	n	%
Smartphone	1080	86.2	848	79.0
Electronic tablet	688	54.9	643	59.9
Laptop computer	791	63.1	615	57.3
Desktop computer	293	23.4	163	15.2
Smart TV	727	58.0	649	60.5
Internet	1090	87.0	1009	94.0
A computer to use for schoolwork	907	72.4	704	65.6
Educational software	549	43.8	483	45.0

Secondary students in the sample in 2022 were asked several questions about their access to devices and the internet at home during the COVID-19 pandemic. 82.9% of students reported that they attended classes online, though 74.2% experienced challenges during online schooling, including difficulties with logging into meeting spaces (50.6%), internet access dropping out frequently (47.3%), devices not always working (30.9%), challenges using learning platforms (17.5%), having to share a device (11.2%), not owning a device (9.8%), and no internet access (9.7%). When secondary school students were asked about their preference for attending school,

51% responded that they prefer face-to-face instruction only, 5.2% prefer online instruction only, and 35.2% prefer a hybrid model of some face-to-face and some online instruction.

Several changes to the home literacy environment are also evident in the data. While the overall number of reported books in the home remained relatively constant between 2017 and 2022, there was a decline in the number of students who reported having certain kinds of books in their homes, which can be seen in Table 39. Furthermore, the proportion of students who reported reading in their leisure time dropped in 2022 to 52.4% from 59.4% in 2017. The number of students who reported being read to by an adult in primary school also decreased to 66.9% in 2022 from 70.1% in 2017. This trend was noted across all categories of adults who reportedly read to secondary students in primary school, including mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters and other family members.

Table 39: Secondary Students' Access to Specific Books at Home

Student has at home:	2017 (N=1253)		2022 (N=1073)	
	n	%	n	%
A dictionary	1106	88.3	919	85.6
Books of poetry	542	43.3	422	39.3
Books to help with schoolwork	1016	81.1	873	81.4
Classic literature	500	39.9	352	32.8
Technical reference books or manuals	381	30.4	318	29.6

Secondary Students' Participation in Extracurricular Activities

From 2017 to 2022, the proportion of secondary students participating in extracurricular activities dropped significantly from two-thirds to just over one-half. See Table 40 for a breakdown of secondary student responses. Secondary students in both years reported engaging in various activities, including 4H, cheerleading, chess club, choir, music (e.g. steelpan, piano), Girl Guides and Cadets, and sports like netball, football, swimming, and track and field.

Table 40: Secondary Students' Participating in Extra-Curricular Activities

Participate in extra-curricular activities	2017 (N=1253)		2022 (N=1073)	
	n	%	n	%
Yes	763	60.9	565	52.7
No	472	37.7	483	45.0
No Response	18	1.4	25	2.3
TOTAL	**1253**	**100.0**	**1073**	**100.0**

Students who reported not participating in extracurricular activities gave various reasons, including not wanting to or not being interested (e.g. because I haven't been interested in any of them, the Christian club caught my attention but it isn't at the school anymore), having to go home or location of school (e.g. because of my location it is hard to get home; because I live far so I don't have time to stay back at school for long), lack of confidence (e.g. as of now, I do want to be active in sports but I lack courage; because I feel like I let down everyone and I am shy; because of my weight they would tease me), lack of time (e.g. because there is enough work and pressure as it is; because I am too involved in my schoolwork); religious reasons (e.g. because I am a Christian a minister of the gospel and I do not participate in school band because of the music they play), and health related reasons (e.g. because I am asthmatic; because I am diagnosed with sickle cell; because I have a problem with both of my knees).

Secondary Students' Attitudes Towards School and Learning

Secondary students were presented with a list of statements about school and learning and were asked to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed with each statement. They were also allowed to indicate that they did not know if they agreed or disagreed. The frequency of secondary student responses to each statement is presented in Table 41.

One of the most notable shifts in the attitudes toward school and learning is the significant increase, across every item (except one), in the number of students who responded "unsure", indicating that more secondary students are uncertain about or unwilling to share their feelings about school. Some consistent trends were found between 2017 and 2022. In both years, most students agreed that going to school would help them get a good job when they are older, prepare them for the future, help them know many things and think better and that school is important for everyone. The highest proportion of students in both years also agreed that school is fun and learning new things at school is fun, that they like the various activities they do at school, and that they would rather be at school than at home watching television.

Notable changes include the highest proportion of students in 2022 reporting that school is boring (40.2%) versus 2017 (31.2%) and that they do not like to do schoolwork (39.1%) in 2022 versus 2017 (29.1%). The highest proportion of students in 2022 also said they would prefer playing video games at home rather than at school (40.5%) compared to 2017 (32.4%). In addition, higher

proportions of students agreed with statements such as “School is like a prison”, “I would rather be at home alone than at school”, and “All we ever do at school is work, work, work” in 2022 when compared with 2017.

Primary school students in 2022 were asked about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on their feelings about school. The most significant proportion of students reported that the pandemic has had a bad effect on their feelings about school (35.2%), slightly fewer reported that it had a good effect on their feelings about school (31.6%), and no effect on their feelings about school (22.5%).

Summary

Between 2017 and 2022, secondary students' home environments showed slight changes, with a small decrease in the number of parents working full-time and a slight increase in part-time employment. Access to technology in the home varied, with declines in access to some devices but increases in access to electronic tablets, smart TVs, educational software, and the internet. The COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted students' online learning experiences, with more students attending classes online but many facing challenges like unreliable internet and device issues. Home literacy environments also changed, with a decrease in the variety of books at home and a drop in the number of students reading for leisure. Participation in extracurricular activities declined, with fewer students engaging by 2022, citing a lack of interest, confidence, or time. Attitudes towards school and learning also shifted, with more students feeling unsure about their views on school and increasing negative perceptions, such as finding school boring or preferring to be at home. The pandemic had mixed effects on students’ feelings about school; some reported it had no impact, while others felt it had a good or bad effect.

Table 41: Secondary Students' Attitudes Towards School and Learning

Statement	2017 (N=1253)					2022 (N=1073)				
	Responses (%)					Responses (%)				
	Agree	Disagree	Don't Know	No Response	Total	Agree	Disagree	Don't Know	No Response	Total
Going to school will help me get a good job when I am older.	**93.9**	1.8	2.9	1.4	100.0	**85.0**	4.8	7.2	3.1	100.1
School is fun.	**55.2**	22.6	19.6	2.6	100.0	**43.8**	30.2	22.8	3.2	100.0
I wish we didn't have to go to school at all.	20.0	**64.6**	13.2	2.2	100.0	25.1	**53.7**	18.2	3.1	100.1
I would rather stay at home than go to school.	20.0	**60.7**	16.0	3.4	100.1	30.8	**49.3**	16.3	3.5	99.9
I would rather go to the doctor or dentist than go to school.	10.1	**76.2**	10.6	3.0	99.9	15.4	**68.7**	11.9	4.0	100.0
Learning new things at school is fun.	**80.6**	5.1	12.0	2.3	100.0	**75.5**	7.1	14.5	2.9	100.0
In school, all we ever do is work, work, work.	**54.3**	37.4	5.9	2.5	100.1	**57.7**	32.5	6.4	3.4	100.0
School will help me know many things.	**91.7**	3.0	3.4	1.9	100.0	**83.7**	6.9	7.1	2.3	100.0
School will help me think better.	**80.4**	7.5	9.3	2.8	100.0	**66.2**	13.9	17.0	3.0	100.1
School will get me prepared for the future.	**91.7**	2.8	4.0	1.5	100.0	**79.3**	7.3	10.3	3.2	100.1
School is boring.	31.2	**44.4**	21.5	2.9	100.0	**40.2**	32.0	24.7	3.2	100.1
I don't like school.	18.4	**61.5**	16.4	3.7	100.0	28.1	**47.0**	21.5	3.4	100.0
I like to do schoolwork.	**45.1**	29.1	22.5	3.3	100.0	31.5	**39.1**	25.4	3.9	99.9
I will never use what I learn at school.	6.5	**79.7**	10.5	3.3	100.0	9.5	**71.2**	16.0	3.3	100.0
School is like a prison.	**46.4**	34.5	15.7	3.4	100.0	**47.0**	34.0	15.3	3.7	100.0
I would rather be at school than playing video games	**48.4**	32.4	16.8	2.3	99.9	35.9	**40.5**	20.7	2.9	100.0
I hate to do schoolwork.	20.3	**59.5**	17.2	3.0	100.0	30.5	**44.3**	21.2	4.0	100.0
I would rather be at school than at home watching TV.	**49.4**	32.1	16.3	2.2	100.0	**40.8**	39.0	16.8	3.4	100.0
I don't need school to get a job.	12.1	**76.3**	9.3	2.3	100.0	20.2	**62.5**	14.0	3.3	100.0
I like all the different things we do at school.	**68.7**	14.1	14.4	2.8	100.0	**60.2**	17.0	19.2	3.6	100.0
What I learn at school is good for my brain.	**87.3**	3.2	7.6	1.9	100.0	**76.0**	6.4	14.2	3.4	100.0
School is important for everyone.	**87.1**	4.9	6.0	2.0	100.0	**77.7**	8.8	10.6	2.9	100.0
I would rather be at home alone than at school.	20.3	**65.0**	12.3	2.5	100.1	34.4	**45.4**	17.0	3.3	100.1

Secondary School Teachers

Data were collected from 178 secondary school teachers (48 males and 115 females) in 2017 across four countries (Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada, St Kitts and Nevis and St Vincent and the Grenadines) and from 331 secondary school teachers (88 males and 241 females), in 2022 across five countries (Dominica, Grenada, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia and St Vincent and the Grenadines). Key findings from the secondary teacher survey are presented in the following section.

