Conference Theme: Reconceptualising the Agenda for Education in the Caribbean

Rationale

Traditionally, the agenda for education in the Caribbean has focused on issues such as access to groups and in the distribution of resources, empowerment of disenfranchised social groups, and definition of Caribbean identities. While these remain enduring issues for Caribbean educators, other relatively newer ones have been pushed to centre stage, in the biennium since the last conference at Mona.

Chief amongst these developments have been the emergence of the Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME), the movement towards education for all, the spread of health-related concerns across the region, and the rapid expansion of electronic communication within institutions of higher education. Taken together, such developments point to the collapse of traditional boundaries and the crafting of new scripts to define how educators respond to the changing nature of the Caribbean landscape. For instance, what might or should be the role of education and educators, especially at the secondary school level, in dealing with the HIV/AIDS epidemic? What are the practical boundaries of classrooms in tertiary education given the ready availability of broadcast technology? What should arts education programmes look like for promoting social cohesion in the Caribbean? Is there a new core of knowledge and experiences that teachers must have for dealing with changed learners in a changing Caribbean?

While questions such as these assume that some battles have been won in “old” agendas for education and that we can move on to fresher issues, this is not always a safe assumption to make. ICT application to tertiary education is a fair case in point. On the one hand, ICT has facilitated the possibility of wide access to university education, which has been sought after by most stakeholders. On the other hand, it has not necessarily influenced all tertiary-level educators to embrace its benefits as a teaching tool and convinced students to “think technologically.” For those who embrace it, though, ICT has revolutionised learning and research. It has made the
Caribbean more readily accessible both as a site for research and as a provider of information about itself.

Contradictory though some of these developments can be, a reconceptualisation of the agenda for education is necessary at this time. The speed at which economic and social changes are occurring and can occur is dependent on the responsiveness of education systems, yet it is capable of leaving those very systems behind and in need of modernisation. What constitutes the new agenda will conceivably point the way forward, enabling educators at all levels to match their programming to the changing needs of their clients.

**Presentation strands**

Proposals for presentations are invited for the following conference strands:

1. Pedagogy, andragogy, and technology
2. Teacher as professional
3. Educational administration
4. Measurement and assessment
5. Best practices [constructivist teaching; literacy; numeracy; group management; visual and performing arts; school discipline]. This strand can be realised through posters, and kiosk and paper presentations.
6. Education and wellness (to include HIV/AIDS and Sexuality Education)
7. Curriculum
8. Papers addressing the conference theme
9. Education and national development (Does education contribute to the economy?)
10. Student diversity
11. Education and culture

The conference will accommodate three categories of presentation:

1. Papers presenting original work
2. Posters
3. Kiosk presentations [continuously scrolling PowerPoint presentation that the presenter/author speaks to]

**Important dates**

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<th>January 5 2007</th>
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<td>Deadline for registration</td>
<td>March 16 2007</td>
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**Abstracts and notification of acceptance of proposals**

Abstracts not exceeding 200 words should be sent via email to the conference Chair at the address below.

Authors of accepted proposals will be notified by February 8 2007.

**Conference Coordinating Committee**

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