

Statement in relation to the 1617 Supplementary

1st Meeting of the 2018/19 Session of the Cayman Islands Legislative Assembly

By the Honourable Juliana O'Connor Connolly, JP, MLA

Minister of Education, Youth, Sports, Agriculture & Lands

***Statement in relation to the Exceptional Circumstance
Appropriation changes resulting in the 1617 Supplementary
Appropriations of the Ministry of Education, Youth, Sports,
Agriculture & Lands***

Wednesday, September 12th, 2018



**MINISTRY OF
EDUCATION, YOUTH, SPORTS,
AGRICULTURE & LANDS
CAYMAN ISLANDS GOVERNMENT**

Mister Speaker,

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to bring to the attention of this Honourable House, the Exceptional Circumstances Appropriation changes which have resulted in the Supplementary Appropriations initiated by the Ministry of Education, Youth, Sports, Agriculture & Lands for the 18 month period ended 31st December 2017.

Department of Education - Increase in staff for special educational needs

Mister Speaker, in August 2016 Cabinet approval was granted to increase appropriations to Department of Education Services (DES) for increased staffing for primary education and education of children with special needs. This approval was made, subsequent to discussions in Finance Committee with regards to the level of need within the Education system for additional resources, specifically staffing at primary and for special educational needs. In the absence of budgeted funds the appropriation was requested and approved to cover the costs

of fifty (50) additional staff for special needs education and interventions. This resulted in the increases in appropriations EGA 5 *Primary Education Services* by \$1,201,682 and EGA 7 *Education for students with special needs* by \$1,987,784.

The break -down of the posts were as follows:

Position	No	Rational
Education Psychologist	2	Necessary to adequately staff the Student Services areas to ensure increased intervention (in additional to assessment) can occur
Occupational Therapist	3	
Occupational Therapist Assistant	3	
Counsellors	2	
Speech & Language Therapist	3	
Speech & Language Therapist Assistant	2	
Vision and Hearing Specialists	2	
Other therapists: Art therapy	1	
KS1 Behaviour /Inclusion Specialist	1	Staffing for a behaviour unit to address Primary students' needs out of the main-stream environment
KS1 Specialist Support Assistant (Behaviour)	1	
ESL Specialists	1	Growth in student numbers with English as a second language
Numeracy Coach	1	To support improvements in the teaching of Mathematics
Assistant Teacher	8	Growth in number of student assessed as needing 1-1 support entering system in 2016/17
Assistant Teacher	19	To deliver targeted numeracy and literacy interventions
Early Intervention Program Teacher	1	Increase in need to support pre-school children
Total	50	

The posts were appointed on a phased implementation during the 2016/17 year. As the year progressed, and the needs of students shifted, four (4) of the posts were converted to other essential special education needs posts. These conversions were as follows:

- One (1) *Art Therapist* and one (1) *Occupational Therapist Assistant* post were converted to two (2) '*Response to Intervention Tier 3*' *Teacher* posts to enable the Department of Education Services to staff the Reading Recovery program implemented in the 2017/18 school year to Year 1 and 2 students. These students were identified as needing additional literacy intervention.
- One (1) *Occupational Therapist Assistant* post and one (1) *Speech and Language Therapist* post was converted to one (1) *Supply Teacher* post. The *Supply Teacher* post was an essential addition to provide continued educational provision for long term absences and/or release of teacher for professional development/planning during the school day.

The Ministry was able to fund these posts through savings from a reduction of outsourced services, through savings in operational lines due to the actual insurance premium being less than anticipated and through partial funding by Cabinet.

The internal savings resulted in decreases in appropriations *EGA 1 Policy Advice, Governance and Ministerial Support Services* by \$533,000, *EGA 6 Secondary Education Services* by \$971,825 and *EGA 10 Education Evaluation and Support* by \$400,000.

Education Council – Scholarships Increase

Mister Speaker, in August 2016, the Ministry requested an increase in appropriation of *TP 30 Local, Overseas Scholarships and Bursaries* by CI\$2,036,620 as there was an increase in scholarship applications and grants for students who required alternative special educational provision either locally or overseas.