The data were compiled and analysed using descriptive statistics to create a profile of the teachers in the secondary school sample. Secondary teachers in the sample in 2017 had been in the teaching profession between 0 and 40 years (M=12.52, SD=8.04) and in 2022, between 0 and 40 years (M=12.42, SD=8.85). The distribution of the sample by sex and country can be found in Table 42.

Table 42: Distribution of Secondary Teachers by Sex and Country

Country	2017 (N=178)								2022 (N=331)							
	Male		Female		No Response		Total		Male		Female		No Response		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Antigua & Barbuda	**8**	21.6	**28**	75.7	**1**	2.7	**37**	100.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dominica	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**9**	17.6	**42**	82.4	**0**	0.0	**51**	100.0
Grenada	**15**	34.9	**27**	62.8	**1**	2.3	**43**	100.0	**23**	30.3	**52**	68.4	**1**	1.3	**76**	100.0
St Kitts & Nevis	**1**	20.0	**3**	60.0	**1**	20.0	**5**	100.0	**13**	16.0	**68**	84.0	**0**	0.0	**81**	100.0
St Lucia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**5**	27.8	**12**	66.7	**1**	5.5	**18**	100.0
St Vincent & the Grenadines	**24**	25.8	**57**	61.3	**12**	12.9	**93**	100.0	**38**	36.2	**67**	63.8	**0**	0.0	**105**	100.0

Secondary School Teachers: Key Findings

Qualifications and Professional Status of Secondary Teachers

Teachers were asked to indicate the qualifications that they held at the time of data collection. They could select all the qualifications held, and the results are shown in Table 43.

Table 43: Qualifications of Secondary Teachers

Qualification	2017 (N=178)		2022 (N=331)	
	n	%	n	%
Associate degree	55	30.9	49	14.8
Bachelor's Degree	91	51.1	175	52.9
Master's Degree	27	15.2	43	12.9
Doctorate (PhD)	1	0.6	1	0.3
Other Qual (e.g. CSEC)	54	30.3	75	22.7

Between 2017 and 2022, the qualifications of secondary teachers in the Caribbean showed some changes. The proportion of teachers holding an associate degree decreased, and the number of teachers with a master's degree declined slightly. The percentage of those with a bachelor's degree increased very slightly. The rate of teachers holding a doctorate remained very low and relatively unchanged. There was also a slight decrease in the proportion of teachers holding other qualifications.

Not only were the teachers asked to indicate the qualifications they held, but they were also asked to indicate the areas of qualification. These areas were categorised as being education-related and not or not specified. Education-related areas include secondary education, guidance counselling, educational psychology, and secondary education core areas, such as English, mathematics, languages, science, and social sciences. The percentages of respondents who reported holding education-related qualifications are shown in Table 44.

Table 44: Proportion of Secondary Teachers with Qualifications in Education-Related Areas

Education-Related Qualification	2017 (N=178)		2022 (N=331)		Noneducation-Related/ Unspecified Qualification	2017 (N=178)		2022 (N=331)	
	n	%	n	%		n	%	n	%
Associate degree	42	23.6	32	9.7	Associate degree	13	7.3	17	5.1
Bachelor's Degree	66	37.1	43	13.0	Bachelor's Degree	25	14.0	132	39.9
Master's Degree	20	11.2	11	3.3	Master's Degree	7	3.9	32	9.7
Doctorate (PhD)	1	0.6	1	0.3	Doctorate (PhD)	0	0.0	0	0.0
Other Qual	28	15.7	7	2.1	Other Qual	26	14.6	68	20.5

Between 2017 and 2022, there was a significant decline in the proportion of secondary teachers reporting education-related qualifications across all levels, including associate, bachelor's, and master's degrees and other qualifications. In contrast, the proportion of teachers holding non-education-related or unspecified qualifications increased notably, particularly at the bachelor's

degree level. Teachers with education-related qualifications held degrees in Education, Administration, Science, General Studies, Mathematics, English, Physical Education and Foreign Languages. Other qualifications included Certificates in Teaching (secondary level), Diplomas in Education, and A-level qualifications in subjects such as Mathematics, Biology and Chemistry. Teachers with qualifications in non-education-related areas held degrees in Theology, International Relations, Tourism Management and Criminal Justice. It is important to note that some teachers did not specify the areas in which they were qualified. Therefore, more teachers with education-related qualifications may not be included here.

Secondary teachers indicated their status as to whether they were teacher-trained and/or held at least a first degree, and their responses can be found in Table 45.

Between 2017 and 2022, the distribution of professional status among secondary teachers remained relatively consistent. The proportion of trained and untrained graduates showed minor fluctuations, while there was a slight increase in the percentage of trained and untrained non-graduates. The "Other Professional Status" category remained low, with a slight decrease in the proportion of teachers in this group. The percentage of teachers who did not respond to the question decreased slightly.

Table 45: Professional Status of Secondary Teachers

Professional Status	2017 (N=178)		2022 (N=331)	
	n	%	n	%
Trained Graduate	57	32.0	105	31.7
Trained non-graduate	33	18.5	75	22.7
Untrained Graduate	37	20.8	70	21.1
Untrained non-graduate	27	15.2	58	17.5
Other Professional Status	8	4.5	8	2.4
No Response	16	9.0	15	4.5
TOTAL	**178**	**100.0**	**331**	**99.9**

Democratic Teaching Practices in the Secondary Classroom

Teachers were given a list of activities, including traditional methods, those aligned with democratic principles, and student-centred approaches. They were asked to report the frequency

with which they engaged in these practices during the term. Table 46 shows the percentage of teachers using democratic teaching practices and student-centred approaches.

In 2017, the highest proportion of secondary teachers reported using all of the democratic teaching practices and student-centred activities they were asked about, except learning contracts and learning logs. In 2022, the highest proportion of secondary teachers reported using all these practices except learning contracts. In addition, there were significant increases in the number of teachers who reported using democratic, student-centred practices. Some examples include the number of teachers who used problem-solving approaches in 2022 (85.5%) compared with 2017 (76.4%), demonstrations in 2022 (90.6%) compared with 2017 (78.7%), and differentiated instruction, which increased to 82.5% of teachers reporting using this practice in 2022 versus 71.9% in 2017.

In terms of disciplinary practices, the number of teachers who worked with students to establish a code of classroom behaviour and consequences for infractions rose significantly in 2022 (84.3%) when compared with reports in 2017 (72.5%), as did teachers reporting they called parents about student misbehaviour and sent home notes about good behaviour. However, the practice of using physical restraint for misbehaving students remained roughly the same in 2022 (33.2%) compared with 2017 (32.0%), and the practice of threatening to send students out of the classroom if they did not behave increased significantly in reported use in 2022 (76.4%) versus in 2017 (66.3%). Notably, the number of teachers who did not respond to items decreased significantly in 2022, which may account for some differences. Still, it also indicates a greater willingness on the part of the teachers to participate in the research.

