



TEACHING  
SERVICE  
COMMISSION  
2012 ANNUAL REPORT







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## 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Teaching Service Commission (TSC) was established under the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago (Section 124) and its mandate is stated in Section 125:

*Subject to the provisions of this Constitution, power to appoint persons to hold or act in public offices in the Teaching Service established under the Education Act, including power to make appointments on promotions and transfer and to confirm appointments, and to remove and exercise disciplinary control over persons holding or acting in such offices and to enforce standards of conduct on such officers shall vest in the Teaching Service Commission.*

The members of the Commission are appointed for a three-year term by the President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, after consultation with the Prime Minister and Leader of Opposition. The members of the Commission for 2012 were:

Ms. Hyacinth Guy	Chairman
Dr. Anna Mahase	Member
Professor Ramesh Deosaran	Member
Mr. Alwyn Daniel	Member
Dr. Gillian Paul	Member

Ms. Yvette Phillip, Executive Director, Human Resource Management, represented the Director of Personnel Administration (DPA) at meetings and Ms. Janet Gopie, Senior Human Resource Advisor, served as Secretary to the Commission. The Executive Director presided over the Secretariat which provided administrative and advisory services that enabled the TSC to effectively discharge its mandate.

During the reporting period, the Commission held twenty-three (23) statutory meetings and six (6) special meetings. In addition, it met with various stakeholders on four (4) occasions to present its plans and programmes and hear their concerns. At its strategic planning session held in December 2011 for the 2012 period, the Commission identified four (4) specific areas on which it wished to place emphasis.

These were:

- Continuing to accelerate the selection process and make suitable appointments
  - o *The Commission introduced a standardised application form for vacant offices, making it easier for retrieval and collation of information and so reducing the time for processing applications by the Ministry of Education.*
  - o *The Commission revised the special report used to evaluate candidates and this gave it the opportunity to obtain more specific and relevant information on candidates to determine suitability. The Commission made this special report a requirement of the application process as it must be submitted together with the application form in the same manner certificates should be submitted.*
  - o *The Commission designed a request for proposal for widening the selection process to include psychometric testing of candidates wishing to enter the teaching profession.*
  
- Improving the discipline process timeline and addressing irregularity and unpunctuality
  - o *The Commission conducted an orientation session with various stakeholders with the objective of engaging in discussions on how the disciplinary process could be made more efficient and effective.*
  - o *The Commission put systems in place for obtaining, analysing and dealing with reports from the Ministry of Education of teachers with high levels of unpunctuality and irregularity.*
  
- Developing the new regulations for the Teaching Service Commission and improving administrative system
  - o *The Commission completed the review of the new regulations and began the process of consulting with stakeholders. The amended regulations include provision for conducting parallel investigations, establishing one person tribunals and improving efficiency in the recruitment and selection systems.*
  
- Strengthening its relationships with relevant agencies and stakeholder groups.
  - o *In 2012, the Commission continued its meetings with various stakeholder groups and extended its outreach efforts to meetings with Principals and Schools Supervisors in the various educational districts.*

What follows are the details of these accomplishments, an assessment of the challenges and plans and programmes for 2013 and beyond.

## 2.0 OVERVIEW OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The success of the Commission in achieving its mandate under the Constitution of The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago depends heavily on the ability of the Commission to engage the various stakeholders in the activities needed to achieve this mandate while at the same time maintaining its independent status. Key support is required by the Ministry of Education (MOE) which must submit information on a timely basis to allow the Commission to act on issues in the Teaching Service. The Commission met with the MOE officials on several occasions to discuss how the objectives of the education system could be achieved and how to address the challenges faced.

### **2.1. *Appointments***

Over the 2012 period the Commission further accelerated the pace of filling of vacant offices in the Teaching Service. The Commission has been approaching the recruitment and selection process from a strategic perspective by first engaging the stakeholders in establishing a Human Resource (HR) Plan and then executing by liaising with those stakeholders who are to be involved in the process. The HR Planning involves identifying in advance and in conjunction with the MOE, the vacant offices likely to occur in the service, advertising those vacancies and then undertaking the selection process. Several selection panels comprising experienced, retired and active public officers are utilised to make recommendations for the filling of the offices.

The application form for promotion which was designed in 2011 was utilised in 2012 and proved to be instrumental in reducing the time taken by the MOE to analyse and collate information on applications for submission to the Commission. The revised special report is also proving to be beneficial in that it provides more relevant information to assist in the selection process. It is now a requirement for this special report to be submitted together with the application form and this has resulted in the reduction in time taken to process the applications as there is no longer any waiting time for special reports to be submitted. Applicants have been advised that in a manner similar to how certificates are treated, application forms would not be accepted if the special report is not included.



### **2.1.a Promotions – Administrative Offices**

The system of promotion for administrative positions of Principal, Vice Principal, Head of Department, Dean and Senior Teacher in the Teaching Service now includes the following:

- o Planned vacant offices for the upcoming year, e.g. due to retirements, are identified by the MOE and verified by the Commission.*
- o These projected vacant offices, together with vacancies that occurred as a result of promotions, resignations and other unplanned events, are advertised in the second and fourth quarter of each year. Those vacant offices that are advertised in the last quarter of the year include offices that are currently vacant and those that would become vacant in the first half of the next year. Those vacant offices that are advertised in the second quarter of the year include offices that are currently vacant and those that would become vacant in the second half of the current year.*
- o Vacant offices are advertised for a one month period. These applications are received and reviewed by the MOE, who then shortlist qualified candidates and make recommendations for selection to the Commission. The Commission verifies from the overall listing that this short-list is accurate and meets the requirements of the Job Specifications.*
- o The Commission arranges the selection process for suitable candidates. At this time the selection process includes a structured interview conducted by a panel of three persons, and in some cases, a written assessment which is undertaken prior to the candidate being interviewed.*
- o Candidates found suitable for selection are placed on an Order of Merit List and offered appointments as the vacant offices arise.*
- o As it becomes necessary, the Commission confers with the various denominational boards to discuss the suitability of candidates recommended for placements to the denominational schools.*

This process has significantly improved the efficiency and effectiveness of making appointments to vacant offices in the Teaching Service. In 2012, 93% of all of the offices of Principals and Vice Principals that were vacant at the end of 2011 and that became vacant in 2012 were filled and those not filled were scheduled to be filled early in 2013.