Mister Speaker, the Ministry saw an increase in the number of complex special educational needs which often included severe mental health and behavioural issues. These were cases in which the resources in Government schools (including therapy and other special education needs services) had been exhausted.

On a positive note, there were more Caymanian students qualifying for 'A Level' studies and studies at the University College of the Cayman Islands (UCCI) therefore there was increase need for scholarships for these post-secondary programmes.

There was also an increase in the number of Caymanian students meeting the academic criteria for both local and overseas undergraduate and post-graduate studies.

Additionally, there was an increase in the number of students able to maintain their scholarships, both locally and overseas.

Land Purchases – Increase in Appropriation (EA 4)

Mister Speaker, the Government had the opportunity to purchase Block 44B Parcel 23, which is a 0.97 acre of undeveloped land, comprising of white sandy beach with light vegetation adjoining the Coe Wood Public Beach in Bodden Town. The acquisition of the land increased the length of the 310 ft public beach by approximately an additional 210 ft and therefore extended the existing public beach facility.

The land sale was for CI\$600,000 however, the land owner agreed to take payment in two equal instalments of CI\$300,000, with no interest payable. The first instalment was due in 2016/2017 and the second in January 2018.

At the time of sale there were no remaining funds in *EA4 Lands Purchase*. Funding for the initial instalment of CI\$300K was deemed by Cabinet to be an exceptional circumstance pursuant to Sections 11(5) and 11(6) PMFL. The second instalment was paid out of 2018 EA4 appropriated funds.

In reference to the purchase of *Block 23C Parcels 123, 124, 125 and Block 25B Parcels 174, 265 and 297*, these undeveloped 6 adjoining Parcels located between Prospect Drive and Victory Avenue and totalling 1.62 acres were offered for sale to the Government upon the death of the landowner. The Government wished to take this unique opportunity to purchase them, for future development as a public park. However, there were no remaining funds left in *EA4 Lands Purchase*. A price of CI\$500,000 was agreed by Cabinet. Funding of CI\$500,000 was deemed by Cabinet to be an exceptional circumstance pursuant to Sections 11(5) and 11(6) PMFL.

International College of the Cayman Islands – Increase in

Appropriation

In September 2017, Cabinet's approval was sought to increase appropriation of *NGS 25 Teaching of Tertiary Education Courses* by CI\$350,000 following a request by the International College of the

Cayman Islands (ICCI) for the Cayman Islands Government's support to enable the College to continue in operation.

Funds for this appropriation were realised by transferring funding from other appropriations within the Ministry namely: through the decrease in appropriation of *TP 56 Employment Initiatives* by CI\$200,000; the decrease in appropriation for *TP72 Other Youth and Sports Programme Assistance* by CI\$100,000 and by the decrease in appropriation of *TP 30 Local, Overseas Scholarships and Bursaries* by CI\$50,000.

TP56 Employment Initiatives had surplus funds during 2016/17. This was because the CI\$1,205,000 budget for the Ready2Work KY Programme in 2016/17 was designed to subsidise wages and salaries paid to Job Seekers who found employment. However, most employers did not access the subsidy and opted to pay the Job Seekers the full amount earned without any support from government. As a result there was a surplus of CI\$1,065,241.

The Ministry determined that the CI\$100,000 could be moved from *TP 72 Other Youth and Sports Programmes* to *NGS 25 Teaching of Tertiary Education Courses (ICCI)* without affecting any applications during the rest of the year as some organisations had not utilised all the available funding and no new requests for funding were anticipated.

The Ministry also determined that the CI\$50,000 could be moved from *TP 30 Local, Overseas Scholarships and Bursaries* to *NGS 25 Teaching of Tertiary Education Courses (ICCI)*, without affecting disbursements to students, as a small surplus was anticipated.

Mister Speaker, thank you for allowing me explain the exceptional circumstances which have resulted in the Supplementary Appropriations initiated by the Ministry of Education, Youth, Sports, Agriculture & Lands for the 18 month period ended 31st December 2017.