Table 46: Secondary Teachers' Reported Use of Democratic Instructional Practices

Practice	2017 (N=178)					2022 (N=331)				
	Frequency of Use (%)					Frequency of Use (%)				
	Never Uses	Uses	Unsure / Not Applicable	No Response	TOTAL	Never Uses	Uses	Unsure / Not Applicable	No Response	TOTAL
Used didactic questions (Who? What? Where? When? How?)	0.6	**77.5**	1.7	20.2	100.0	0.9	**89.1**	0.3	9.7	100.0
Used demonstrations	0.6	**78.7**	0.0	20.8	100.1	0.3	**90.6**	0.0	9.1	100.0
Used guided methods (e.g. guided reading)	0.6	**76.4**	1.1	21.9	100.0	0.9	**89.4**	0.6	9.1	100.0
Used shared methods (e.g. Shared writing)	6.7	**69.7**	2.8	20.8	100.0	6.6	**79.2**	2.4	11.8	100.0
Used journals	36.5	**41.6**	1.1	20.8	100.0	40.2	**46.2**	3.9	9.7	100.0
Used learning logs	**38.8**	34.3	5.6	21.3	100.0	36.0	**45.0**	6.3	12.7	100.0
Used research projects	6.7	**70.2**	1.7	21.3	99.9	7.9	**79.2**	2.1	10.9	100.1
Used learning centres	36.5	**38.2**	4.5	20.8	100.0	36.6	**44.7**	5.4	13.3	100.0
Used learning contracts	**42.1**	29.8	7.3	20.8	100.0	**42.0**	35.0	9.4	13.6	100.0
Used differentiated instruction	5.6	**71.9**	1.7	20.8	100.0	3.6	**82.5**	1.5	12.4	100.0
Used problem-solving approaches	1.1	**76.4**	1.7	20.8	100.0	2.4	**85.5**	1.5	10.6	100.0
Used case-based method	16.3	**56.2**	6.7	20.8	100.0	12.7	**68.3**	6.6	12.4	100.0
Used reflective discussions	3.9	**70.8**	3.9	21.3	99.9	6.0	**79.2**	3.3	11.5	100.0
Used simulations	10.7	**64.0**	3.9	21.3	99.9	11.2	**70.7**	4.5	13.6	100.0
Used field observation	20.2	**50.6**	6.2	23.0	100.0	21.8	**62.2**	4.8	11.2	100.0
Used role play	13.5	**62.4**	2.8	21.3	100.0	14.5	**71.0**	3.3	11.2	100.0
Used service learning	23.0	**42.1**	11.8	23.0	99.9	24.5	**46.2**	13.9	15.4	100.0
Used cooperative and collaborative learning	6.2	**71.9**	1.1	20.8	100.0	3.0	**83.4**	1.2	12.4	100.0
Used controversial discussions	10.1	**64.0**	5.1	20.8	100.0	11.5	**72.2**	4.2	12.1	100.0
Used debates	20.8	**55.1**	2.2	21.9	100.0	21.1	**64.0**	4.2	10.6	99.9
Used peer partner learning	5.1	**73.0**	1.7	20.2	100.0	4.8	**83.7**	0.9	10.6	100.0

	Never Uses	Uses	Unsure / Not Applicable	No Response	TOTAL	Never Uses	Uses	Unsure / Not Applicable	No Response	TOTAL
Told the students the objectives of an assessment activity	2.2	**73.6**	3.9	20.2	99.9	1.5	**86.7**	2.1	9.7	100.0
Allowed the students to rate their own work before you graded it	18.0	**59.0**	2.2	20.8	100.0	16.0	**71.3**	3.0	9.7	100.0
Allowed the students to engage in peer assessment activities	8.4	**69.7**	1.7	20.2	100.0	5.7	**81.9**	1.8	10.6	100.0
Taught students strategies for reading in your subject area	11.2	**65.7**	2.8	20.2	99.9	10.3	**76.7**	3.3	9.7	100.0
Provided support for struggling readers in your classroom	11.8	**63.5**	4.5	20.2	100.0	6.9	**76.7**	4.2	12.1	99.9
Encouraged students to read for pleasure	7.9	**68.5**	3.4	20.2	100.0	6.0	**79.2**	3.6	11.2	100.0
Encouraged students to read for information	0.0	**77.5**	2.2	20.2	99.9	0.9	**85.8**	1.2	12.1	100.0
(Re)Wrote instructional materials to facilitate diverse reading ability in the classroom	11.2	**63.5**	4.5	20.8	100.0	7.6	**74.0**	5.1	13.3	100.0
Rewarded positive behaviours with incentives (e.g. stars, stickers)	7.9	**70.2**	1.1	20.8	100.0	6.0	**81.3**	0.9	11.8	100.0
Used physical restraint for misbehaving students	**43.3**	32.0	3.4	21.3	100.0	**47.4**	33.2	5.7	13.6	99.9
Threatened to send students out of the classroom if they do not behave	11.2	**66.3**	1.7	20.8	100.0	11.2	**76.4**	0.0	12.4	100.0
Sent home notes to parents about students' good behaviour	37.1	**41.6**	0.6	20.8	100.1	36.6	**48.3**	2.4	12.7	100.0
Called parents about students' misbehaviour	14.6	**64.0**	1.1	20.2	99.9	18.7	**68.9**	0.3	12.1	100.0
Worked with students to establish a code of classroom behaviour and consequences for infractions	6.7	**72.5**	0.6	20.2	100.0	3.9	**84.3**	0.3	11.5	100.0

Secondary Teachers' Attitudes toward Teaching

Teachers in the sample were asked to indicate their feelings about teaching in general and at their current school. Their responses are summarised in Tables 47 and 48.

Table 47: Secondary Teachers' Feelings About Teaching

I like teaching in general	2017 (N=178)		2022 (N=331)	
	n	%	n	%
Never True	0	0.0	4	1.2
Sometimes True	49	27.5	99	29.9
Always True	77	43.3	205	61.9
No Response	52	29.2	23	6.9
TOTAL	**178**	**100.0**	**331**	**99.9**

Table 48: Secondary Teachers' Feelings About Their Current School

I like teaching at this school	2017 (N=178)		2022 (N=331)	
	n	%	n	%
Never True	4	2.2	10	3.0
Sometimes True	66	37.1	150	45.3
Always True	56	31.5	146	44.1
No Response	52	29.2	25	7.6
TOTAL	**178**	**100.0**	**331**	**100.0**

Similar to other survey sections, there was a notable decrease in non-responses in 2022. Between 2017 and 2022, the proportion of teachers who always liked teaching increased significantly, while those who sometimes liked teaching also increased. From 2017 to 2022, the proportion of teachers who always liked and sometimes liked teaching at their school increased. A few teachers in 2022 reported not liking teaching in general, and in both years, never liking teaching at their school.

When asked in 2022 to think about all of their experiences of school during the COVID-19 pandemic, the majority of secondary school teachers reported that the pandemic did not affect how they feel about teaching (32.9%), while the second largest proportion said the pandemic had a fairly good effect on how they feel about teaching (22.4%). The third largest said it had a fairly bad effect on how they feel about teaching (21.1%). A few said it had a very good (7.6%) or very bad effect (6.0%) on their feelings about teaching.

Secondary Teachers' Attitudes Toward the Common Entrance Examination, Streaming and Grade Retention

Teachers in the sample were asked to express their support for specific practices embedded within their education system, which are linked to outdated colonial educational practices that can be viewed as unsuitable for the Caribbean context. These practices included allocating students to secondary schools based on the results of the Common Entrance Examination, streaming students based on academic ability, and grade retention (having students repeat grades until they pass). Tables 49, 50 and 51 illustrate the extent of teachers' endorsement of these practices.

Table 49: Secondary Teachers' Support for Use of CEE for Secondary School Placement

Using the Common Entrance Examination for Secondary School Placement	2017 (N=178)		2022 (N=331)	
	n	%	n	%
I support this	103	57.9	218	65.9
I do not support this	18	10.1	50	15.1
Not Applicable/No Opinion	5	2.8	38	11.5
No Response	52	29.2	25	7.6
TOTAL	**178**	**100.0**	**331**	**100.1**

Table 50: Secondary Teachers' Support for Streaming According to Academic Ability

Streaming classes according to ability	2017 (N=178)		2022 (N=331)	
	n	%	n	%
I support this	94	52.8	242	73.1
I do not support this	30	16.9	51	15.4
Not Applicable/No Opinion	1	0.6	16	4.8
No Response	53	29.8	22	6.6
TOTAL	**178**	**100.1**	**331**	**99.9**

Table 51: Secondary Teachers' Support for Grade Retention

Grade retention	2017 (N=178)		2022 (N=331)	
	n	%	n	%
I support this	84	47.2	176	53.2
I do not support this	31	17.4	83	25.1
Not Applicable/No Opinion	7	3.9	47	14.2
No Response	56	31.5	25	7.6
TOTAL	**178**	**100.0**	**331**	**100.1**

From 2017 to 2022, secondary teachers' support for using the Common Entrance Examination for secondary school placement, the majority opinion, increased significantly. However, considerably more teachers opposed it in 2022 compared to 2017. From 2017 to 2022, support for streaming classes according to ability increased significantly among secondary teachers, while opposition to streaming decreased slightly. In this same period, support for grade retention among secondary teachers increased slightly, as did opposition to the practice.

Secondary Teachers' Use of Technology

The questionnaire included a list of activities where technology might be used in teaching and learning. Teachers were asked to reflect on their practices over the past academic year and indicate how often they used technology for these purposes. Teachers were also provided with a list of factors that impact the frequency of technology use in teaching and learning. They were asked to specify how each factor influenced their use of technology in their practice. Table 52 presents the percentages of the teachers in the sample reporting the frequency of technology use for each activity. Table 53 presents the percentages of teachers in the sample who reported the level of influence of various factors on their use of technology.

Between 2017 and 2022, secondary teachers' reports of using technology for various purposes varied widely. Most teachers who reported using technology "often" in 2017 used it for accessing lessons from the internet, creating instructional materials, formulating tests, getting information from the internet for lessons, having students use the internet for researching subject content, preparing homework assignments, producing handouts for students, and recording student grades. This was true in 2022 with two exceptions. First, there was a shift in most teachers using technology "often" to access lessons from the internet to teachers "seldom" using technology for this purpose. Secondly, more than twice as many teachers in 2022 used technology for designing multimedia presentations. In both years, most teachers reported that they never engaged students in online discussion, used digital cameras to enhance lessons, used LCD projectors to present lessons, and used scanners to prepare for lessons. Shifts between 2017 and 2022 include an increase in most teachers posting homework assignments online, using skill games to reinforce concepts taught, using software for basic remediation skills and to teach concepts, and using videos or DVDs to teach concepts.