The filling of vacant offices of Heads of Department, Deans and Senior Teachers, proceeded throughout 2012. These categories proved more challenging to fill as the capability at the level of Teacher III, from which these positions are selected, is limited. In 2012, 37% of the vacant offices in these categories were filled. The MOE was requested to re-advertise the offices not filled and interviews continued throughout 2012 in an effort to fill these offices.

The Commission also filled the following de-linked offices during 2012 – Curriculum Officer, Schools Supervisor, Guidance Officer, Educational Facilities Planner and conducted interviews for the office of Chief Education Officer. An Order of Merit List was prepared for the office of Schools Supervisor III and this was presented to the MOE so that vacant offices can be filled as they arose. The office of Schools Supervisor I was advertised and the selection process planned in anticipation of vacancies expected throughout 2012 and 2013. The other offices were advertised and filled as the vacancies arose. Table 1 presents this information in more detail.

**Table 1**

**Promotions/Appointments Made to Administrative and De-Linked Offices**

OFFICE	Offices vacant 31/12/11	Offices that became vacant in 2012	Offices filled in 2012	Comments
Principal (Secondary)	13	16	26	All outstanding interviews already scheduled for 1st quarter 2013
Vice Principal (Secondary)	24	27	25	All outstanding interviews already scheduled for 1st quarter 2013
Principal (Primary)	73	60	91	All outstanding interviews already scheduled for 1st quarter 2013
Vice Principal (Primary)	15	34	15	Interviews will commence March 2013
<b>Total</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>152</b>	
Dean (Secondary)	273	No info	72	Interviews conducted and only 72 offices filled. The MOE was asked to re-advertise in 2012
Head of Department (Secondary)	265	No info	3	Interviews conducted and only 72 offices filled. The MOE was asked to re-advertise in 2012
Head of Department (Primary)	93	51	72	
Senior Teacher (Primary)	124	115	131	
Senior Special Ed Teachers	3	3	0	
<b>Total</b>	<b>758</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>278</b>	
Curriculum Officer	64	0	31	
Schools Supervisor III/II/I	6	0	6	Order of Merit List in place for SS III
Guidance Officer II/I	64	0	2	Interviews scheduled for 2013
Educational Facilities Planner	1	0	0	Interviews scheduled for 2013
Curriculum Co-ordinator	8	0	0	
Chief Education Officer	0	1	0	Interviews scheduled for January 2013.
<b>Total</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>36</b>	

The information in Table 1 above includes the filling of vacant offices that occurred in Tobago. These are extracted and detailed in Table 2 as follows:

**Table 2:  
Teachers Appointed to the Primary and Secondary Schools in Tobago in 2012**

Principal Secondary	Vice Principal Secondary	Principal Primary	Vice Principal Primary	Head of Department Primary	Senior Teacher
3	1	8	1	4	16

**2.1.b. Appointments – Primary and Secondary School Teachers**

**Primary**

The recruitment and selection system for entry level Primary School Teachers is delegated to the MOE. At this time, it involves the following:

- o The MOE places advertisements in the newspapers from time to time and also accepts unsolicited applications from Teachers wishing to enter the Primary School system.
- o An individual who is registered as a Teacher may apply to the Ministry of Education for the position of Teacher in a primary school.
- o The Ministry of Education assesses the application to determine whether the individual meets the stated criteria. At this point, a person with passes in at least 5 CSEC subjects may apply and be selected to be an Assistant Teacher but this is an interim measure. The MOE is on a drive to professionalise the service and is placing all primary school teachers on degree programmes to become qualified. Once sufficient capacity is in the system, no one without a first degree in education would be selected to teach.
- o The MOE conducts interviews using a structured instrument designed by the TSC, to identify candidates who meet the requirement to determine their suitability to teach in a primary school.
- o The TSC audits the selection process at least once per year.
- o Suitable individuals are placed on an Order of Merit List for future placements when vacant offices arise.

This system is intended to ensure that the MOE has the flexibility to appoint persons to vacant offices in a timely manner and so, avoid the teaching service being negatively affected as a result of lack of resources in the classroom. In 2012, the Commission approved 499 persons for placement on the Order of Merit List for the office of Teacher/Assistant Teacher.

Sixty-eight (68) temporary appointments were made to vacant offices in the Teaching Service and 153 permanent appointments were made to offices in the primary school system. One hundred and forty nine (149) persons left the Teaching Service for various reasons. Table 3 details this information.

**Table 3**  
**Teachers Appointed to Primary Schools in 2012**

No. of Persons Placed on the Order of Merit List	No. of Temporary Appointments	No. of Permanent Appointments	No. of Officers Leaving the Service
<b>499</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>149</b>

### Secondary

The existing recruitment and selection process for entry level secondary school teachers include the following:

- o An individual who is registered as a Teacher may apply to the Ministry of Education for the position of Teacher in a secondary school.
- o The Ministry of Education assesses the application to determine whether the individual meets the stated criteria for the subject area. The minimum criteria are a degree from an accredited tertiary education establishment and a minimum age of 18.
- o In order to determine the candidate’s proficiency level and ability to teach the curriculum of the particular subject, this application is sent to the Curriculum Division of the MOE for assessment.
- o The Curriculum Division assesses the candidate and certifies him/her as being competent to teach at a particular level. This certification may be at either the level of a Teacher III or II.
- o The file of the individual is then sent to the Commission where an interview is conducted so as to ascertain the candidate’s suitability and fit for the profession.
- o If the Commission is satisfied that the candidate meets the requirements for selection as a Teacher, his/her name is placed on an Order of Merit List and sent to the MOE for subsequent placement in a school.

