



# PRESS RELEASE

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## **22 Teachers Complete OECS/USAID/ECJBTE UWI Reading Certificate Course**

**ST. GEORGE'S, GRENADA, SEPT. 3, 2021:** Twenty-two (22) primary school teachers have completed an OECS/USAID/ECJBTE reading certificate course, receiving certificates of achievement and participation during a ceremony at the Ministry of Education on August 26.

The 22 teachers received 60 hours of instruction in a reading certificate course, which focused on specialized reading instruction, emphasising practical knowledge and skills for quality reading instruction in the primary school grades – kindergarten to Grade 6.

The course will develop teaching skills in reading assessment and will allow teachers to be able to use the outcomes of these to plan reading instruction. The expectation is that these teachers have mastered skills to ensure primary grade learners develop essential reading skills.

Speaking to teachers at the ceremony, the Chief Education Officer, Angella Finlay, noted the inadequate number of students who are reading at their grade level.

She said, “Throughout the years, we have been able to celebrate many outstanding performances by some of our students, but a lingering concern continues to be that of the number of students who are reading below grade level. It is lamentable that many exit the school system without the level of competence in reading or that love for reading. The statement, ‘If you want to hide something from a Grenadian hide it in a book,’ is often said quite jokingly’, but it is one which is an apt summary of what can be termed a reading crisis.”

The Chief Education Officer therefore urged the successful participants to use the new skills gained wisely.

She said, “The Ministry therefore is counting on you to impart what you have learnt, as trailblazers within our schools, within your districts and, ultimately, we do hope, by your inspiration, by your demonstration, by your collaboration with your peers, we will be transforming these dismal reading statistics into something that we will be retuning maybe to this venue or a bigger one to celebrate.”

All 22 teachers who completed the course received certificates of completion certified by the Eastern Caribbean Joint Board of Teacher Education (ECJBTE). This award is given to participants who submitted all graded assignments and obtained a grade of B or higher.

Tutor for the course, Gillian Fleary-Lazarus, commended the participants for their teamwork and dedication during the course, highlighting important aspects of what was learned.

She said, “Teachers, you have been exposed to best practices in the teaching of reading from previous training generally and the ELP specifically and I’m certain through the course, which you recently undertook, with such topics as theories on the teaching of reading; phonological and phonemic awareness, which really gave us a tough time; word recognition; developing fluency and comprehension and even a little dabbling in analyzing spelling, motivating readers and the list can go on and on. All of these reinforce or added to your teacher resource tool kit.”

Barbara Regis, a participant in the course, shared reflections on the course.

“As we reflect on this course, three words summed up my impressions – comprehensive, relevant and eye opening,” she said. “It is good to have a clear path to follow, because Language Arts is complex.”

Regis thanked the facilitators of the course on behalf of fellow participants.

She said, “We sincerely thank all the stakeholders who made this possible. We especially thank the Ministry of Education, here in Grenada, for affording us this opportunity to develop our craft.”

Finlay also extended thanks on behalf of the Ministry.

She said, “On behalf of the Ministry of Education, Human Resource Development, Religious Affairs and Information, I therefore extend profound gratitude to USAID and the Education Management Unit of the OECS for having brought this course to fruition.”

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