Between 2017 and 2022, secondary teachers identified several factors influencing their use of technology in the classroom. The most significant issues in both years included the availability of computers, the reliability of those computers, and the accessibility of the internet. There was a slight increase in the extent to which these factors were reported as influencing technology use.

Summary

Between 2017 and 2022, secondary school teacher data showed various trends in qualifications, professional status, teaching practices, attitudes, and use of technology. There was a decline in the proportion of teachers holding education-related qualifications, with a notable increase in those with non-education-related or unspecified qualifications. This decline could have implications for the quality of instruction, particularly in specialised subject areas. The professional status of teachers remained relatively consistent, with slight increases in both trained non-graduates and untrained non-graduates. This suggests that the composition of the teaching workforce remains stable, but the increase in non-graduates highlights a potential area for development. Democratic and student-centred teaching practices became more prevalent, with significant increases in problem-solving approaches, demonstrations, and differentiated instruction. The growing adoption of democratic and student-centred practices reflects a positive shift toward more inclusive and engaging teaching methods, which could improve student outcomes. Teachers' attitudes towards teaching generally improved, with more reporting that they always liked teaching, both in general and at their current school. However, the mixed impact of the pandemic on teachers' attitudes indicates ongoing challenges in adapting to new teaching environments. Support for traditional practices like the Common Entrance Examination, streaming, and grade retention grew alongside rising opposition, and this suggests a growing debate within the education community about the best approaches to student assessment and progression. The use of technology in the classroom varied, with increased use of multimedia presentations and online tools, though barriers such as computer availability, reliability, and Internet access remained significant. The continued barriers to effective technology use highlight the need for ongoing investment in digital infrastructure and teacher training.

Table 52: Secondary Teachers' Frequency of Use of Technology for Specific Purposes

Purpose of using Technology	2017 (N=178)						2022 (N=331)					
	Frequency of Use over the Academic Year (% of sample)						Frequency of Use over the Academic Year (% of sample)					
	Often 8+times	Sometimes 3-7 times	Seldom 1-2 times	Never	No Response	TOTAL	Often 8+times	Sometimes 3-7 times	Seldom 1-2 times	Never	No Response	TOTAL
Access lessons from the internet	**22.5**	20.8	17.4	16.3	23.0	100.0	20.5	23.0	**25.1**	23.3	8.2	100.1
Create instructional materials	**42.1**	25.8	9.0	2.2	20.8	99.9	**47.1**	36.6	8.5	0.3	7.6	100.1
Design multimedia presentations (e.g. PowerPoint)	14.6	20.8	**27.5**	16.3	20.8	100.0	**32.9**	29.9	23.6	6.3	7.3	100.0
Engage students in online discussion (e.g., blogs, chat rooms, social networking sites	7.9	11.8	15.2	**43.8**	21.3	100.0	19.0	22.4	24.8	**26.6**	7.3	100.1
Formulate tests for students.	**43.8**	20.2	6.7	9.0	20.2	99.9	**65.0**	21.1	6.0	2.1	5.7	99.9
Get information from the internet for use in lessons	**52.2**	23.6	3.4	0.0	20.8	100.0	**69.2**	23.6	1.5	0.3	5.4	100.0
Have students use the internet for researching subject content	**34.3**	31.5	11.2	2.2	20.8	100.0	**42.6**	36.0	13.6	2.7	5.1	100.0
Post homework assignments online	6.7	9.6	16.9	**45.5**	21.3	100.0	26.6	**32.6**	22.1	12.7	6.0	100.0
Prepare homework assignments	**30.9**	25.8	18.5	4.5	20.2	99.9	**50.5**	28.7	11.2	3.6	6.0	100.0
Produce handouts for students	**30.3**	27.0	17.4	5.1	20.2	100.0	**42.6**	30.2	17.2	3.9	6.0	99.9
Record student grades	**47.8**	12.4	7.9	11.8	20.2	100.1	**66.2**	16.0	6.9	4.5	6.3	99.9
Send lesson information, assignments, and other communication to students by email	12.4	16.9	20.2	**30.3**	20.2	100.0	24.8	**25.7**	24.8	17.8	6.9	100.0
Share material, ideas, and/or information with other teachers	20.8	**25.3**	22.5	11.2	20.2	100.0	36.0	**39.9**	13.9	5.1	5.1	100.0
Use digital cameras to enhance lessons	3.9	10.7	12.9	**51.7**	20.8	100.0	6.9	8.2	22.1	**56.8**	6.0	100.0
Use LCD projectors to present lessons	10.1	19.1	20.2	**29.2**	21.3	99.9	13.6	25.4	24.5	**29.6**	6.9	100.0
Use scanners to prepare for lessons	6.2	16.9	18.0	**38.2**	20.8	100.1	7.9	19.3	27.5	**38.1**	7.3	100.1
Use skill games to reinforce concepts taught	15.2	19.7	20.8	**23.0**	21.3	100.0	17.2	**34.7**	26.6	14.8	6.6	99.9
Use software for remediation of basic skills	5.6	9.6	19.1	**43.8**	21.9	100.0	7.6	21.8	**32.3**	29.3	9.1	100.1
Use software to teach concepts	5.6	14.6	21.9	**36.5**	21.3	99.9	11.8	**29.3**	26.3	25.1	7.6	100.1
Use videos or DVDs to teach concepts	9.6	23.6	21.9	**24.2**	20.8	100.1.0	24.8	**32.9**	18.4	17.8	6.0	99.9

Table 53: Factors Affecting the Use of Technology by Secondary Teachers

Influence:	2017 (N=178)						2022 (N=331)					
	Extent of Influence (% of the sample)						Extent of Influence (% of the sample)					
	To a Great Extent	To a Moderate Extent	A Little Bit	Not At All	No Response	TOTAL	To a Great Extent	To a Moderate Extent	A Little Bit	Not At All	No Response	TOTAL
Not enough computers available	**33.7**	18.5	15.2	11.8	20.8	100.0	**35.3**	24.2	18.4	16.6	5.4	99.9
Unreliable computers	21.3	18.5	**22.5**	16.3	21.3	99.9	**28.4**	26.6	19.0	19.9	6.0	99.9
Internet not easily accessible	**38.2**	19.7	15.2	6.2	20.8	100.1	**39.6**	28.1	18.4	8.5	5.4	100.0
Lack of good instructional software	20.2	**27.5**	17.4	12.9	21.9	99.9	21.1	**26.6**	25.7	18.4	8.2	100.0
Inadequate training opportunities	15.7	**24.7**	**24.7**	14.6	20.2	99.9	13.9	28.1	**31.1**	20.5	6.3	99.9
Lack of administrative support	12.4	21.3	**25.8**	20.2	20.2	99.9	8.5	22.7	**30.8**	30.5	7.6	100.1
Lack of support regarding ways to integrate technology into the curriculum	14.0	**23.6**	**23.6**	18.5	20.2	99.9	10.0	25.4	**33.2**	26.0	5.4	100.0
Lack of technical support or advice	11.8	24.7	**25.3**	18.0	20.2	100.0	8.2	29.3	**31.7**	25.4	5.4	100.0
Lack of relevant computer skills	3.9	12.9	29.2	**33.1**	20.8	99.9	7.6	21.1	31.7	**34.7**	4.8	99.9
Inadequate amount of computer peripherals	**28.1**	22.5	19.1	9.6	20.8	100.1	20.5	24.8	**26.9**	19.6	8.2	100.0
Lack of knowledge in ways to integrate technology to enhance the curriculum	4.5	19.7	**29.2**	25.8	20.8	100.0	4.8	21.5	**37.5**	30.5	5.7	100.0
Use of technology not integrated into curriculum documents	15.7	**23.6**	20.8	19.1	20.8	100.0	10.6	28.7	**30.8**	23.3	6.6	100.0

Secondary School Principals

Data were collected from 10 secondary school principals (4 males and 6 females) in 2017 across three countries (Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada, and St Vincent and the Grenadines) and from 22 secondary school principals (6 males and 15 females) in 2022 across five countries (Dominica, Grenada, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, and St Vincent and the Grenadines). Key findings from the secondary principal survey are presented in the following section.

The data were compiled and analysed using descriptive statistics to create a profile of the principals in the secondary school sample. Secondary principals in the sample in 2017 had been in the teaching profession between 12 and 36 years (M=26.9, SD=7.94) and had been a principal for between 1 and 13 years (M=6.4, SD=4.48). In 2022, principals had been in the teaching profession for 15 to 39 years (M=30.76, SD=7.78) and had been principals for between 1 and 20 years (M=6.58, SD=5.17). The distribution of the sample by sex and country can be found in Table 54.