The Commission in 2012 interviewed 542 persons from various subject areas and placed 481 on Order of Merit Lists for various subject areas. Of these, 88 or 18% were for Mathematics, 67 or 14% were for Natural Science and 63 or 13% were for English. This was in keeping with the needs identified by the Ministry of Education. The TSC, in conjunction with the MOE, has worked to ensure that those subject areas where there is a shortage of teachers are addressed in an expeditious manner. The areas identified as having a shortage of teachers were Mathematics, Natural Science, Visual and Performance Arts and

Physical Education. The Commission ensured that Order of Merit Lists were well populated with teachers from these disciplines while also ensuring that the other areas continued to be served. In 2012, 176 temporary appointments were made to vacant offices in secondary schools, 174 permanent appointments were made and 64 officers left the Teaching Service. Details are outlined in Table 4 below.

**Table 4 a**

**Candidates by Subject Areas - Secondary**

<b>Subject Area</b>	<b>Interviewed</b>	<b>Successful</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Mathematics	110	88	18
Natural Science	67	60	12.5
Agricultural Science	12	12	2.5
Visual Arts/Theatre Arts/Music/Dance	43	39	8
History/Social Studies	47	44	9
English	63	57	12
Spanish/French	40	37	8
Geography	30	28	6
Business Studies/Accounts/Economics	14	12	2.5
Computer Science/Information Tech. Technology	18	12	2.5
Physical Education	32	32	7
All other areas	66	60	12
<b>All Subject Area</b>	<b>542</b>	<b>481</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 4 b**

**Candidates by Order of Merit Lists; Appointments; Separations - Secondary**

<b>No. of Persons Placed on the Order of Merit List for Secondary Schools</b>	<b>No. of Temporary Appointments</b>	<b>No. of Permanent Appointments</b>	<b>No. of Officers Leaving the Service</b>
<b>481</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>64</b>

### **2.1.c Other Activities Related to Appointments**

The Commission was mindful of the fact that in addition to increasing the efficiency of the recruitment and selection processes, it was also important to handle other activities related to appointments with a degree of efficiency. The Commission assigned a team to work on bringing up to date the confirmation of teachers in their positions after probation, acting appointments, transfers, releases, and medical boarding. By the end of 2012, significant progress has been made in this area. Table 5 has these details.

**Table 5: Other Activities Related to Appointments**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Acting</b>	<b>Temporary</b>	<b>Confirmation</b>	<b>Transfers</b>	<b>Release</b>	<b>Medical Board</b>	<b>Other</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>244</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>10</b>

### **2.2. Discipline**

#### **2.2.a. Misconduct and Other Disciplinary Issues**

Improving the administration of disciplinary matters and improving standards of discipline in schools were identified as priority areas for the Commission. In 2012, the Commission intensified its efforts to treat expeditiously with disciplinary matters and it spearheaded an orientation programme with officers of the MOE, facilitated by members from the Discipline Unit of the Service Commissions Department, to discuss and align how all persons in the system should function. This has resulted in some improvements to the efficiencies in the handling of discipline.

During 2012, the Commission handled 61 disciplinary matters. At the end of the year, 42 of these were at various stages of the disciplinary process and 19 matters were completed (See Table 6). Thirty (30) of the 61 matters were related to allegations of misconduct, 18 were before disciplinary tribunals and 10 were abandonments. It is to be noted that of the 30 allegations of misconduct, only 2 had information outstanding from the MOE at the end of the year. This is a change from the 16 matters that had information outstanding from the MOE at the end of 2011 and is an indication of the co-operation between the secretariat of the TSC and the HRM Department of the MOE in moving these matters to completion. The late submission of investigative reports from Investigating Officers continues to be a main factor in the time taken to handle issues of misconduct in the Teaching Service and the Commission continues to work with the MOE to improve this.

Of the 18 matters before disciplinary tribunals, nine (9) were completed and nine (9) were outstanding. Ten (10) cases of abandonments were handled in 2012; the process of handling abandonments has been significantly improved through collaboration with the Discipline Unit of the Service Commissions Department and the MOE (see Chart 7 at Appendix 1). Table 6 details the disciplinary matters handled in 2012.

**Table 6 – Details on Disciplinary Matters - 2012**

Category	No. of Matters before the Commission	Comments	
		Completed	Outstanding
Court Charges	2		1 – Indecent assault 1 – possession of marijuana
Disciplinary Tribunals	18	8 – completed 1 – officer resigned	9 – tribunals on going
Abandonments	10	1 – officer resigned 2 – declared to have resigned 1 – allowed to resume duty	6 – being processed by TSC
Allegations of misconduct	30	2 – examined by Med. Board  1 – retirement on ill health 1 – found unfit by Med. Board 1 – no further action 1 – allowed to resume duty 1 – matter completed	16 – charges preferred and moved to tribunal stage 5 – being processed by TSC 2 – additional info from MOE
Ongoing HC Action matters	1	1 - outstanding	
<b>Total</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>40</b>

