



ADDENDUM to DRAFT
Interim Future State Report
February 12, 2019

INTRODUCTION

On Monday, February 4th, 2019, members of BermudaFirst's Executive Committee Meeting met with the Premier, Minister of Finance, Minister for the Cabinet Office and Marc Telemaque to present the recommendations contained with BermudaFirst's DRAFT Interim Future State Report. During the meeting, BermudaFirst was asked by the Premier to provide additional information pertaining to the following recommendations:

- 1. High Priority Recommendation 1 EDUCATION-** *Create an independent authority for public education that is responsible for the performance management of educators and researching and implementing a holistic public education system that is appropriately sized/structured, resulting in a learning environment that facilitates optimum student success.*
- 2. Quick Win INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS Recommendation 2** (component of overall recommendation) *- Creation of an economic free zone to encourage innovation.*
- 3. Quick Win TECHNOLOGY Recommendation 3.iv.** *- Provide a pathway to connecting relevant start-ups to appropriate funding resources (i.e. Angel investors, infrastructure fund, etc.);*
- 4. All Remaining Recommendations TECHNOLOGY Recommendation 1.b.ii.** *Position Bermuda as a viable jurisdiction to undertake 'proof of concept' initiatives.*

Due to travel, we were not able to fully develop responses for requests 2 – 4; however, we are pleased to provide an addendum for the Education, providing additional information on current challenges and details pertaining to the proposed independent authority. High level thoughts have been provided for the international business recommendation pertaining to the creation of an economic free zone and further details on the technology recommendations will be provided in due course.

EDUCATION RECOMMENDATION

Create an independent authority for public education that is responsible for the performance management of educators, and researching and implementing a holistic public education system that is appropriately sized/structured, resulting in a learning environment that facilitates optimum student success.

Rationale for an Independent Authority

A progressive, agile, public education system that produces students who excel in globally recognised assessments is the foundation of an economically and socially successful society. The current public education system is bureaucratic, cumbersome and lacks accountability at all levels. There are schools of thought that adhere to the notion that accountability is the primary challenge and that the issue can be addressed within the current structure. This thought negates the bureaucracy, inefficiency, lack of agility, and politicisation of public education. All of these are major obstacles that cannot be simplified or overlooked due to their complexity. Further, they would be extremely difficult to overcome within the current structure. BermudaFirst strongly believes that the problems are far more systemic and require managerial and pedagogical excellence, within a nimble infrastructure that has the power and ability to fully transform the System.

It is a fact that Bermuda's public education system is not producing world class results. The Bermuda Omnibus Q4 2018 Survey identified education as the second most important issue facing Bermuda after

the cost of living. 69% of respondents in Q3 2018 considered the overall quality of public education to be Fair or Poor. The Community Foundation Vital Signs Report rated public perception of public schools as fair or poor and the private schools are rated good or excellent. This is illustrated by the fact that roughly 50% of the school age students in Bermuda are enrolled in private education facilities. The number of students enrolled in public school continues to decrease, while the number of students in private institutions remains constant.

Creation of an independent authority would be transformational for public education in Bermuda. It would facilitate a change in system structure, hiring practices and performance management, establishing a new and effective partnership between the Bermuda community and the public education system. The new structure would enhance performance and is required to effectively manage the Bermuda public education system and propel it to academic, vocational and social excellence.

The Board of Education as currently structured, presents the following issues that an independent authority would not have.

- The Members of the Board of Education are appointed each year, potentially resulting in no continuity or sustainability.
- There is limited accountability for the Board Members who are all volunteers. The level of support from a volunteer group can sometimes differ from the commitment level of those who are remunerated to complete a task.
- There are elements of the Education Act pertaining to the Board of Education that may be difficult for the Board to execute because volunteer members of the Board may not feel comfortable or be suitably skilled enough to complete some tasks. More specifically:
 - The Board is responsible for 4:1F “evaluate, in conjunction with the Commissioner of Education, the performance of schools and Boards of Governors”.
- The Board provides advisory services (recommendations) to the Minister (not oversight or accountability).

The following recommendations provide additional support in the implementation of the independent authority (the Authority):

- The Authority would be an agile organisation.
- The Commissioner of Education would be employed by the Authority.
- The Authority would have very clear lines of oversight.
- The Board would be responsible for hiring a suitably qualified Commissioner of Education.
- The Commissioner of Education would hire, fire and manage the performance of staff, reflecting agility and accountability consistent with best of class practices.
- The Authority would be responsible for the short, medium- and long-term education needs of the Country.
- The Minister of Education would participate in the development of strategy and governance for the Authority.
- The Authority would have a Board and an Executive Chairperson responsible for engaging the Minister to ensure full transparency of progress and status.
- The Chairperson for the Authority would be a full-time, paid position.

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- The Authority would have three-year appointments to the Board and no more than a third of persons would be changed at any given time to ensure continuity.
- The Authority would be a buffer to the Government, while implementing the necessary decisions to make the system more effective (i.e. decreasing the number of schools).
- The Authority would have the opportunity to attract top talent at market based pay levels to ensure the sustainability of the education system.

The Minister of Education should focus on:

- Holistic oversight of education in Bermuda for both public and private institutions;
- Ensuring appropriate transition standards from Pre-K to P1 and S4 to Bermuda College;
- Implementing a civil service professional development programme at the Bermuda College; and
- Developing and implementing the appropriate legislation and policy to support the transformation of the education system.

It is never an easy decision for any government to decentralise a department that vital to the community it serves. This courageous, visionary decision is necessary to provide total transformation within a district, city, country or nation. Full transformation provides an opportunity to deconstruct and rebuild. Opportunities that are not given at other intervals in an organisation or department's life cycle.

Public education has failed to produce systemic best in class results; the education system is in crisis, reflecting challenges in discipline, performance and effectiveness. Our children being educated in the public system will therefore NOT achieve their full potential without transformational change. Tinkering with elements of the current construct will not meaningfully move the dial.

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS QUICK-WIN RECOMMENDATION 2

Creation of an economic free zone to encourage innovation. (NOTE: This is a component of the overall recommendation).

An Economic free zone will require appropriate incentives to be developed and offered. More work is required on this aspect of the recommendation.

There is alignment; however, that the concierge service that is required for businesses seeking to start-up/set-up offices in Bermuda is not yet in place in a full enough form. The existing approach delivered by the Bermuda Development Agency (BDA) with assistance, when necessary, from Government's Business Development Unit, requires refinement.

CONCLUSION:

We will look forward to discussing these additions with you tomorrow and receiving more in-depth feedback from you on the High Priority and Quick Win Recommendations that were presented during our February 4th, 2019 meeting.