Table 54: Distribution of Secondary Principals by Sex and Country

Country	2017 (N=10)								2022 (N=22)							
	Male		Female		No Response		Total		Male		Female		No Response		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Antigua & Barbuda	**0**	0.0	**1**	100.0	**0**	0.0	**1**	**100.0**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dominica	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**0**	0.0	**1**	50.0	**1**	50.0	**2**	**100.0**
Grenada	**2**	50.0	**2**	50.0	**0**	0.0	**4**	**100.0**	**1**	14.3	**6**	85.7	**0**	0.0	**7**	**100.0**
St Kitts & Nevis	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**2**	50.0	**2**	50.0	**0**	0.0	**4**	**100.0**
St Lucia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**0**	0.0	**1**	100.0	**0**	0.0	**1**	**100.0**
St Vincent & the Grenadines	**2**	40.0	**3**	60.0	**0**	0.0	**5**	**100.0**	**3**	37.5	**5**	62.5	**0**	0.0	**8**	**100.0**

Secondary School Principals: Key Findings

Secondary Principals' Qualifications and Training

Principals were asked to indicate the highest qualification held at the time of data collection and their area of qualification. These areas were categorised as being education-related and not. Their responses are shown in Tables 55 and 56.

Table 55: Qualifications of Secondary Principals

Qualification	2017 (N=10)		2022 (N=22)	
	n	%	n	%
Bachelor's Degree	3	30.0	9	40.9
Master's Degree	7	70.0	12	54.5
No Response	0	0.0	1	4.5
TOTAL	**10**	**100.0**	**22**	**99.9**

Table 56: Proportion of Secondary Principals with Qualifications in Education-Related Areas

Education-Related Qualification	2017 (N=10)		2022 (N=22)	
	n	%	n	%
Bachelor's Degree	2	20.0	8	36.4
Master's Degree	6	60.0	11	50.0

Between 2017 and 2022, the qualifications of secondary school principals shifted, with more principals holding bachelor's degrees in 2022 compared to 2017. However, the proportion of those with master's degrees slightly decreased over this period. There was a noticeable increase in the number of secondary school principals holding education-related bachelor's degrees, while the proportion of those with education-related master's degrees decreased. Those principals who did not hold degrees in education-related fields had degrees in Economics and Human Resource Development.

Principals were also asked to indicate whether they had qualifications or training in school leadership and/or management, and if so, to report at what level and in which area. Their responses are shown in Tables 57 and 58.

Table 57: Secondary Principals' Training in School Leadership/Management

Qualifications/training in school leadership/management?	2017 (N=10)		2022 (N=22)	
	n	%	n	%
Yes	7	70.0	18	81.8
No	3	30.0	2	9.1
No Response	0	0.0	2	9.1
TOTAL	**10**	**100.0**	**22**	**100.0**

Table 58: Highest Level of Training in School Leadership/Management for Secondary Principals

Education-Related Qualification	2017 (N=10)		2022 (N=22)	
	n	%	n	%
Bachelor's Degree	1	10.0	5	22.7
Master's Degree	2	20.0	3	13.6
Doctorate (EdD)	0	0.0	2	9.1
Other Qual	3	30.0	9	40.9

Between 2017 and 2022, there was an increase in the proportion of secondary school principals who received training in school leadership or management. By 2022, most principals had such training, with only a few lacking it or not responding. There was an increase in the diversity of training levels among secondary school principals in school leadership and management from 2017 to 2022. More principals in 2022 held a bachelor's degree in this area, and there was also a noticeable rise in those with a doctorate. Additionally, many principals pursued other qualifications, which became more prevalent. Other qualifications included University of the West Indies certificate courses in Classroom Management, International School Leadership, and School Leadership, as well as short courses in Leadership and Management.

Secondary School Principals' Perspectives on School Leadership

One section of the survey was designed to provide a profile of principals' leadership. The tool utilised for this purpose was the principal form of the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS; Hallinger, 2015). This section included fifty behavioural statements that describe principal job practices and behaviours. Principals were asked to consider each statement concerning their leadership over the past academic year and circle the appropriate response based on its frequency in their practices and behaviours. Response categories range from 5 (Almost Always) to 1 (Almost Never). The distribution of principal responses to each statement can be found in Table A2.

Secondary principals' responses to the questions in this survey section were quite broad, indicating a lack of consistency in leadership practices within and between years. Summaries for each subsection are provided below.

Framing School Goals

In 2022, secondary school principals reported a shift towards more frequent goal-setting practices compared to 2017. While the development of focused, school-wide goals and framing these goals in terms of staff responsibilities remained high, there was a notable increase in staff involvement through needs assessment, data on student performance, and the clarity and usability of these goals by teachers.

Communicating School Goals

The frequency with which principals reported communicating the school's mission on academic goals improved from 2017 to 2022. Principals more often referred to these goals during faculty meetings and curricular decisions. Despite these improvements, the visibility of these goals within the school environment, such as on bulletin boards, still varied widely among schools.

Supervising and Evaluating Instruction

There was a marked increase in principals ensuring that classroom priorities aligned with school goals in 2022. More principals reported regularly reviewing student work and conducting informal classroom observations. Feedback, in terms of strengths and weaknesses in teaching practices, also became more frequent, indicating a stronger focus on instructional quality.

Coordinating the Curriculum

Principals in 2022 reported more consistent practices in coordinating the curriculum across grade levels. Using school-wide testing data to inform curricular decisions and monitor alignment with objectives became more prevalent, as did participation in curricular reviews and providing clarity regarding responsibility for coordination.

Monitoring Student Progress

In 2022, principals frequently discussed student progress with teachers and faculty more often. The use of assessments to gauge progress towards school goals increased, along with efforts to inform teachers and students of performance results. However, the consistency of these practices varied across schools.

Protecting Instructional Time

Efforts to protect instructional time improved, with principals more often limiting interruptions and ensuring that students were not called out of class. The enforcement of consequences for tardiness and encouragement of effective instructional time usage also showed increased frequency.

Maintaining High Visibility

Secondary principals reported being more visible within their schools in 2022. Increased engagement with students and teachers during breaks, visits to classrooms, and participation in extracurricular activities were noted. However, direct involvement in classroom instruction and tutoring remained inconsistent.

Providing Incentives for Teachers

Recognition of superior teacher performance through meetings, newsletters, and other forms of acknowledgement became more common in 2022. Principals increasingly used professional growth opportunities as rewards, though some variability in these practices was observed.

Promoting Professional Development

Support for professional development saw significant improvement, with principals more frequently aligning in-service activities with school goals, ensuring the application of new skills in the classroom, and obtaining staff participation in important in-service activities.

Providing Incentives for Learning

Recognition of student achievements increased in 2022, with principals more often using assemblies and other formal rewards to honour students. Support for teachers and recognising student accomplishments also became more frequent, though the consistency of these practices across schools varied.

Secondary Principals' Attitudes Toward the Common Entrance Examination, Streaming and Grade Retention

Principals in the sample were asked to express their support for specific practices embedded within their education system linked to outdated colonial educational practices that may be considered unsuitable for the Caribbean context. These practices included allocating students to secondary schools based on the results of the Common Entrance Examination, streaming students based on academic ability, and grade retention (having students repeat grades until they pass). Tables 59, 60 and 61 illustrate the extent of principals' endorsement of these practices.

Table 59: Secondary Principals' Support for Use of CEE for Secondary School Placement

Using the Common Entrance Examination for Secondary School Placement	2017 (N=10)		2022 (N=22)	
	n	%	n	%
I support this	3	30.0	13	59.1
I do not support this	1	10.0	8	36.4
Not Applicable/No Opinion	1	10.0	0.0	0.0
No Response	5	50.0	1	4.5
TOTAL	**10**	**100.0**	**22**	**100.0**

Table 60: Secondary Principals' Support for Streaming According to Academic Ability

Streaming classes according to ability	2017 (N=10)		2022 (N=22)	
	n	%	n	%
I support this	2	20.0	9	40.9
I do not support this	3	30.0	10	45.5
Not Applicable/No Opinion	0	0.0	1	4.5
No Response	5	50.0	2	9.1
TOTAL	**10**	**100.0**	**22**	**100.0**

Table 61: Secondary Principals' Support for Grade Retention

Grade retention	2017 (N=10)		2022 (N=22)	
	n	%	n	%
I support this	5	50.0	11	50.0
I do not support this	5	50.0	7	31.8
Not Applicable/No Opinion	0	0.0	2	9.1
No Response	0	0.0	2	9.1
TOTAL	**10**	**100.0**	**22**	**100.0**

In 2022, more secondary school principals supported using the CEE for secondary school placement compared to 2017. There was also an increase in the number of principals opposing this method, while fewer principals chose not to express opinions on the issue. In this period, views on streaming classes based on academic ability became more divided—many principals supported streaming in 2022, though opposition also grew. Fewer principals remained undecided or refrained from responding. Support for grade retention remained relatively consistent between 2017 and 2022. However, there was a decrease in the number of principals opposing the practice, with a slight increase in those who were uncertain or chose not to respond.