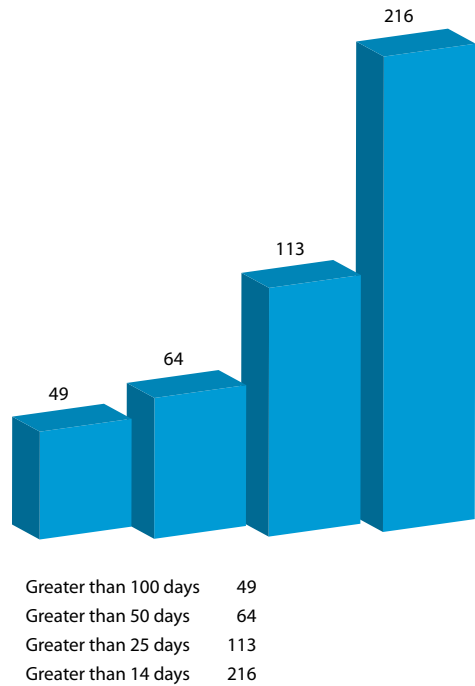
### **2.2.b. Irregularity and Unpunctuality**

The Commission was concerned about the very low number of reports on teacher irregularity and unpunctuality that came to the Commission. As such, a comprehensive report on the levels of attendance and late-coming of all Teachers in the Primary and Secondary School systems was requested from the MOE. The data received was analysed and information shared with various stakeholders.

The 2012 report showed that there were 442 primary school teachers who exceeded their sick leave of 14 days for the year. Of these 49 or about 11% were absent on sick leave for more than 100 days in the year; 64 or 14% were absent for between 50 and 99 days; 113 or 26% were absent for between 25 and 49 days and 216 or 49% were absent for between 14 and 24 days in the year. In addition, 48 teachers were late for more than 1,000 minutes in the year.

Chart 1

Irregularity in the Teaching Service by District – Primary Schools



In the Secondary school system, the 2012 report showed that there were 755 teachers who exceeded their sick leave of 14 days for the year. Of these, 444 or about 59% were absent between 15 and 24 days; 18 or 24% were absent for between 25 and 49 days; 86 or 11% were absent for between 50 and 99 days and 43 or 6% were absent for greater than 100 days in the year. In addition, 472 teachers were late for more than 1,000 minutes in the year.

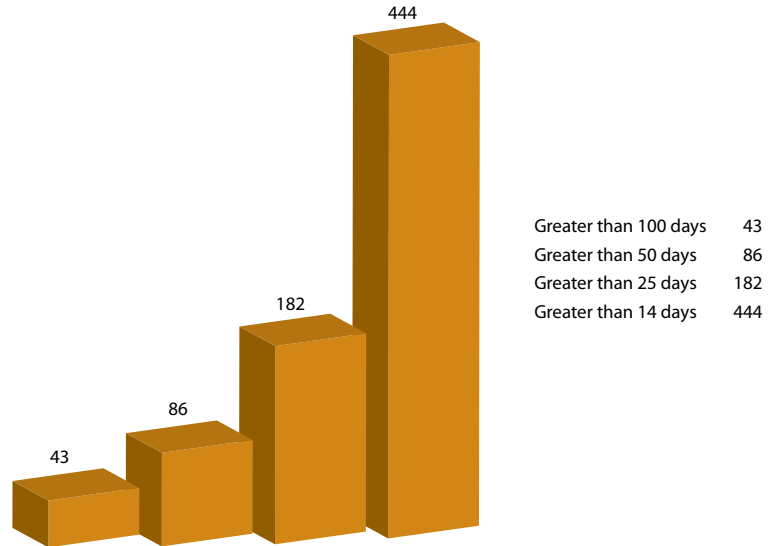
The MOE was requested to provide data on all late-coming in the service including those teachers with less than 1,000 minutes late in the year. The MOE has also been requested to investigate the individual cases of excessive absences and late coming and recommend whether disciplinary action should be initiated against those teachers. The TSC continues to work with the MOE and all stakeholders to ensure that sick leave is utilised for the purpose for which it was intended and that teaching time in the classroom is maximised. The TSC plans to continue its pursuit of addressing those officers who have unacceptable levels of absences in keeping with its mandate under the regulations.



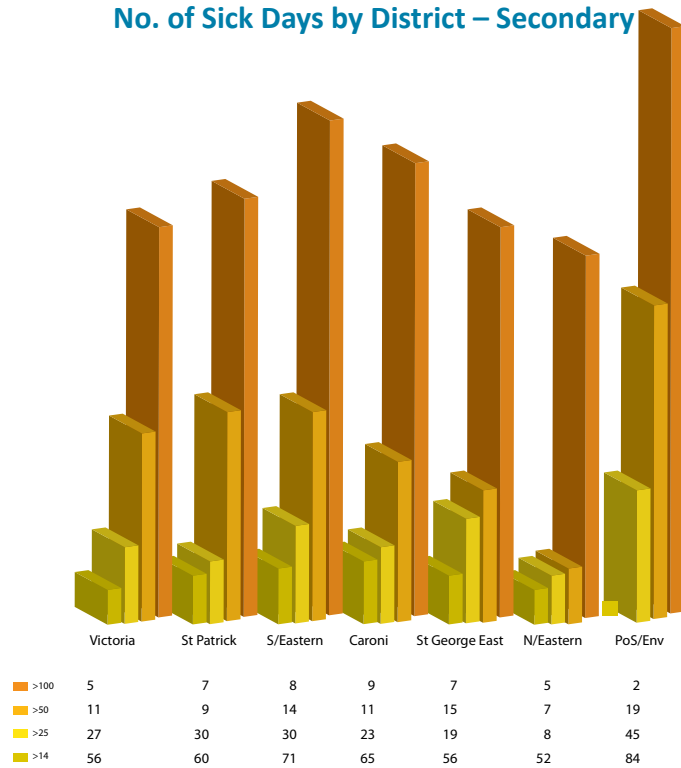
This information for Secondary Schools for the year ending 2012 is contained in the Charts below.

