



THE AGENCY FOR PUBLIC INFORMATION

P.O Box 608, Kingstown, St Vincent and The Grenadines

Tel: (784) 456-1600, Fax (784) 456-2430

Email: apisvg2023@gmail.com

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OECS EDUCATORS CONVENE FOR “PEARL” SUMMIT

Education stakeholders across the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) convened at the Holiday Inn Conference Room for the “Programme for Educational Advancement and Relevant Learning” (PEARL) Regional Sustainability Summit.

The summit, which began on Tuesday April 14, also brings together regional policymakers and technical experts to advance innovation, and resilience across the Eastern Caribbean, with a strong emphasis on transforming education systems to meet the demands of a rapidly evolving world.

PEARL is a four-year programme designed to advance the goals of the OECS Education Sector Strategy by improving equitable access to quality education and strengthening student learning outcomes at the basic education level.

The programme focuses on enhancing early childhood and special education, strengthening curriculum and assessment systems, improving leadership and management, and reinforcing programme management, institutional capacity, and monitoring and evaluation frameworks.

Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education, Vocational Training, Innovation, Digital Transformation and Information, Myccle Burke, remarked that educational advancement is achievable through collective effort, unity, and commitment to national and regional development. He highlighted the importance of regionalism within St. Vincent and the Grenadines and noted that the success of the education system relies heavily on the contributions of citizens and professionals.

Minister of Education, Vocational Training, Innovation, Digital Transformation and Information, Hon. Phillip Jackson, said there must be a change in the modern education system, where teaching must go beyond content delivery to fostering lifelong learners and critical thinkers.

Minister Jackson stressed the importance of equipping students with the ability to locate, evaluate, and apply information, while raising concerns about the heavy focus on examinations such as CPEA for primary school students, and calling for a greater emphasis on individualized learning and competency development.

Head of the Human and Social Division at the OECS Commission, Sisera Simon, highlighted the need for a forward-looking approach as the region advances toward its 2030 vision. She emphasized strengthening key pillars including curriculum, assessments, continuous school improvement, professional development, and monitoring, evaluation, reporting, and learning (MERL), noting that the summit marks a transition from project milestones to a lasting legacy.

Mohamed Yassine, representing the Global Partnership for Education, noted that regenerative development requires building systems supported by strong data, continuous feedback, and responsive action, ensuring that reforms extend beyond project timelines into long-term transformation.

The OECS PEARL Regional Sustainability Summit provides a vital platform for dialogue, collaboration, and knowledge sharing among member states and partners, reinforcing the OECS' commitment to building inclusive, high-quality, and future-ready education systems across the region.

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