Summary

Between 2017 and 2022, secondary school principals in the Caribbean exhibited a notable shift in their qualifications and training. There was an increase in the proportion of principals holding bachelor's degrees, particularly in education-related fields, although the percentage of those with master's degrees slightly decreased. Additionally, there was a significant rise in the number of principals receiving training in school leadership and management, with a greater diversity in the levels of training, including more principals holding doctorates and other specialised qualifications. This trend towards higher and more specialised training reflects a growing emphasis on professional development among school leaders. Leadership practices also improved during this period, with principals becoming more proactive in setting and communicating school goals, supervising instruction, coordinating curriculum, and supporting teachers and students. The increased focus on aligning in-service activities with school goals and providing professional growth opportunities for teachers indicates a stronger commitment to improving educational outcomes. However, despite these improvements, there was considerable variability in leadership practices across schools, particularly in areas such as monitoring student progress and maintaining high visibility within the school. The perspectives of secondary school principals on traditional educational practices, such as the CEE, streaming by academic ability, and grade retention, have evolved. In 2022, more principals supported using the CEE for secondary school placement, though opposition to this method grew. Opinions on streaming classes by academic ability became more divided, with increased support and opposition. Similarly, support for grade retention remained consistent, but there was a slight decrease in the number of principals opposing the practice, with more expressing uncertainty or choosing not to respond. This reflects ongoing

debates within the educational community about the relevance and appropriateness of these practices in the context of the Caribbean.

Conclusion

This study highlights the complex and evolving landscape of education in the Caribbean, particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. The findings underscored the pressing need for evidence-informed policy-making, especially in resource-limited contexts like small island developing states. While there have been significant strides in leadership practices, teaching methods, and technology integration, the persistence of challenges such as absenteeism, declining home literacy environments, and mixed attitudes towards traditional educational practices indicate that much work remains to be done.

The decline in education-related qualifications among teachers, coupled with the varied impact of the pandemic on both students and educators, suggests a critical need for targeted professional development and a re-evaluation of current educational policies. The increasing emphasis on extracurricular activities and mixed-ability grouping points to a growing recognition of the importance of holistic and inclusive education. However, the sharp decline in reading policies and leisure reading time raises concerns about the long-term impact on student literacy and engagement.

Moving forward, policymakers and educators must continue adapting to students' changing needs and the broader educational environment. This will require a concerted effort to address the disparities highlighted in this report, focusing on enhancing equity, inclusivity, and the overall quality of education in the region. By prioritising these areas, the Caribbean can better prepare its students to meet the demands of a rapidly changing world and ensure that all students have the opportunity to succeed academically and personally.

What's Next…

In the pre-COVID (2017) and post-COVID (2022/2024) periods, data were collected from primary and secondary students, teachers and school principals from Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean to investigate certain home and school factors that known to influence academic achievement, both at the individual level and school level. This report focused on the data collected in seven OECS countries. It provides a descriptive summary of the responses from the various participant groups

in this country that shed light on the home and school factors investigated and, in some cases, discusses implications.

A follow-up to this report is imminent. The follow-up report will examine the relationship between home and school factors summarised in this current report and academic achievement at the school level. Using primarily correlational analysis, we will explore, for example, the link between:

- school leadership and students' attitudes to school and learning
- school leadership and teachers' instructional practices
- students' home literacy behaviour and school achievement
- students' attitudes to school and learning and school achievement
- students' perceptions of their school and school achievement

Such issues will be explored for the pre- and post-COVID periods.

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Appendix A

Table A1: Primary School Principals' Leadership Practices

BEHAVIORAL STATEMENT	2017 (N=13)						2022 (N=34)					
	Frequency of Occurrence over the Academic Year (% of sample)						Frequency of Occurrence over the Academic Year (% of sample)					
	1 Almost Never	2 Seldom	3 Some-times	4 Frequ-ently	5 Almost Always	No Response	1 Almost Never	2 Seldom	3 Some-times	4 Frequ-ently	5 Almost Always	No Response
FRAME THE SCHOOL GOALS												
Develop a focused set of annual school-wide goals	0.0	0.0	15.4	**46.2**	15.4	23.1	0.0	0.0	5.9	**67.6**	23.5	2.9
Frame the school's goals in terms of staff responsibilities for meeting them	0.0	7.7	**30.8**	**30.8**	7.7	23.1	5.9	0.0	**38.2**	32.4	17.6	5.9
Use needs assessment or other formal and informal methods to secure staff input on goal development	0.0	15.4	23.1	**30.8**	7.7	23.1	0.0	0.0	23.5	**41.2**	29.4	5.9
Use data on student performance when developing the school's academic goals	0.0	7.7	7.7	**46.2**	15.4	23.1	5.9	0.0	8.8	41.2	**44.1**	0.0
Develop goals that are easily understood and used by teachers in the school	0.0	7.7	0.0	**53.8**	15.4	23.1	0.0	0.0	8.8	**55.9**	35.3	0.0
COMMUNICATE THE SCHOOL GOALS												
Communicate the school's mission effectively to members of the school community	0.0	0.0	**30.8**	**30.8**	15.4	23.1	0.0	8.8	14.7	**44.1**	32.4	0.0
Discuss the school's academic goals with teachers at faculty meetings	0.0	0.0	7.7	**46.2**	23.1	23.1	0.0	0.0	8.8	41.2	**47.1**	2.9
Refer to the school's academic goals when making curricular decisions with teachers	0.0	0.0	0.0	**69.2**	7.7	23.1	0.0	5.9	17.6	**38.2**	35.3	2.9
Ensure that the school's academic goals are reflected in highly visible displays in the school (e.g., posters or bulletin boards emphasizing academic progress)	23.1	7.7	**30.8**	7.7	7.7	23.1	11.8	23.5	**29.4**	20.6	14.7	0.0
Refer to the school's goals or mission in forums with students (e.g., in assemblies or discussions)	0.0	7.7	23.1	**46.2**	0.0	23.1	0.0	2.9	23.5	**44.1**	23.5	5.9

	1 Almost Never	2 Seldom	3 Some-times	4 Frequ-ently	5 Almost Always	No Response	1 Almost Never	2 Seldom	3 Some-times	4 Frequ-ently	5 Almost Always	No Response
SUPERVISE & EVALUATE INSTRUCTION												
Ensure that the classroom priorities of teachers are consistent with the goals and direction of the school	0.0	0.0	15.4	**53.8**	7.7	23.1	0.0	0.0	11.8	**50.0**	38.2	0.0
Review student work products when evaluating classroom instruction	0.0	7.7	23.1	**46.2**	0.0	23.1	0.0	0.0	20.6	**44.1**	32.4	2.9
Conduct informal observations in classrooms on a regular basis (informal observations are unscheduled, last at least 5 minutes, and may or may not involve written feedback or a formal conference)	0.0	0.0	15.4	**30.8**	30.8	23.1	0.0	2.9	2.9	44.1	**50.0**	0.0
Point out specific strengths in teacher's instructional practices in post-observation feedback (e.g., in conferences or written evaluations)	0.0	0.0	0.0	**53.8**	23.1	23.1	0.0	0.0	17.6	35.3	**47.1**	0.0
Point out specific weaknesses in teacher instructional practices in post-observation feedback (e.g., in conferences or written evaluations)	0.0	0.0	7.7	**38.5**	30.8	23.1	0.0	0.0	17.6	29.4	**52.9**	0.0
COORDINATE THE CURRICULUM												
Make clear who is responsible for coordinating the curriculum across grade levels (e.g., the principal, vice principal, or teacher-leaders)	0.0	7.7	**30.8**	15.4	23.1	23.1	0.0	2.9	11.8	32.4	**44.1**	8.8
Draw upon the results of school-wide testing when making curricular decisions the school's curricular objectives	0.0	7.7	23.1	**46.2**	0.0	23.1	2.9	0.0	11.8	**41.2**	38.2	5.9
Monitor the classroom curriculum to see that it covers the school's curricular objectives	0.0	0.0	15.4	**45.2**	15.4	23.1	0.0	0.0	14.7	**44.1**	32.4	8.8
Assess the overlap between the school's curricular objectives and the school's achievement tests	0.0	15.4	23.1	38.5	**76.9**	23.1	2.9	2.9	20.6	**52.9**	14.7	5.9
Participate actively in the review of curricular materials	0.0	23.1	**30.8**	23.1	0.0	23.1	0.0	2.9	17.6	**47.1**	29.4	2.9