**Chart 2**

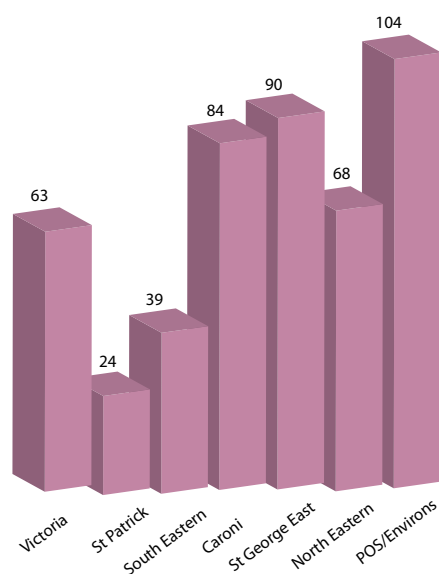
**Irregularity in the Teaching Service by District – Secondary Schools**



**No. of Sick Days by District – Secondary**



### Greater than 1,000 Minutes Late – Secondary



### 2.3. The Regulatory Framework

The review of the regulatory framework governing the TSC continued in 2012. By the end of 2011, the draft TSC regulations were substantially completed and discussions with the various stakeholders were continuing. Further discussions were requested by major stakeholders in 2012 and these were facilitated by the TSC. By the end of 2012, the new TSC regulations were completed and ready to be sent to the Parliamentary Committee in 2013. The major changes to the regulations include revisions in accountability and timelines and the introduction of One-Man Tribunals and parallel proceedings in the disciplinary process.

### 2.4. The Concordat

The Concordat of 1960 subtitled “Assurances for the Preservation and Character of Denominational Schools as approved by Cabinet” states in part:

*A teacher shall not be appointed to a school if the denominational Board objects to such an appointment on moral or religious grounds. Similarly, if a teacher be found unsatisfactory on these grounds, moral or religious, the denominational authority shall have the right to request his removal to another school after due investigation.*

The Commission has continued to work within the stipulations of the Concordat, and on many occasions has invited representatives of denominational boards to its offices to discuss the proposed appointment of a candidate to a denominational school and to hear the held views of the Board on such appointments,

especially where the Board has a different view to that of the Commission. Parties have been able to resolve issues in most cases, but this long-standing agreement between Church and State still constitutes one of the many challenges faced by the TSC in delivering its mandate to the people of Trinidad and Tobago.

### **2.5. Accommodation**

The Commission continued to conduct the selection process at the Selection Centre at 62 Queen Street, Port of Spain even though the facilities and amenities are not always up to the standard expected to meet basic needs. The Commission has faced challenges such as lack of proper washroom facilities, poor air-conditioning and a non-functioning escalator. This matter has been brought to the attention of the DPA and the Commission was informed that alternative accommodation was being sought for the Selection Centre. It is to be noted that the Commission was informed that there were possible violations of the Occupational Safety and Health guidelines in the building and has sought the guidance of the DPA on the matter. Meanwhile, the Commission continues to be negatively impacted by the poor amenities and inappropriate infrastructural issues of this location and this is hampering the pace at which selection activities can be conducted.

### **2.6. Administration**

The administration of the TSC is vested in the Office of the Director of Personnel Administration. This office provides information and advice to the Commission, to examine the effects of policies and to question the effectiveness of decisions made. In the discharge of its responsibilities, the Office of the DPA has devolved certain administrative services via centralised and common services. These services relate to legal advice, auditing, policy and research, information technology and corporate services. The Commission is hampered by the lack of easily available information from the research department. This is because the systems for retrieval of information are manual and paper based. The Commission also suffers serious setbacks in its ability to consistently publish its quarterly newsletter as there is not sufficient internal support service for this function. The common services of Legal, Discipline and the Tribunals are shared among the various Commissions and this means that the Commission has to wait in line for its matters to be handled. This results in long administrative delays. The Commission met with the DPA and discussed various issues which could bring better efficiencies to its administrative processes. High on the agenda was the assignment of a Legal Officer dedicated solely to Commission matters, tribunal for hearings of the Commission and the staffing of the investigative unit at the SCD so that officers of this unit can be used to investigate matters on behalf of the Commission.

## 2.7. Stakeholders

In 2012, the Commission extended its outreach programme to include presentations and meetings with various fraternity groups at the district level. Members met regularly with fraternity groups and discussed issues such as the role of performance management in the selection process and the process of managing discipline in schools. These outreach programmes allowed the Commission the opportunity to share its plans and programmes with a wider stakeholder group (Supervisors and Principals) and hear their issues and challenges. The Commission also met with the Permanent Secretary, MOE to discuss the policy direction of the Ministry and so ensure that in discharging its mandate, it was also achieving the national development goals. The Executive Director and HR staff of the Commission met regularly with the HR Officials of the MOE to discuss and plan for the execution of the strategic plans of the Commission. The schedule of meetings for 2012 is outlined at Table 7 below.

**Table 7– Stakeholder Meetings Held in 2012**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Stakeholder</b>
February 29	Meeting with the Trinidad and Tobago Unified Teachers’ Association
May 16	Meeting with Association of Denominational Boards
May 28	Meeting with Minister of Education and Senior Executive Officers at the MOE
June 13	Meeting with Permanent Secretary and Senior Executive Officers at the MOE
July 27	Meeting with Association of Denominational Boards
August 15	Workshop on Disciplinary Policy and Procedures
August 22	Sixth Annual Schools Supervisors Workshop
September 19	Meeting with Stakeholders in Tobago – School Supervisors, HRM staff of the THA and representatives of the Denominational Boards
September 29	Facilitated workshop on Performance Appraisal at St. Patrick Educational District
November 1	Facilitated workshop on Performance Appraisal at Caroni Education District

## 3.0 ISSUES AND CHALLENGES FACED IN 2012

3.1 **Appointments:** While the TSC is satisfied for the most part that there are improvements in the system of appointments, there still remain significant issues and challenges that must be addressed if the improvements are to be sustained in the long term. These include:

- *Human Resource Planning* - there is no Human Resource Plan evident at the MOE which can assist the Commission in making the recruitment and selection process more effective. Human Resource Planning is the process of identifying future HRM needs, determining how those needs should be met and making a plan for meeting those needs. The Commission has sought to bridge this gap by initiating this process annually with the MOE in order to identify those vacant offices likely to occur in the administrative areas. However, as it stands, while this process gives information for the offices of Principal, Vice Principal, Head of Department, Dean and Senior Teacher, it does not give information for the number of vacant offices that exist or are likely to occur in the Teaching establishment at the Primary and Secondary levels. As a result, there is a long lag time between vacancies occurring and persons from the Order of Merit List being selected to fill these vacancies.

