



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

MEDIA RELEASE

March 28, 2022

Dear Editor / Head of Department,

Full Return to Physical School in Term III 2021/2022

The Ministry of Education is pleased to announce the full return of all students to physical school at the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), Primary, Secondary and Tertiary level from 19th April, 2022; Term III 2021-2022.

In preparation for this full return of all students to physical school, Dr. the Hon Nyan Gadsby-Dolly, Minister of Education, the Hon. Lisa Morris Julian, Minister in the Ministry of Education, along with the executive of the Ministry sought the input of all education stakeholders to determine guidelines for the safe return of students to school in Term III, 2021/2022.

The Ministry sought the input of the Division of Education, Research and Technology of the Tobago House of Assembly (THA), Denominational Boards, Associations of Private Primary and Secondary Schools, Private Special Schools' Association, Principals' Associations for primary and secondary schools, and the National Parent Teachers Association (NPTA). Though the Trinidad and Tobago Unified Teachers' Association (TTUTA) was unable to meet on the dates scheduled for their specific meeting, they are in communication with the Ministry and a meeting to discuss their operational recommendations is imminent.

The stakeholder meetings were all very productive and the Education Minister thanks all participants for their frank opinions and solid recommendations. The following is an outline of the major decisions taken for the full return of all students to physical school in Term III for Academic Year 2021/2023.

1. No rotational schedules to be followed; as such, pre-COVID regular school hours to be reinstated
2. Entry protocols of handwashing and temperature checks to remain
3. Enhanced cleaning and sanitization schedules to remain
4. Students are to be continuously reminded to adhere to protocols of sanitization and handwashing. These reminders are to be broadcast throughout the day using the PA system, and schools to retain signage to encourage students to practice safety protocols
5. Students are to be encouraged to maintain personal space and social distancing practices
6. Whole-school assemblies to be allowed

7. Whole-school breaks to be allowed- no staggering required
8. Mandatory mask wearing for all school personnel and students at Primary and Secondary Schools. This will not be mandatory for ECCE students. ECCE operations will facilitate further safety protocols.
9. All school sporting and extra-curricular activities to resume
10. All inter-school sporting and extra-curricular competitions to resume
11. Education District Medical Health Unit personnel to continue lending support for COVID-19 management to schools
12. School feeding and school transport to resume full operations
13. School uniform requirements to be relaxed. Parents are to be guided by Principals, and are asked to corporate with these school-specific guidelines, as student uniformity is a safety measure for students in Trinidad and Tobago.

In speaking at the press conference held on Monday March 28th, 2022, the Education Minister thanked all stakeholders who have worked tirelessly over the last two years in supporting our students and will now continue to ensure their safe return to the physical classroom. The Minister called on parents to guide and prepare their children for the full return to school and reminded students of their personal responsibility to adhere to health protocols in school and when travelling using public transport. *“Provide your children with an extra face mask and sanitizer, equip them with the tools to learn and to be safe. The Ministry is committed to safely returning all our nation’s children to physical school as this provides the best opportunity for learning for all”.*

The full, updated document, "Guidelines for Return to Physical School for Term III of Academic Year 2021/22" will be provided to all schools via Circular Memorandum, and posted on the Ministry of Education’s website, moe.gov.tt. by Friday, April 1st, 2022.

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