	1 Almost Never	2 Seldom	3 Some-times	4 Frequ-ently	5 Almost Always	No Response	1 Almost Never	2 Seldom	3 Some-times	4 Frequ-ently	5 Almost Always	No Response
MONITOR STUDENT PROGRESS												
Meet individually with teachers to discuss student progress	0.0	0.0	**38.5**	30.8	7.7	23.1	0.0	2.9	17.6	**47.1**	32.4	0.0
Discuss academic performance results with the faculty to identify curricular strengths and weaknesses	7.7	0.0	23.1	**38.5**	7.7	23.1	0.0	0.0	14.7	41.2	**44.1**	0.0
Use tests and other performance measure to assess progress toward school goals	0.0	7.7	**23.1**	**23.1**	**23.1**	23.1	2.9	0.0	5.9	**47.1**	44.1	0.0
Inform teachers of the school's performance results in written form (e.g., in a memo or newsletter)	7.7	7.7	**30.8**	15.4	15.4	23.1	14.7	8.8	20.6	**26.5**	**26.5**	2.9
Inform students of school's academic progress	0.0	0.0	23.1	**38.5**	15.4	23.1	2.9	2.9	23.5	**44.1**	23.5	2.9
PROTECT INSTRUCTIONAL TIME												
Limit interruptions of instructional time by public address announcements	15.4	7.7	0.0	**30.8**	23.1	23.1	5.9	2.9	5.9	**47.1**	29.4	8.8
Ensure that students are not called to the office during instructional time	7.7	15.4	15.4	**30.8**	7.7	23.1	0.0	11.8	**50.0**	32.4	2.9	2.9
Ensure that tardy and truant students suffer specific consequences for missing instructional time	15.4	15.4	7.7	**38.5**	0.0	23.1	11.9	8.8	**44.1**	26.5	5.9	2.9
Encourage teachers to use instructional time for teaching and practicing new skills and concepts	0.0	0.0	0.0	**46.2**	30.8	23.1	0.0	0.0	2.9	35.3	**61.8**	0.0
Limit the intrusion of extra- and co-curricular activities on instructional time	0.0	7.7	7.7	**46.2**	15.4	23.1	0.0	2.9	11.8	**52.9**	26.5	5.9
MAINTAIN HIGH VISIBILITY												
Take time to talk informally with students and teachers during recess and breaks	0.0	0.0	0.0	**46.2**	30.8	23.1	0.0	2.9	8.8	32.4	**55.9**	0.0
Visit classrooms to discuss school issues with teachers and students	0.0	7.7	7.7	**61.5**	0.0	23.1	0.0	2.9	5.9	44.1	**47.1**	0.0
Attend/participate in extra- and co-curricular activities	0.0	0.0	23.1	**30.8**	23.1	23.1	0.0	0.0	14.7	23.5	**61.8**	0.0
Cover classes for teachers until a late or substitute teacher arrives	0.0	7.7	15.4	**30.8**	23.1	23.1	0.0	0.0	17.6	32.4	**47.1**	2.9

	1 Almost Never	2 Seldom	3 Some-times	4 Frequ-ently	5 Almost Always	No Response	1 Almost Never	2 Seldom	3 Some-times	4 Frequ-ently	5 Almost Always	No Response
Tutor students or provide direct instruction to classes	0.0	0.0	**46.2**	23.1	7.7	23.1	0.0	5.9	**41.2**	20.6	29.4	2.9
PROVIDE INCENTIVES FOR TEACHERS												
Reinforce superior performance by teachers in staff meetings, newsletters, and/or memos	0.0	15.4	23.1	**30.8**	7.7	23.1	2.9	5.9	17.6	32.4	**35.3**	5.9
Compliment teachers privately for their efforts or performance	0.0	0.0	15.4	**46.2**	15.4	23.1	0.0	0.0	5.9	29.4	**61.8**	2.9
Acknowledge teachers' exceptional performance by writing memos for their personnel files	23.1	15.4	7.7	**30.8**	0.0	23.1	5.9	23.5	**29.4**	23.5	11.8	5.9
Reward special efforts by teachers with opportunities for professional recognition	7.7	**23.1**	**23.1**	**23.1**	0.0	23.1	5.9	14.7	20.6	**26.5**	23.5	8.8
Create professional growth opportunities for teachers as a reward for special contributions to the school	7.7	15.4	15.4	**30.8**	7.7	23.1	0.0	8.8	23.5	**29.4**	26.5	11.8
PROMOTE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT												
Ensure that in-service activities attended by staff are consistent with the school's goals	0.0	7.7	0.0	**46.2**	23.1	23.1	2.9	2.9	17.6	**41.2**	29.4	5.9
Actively support the use in the classroom of skills acquired during in-service training	0.0	0.0	7.7	**53.8**	15.4	23.1	0.0	2.9	5.9	**52.9**	32.4	5.9
Obtain the participation of the whole staff in important in-service activities	0.0	0.0	15.4	**30.8**	**30.8**	23.1	0.0	0.0	5.9	38.2	**52.9**	2.9
Lead or attend teacher in-service activities concerned with instruction	0.0	0.0	15.4	**38.5**	23.1	23.1	2.9	5.9	14.7	**38.2**	35.3	2.9
Set aside time at faculty meetings for teachers to share ideas or information from in-service activities	0.0	0.0	**30.8**	23.1	23.1	23.1	0.0	0.0	14.7	**41.2**	**41.2**	2.9
PROVIDE INCENTIVES FOR LEARNING												
Recognize students who do superior work with formal rewards such as an honor roll or mention in the principal's newsletter	7.7	0.0	23.1	15.4	**30.8**	23.1	5.9	8.8	20.6	26.5	**35.3**	2.9
Use assemblies to honor students for academic accomplishments or for behavior or citizenship	7.7	0.0	0.0	23.1	**46.2**	23.1	0.0	0.0	20.6	**44.1**	35.3	0.0

	1 Almost Never	2 Seldom	3 Some-times	4 Frequ-ently	5 Almost Always	No Response	1 Almost Never	2 Seldom	3 Some-times	4 Frequ-ently	5 Almost Always	No Response
Recognize superior student achievement or improvement by seeing in the office the students with their work	23.1	0.0	**46.2**	0.0	7.7	23.1	5.9	14.7	**41.2**	20.6	11.8	5.9
Contact parents to communicate improved or exemplary student performance or contributions	7.7	15.4	**30.8**	15.4	7.7	23.1	0.0	14.7	**41.2**	26.5	14.7	2.9
Support teachers actively in their recognition and/or reward of student contributions to and accomplishments in class	0.0	0.0	23.1	23.1	**30.8**	23.1	0.0	0.0	8.8	**47.1**	38.2	5.9

Table A2: Secondary School Principals' Leadership Practices

BEHAVIORAL STATEMENT	2017 (N=10)						2022 (N=22)					
	Frequency of Occurrence over the Academic Year (% of sample)						Frequency of Occurrence over the Academic Year (% of sample)					
	1 Almost Never	**2 Seldom**	**3 Some-times**	**4 Frequ-ently**	**5 Almost Always**	**No Response**	**1 Almost Never**	**2 Seldom**	**3 Some-times**	**4 Frequ-ently**	**5 Almost Always**	**No Response**
FRAME THE SCHOOL GOALS												
Develop a focused set of annual school-wide goals	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0	**40.0**	50.0	0.0	0.0	22.7	**54.4**	22.7	0.0
Frame the school's goals in terms of staff responsibilities for meeting them	0.0	0.0	0.0	**30.0**	20.0	50.0	4.5	13.6	**45.5**	18.2	9.1	9.1
Use needs assessment or other formal and informal methods to secure staff input on goal development	0.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	**20.0**	50.0	4.5	0.0	31.8	**40.9**	22.7	0.0
Use data on student performance when developing the school's academic goals	0.0	0.0	**20.0**	**20.0**	10.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	22.7	**40.9**	0.0	0.0
Develop goals that are easily understood and used by teachers in the school	0.0	0.0	10.0	**40.0**	0.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	22.7	**54.5**	22.7	0.0
COMMUNICATE THE SCHOOL GOALS												
Communicate the school's mission effectively to members of the school community	0.0	0.0	10.0	**20.0**	**20.0**	50.0	0.0	0.0	**40.9**	**40.9**	13.6	4.5
	1 Almost Never	**2 Seldom**	**3 Some-times**	**4 Frequ-ently**	**5 Almost Always**	**No Response**	**1 Almost Never**	**2 Seldom**	**3 Some-times**	**4 Frequ-ently**	**5 Almost Always**	**No Response**
Discuss the school's academic goals with teachers at faculty meetings	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	**30.0**	50.0	0.0	0.0	4.5	**63.6**	31.8	0.0
Refer to the school's academic goals when making curricular decisions with teachers	0.0	0.0	0.0	**30.0**	20.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	31.8	**45.5**	22.7	0.0
Ensure that the school's academic goals are reflected in highly visible displays in the school (e.g., posters or bulletin boards emphasizing academic progress)	10.0	**20.0**	10.0	10.0	0.0	50.0	27.3	18.2	**36.4**	9.1	4.5	4.5
Refer to the school's goals or mission in forums with students (e.g., in assemblies or discussions)	0.0	0.0	10.0	**30.0**	10.0	50.0	0.0	4.5	**36.4**	22.7	**36.4**	0.0
SUPERVISE & EVALUATE INSTRUCTION												