While staff returns are submitted to the MOE by Principals on a monthly basis, there is no indication that this information is collated into a comprehensive report which can inform the system of how best to plan for resource continuity. The Commission tries to bridge this gap by ensuring that the Order of Merit Lists for both Primary and Secondary schools are well populated and that there are sufficient persons approved to teach and who can be placed on the Order of Merit List to replace those who have left the service.

The MOE has advised that it was undertaking a teacher rationalisation process in order to streamline the allocation of resources among the various schools in keeping with a stated pupil to teacher ratio. The MOE was requested to provide this information to the Commission and discussions on the issue continue. It is also important for the MOE to analyse the information on persons leaving the system to determine the reasons for the turnover and to implement systems to mitigate the risk of losing qualified persons.

The Commission is aware that the substitute teacher system which was implemented some years ago in the Secondary school system, is not working in an effective manner. The MOE is advised to revise and re-establish this system so that Schools Supervisors can have access to resources from a qualified pool of persons in the event there are temporary shortages in the service. The MOE is also advised to extend this system to the primary school.

- *Performance Appraisal* – the new performance appraisal system for teachers and administrators has not yet been implemented in the Teaching Service. Teachers are presently appraised with the use of an instrument known as the Confidential Staff Report. This system is somewhat dated and is not sufficiently transparent to serve the needs of a modern Teaching Service. An effective performance appraisal system should provide evidential basis for the rating given and it should provide information which can be used in making decisions about a teacher's confirmation in the position, promotion to a new position, and on-going continuous professional development. As such, the Commission continues to use the Special Report as a requirement in the application for vacant office process, in order to select the most suitable person for appointment.

The MOE has informed the Commission that it has completed discussions with various stakeholders and it intends to introduce a robust performance management and appraisal system. This new system will be transparent and a collaborative process and will focus on objectives, performance standards, behavior, and development. The Commission welcomes this initiative.

- *School profiles* – a template for capturing information on the profile of the school was made available to the MOE to collect data on schools which would assist in making a better fit between a potential candidate and a school. Information on some schools has been provided to the TSC but information on several schools remains outstanding.

3.2. **Training and Development** – the TSC is challenged in filling the offices of Heads of Department, Secondary and Deans, Secondary as there is proving to be insufficient capability in the ranks of Teacher III to fill the 538 vacant offices in these categories. The Commission completed the selection process for these categories and filled just about 14% of those offices as suitably qualified candidates could not be found for all the vacant offices. Officers who aspire to these offices need to have more exposure in education administration within the school and to better understand the regulations and policies in the Teaching Service They would also benefit from training programmes in management and leadership put on by the MOE as preparation for assuming higher responsibilities in the Teaching Service. The MOE was requested to re-advertise the vacant offices in 2012 but at the end of that year had not yet done so. The Commission plans to undertake the selection process again in 2013.

- 3.3. **Discipline** – It is expected that the new regulations which have been completed will significantly improve the administration of discipline in the Teaching Service. It is proposed to give more accountability to Principals and Supervisors and to institute one-person tribunals. It is also proposed to implement parallel proceedings for issues that go before the court so that allegations of misconduct can be addressed alongside court proceedings.

The Commission continues to be challenged by the long time taken by Investigating Officers to investigate allegations of misconduct. It has included accountability measures in the new regulations to address this issue. There also needs to be standard guidelines given to schools by the MOE for dealing with issues of irregularity and unpunctuality of Teachers. Schools Supervisors and Principals continue to report on differing standards in dealing with this issue.

The Commission has been insisting that the MOE investigate teachers who consistently do not meet the teaching requirements and bring this to the attention of the Commission so that an appropriate determination can be made as to the ability of those teachers to discharge their duties.

- 3.4. **Other Issues:** The issue of the appointment of approximately 743 primary school teachers who entered the University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT) in 2006 to pursue a Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) degree was discussed and issues resolved with the MOE in 2012. There also continues to be the need for the MOE to review the educational requirements for the office of Vice Principal - Primary. At present, no tertiary level qualification is required for this office and as such, advertisements attract hundreds of applicants hopeful of being interviewed for the office. This situation is an anomaly since the office of Principal - Primary calls for a relevant undergraduate degree and as such, it does not make for good succession planning for the office of Vice Principal - Primary to not have the same requirement. It also means that Senior Teachers, Teachers and Heads of Departments in primary schools who have a relevant degree can be considered for the office of Principal - Primary ahead of a substantive office holder who does not hold such a qualification.

Several of the job descriptions in the Teaching Service are dated and need to be revised to make the role and responsibilities aligned with the current realities of the office. This includes Schools Supervisors and Guidance Officer.

## 4.0 PLANS AND PROGRAMMES FOR 2013

- 4.1. **Appointments:** The Commission aims to focus on improving the efficiency in the filling of vacant offices for teachers in the Primary and Secondary School system. Its aim is to fill those vacancies within one month of vacant offices arising. Some strategies are:
- o Map the recruitment process and identify areas which add no value and revise this process.
  - o Expand the selection process to include psychometric testing and a wider set of selection activities in order to get the best fit for offices in the teaching service.
  - o Obtain a consolidated quarterly return of staff movement from MOE and use this information to project the number of vacant offices likely to occur and plan for filling those vacant offices.
  - o Expand the reach of advertisements for vacant offices in the teaching service by placing the advertisements on the SCD and MOE websites, emailing directly to schools and placing notices in the daily newspapers.
  - o Delegate some areas of recruitment activities to MOE
  - o Work with the MOE to revise outdated job descriptions to make the selection process more relevant.
- 4.2. **Discipline:** The Commission aims to focus on reducing the time it takes to process a disciplinary issue from the present time frame of approximately 3 years to less than 6 months from the date of occurrence. Its goal, in the first instance, is to initiate the disciplinary process for teachers with irregularity and unpunctuality of greater than 14 days sick leave, 14 days casual leave and in excess of 1,000 minutes per term. While the Commission is of the view that no level of latecoming should be sanctioned, it is guided by the reality that there is a high level of unpunctuality in the Teaching Service and it has decided that a practical approach to dealing with this is to address in the first instance, the worst offenders. This is defined at this time as those persons with more than 1,000 minutes late in the year. Some strategies and activities for achieving this include:
- o Map the process and identify areas which add no value and which can be improved.
  - o Establish procedure for obtaining information on issues of discipline from Schools.
  - o Identify teachers with high levels of absences and late coming and initiate the investigative process.
  - o Delegate more areas of discipline to Principals and Supervisors.
  - o Work with the SCD and its discipline unit to establish a register of disciplinary issues and track and report on these at every meeting.
  - o Work with the DPA to ensure the establishment and staffing of an investigative unit at the SCD which will undertake investigations in an expeditious and thorough manner.
  - o Work with the DPA to address issues regarding the length of time taken by tribunals to hear issues and produce reports to the Commission.
  - o Work with the DPA to have assigned to the Commission a focused Tribunal and a dedicated Legal Officer for Commission matters.



4.3. **Stakeholder Relationships:** The Commission will further improve relationships with its stakeholders.

To do so it would:

- o Have more interaction with district fraternity groups both in Trinidad and in Tobago in an effort to communicate its vision for the school as a professional learning centre with attributes of collaboration, effective communication, and an environment which embraces all types of learners.
- o Continue to build more effective relationships with the MOE and with the Division of Education, Youth Affairs and Sport (DEYAS) in Tobago to better integrate government policy for education into the work of the Commission. In particular, the Commission wishes to see the implementation of an effective performance management and appraisal system to aid in the selection process and strengthen accountability.
- o Build better relationships with the media to get the work of the Commission out to the public.
- o Continue discussions with the denominational boards in order to reconcile situations with differing recommendations to positions in the denominational schools. The Commission will ask the various boards to define, in their own context and situation, the requirements for meeting the 'moral and religious' standards for appointments.

4.4. **Administrative Process:** The Commission will improve its administrative process by adopting the following strategies:

- o Get regulations and delegation orders specific to the Commission approved and implement appropriately. Use the regulations as an avenue to empower Schools Supervisors and Principals to manage their districts and schools effectively.
- o Work with MOE to have in place a manual of policies and procedures that are applicable to the teaching service and make this available to those who need to know, in the service.
- o Process confirmations, transfers and other administrative issues within one month of information reaching Commission.
- o Develop systems using Information Technology to improve administrative processes.
- o Issue guidelines on Commission functioning and its expectations of stakeholders as necessary

## 5.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

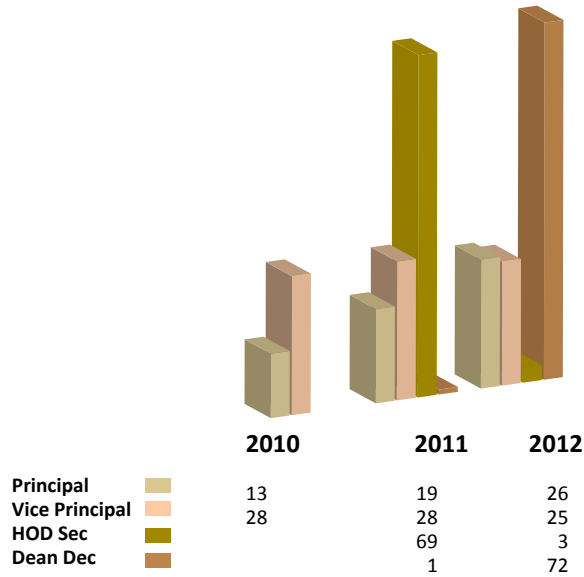
The Commission wishes to express its gratitude to the Director of Personnel Administration, Mrs. Gloria Edwards-Joseph, the Executive Director, Ms. Yvette Phillip, the Secretary, Ms. Janet Gopie, the invaluable members of the selection panels, other staff who assist in the selection process and all the staff of the Secretariat of the Commission for their loyalty and full support over the reporting period. Their dedication to duty and focus on the goals of the Commission were instrumental in contributing to its progress in 2012.