Ensure that the classroom priorities of teachers are consistent with the goals and direction of the school	0.0	0.0	**20.0**	10.0	**20.0**	50.0	0.0	0.0	4.5	**81.8**	0.0	13.6
Review student work products when evaluating classroom instruction	0.0	0.0	**30.0**	10.0	10.0	50.0	0.0	9.1	36.4	**45.5**	4.5	4.5
Conduct informal observations in classrooms on a regular basis (informal observations are unscheduled, last at least 5 minutes, and may or may not involve written feedback or a formal conference)	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	**30.0**	50.0	0.0	0.0	27.3	**50.0**	22.7	0.0
Point out specific strengths in teacher's instructional practices in post-observation feedback (e.g., in conferences or written evaluations)	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0	**40.0**	50.0	0.0	0.0	22.7	**50.0**	27.3	0.0
	1 Almost Never	**2 Seldom**	**3 Some-times**	**4 Frequ-ently**	**5 Almost Always**	**No Response**	**1 Almost Never**	**2 Seldom**	**3 Some-times**	**4 Frequ-ently**	**5 Almost Always**	**No Response**
Point out specific weaknesses in teacher instructional practices in post-observation feedback (e.g., in conferences or written evaluations)	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	**30.0**	50.0	0.0	0.0	27.3	**50.0**	22.7	0.0
COORDINATE THE CURRICULUM												
Make clear who is responsible for coordinating the curriculum across grade levels (e.g., the principal, vice principal, or teacher-leaders)	0.0	0.0	0.0	**40.0**	10.0	50.0	0.0	4.5	9.1	**40.9**	40.9	4.5
Draw upon the results of school-wide testing when making curricular decisions the school's curricular objectives	0.0	0.0	20.0	**30.0**	0.0	50.0	0.0	4.5	22.7	**54.5**	9.1	9.1
Monitor the classroom curriculum to see that it covers the school's curricular objectives	0.0	0.0	10.0	**30.0**	10.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	31.8	**59.1**	9.1	0.0
Assess the overlap between the school's curricular objectives and the school's achievement tests	0.0	0.0	**20.0**	**20.0**	10.0	50.0	0.0	4.5	31.8	**50.0**	0.0	13.6
Participate actively in the review of curricular materials	0.0	0.0	**20.0**	**20.0**	10.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	27.3	**36.4**	22.7	13.6
MONITOR STUDENT PROGRESS												
Meet individually with teachers to discuss student progress	0.0	10.0	**20.0**	**20.0**	0.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	36.4	**54.5**	9.1	0.0

Discuss academic performance results with the faculty to identify curricular strengths and weaknesses	0.0	0.0	**20.0**	**20.0**	10.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	9.1	**63.6**	27.3	0.0
	1 Almost Never	**2 Seldom**	**3 Some-times**	**4 Frequ-ently**	**5 Almost Always**	**No Response**	**1 Almost Never**	**2 Seldom**	**3 Some-times**	**4 Frequ-ently**	**5 Almost Always**	**No Response**
Use tests and other performance measure to assess progress toward school goals	0.0	0.0	10.0	**30.0**	10.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	9.1	**72.7**	18.2	0.0
Inform teachers of the school's performance results in written form (e.g., in a memo or newsletter)	0.0	10.0	**20.0**	**20.0**	0.0	50.0	4.5	9.1	27.3	27.3	**31.8**	0.0
Inform students of school's academic progress	0.0	0.0	**20.0**	**20.0**	10.0	50.0	0.0	4.5	27.3	**36.4**	27.3	4.5
PROTECT INSTRUCTIONAL TIME												
Limit interruptions of instructional time by public address announcements	0.0	0.0	10.0	10.0	**30.0**	50.0	9.1	9.1	9.1	**31.8**	27.3	13.6
Ensure that students are not called to the office during instructional time	0.0	20.0	**30.0**	0.0	0.0	50.0	0.0	18.2	**59.1**	13.6	9.1	0.0
Ensure that tardy and truant students suffer specific consequences for missing instructional time	0.0	0.0	10.0	**30.0**	10.0	50.0	0.0	4.5	22.7	**54.5**	13.6	4.5
Encourage teachers to use instructional time for teaching and practicing new skills and concepts	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	**30.0**	50.0	0.0	0.0	4.5	27.3	**68.2**	0.0
Limit the intrusion of extra- and co-curricular activities on instructional time	0.0	0.0	10.0	**20.0**	**20.0**	50.0	0.0	4.5	18.2	**54.5**	22.7	0.0
MAINTAIN HIGH VISIBILITY												
Take time to talk informally with students and teachers during recess and breaks	0.0	10.0	0.0	**20.0**	**20.0**	50.0	0.0	0.0	18.2	36.4	**45.5**	0.0
	1 Almost Never	**2 Seldom**	**3 Some-times**	**4 Frequ-ently**	**5 Almost Always**	**No Response**	**1 Almost Never**	**2 Seldom**	**3 Some-times**	**4 Frequ-ently**	**5 Almost Always**	**No Response**
Visit classrooms to discuss school issues with teachers and students	0.0	0.0	10.0	**20.0**	**20.0**	50.0	0.0	0.0	**40.9**	**40.9**	18.2	0.0
Attend/participate in extra- and co-curricular activities	0.0	10.0	10.0	**20.0**	10.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	13.6	**59.1**	27.3	0.0
Cover classes for teachers until a late or substitute teacher arrives	0.0	10.0	**20.0**	10.0	10.0	50.0	0.0	22.7	**40.9**	31.8	4.5	0.0

Tutor students or provide direct instruction to classes	0.0	0.0	20.0	**30.0**	0.0	50.0	9.1	18.2	27.3	**31.8**	13.6	0.0
PROVIDE INCENTIVES FOR TEACHERS												
Reinforce superior performance by teachers in staff meetings, newsletters, and/or memos	0.0	0.0	10.0	**30.0**	10.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	**45.5**	27.3	27.3	0.0
Compliment teachers privately for their efforts or performance	0.0	0.0	10.0	0.0	**40.0**	50.0	0.0	0.0	9.1	40.9	**50.0**	0.0
Acknowledge teachers' exceptional performance by writing memos for their personnel files	**20.0**	**20.0**	0.0	0.0	10.0	50.0	22.7	**27.3**	**27.3**	4.5	4.5	13.6
Reward special efforts by teachers with opportunities for professional recognition	0.0	0.0	**40.0**	0.0	10.0	50.0	13.6	27.3	**31.8**	18.2	4.5	4.5
Create professional growth opportunities for teachers as a reward for special contributions to the school	0.0	**20.0**	10.0	**20.0**	0.0	50.0	13.6	**31.8**	22.7	22.7	4.5	4.5
PROMOTE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT												
Ensure that in-service activities attended by staff are consistent with the school's goals	0.0	10.0	0.0	**20.0**	**20.0**	50.0	0.0	4.5	4.5	**50.0**	27.3	13.6
	1 Almost Never	**2 Seldom**	**3 Some-times**	**4 Frequ-ently**	**5 Almost Always**	**No Response**	**1 Almost Never**	**2 Seldom**	**3 Some-times**	**4 Frequ-ently**	**5 Almost Always**	**No Response**
Actively support the use in the classroom of skills acquired during in-service training	0.0	0.0	**20.0**	10.0	**20.0**	50.0	0.0	0.0	4.5	**59.1**	36.4	0.0
Obtain the participation of the whole staff in important in-service activities	0.0	0.0	**20.0**	**20.0**	10.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	13.6	**50.0**	36.4	0.0
Lead or attend teacher in-service activities concerned with instruction	0.0	0.0	10.0	10.0	**30.0**	50.0	0.0	9.1	27.3	**36.4**	27.3	0.0
Set aside time at faculty meetings for teachers to share ideas or information from in-service activities	0.0	10.0	0.0	**20.0**	**20.0**	50.0	0.0	9.1	13.6	**36.4**	**36.4**	4.5
PROVIDE INCENTIVES FOR LEARNING												
Recognize students who do superior work with formal rewards such as an honor roll or mention in the principal's newsletter	0.0	**20.0**	10.0	0.0	**20.0**	50.0	9.1	4.5	18.2	27.3	**40.9**	0.0
Use assemblies to honor students for academic accomplishments or for behavior or citizenship	0.0	0.0	**20.0**	10.0	**20.0**	50.0	0.0	4.5	22.7	22.7	**50.0**	0.0

Recognize superior student achievement or improvement by seeing in the office the students with their work	10.0	**20.0**	**20.0**	0.0	0.0	50.0	4.5	136	**63.6**	18.2	0.0	0.0
Contact parents to communicate improved or exemplary student performance or contributions	0.0	**20.0**	10.0	10.0	10.0	50.0	0.0	9.1	**45.5**	31.8	9.1	4.5
Support teachers actively in their recognition and/or reward of student contributions to and accomplishments in class	0.0	0.0	10.0	**20.0**	**20.0**	50.0	0.0	4.5	22.7	**36.4**	**36.4**	0.0