# APPENDIX 1

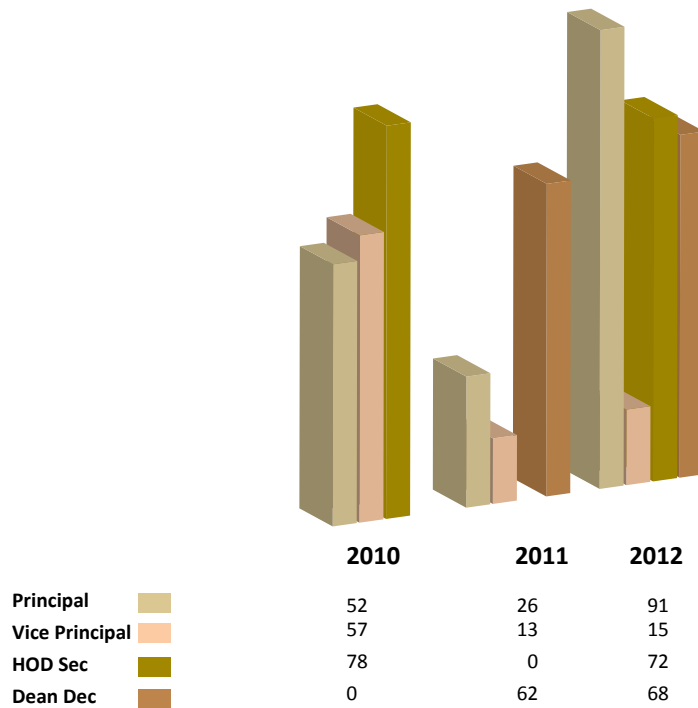
## Graphs and charts related to appointments, selection and discipline

### Offices Vacant and Filled in 2012

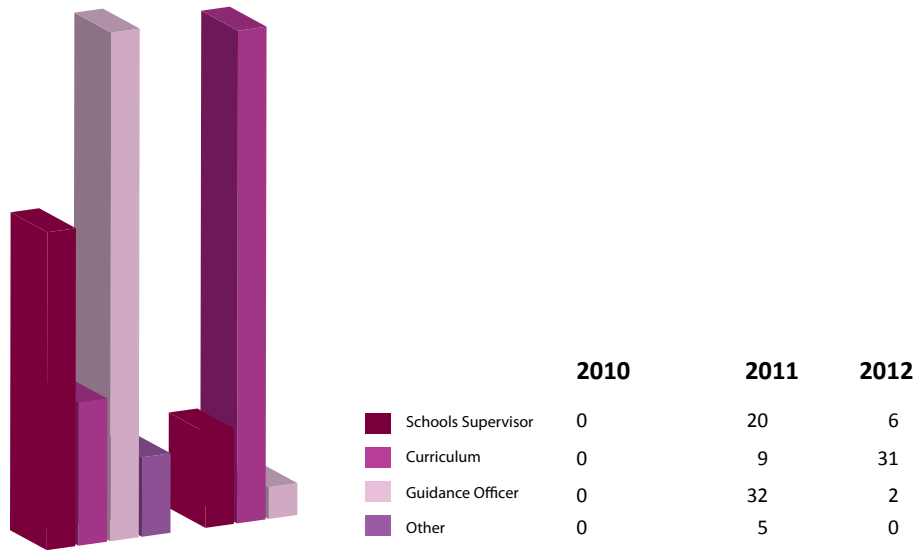
**Chart 3 – Secondary Appointments**



**Chart 4 – Primary Appointments**



**Chart 5 – Other Appointments**



**Chart 6 – Teacher Secondary**

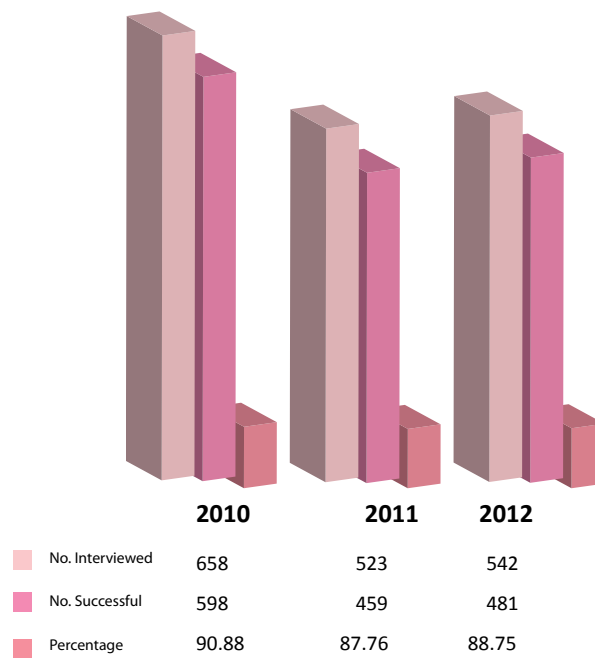
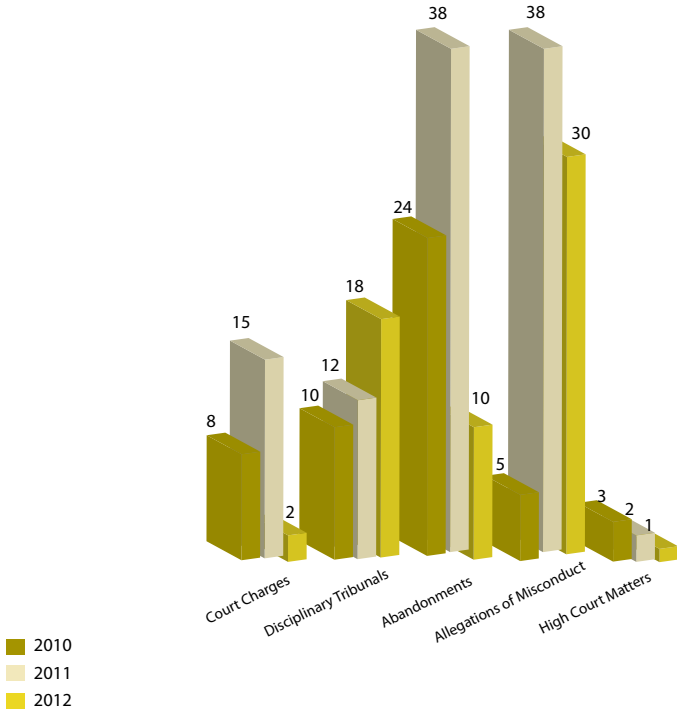


Chart 7 – Matters of Discipline



# NOTES



# NOTES



# NOTES







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